

**Mass Clientelism:
Urban Growth and the Dialectic of Nation-Building
in 20th Century Latin America**

by

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Preface

The current multidimensional crisis has witnessed the fall of numerous regimes institutionalists had hoped would prove resilient, from Turkey to the Philippines, and even ones some had venerated for their purported institutional robustness, including the United States and Britain. With this, the liberal political paradigm cherished by most of the foremost students of politics has begun to appear moribund. Symptoms are ready to hand. Not only have physics-based canards about “waves” of democracy and authoritarianism repopulated journalistic-quality discourse, but some of the most venerated minds in the social sciences have succumbed to biologically-inspired metaphors about how specific institutional configurations (which were never “alive”) wither and “die.” In truth, institutionalism was never very incisive because it was premised on conflating channels allowing for the exercise of popular *will* for evidence of the existence of popular *sovereignty* (Mouffe 2000)—a fundamental error that became institutionalism’s most guarded dogma and that has prevented more profound appreciations.

But now the situation has become dire. Taking a wholly defensive intellectual position and proffering nothing by way of a forward-looking political program, institutionalism and liberal theory have become, in a word, reactionary. Amidst a demos pressing up against the bounds of existing channels for the exercise of popular will, liberals are incapable of conceding popular sovereignty precisely because liberal-institutionalist dogma denies its absence. Reality has struck liberal-institutionalism with a powerful blow. This, in turn, provides space not only for political alternatives, of which the contemporary moment bears harrowing witness, but also for theoretical ones. Political sociology has nevertheless struggled to gain a hearing. In part this is because political sociologists have been reluctant to probe the bottom-up aspects of the institutions vaunted by liberals, presumably thinking that liberal attempts to construct those objects as “representative institutions” are absurdly uncritical (cf. Michels [1915] 1962).

The foremost alternatives political sociology has advanced are Gramscian. There are essentially two. First, when they focus on liberal institutions, contemporary Gramscians tend to argue that they are not representative at all, but are instead best understood as the result of top-down political machinations (de Leon, Desai, and Tuğal 2009; 2015). By constructing liberal institutionalism as an elite-driven affair, this has helped reawaken scholars to the crucial observation that the mere presence of liberal institutions allowing for the exercise of popular will does not constitute evidence of popular sovereignty. But it has not gone far towards an understanding of how the one is independent of the other—of how popular will can indeed support government institutions (which has only recently come into question) without those institutions being an expression of popular sovereignty.

Gramscians' second alternative breaks with the traditional political-sociological assumption that authoritarianism is a purely top-down phenomenon—the “marriage of iron and rye” (Moore 1966:130)—and argues for a bottom-up understanding of authoritarian governments (Riley 2010; for classical statements by political scientists working in the same tradition, see Berman 1997; Roberts 2006). This, in turn, has pointed to a research agenda dedicated to mapping out variations in authoritarianisms as regards the degree and nature of their bottom-up support (Tuğal Forthcoming). Taken together with the top-down Gramscian sociology of liberal institutions, the Gramscian perspective on authoritarian governments is immensely valuable.

But by the same token, viewing them together, these approaches show that Gramscian sociology has remained a mere gadfly vis-a-vis liberalism. Against the dominant social-scientific paradigm presenting the presence of institutions that support popular will as evidence of popular sovereignty, they try to divert attention to elite machinations behind “liberal” institutions; and against liberals who point to elite machinations behind so-called illiberal regimes, they call attention to popular support for them. In sum, if we were to follow political sociologists, we could conclude that elites demand democracy and the masses demand authoritarianism. But this by definition *cannot* be right! So while each type of Gramscian sociology highlights important aspects of different kinds of government institutions, they do not aggregate into a sound theoretical system.

Thus while the crisis makes us well-poised to offer a *critical theory of representative institutions*—seen to be lacking for a very long time (Anderson [1977] 2020:64-68; 1979:47-48)—political sociologists have not really applied ourselves to develop theory truly adequate to

the task. To do so, I think it is useful to build from Poulantzas's (1969; 1973; 1978) Gramsci-inspired critical theory of the state, since it points to a specific theoretical challenge: to account for a political order whose relational aspects involve elite-level convergence and mass-level division and whose ideological features involve intra-elite agreement and inter-class consensus. This theoretical point of departure safeguards against mistaking popular will for popular sovereignty, which, in turn, allows us to probe the bottom-up aspects of representative institutions without succumbing to tired canards about "waves" of democracy or leaping to the defense of such institutions for fear they could otherwise "die."

Poulantzas orients us theoretically by positing a form of rule characterized by the exercise of popular will *but not* popular sovereignty: consent and even active support for one's own domination. This is of course the same theoretical problem with which Gramsci grappled (see Gramsci 1971:80 n., 193-94, 266 et passim; for a prescient appreciation, see Anderson [1977] 2020). The challenge is to demonstrate how consent to coercion works in practice. Of course, a variety of factors may account for such a scenario, according to the case of interest. And a variety of additional theoretical resources besides those of Poulantzas are likely to be needed to explain any given case, especially beyond the Euro-American core (Jessop 2016:239; Poulantzas 1976:130-31). So this point of departure is really just a beginning.

But taking this approach may prove helpful to make sense of a variety of seemingly-puzzling substantive political developments, pointing to the possibility of significant payoffs. For on this basis we can posit that the reason American progressives silenced their protests against the government's war on Iraq when Barack Obama came to power (Heaney and Rojas 2015:134) is much the same as the reason immigrant Latinos supported the anti-immigrant leader Donald Trump (Cadava 2020).¹ Beyond ideological appearances, both were bottom-up pledges of political loyalty. The fact that they advanced support for divergent types of institutions—the government headed by "liberal" Obama and that headed by "illiberal" Trump—helps move beyond a framing of the problem dominated by institutionalist assumptions, pointing to the possibility of a tectonic shift in how we view politics which could approach the magnitude of, or at least help understand, the political developments we have seen during the crisis. For on this

¹ As one put it, "I don't believe it for a second. I don't believe he's racist. I believe that he was just looking out for the working class. And that includes Latinos, you know?" And as another put it, "support was forthcoming because "you're seeing me as an American—you're not seeing me as a Hispanic that's separate" (quoted in Cadava 2020).

basis we can posit that the reason for liberal institutional resilience, when it is forthcoming, is much the same as the source of support for authoritarianism. Within the Poulantzian research agenda, the clincher will be to show that these vertical bonds of loyalty between political elites and important social groups necessarily generate cleavages which contravene horizontal solidarity relations in civil society.

In fact, this answer to the Poulantzian challenge pushes beyond Poulantzas himself, whose last book (Poulantzas 1978) assumed that social movements could and should somehow enter existing political institutions, for which reason it was quite theoretically underdeveloped. A group of contemporary political sociologists continue to think political institutions should be at the center of social change and that sociologists should be at the center of these institutions—in order, some might deign to say, to keep them “alive.” While all of this may be pretty inoffensive in the form it takes, it does present a problem. Due to its commitment to institutions, the whole school of thought has insufficient distance from them to appreciate rise-and-fall dynamics to which institutions themselves are subject.

This is where Hegelian theory excels and, indeed, surpasses—Hegelians would say “sublates”—Poulantzas and Gramsci. Hegel explodes confidence in common starting assumptions, one after the other, thus moving headlong to articulate a metatheory of ironic overtime change. In his magnum opus on the history of human consciousness, for instance, one of his observations is that irrational desire drives the development of rational self-consciousness; in response to hysterical vitalist notions of a quest for “life,” Hegel observes soberingly that there is a symmetrical inevitability of “death.” It is with the help of Hegel, with the point of departure of Poulantzas, and with the opening afforded us by the current crisis that we may begin to see the inherently ironic nature of institutions. Just as “[desire] *helped itself to life*, but in doing so, it instead laid hold of death” (Hegel [1807] 2018: par. 364), so too, I think, it is best to allow that institutions themselves may be passing phenomena characterized by a rise-and-fall dynamic, itself driven along by underlying social trends. This much, at least, is the promise of characterizing them as modes of political intermediation.

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Glossary

Assistant director of administration—subdirector administrativo

Assistant director of operations—subdirector operativo

AURIS: Institute of Urban Action and Social Integration—Instituto de Acción Urbana e Integración Social

BARAPEM: Radio Patrol Battalion of the State of Mexico—Batallón de Radiopatrullas del Estado de México

CEN: National Executive Committee—Comité Ejecutivo Nacional (of the PRI)

CNC: National Confederation of Peasants—Confederación Nacional Campesina

CNOP: National Confederation of Popular Organizations—Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares

CONAMUP: National Coordinator of the Popular Urban Movement—Coordinadora Nacional del Movimiento Urbano Popular

CORETT: Land Tenure Regularization Commission—Comisión Regularizadora de la Tenencia de la Tierra

CTM: Confederation of Mexican Workers—Confederación de Trabajadores de México

DAAS: Colonization and Agrarian Affairs Department—Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización (later renamed the SRA)

DDF: Federal District Department—Departamento del Distrito Federal

DFS: Federal Security Directorate—Dirección Federal de Seguridad

DGIPS: General Directorate of Political and Social Investigations—Dirección General de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales

DGPYT: General Directorate of Police and Transit—Dirección General de Policía y Tránsito (Federal District)

FINEZA: Nezhualcáyotl City Irrevocable Domain Transfer Trust—Fideicomiso Irrevocable
Traslato de Dominio de Ciudad Nezhualcáyotl
Fraccionador—Illegal land developer
GRUCOPIT: Group Against the Illegal Possession of Land—Grupo Contra la Posesión Ilegal de
la Tierra
Left Coalition—Coalición de Izquierda
Light and Power Company—Compañía de Luz y Fuerza
MAP: Popular Action Movement—Movimiento de Acción Popular
Marxist Labor League—Liga Obrera Marxista
Mexican Party of the Proletariat—Partido Mexicano del Proletariado
Mobilization committees—comités de lucha
National Front Against Repression—Frente Nacional Contra la Represión
NAUCOPAC: Popular Settlements Union of Naucalpan—Unión de Colonias Populares de
Naucalpan
PAN: National Action Party—Partido Acción Nacional
PCM: Mexican Communist Party—Partido Comunista Mexicano
POIS: Independent Socialist Workers Party—Partido Obrero Independiente Socialista
Popular Socialist Party—Partido Popular Socialista
PRI: Institutional Revolutionary Party—Partido de la Revolución Institucional
Procurador—Attorney general
PRT: Workers' Revolutionary Party—Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores
PST: Socialist Workers' Party—Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores
Public Prosecutor—Ministerio Público
Public Safety and Transit Directorate—Dirección de Seguridad Pública y Transito
Sagittarius Plan—Plan Sagitario
Secretary of Human Settlements—Secretario de Asentamientos Humanos
Secretary of State—director/Secretario de Gobernación
SEGOB: Department of State—Secretaría de Gobernación²
Settlers' Alliance of South Naucalpan—Alianza de Colonos Sur de Naucalpan

² Langston calls this the Secretariat of Governance (2017:31).

Socialist Labor Party—Partido Obrero Socialista

SRA: Department of Agrarian Reform—Secretaría de Reforma Agraria (previously named DAAS)

State Department—Secretaría de Gobernación

Trustees—síndicos

UCONAC: Settlers' Union of Naucalpan—Unión de Colonos de Naucalpan, A.C.

UGOCM: Unión General de Obreros y Campesinos de México³

UGOCEM: Unión General de Obreros y Campesinos del Estado de México

UIC: Left Communist Unity—Unidad de Izquierda Comunista

³ Affiliated with the Partido Popular, later Partido Popular Socialista (Niblo 1999:185).

Abstract

Urban population growth was a *causal force* which profoundly shaped 20th-century Latin American politics. I argue that it did so in two main ways. First, in each of the countries examined—Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela—it gave rise to urban political relations that furthered nation-building. In the 1930s-1960s, poor peasants flocked to capital cities and formed squatter settlements. Their neighborhood-level leaders offered political support in exchange for denizen status and urban upgrades, giving rise to what I call “benevolent mass clientelism”: these intermediaries organized residents’ support behind various political elites, and the latter reciprocated with aid. This simultaneously furnished distinct kinds of political elites with a mass base and hailed discrepant fractions of the political elite into field-like alignment with one another because of their common pro-squatter orientation. Thus, during the mid-20th century, in each of these countries, clientelist relations helped fortify nation-building political elites in power. In Mexico, this helped the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) secure its dominance.

Second, however, urban growth eventually reached a tipping point after which it served to erode the political elite’s base of support and thus inclined political elites to drift apart and oppose one another. Specifically, by the 1960s-1980s, the rapid continuing growth of Mexico City—which was far more extensive than that of Lima and Caracas—generated conflicts between older and newer generations of squatters. This drove newer residents into neighborhood association leaders’ arms for protection, giving rise to what I call “bossist mass clientelism.” Whereas before, local leaders essentially channeled aid they got from politicians, now they were able to offer independent protection and were thus no longer oriented to political elites. This left them free to peel support away from the regime, which eroded the PRI’s base and contributed to its decline and fall after several decades in power.

The dissertation sustains four contributions. First, it makes a topical innovation. The human sciences focus extensively on urban growth, on the one hand, and on phenomena that occur within already-existing cities, on the other. But very little research examines the relationship between city growth and the phenomena that transpire within urban spaces, much less the macro-historical implications of those phenomena. This dissertation helps debut this topical nexus.

Second, it brings two bodies of research—the micro-scale clientelism literature and macro-scale critical state theory—into dialogue for the first time. Each compliments the other: the former elucidates how between-clients conflicts benefit political elites; the latter posits that the convergence of disparate kinds of political elites, central to nation-building, presupposes divisions among the popular classes. Combining them helps illuminate how national-level developments stem from local-level relations.

Third, it furthers an incipient methodological initiative I call “dialectical explanation”—which strikes a balance between theoretical generality and case-oriented particularity—by unearthing the non-linear relationship between urban growth and mass support for political elites, and by drawing from Marxist social theory and historical-sociological methods literature. This is one of the first book-length applications of the approach.

Finally, it makes an historical contribution. Latin America experienced the largest wave of urban growth in world history. This profoundly shaped the region’s politics. But the political development literature has not adequately registered this fact. This is the first monograph to attempt this task directly. It draws on considerable original archival evidence and the extensive existing research to these ends.

Introduction: Urbanization and Power in Latin America and Beyond

Twentieth-century Latin American political development was profoundly shaped by urban population growth. As the region underwent a demographic transition from majority-rural to majority-urban, hundreds of thousands of peasants migrated to the region's major cities—especially its capital cities—and settled disproportionately in their new, booming squatter settlements. Meanwhile, a new ruling elite dedicated to nation-building came to definitively supplant rural strongmen. Different fractions of the new political elite embraced the new urban poor, tacitly granting squatters access to residential land, gifting them building materials, and helping supply their communities with urban infrastructure.

In this dissertation, I examine the bottom-up process of urban population growth and the top-down dynamics of political elites' reactions to it impacted the region's 20th-century political development. Urban population growth thrust mass politics onto the political agenda. The aspiring urban poor offered to support political elites in exchange for denizen status (the ability to live in the city), which I call *soliciting subordination*. This was an expression of popular will whose effects, since political elites often abided the requests, made subjects into clients. The chorus of requests of subordination accompanying urban growth presented competing fractions of the political elite with a de facto ultimatum: they could either embrace squatters or lose supporters to their opponents and suffer the political consequences. In response, the key fractions of the political elite accepted the new urban poor as their clients. This in turn drew them into alignment with one another.

Following Vilfredo Pareto, sociologists often see different kinds of political elites as mutually opposed and trace political change to episodes during which radical “foxes” challenge

or supplant conservative “lions.” This line of thinking leads us to expect the default relations between political elites to be antagonism, such that they sometimes try to annihilate one another, and, when they do agree, for convergence to stem from elite-level negotiations and pact-making (Burton and Higley 1987). I argue that elite convergence came about for a different reason in 20th-century Latin America. In effect, political elites reacted to the pressure emanating from urban growth by responding favorably to the new urban poor’s leaders, who conveyed to them requests for mass subordination. These were not heroic pact-making “foxes,” but actors subject to social forces largely out of their control, forces which happened to draw them into alignment.

They were, however, foxy enough to embrace an ideological inversion of the fate they confronted: they responded to the social pressure to which they were subjected with the idea that if the urban poor lent them their support, they could live in the city, and could even gain access to vital urban amenities. I call this pattern—which appears to many as an informal political exchange between dominant and dominated actors, mediated by local leaders, but which appearance is actually a reflection of the aforementioned ideological inversion—*mass clientelism*. Social scientists have often been taken by ideological appearances, which ultimately boils down to political elites’ folk theory, attributing undue agency to political elites. Brutally-austere description may help. Mass clientelism was the creature of two factors mostly out of political elites’ control: on the one hand, the development of the built environment, or *urbs*; on the other hand, the patterns of association which take place within cities, or *civitas*. The human sciences have traditionally examined *urbs* and *civitas* separately. But mass clientelism stemmed from and can only be understood on the basis of, their interrelationship.

The rise of mass clientelism had implications for both rulers and ruled. First, *distinct fractions of the political elite*—who otherwise disagreed about fundamental issues, like their preferred type of nation-building—*converged*, not because they chose convergence per se but due to a common orientation to squatters. In this way, mass clientelism helped give form to what I call “historically-aligned power blocs” (discussed further below), which supported nation-building continuity in the form of government institutions. Second, *cleavages among the popular classes*—who were already divided between peasants and workers—*deepened*. Since the social group I shall call “the urban poor” (*colonos* in Mexico, *pobladores* in Peru and Venezuela) was not reducible to peasants or workers, much less did it encompass both of these classes, its advent

promoted particularistic non-class political identification and thus sowed divisions within the popular classes.

Both the advent of historically-aligned power blocs and the deepening of cleavages among the popular classes were furthered by the way Latin American cities grew and changed. That is, urban growth affected the nature of the political dynamics that took root within cities, and in turn impacted national political development. In this sense, mass clientelism is a specific instance of Gramscian-Poulantzian theory, which as a whole aims to incorporate the problem of popular will and representative institutions into our theories of mass politics without falling prey to the liberal assumption that the presence of popular support for representative institutions amounts to popular sovereignty. This bottom-up orientation to the study of mass politics thereby accommodates a somewhat unique approach to explaining political-institutional dynamics. First, it allows us to view political institutions as epiphenomenal. This supports the view that, because it draws political elites into alignment, the onset of mass requests for subordination undergirds government institutions *per se*, not just governments of one or another type (liberal, illiberal). It also supports the view that, regardless of type, a downturn in requests for subordination is tantamount to institutional debility or even regime crisis. Second, this orientation to the study of mass politics also allows us to appreciate the non-linear nature of the relationship between the stimulus for bottom-up action and political-institutional dynamics. Specifically—and this is the main discovery of this dissertation—it allows us to see that urban growth was related in a non-linear way to requests for subordination in 20th-century Latin America. And this, of course, had destabilizing implications for government institutions.

Accordingly, the dissertation is divided into two parts. Part I is a comparative-historical study of three parts of Latin America—Mexico City, Lima, Peru, and Caracas, Venezuela—which I view as distinct empirical manifestations of a phenomenon characterizing much of the region, which I take as a single case. I examine how, during the mid-20th century in all three cities, swift growth of the urban population led to the proliferation of squatter settlements, and, in an effort to secure permission to squat and gain access to urban services, squatter neighborhood leaders solicited subordination and thereby became enmeshed in clientelist relations with political elites. On the one hand, this helped peasants become denizens; on the other, it helped give form to a group of nationally-oriented political elites who enjoyed concentrated power. Together, this scenario supported the advent and continuity of specific kinds of government

institutions. It was not, however, permanent. Part II is a multi-sited historical ethnography which shows that, during the late-20th century, in Mexico City, another phase of urban population growth produced conditions in which neighborhood leaders grew autonomous, undermining the previous relationship they mediated between political elites and the urban poor and thereby destabilizing extant institutions, namely the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Together, the two parts show that, whereas up to a point urban population growth furthered the concentration of power (in mid-20th century Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela), more such growth diluted power (in late-20th century Mexico), making the overall developmental dynamic of this mode of political intermediation “ironic” or dialectical (Sewell 1987:170).

This dissertation is thus primarily an inquiry into a social force—urban growth—with a focus on how it impacted politics in 20th-century Latin America. The main reason for focusing on this social force is theoretical: to refine our understanding of a causal power. Thus, the dissertation is not intended to be primarily a study of empirical outcomes per se, in which case causes would naturally be identified, weighed, and ranked in terms of their relative contribution to the outcome(s) of interest in the specific places studied. There were, of course, many contributing factors responsible for the dynamics of Latin America’s government institutions, and urban growth was only one. Nevertheless, for reasons I elaborate in the relevant parts of the text, I think urban growth was in a sense more fundamental than many (perhaps all) of these other factors. Moreover, since I think the highest tribute one can pay to a cause is to identify its effect, I focus on the political outcomes to which urban growth contributed in Latin America, where it was most extensive. The research design serves the theoretical argument: I show that urban growth was crucial in supporting mass-oriented government institutions in multiple countries (Part I) but that where urban growth was most extreme its impact cut in the opposite direction, undermining government (Part II). In sum, the dissertation substantiates the claim that urban growth is an important social force by showing that it had a major impact on Latin American political development.

From *Urbs And Civitas* To Urbanization And Power

The relationship between urban growth and politics is inadequately captured in the existing literature. Sociology, and the human sciences more broadly, is bifurcated between the

study of *forms of association* that often happen to take place within cities (*civitas*) and the study of cities as *built environments* of various kinds (*urbs*). It is perhaps for this reason that the historical social sciences say little about urban processes while urban studies lacks a robust historical social science current (Rast 2012). And yet the process of city *formation* affects *political development* within, and even beyond, these urban spaces. The separate concepts of *urbs* and *civitas* would thus benefit from combination to better appreciate the relationship between urbanization and political power. This combination has been elusive, however, because of the extant division of labor within the social sciences. On one side is a series of scholars who study *urban growth* (e.g., Bairoch [1985] 1988; Blockmans and 't Hart 2016:121-22; Chase-Dunn, Álvarez, and Pasciuti 2005:109; Logan and Molotch [1987] 2007; Molotch 1976).⁴ On the other is a collection of students of diverse *phenomena within already-formed cities* (e.g., Anderson 1990; Auyero 2000; Habermas [1962] 1989; Sampson 2011).⁵ Since these two areas of inquiry are mostly separate, urban growth is seldom shown to affect political dynamics: the two most relevant bodies of research do not interpenetrate and inform one another.

Thus while everyone knows that urbanization has had a major impact on the modern world (Lachmann 2013:4), its specifically political effects are unclear. Although *urban growth* has long been said to affect individual human behavior in general (Simmel [1903] 1971; Tönnies [1887] 2001), little attention has been directed to how it affects *political relationships* in particular. And while already-formed cities are said to impact political development (e.g., Tilly

⁴ There are a variety of theories of urban growth. Molotch (1976) argues that economic elites try to cause cities to grow, and pursue policy accordingly. But he does not dwell on the effects urban growth has on politics. Chase-Dunn, Álvarez, and Pasciuti (2005:109) find that city size and empire size were positively associated in West Asia (2800 BCE to 1500 CE) and Europe (430 BCE to 1800 CE). But they see this association as an effect—expanding empires built large capital cities—rather than a cause of political phenomena.

⁵ Thus, the leading explanatory accounts of U.S. machine politics invoke culture (Banfield and Wilson 1963), patronage resources (Erie 1988), and expertise (Finegold 1995), but *not* urban growth. The literature on gangs (e.g., Sánchez-Jankowski 1991) and drug cartels (e.g., Correa-Cabrera 2017) focuses on powerful non-government actors in urban contexts, but explains their rise and persistence with reference to economic interests and constraints, not with reference to urban growth.

1990; Tilly 1994)⁶ and pattern political action (e.g., Caldeira 2000; Garrido 2013; Gould 1995),⁷ few scholars examine how the *process of city formation* affects political dynamics.⁸

Consequently, while cities, variously defined, are prominent in historical and political sociology, *urbanization*—that is, growth in the number of urban denizens and the associated alteration of space necessary to produce built environments—is not. Insofar as sociologists focus on urban politics, they rarely link them to city formation, and insofar as they study city-level dynamics, they seldom study political relationships (for partial exceptions, see Tuğal 2009; Wacquant 2008) and practically never political development.

Urban Concentration

Urban growth can take a variety of forms. I focus on one specific kind of urban growth, which I call *urban concentration*.⁹ This involves politically-available poor people packing themselves into a large city, in Latin America, often into a capital city. Urban concentration is caused by emigration of significant numbers of poor people away from the countryside (driven by the pressure placed on rural inhabitants borne of capitalist penetration into agrarian relations) and natural population growth (due to advances in public health).¹⁰ It contrasts with several other

⁶ After Tilly's first book (Tilly 1964), in which he invokes variation in his broad conception of urbanization as an explanation for rural counterrevolution, he dropped the concern with urban growth, conceiving of cities instead as "containers and distribution points for [merchant] capital" (Tilly 1994:8). Cities influenced the kind of organizational structure that accompanied European governments-in-formation. In order to "raise the money [they needed] for warfare," Tilly argues (1994:24), proto-governments ceded to urban oligarchs' "municipal councils and similar institutions," which then became "integral elements of the state [i.e., government] structure."

⁷ Gould (1995), for example, considers urban environment an important mediating factor that affected contentious politics in mid- and late-19th century Paris. But *urbs* is, for him, an expression of government action, not of urban population growth (cf. Zhao 1998).

⁸ While cities are important in many of Tilly's works, only in his posthumously-published final work does he imply they may be defined chiefly by the number of people they contain (Tilly 2010). And yet urban growth in the form of squatter settlements was behind such monumental political developments as the African National Congress' pivot from a labor-oriented to a community-oriented strategy—the approach that saw them through the struggle against apartheid (Mamdani 1996:98).

⁹ Related terms include "overurbanization" (Davis and Golden 1954; Gugler 1982), "cityward migration" (Cornelius 1970), and "popular urbanization" (Streule, Karaman, Sawyer, and Schmid 2020).

¹⁰ For estimates of, and a discussion about, the relative importance of rural-to-urban migration vs. natural population growth in 20th-century Latin America, see Roberts and de Oliveira (1995:261-62).

conceptions of urbanization, such as growing city primacy and entrepreneur-driven urban growth.¹¹ While political elites are often unofficially and surreptitiously involved in urban concentration, most such urban growth in human history has not obeyed rational-legal norms.

The urban explosion

Following a century of explosive urban growth, by the turn of the millennium, one out of every seven or eight of the world's people lived in these kinds of urban environments. The urban explosion occurred across much of the postcolonial world. New urban residences took the form of improvised dwellings. As in most of human history, the neighborhoods that took shape in this way were not forecasted by urban planners—though they were often the object of subsequent remedial government initiatives (cf. Streule, Karaman, Sawyer, and Schmid 2020). The resulting spaces are typically called “squatter” settlements, at least when located in the postcolonial global south.¹² The people who jointly comprise urban concentration are frequently called “the urban

¹¹ Urban concentration contrasts with city primacy, because it is not a relative measure, but rather denotes a process giving rise to an absolute increase in the population of a major city (it refers to an increase in the number of inhabitants of a given city, whereas primacy measures the ratio between a country's largest and its next-largest cities) and because it is metropolis-centric rather than country-centric (it focuses on the size of the city in question, whereas the primate index references within-country comparisons of cities). Urban concentration also contrasts with entrepreneur-driven urban growth (Logan and Molotch [1987] 2007), because it is inherently time-limited rather than potentially endless (urban concentration cannot continue indefinitely, whereas the chain-reaction that Logan and Molotch describe—investing in fixed capital, attracting workers, and driving up rent differentials—is potentially endless) and because it generates conflict at the low end of the class hierarchy rather than among elites (it fractures the popular classes by reinforcing a particular non-class identity, the urban poor, and leads to conflict between different generations of squatters, not between elites who benefit from increased real estate exchange values and those who do not).

¹² Some express disagreement with use of the term “squatter,” viewing it as pejorative and recommending alternatives. The problem, however, does not lie in the *term*, but the fact that the urban *spaces* it denotes are stigmatized such that they infect the term with a negative connotation. A search for non-pejorative terminology would, for this reason, be in vain. And even if terminological alternatives sufficiently experience-distant to escape the signified's stigma were somehow to be found, their use would do little to change inhabitants' life chances—and may even harbor scientific liabilities. Thus, some advocate using the term “informal” settlements to denote such spaces. For my purposes, however, “squatter” settlements is preferable to “informal” settlements, since the former denotes lack of legal authorization of residences and is therefore specific and precise, even though it does not eliminate stigma (Azuela de la Cueva 1993:159). The latter term, in contrast, is typically applied to economic activity that is not presently, but that hypothetically could be, regulated (see Portes, Castells, and Benton 1989:12). The problems with the term “informal” settlements are therefore twofold: on the one hand, it is not clear that the settlements in question would be best described in economic terms (nor are the theoretical implications stemming from the assumption that the phenomenon is fundamentally economic necessarily desirable); and, on the other hand, it is not clear that the government could have regulated their formation (and there would seem to be an epistemic liability associated with assuming governments could have done so). I therefore follow a critical mass of other researchers (e.g., Álvarez-Rivadulla 2017; Davis 2006; Garrido 2019; Weinstein 2014) who call these spaces

poor” (Auerbach 2017; Das 2011; Dietz 1980; Eckstein 1977; Montaña 1976; Nelson 1979; Resnick 2012; Stokes 1991), or “squatters.”¹³ Regardless of names, the social category is a mass group that is at least potentially distinct from both peasants and workers.

Whereas today, urban concentration is most intensive in Africa (Paller 2019:5-6), during the mid- to late-20th century, it affected Latin America more than any other world region. This had a massive impact; some go as far as to say that, “in many ways, this massive movement of millions of rural and small-town dwellers to larger metropolitan areas . . . can be considered the most transformative social phenomenon in the recent history of Latin America” (Weinstein 2016:vii). The “internal population movement” drove rural inhabitants to “capital cities” on a truly massive scale (Bernard et al. 2017:3). Latin American urban growth surpassed that of 19th-century Europe and the early- to mid-20th century United States. The social changes borne of these earlier episodes of urbanization attracted the attention of contemporaries whose appreciations of the effects became central planks to what was then the new discipline of sociology (Burgess 1925; Du Bois [1899] 2007; Engels [1845] 1958; Simmel [1903] 1971; Tönnies [1887] 2001). But while the 20th-century urban explosion giving rise to squatter settlements was more extensive than all previous phases of urban growth, sociologists nevertheless shifted focus away from the process of city growth. This represents not only an epistemic injustice of a sort (Fricker 2007) but also a missed opportunity to probe how *urbes* impacts *civitas*.

Research on the historically-singular wave of urbanization in the postcolonial global south has been left to historians who have drilled deep into single cities (e.g., Fischer 2008; Fontes 2016; Karpat 1976; Murphy 2015; Velasco 2015; Yee 2021), theorists who conceptualize iconic cases (e.g., Azuela 1989; Calderón Cockburn 2005; Davis 1994; Holston 2008), scholars who juxtapose such cities with contrasting places (e.g., Germani 1978; Morse 1962), and eclectic comparativists who highlight myriad features of the phenomenon according to discipline, idiosyncratic interests, and the pursuit of grand panoramic vistas (e.g., Azuela de la Cueva 1993; Castells 1983; Davis 2006; Gilbert and Ward 1985; Morse 1965; Nelson 1979). But it has not yet

“squatter” settlements.

¹³ Alternative terms for the people involved include the “migrant poor” (Cornelius 1975) and “informals” (Bayat 2004).

been taken up by historical sociologists keen to identify its impact on political development. This is especially vexing considering that, during roughly the same time that urbanization receded from sociologists' crosshairs, it reached historically-unprecedented levels. If we want to know how urban growth affects political development, we ought to study the 20th century—especially 20th century Latin America.

Filling the interpretive void

This intellectual terrain was first ambushed by Cold War propagandists. In the 1960s—perhaps alarmed by the Fanonian view that “the *lumpenproletariat* . . . constitutes one of the most spontaneous and the most radically revolutionary forces” (Fanon 1963:129)—Cold Warriors of both the Eisenhower (Huntington 1968:282) and Kennedy (Vekemans and Giusti 1969) types grew concerned that booming slums would become incubators of insurrection and staging grounds for revolutions, which could sweep across the postcolonial global south due to discontent with corruption and weak governments, on the one hand, and misery and deprivation, on the other. They formulated the idea that the rural-to-urban migrant poor constituted a hotbed of insurrectionary ideology—the shantytown radicalism hypothesis—as part of a larger theoretical suite. The politically-motivated theory accompanying Cold War hysteria, known as marginality theory, was an offshoot of the modernization-theoretic paradigm dominant at the time. The idea was that the urban poor needed to be integrated into existing institutions to prevent the outbreak of revolutionary conflict.

Dependency theory demolished the credibility of modernization theory, arguing that if poor people are powerless it is not due to an absence of intercourse with society but rather due to the nature of their position in the worldwide capitalist system. Dependency theory argued that the intercourse to which they are subjected relegates the urban poor to a disprivileged position, making them powerless. Any second-order implications as regards deprivation are just that: implications. So-called “marginality” does not stem from an absence of capitalism but is rather one of the primary results of integration in the underdeveloped world. The worldwide capitalist system puts incredible strain on the agrarian sector in some countries, driving agrarian elites to develop and maintain brutally-coercive labor regimes to super-exploit agrarian laborers. This, in

turn, ejects peasants from the countryside, who thereafter move to cities in search of livelihoods, whereupon they establish squatter settlements out of a lack of alternatives.

The question for some observers was, what happens next? Intellectuals relatively unaffected by Cold War hysteria, like Eric Hobsbawm, held that squatters were susceptible to populist demagogues: “They understand personal leadership and patronage alone. . . . Untouched by any other tradition, the new migrants look naturally for the powerful champion, the savior, the father of his people” (Hobsbawm 1967:59-60). The idea that rural-to-urban migrants were willing supporters of populist demagogues—the spineless dupes hypothesis—shaped a generation of scholarship, with important contributions by Gino Germani on Argentina (1978) and David Collier (1976) on Peru, among others. Wayne Cornelius (1975) drove the point home most forcefully with his monumental empirical study of Mexico City’s migrant poor, in which he characterized the group as fundamentally conservative (see also Karpat 1976:44; Ray 1969:153-58). This body of research attributes a massive amount of agency to demagogues. But it also establishes one of the fundamental features of the phenomenon: the frequent conservatism of the urban poor.

Inserting this finding into a debate dominated by Cold Warriors meant revisiting and reformulating the shantytown radicalism hypothesis. In light of the conservatism of the urban poor, the question morphed from whether rural-to-urban migrants would themselves be susceptible to the menace of revolutionary ideas to whether their children would be so vulnerable (for the classic statement, see Huntington 1968:282-83; for a prominent study assessing it, see Cornelius 1975:65-67, 87-90). This idea—the second-generation hypothesis—also failed empirically.

Theorizing Political Implications

Three major schools of thought endeavor to conceptualize the politics stemming from urban concentration;¹⁴ I build on the third. The first theoretical tradition frames urban politics in

¹⁴ More broadly, the arrival of more denizens to a given urban area has had a variety of effects. The clustering of people around alluvial deposits—so-called “social caging”—seems to have allowed for the emergence of the earliest-known proto-government organizations (Mann 1986:40-49). The medieval European serf who resettled in the city thereby gained a bevy of political rights and freedoms beyond what s/he had enjoyed in the countryside (Blockmans and ’t Hart 2016:122; Mumford 1961:252; Pirenne [1925] 2014:125). The clustering of poor people into a major city can also lead elites to grow out of phase with masses, resulting in anarchy (Stedman Jones

terms of citizenship. Since squatters lacked legal backing permitting them to reside where they did, they did not enjoy full liberal citizenship rights (Fischer 2008; Holston 2008).¹⁵ The sequence of rights development characteristic of England—from political to civil to social rights (Marshall 1950)—did not occur in the postcolonial global south; instead, governments sometimes initially helped the population secure their social needs, and only later ceded civil and political rights. Researchers in this tradition disagree about the significance for the quality of citizenship of the fact that such needs-fulfillment preceded civil and political rights. One camp opines that needs-fulfillment was used to fortify authoritarianism, such that this sequence was at odds with the development of citizenship rights (Roberts 1995:184-97); this is the view behind the most prominent strand of the clientelism literature, self-styled as a theory of nefarious or even demagogic political elites who secure support through *distributive politics* (e.g., Stokes 2005). Another camp maintains that only if there had been *more* needs-fulfillment would government action have been sufficient to reinforce citizenship rights (Holston 2008); this view can be used to motivate a theory of *distributive democracy*, the idea that “citizenship” is largely reducible to the “securing of certain socioeconomic rights” (Levenson 2022:48). Whereas distributive politics theory says governments who deliver resources to followers are typically *not* democratic, distributive democracy theory says only governments who really do distribute such resources *are* democratic. No resolution to this disagreement is in sight (Hilgers 2012:4). So I acknowledge the importance of needs-fulfillment but do not aim to contribute to the citizenship debate.

The second major theoretical tradition conceives of urban politics in the postcolonial global south in terms of class. A classical position maintains that the urban poor do *not* constitute a class, but instead a “surplus population,” because they have no organic relationship to production (not even as an industrial reserve army) (Nun 1969).¹⁶ Of course, the urban poor may still be conceptualized as a class if class is defined in some other way, such as by one group’s

1971:252).

¹⁵ The urban poor are for this reason sometimes deemed the “guest-citizens of Latin American metropolises” (Castells 1983:211).

¹⁶ While this interpretation was hotly contested in the literature (e.g., Perlman 1976; Quijano Obregón 1974), its main detractor eventually conceded the point that the urban poor were indeed marginal from the means of production (Perlman 2010:231-32).

relationship to another as mediated not by the means of production but, say, by space (Garrido 2019:27-32). Few would deny the importance of spatially-mediated identities, though many argue that they do not constitute class identity but are instead an alternative to it (Gould 1995; Katznelson 1981). Another conceptualization involves viewing the urban poor as a special kind of class, one that is characterized by vertical bonds with political elites rather than horizontal solidarity relations (Chatterjee 2004). But class theory is poorly equipped to address vertical linkages. And the clientelism literature has been developed to account for precisely such relationships.

This brings us to the third theoretical tradition—urban clientelism—to which I contribute here. Since patron-client relations cut across status groups, clientelist politics contrast with those based on universalizable categories, like citizenship, and those that are rooted in encompassing structures, like class. Clientelist relations are *sui generis* to clientelism (Auyero, Lapegna, and Poma 2009; Martin 2009:207, 226), and they thus support dynamics unlike those of these peer types of relations (Camp 2017; Landé 1977; Martin 2009; Singelmann 1981)—and this is especially evident when clientelism is conceptualized as a bottom-up phenomenon, as I do below. In light of the problems associated with citizenship- and class-based analysis of the politics of urban concentration it is logical that, many researchers deem urban poor people’s politics as a form of clientelism (Álvarez-Rivadulla 2017; Auyero 2000; Burgwal 1995; Collier 1976; Cornelius 1975; Danielson and Keleş 1985; Dietz 1980; Gay 1994; Shefner 2008). Where they fall short is capturing how clientelism affects political development.

Urban concentration generated mass-scale clientelistic political relationships. From the perspective of new denizens, it made the government highly relevant to their survival strategies; from the perspective of political elites, new urban residents represented potential supporters, especially when they came to capital cities. Clientelist relations therefore readily took root.

They linked the urban poor (clients) to political elites (patrons) via neighborhood association leaders (intermediaries). The availability of these vertical bonds of loyalty appealed similarly to different fractions of the political elite, drawing them into de facto alignment on governmental orientation to the urban poor, even when they explicitly disagreed with one another about a variety of other issues—and even though they disagreed about aspects of the squatter problem. By promoting clientelism, urban concentration thus drew discrepant political

elites into practical alignment. Moreover, although it was on the basis of these vertical bonds that the new urban poor gained denizen status (the ability to live in the city) and secured some of their vital urban necessities (electricity, piped water, paved streets, neighborhood schools, etc.), this vertical relationship divided the popular classes. Not only did it implicitly set squatter communities against one another in a competition for finite government resources; it also fostered popular division by hailing the urban poor as distinct from the rest of the popular classes (peasants and workers).

Mass Clientelism

Students of clientelism generally agree that the phenomenon has two key features. First, clientelism involves a *non-codified, vertical relationship* between higher and lower status people and/or groups—patrons and clients, respectively—on the basis of which patrons acquire support and clients secure aid, with the support and aid taking a variety of forms.¹⁷ Since these relations cut across status groups, clientelism contrasts with both universal-categorical statuses, like citizenship, and relationships that describe part of a single overarching structure, like class. Rather than appeal to universal individual rights, clients appeal to patrons' beneficence; patrons, for their part, are hypothetically free to ignore or respond to clients' appeals, for they are not duty-bound to them. (Although when competing with other patrons, the prospect of followers can be politically difficult or even impossible to ignore.) And when a patron fulfills a client's request for aid, this does not necessarily diminish exploitation (Scott 1977b); indeed, a patron's disproportionate access to resources likely stems from exploitation in the last instance (Rothstein 1979). (Thus non-codified, vertical bonds are fully compatible with and, social reproduction theory would seem to suggest, functionally necessary for capitalism.)

Clientelism's second key feature is that the vertical bonds between clients and patrons often *undermine horizontal solidarity* between sets of clients, or between clients and non-clients with whom they share common interests (Martin 2009:209-10, 227; Shefner 2008:41; Singelmann 1981:113). Peasants often refuse to extend gestures of sympathy towards their

¹⁷ For comparable definitions of clientelism, see Auyero (2017:179), Hilgers (2012:7), Landé (1977:xx), and Scott (1977a:125).

neighbors, e.g., when their neighbors have a dispute with a landlord they share in common, for fear of jeopardizing their own vertical relationship with the landlord (Singelmann 1981); this precludes horizontal solidarity. Similarly, squatter communities sometimes compete with one another to elicit special treatment from politicians (Gay 1994; Shefner 2008); this precludes uniting in struggle with other neighborhoods, much less with other groups among the popular classes, such as peasants and workers.

Modernization theorists once viewed clientelism as a relic of traditional society destined to disappear with the putative march of progress. That view has been roundly discredited (Combes 2011:16; Hicken 2011:296-302), allowing us to see that clientelism is tenacious and pervasive. Indeed, more periods' and places' politics seem to approximate clientelism better than perhaps any other peer concept. Researchers find clientelism all over: in ancient Rome (Roniger 1983), early-modern Europe (Kettering 1986), and the postcolonial global south (Barnes [1986] 2019; Karpat 1976; Roniger 1990); in both agrarian (Powell 1970; Roniger 1990; Scott 1977b; Singelmann 1981; Wilson 1990) and industrial (Eidlin 2018:235; Street 1996; Zieger 1995:327) relations; and even inside the government bureaucracy (Grindle 1977; Shor 1960:80; Toral Forthcoming), often assumed to be the preserve of rational-legal authority.

Clientelism may indeed be the elementary form of what Gramscians call *political society*—the connective tissue linking the variegated domain of civil society with the unitary domain of government (Tuğal 2009:24-28)—and thus a veritable default to which political relations gravitate in the absence of countervailing factors. This points to a need to further specify varieties of clientelism. Here I conceptualize *mass clientelism*, a form of clientelism that is rooted in local relations but that impinges on national politics. In addition to the generic features of clientelism—the vertical and informal relationship between patrons and clients which undermines horizontal solidarity among clients—the scale of mass clientelism gives it a distinctive third feature, namely, that patrons and clients are linked via *intermediaries*.

Existing Theories of Clientelism

My elaboration of the theoretical concept of mass clientelism draws from but also moves beyond the existing literature. There are two major camps in clientelism studies: neo-Durkheimian gift theory and neo-Weberian principal-agent theory. Both perform poorly at

explaining political change because they are both top-down. I examine these existing theories before developing a neo-Marxian alternative which incorporates some of their insights but, since it is bottom-up, outperforms them in its ability to explain political change by rendering intelligible the way local relations impact national politics.

Neo-Durkheimian gift theory

Neo-Durkheimian gift theory, developed by Durkheim's student Marcel Mauss ([1925] 1966), has been highly influential among students of small-scale clientelism, especially anthropologists. All gift relations encompass a giver and a receiver. When one party gives resources or a "gift" to another—be it help or the opposite, harm—it puts the receiver in a position of "dependence" on the giver (Bourdieu [1997] 2000:200; Bourdieu [1980] 1990:106). From the point of view of "the one who receives it," the gift is an "attack" on her or his "freedom" (Bourdieu [1994] 1998:94). Such attacks can only be parried by counter-gifts which are larger and different from the original gift (Bataille [1949] 1988:67-68, 70; Bourdieu [1980] 1990:105; Landé 1977:xxvi; Scott 1977a:125). This magnitude requirement means that only the relatively-wealthy are in a position to bestow gifts capable of absolving themselves; this option is not available to those with inferior resources.¹⁸ And when a gift is not reciprocated,¹⁹ it confers a superior *rank* on the giver (Bataille [1949] 1988:71; Blau 1964:21-22, 118-19, 321-22; Bourdieu [1997] 2000:200; Landé 1977:xxvii-xxviii). Gifts, then, allow the wealthy to dominate the poor given conditions of inequality.

Scholars draw heavily on gift theory to conceptualize clientelism and other forms of political dependency (Aspinall 2014:556; Auyero 2000:175-81; Graziano 1975:25; Médard 2000:77-78). The strength of gift theory is its ability to accommodate a range of phenomena, from aid to injury, from favors to vendettas (Landé 1977). This is a theoretical asset because clientelism itself takes a variety of forms, from attempts to "buy" and "sell" to factional conflict

¹⁸ In the case of money-borrowing, borrowers without collateral may also be at a relative disadvantage compared to those with collateral as regards ability to decline lenders' metrics of inferiority (Krippner 2017).

¹⁹ The giver gives a unilateral gift when the receiver cannot give a counter-gift that is both larger than and different from the original gift (Bataille [1949] 1988:67-68, 70; Blau 1964:321-22; Bourdieu [1980] 1990:105; Landé 1977:xxvi; Molm 2003:4; Scott 1977a:125), e.g., because the giver is wealthier than the receiver.

(Shefner 2008:40-41), and this range is poorly captured by principal-agent theory and kindred approaches discussed below (Álvarez-Rivadulla 2017; Berenschot 2018:1586). But there is a critical weakness as well: gift theory fails to delineate the role of intermediaries, which is where principal-agent theory excels. Indeed, it fails to even differentiate intermediaries from gift givers and receivers, conceiving of them only in terms of elongated giver-receiver relationships (Sahlins 1972:159).²⁰

Neo-Weberian principal-agent theory

Clientelist relations often involve only one or a few patrons and lots of clients, introducing a “group element in[to] clientelist politics” (Hilgers 2011:580). A neo-Weberian strand of the literature therefore focuses on intermediaries or “brokers.” For as Weber (1978:1058) observes, under conditions of few patrons and many clients, there is a corresponding need for a third type of actor to “mediate” patron-client relations. This focus points directly to the problematic of principal-agent theory.²¹ The idea is that patrons give intermediaries orders (for instance, to secure sufficient votes to win an election), and intermediaries convey them to clients (for instance, by “buying” their votes), and clients obey the intermediaries (for instance, voting accordingly) (Stokes 2005; see also Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007; Stokes, Dunning, Nazareno, and Brusco 2013; for a perspective that does not focus on votes, see Reed 2020).

But, of course, there are accountability problems at each link. To secure the desired behavior from intermediaries, scholars say, patrons must monitor and somehow try to control brokers’ behavior (Medina and Stokes 2007; Stokes, Dunning, Nazareno, and Brusco 2013:92-95; Szwarcberg 2012). And yet research shows that intermediaries frequently betray patrons (Aspinall 2014; Shefner 2008:42, 70; 2012:45; Wang and Kurzman 2007). The literature thus has a conceptual solution to the problem of broker betrayal that lacks empirical support (Hicken and Nathan 2020).

²⁰ The adjacent social exchange theory literature, which otherwise furnishes considerable insight about intermediaries, has shifted its focus from conceiving of intermediaries in terms of power to exploring their role in negotiated transactions and social cohesion (for reviews, see Molm 2003; Savage and Whitham 2018).

²¹ For a general discussion of principal-agency theory, see Kiser (1999).

Meanwhile, if we assume that intermediaries obey patrons, we must still explain how they ensure that clients behave as patrons and intermediaries want. Take the example of voting as patrons demand. When loyal intermediaries approach clients, the latter may assent or agree to vote for the patron but then refuse to actually do so when the time comes (Wang and Kurzman 2007:236). So scholars argue that in order to be efficacious, rather than focus on *votes* per se, intermediaries try to increase *turnout* among those whom they think are predisposed to vote in their favor (Calhoun 1996:202; Nichter 2008). Intermediaries try to entice clients to participate in group-level *mobilization* efforts (Szwarcberg 2012; 2015). Again, this is a hypothetical solution to the problem of accountability which lacks empirical support.

To succeed at mobilizing clients, intermediaries must be highly-responsive to clients. The problem is clients are often quite clear about what they would like: they prefer those brokers whom they believe will be successful at petitioning political elites on their behalves (Auerbach and Thachil 2018; Hilgers 2009:70). Taken together, this leads to a problem for principal-agent theory, for it implies that “only” brokers “who have the capacity to solve voter problems have a chance to mobilize poor voters” (Szwarcberg 2015:44). But to the degree that intermediaries enjoy client support only when they secure them benefits from patrons (Szwarcberg 2015:45), patrons are not principals at all: clients are. But principal-agent theory is fundamentally mistaken insofar as the tail wags the dog. But to argue that clients control patrons is tantamount to forfeiting the theoretical initiative. Perhaps all we can say about the application of principal-agent theory to clientelism is that it is a “red herring” (Hicken and Nathan 2020).

Towards a Synthetic-Gramscian Theory of Mass Clientelism

We can suspend judgment on whether gift theory and principal-agent theory are adequate to capture the dynamics of clientelist relations in general and proceed only on the assumption they are inadequate to capture the nature of politics arising from urban concentration in 20th-century Latin American cities in particular. This inadequacy points to the need for a theoretical alternative that encompasses a broad range of phenomena, like gift theory; that focuses on intermediaries’ role(s) in power relations, like the principal-agent approach; and that, on this basis, allows us to account for political dynamics. This requires a bottom-up conception of mass clientelism.

The clientelism literature has been gestating a bottom-up theory in recent years (Dawson 2014; Nichter 2018; Nichter and Peress 2017:1099; Pellicer, Wegner, Bayer, and Tischmeyer 2020). Nichter (2018: especially 79-83) argues that poor and vulnerable people approach intermediaries in an effort to essentially “sell” their support in exchange for material aid and protection from patrons.²² Gramscian-Poulantzian theory helps fortify this initiative. First, Gramscian theory helps bring *consent to coercion* into view (Gramsci 1971:80 n., 193-94, 266, et passim).²³ The client cannot make demands that appear to contradict the interests of the patron. Accordingly, if the client is to avail him or herself of a relationship with the patron, from which s/he may stand to secure beneficence, s/he must present patron and client interests as identical (Reed 2020:111, 120). I call such offers of consent to coercion *soliciting subordination*.²⁴ Second, Poulantzian theory helps tease out the broader political implications. By supporting elites in this way, clients are *incapable* of “autonomous political organization” (Poulantzas 1973:245). It is not just that people make their own history, only not under conditions of their own choosing; it is that they make history in such a way that their choice no longer matters—such that they are not sovereign.

To those steeped in gift, principal-agent, and liberal theories, solicitations of subordination may seem counter-intuitive. Rest assured, clients do so out of a perceived lack of alternatives more often than out of irrationality. When European peasants denounced “lords, officials, clergymen and other exploiters [who] suck[ed] the blood of the poor” they often appealed to the monarch—who else could they turn to?—purporting that “the monarch does not know what is being done in his name” (Hobsbawm 1959:118). That is, peasants solicited

²² This does not mean clients control intermediaries; to the contrary, intermediaries may be relatively free agents (Auerbach 2020; Auyero 2000; Hagene and González-Fuente 2016; Hilgers 2009; Paller 2019; Zarazaga 2014). It means that *clients opt for clientelism*—clients are causally responsible—even though it benefits patrons.

²³ Gramsci’s prison notebooks are notoriously fragmentary. This leads to many contradictions (Anderson [1977] 2020: chapter 1). But the theoretical category of consent to coercion, albeit not philologically derived from Gramsci, would seem to be both faithful to his ideas and capable of surviving the scrutiny that has succeeded at torpedoing his explicit efforts to theorize political power (Anderson [1977] 2020: chapter 2), but in a way that makes Gramscian theory not at all specific to capitalist “democracy” or the “West” per se.

²⁴ Polanyi ([1944] 2001) is perhaps the foremost theorist (providing a description of the mechanics of such relations—the exacerbation of vulnerability leads the vulnerable to seek protection in the so-called “double movement”—even though he fails to explain them. This is perhaps what most distinguishes Polanyi from classical contract theorists like Hobbes and Locke. For the latter two, people seek *protection of property*, whereas for the former people seek *social protection* (which oftentimes implies opposing property law, or the prerogatives of the “market”).

subordination to the monarch amidst real problems and with the hope of securing meaningful beneficence. Much the same pattern characterized rural-to-urban migrants who established squatter settlements. In 20th-century Turkey, the urban poor held the government up as their benevolent patron, “as established for the people’s common good and protection,” but deemed lower-level officials a constant threat. On this basis, they were able to frame their own hardships as instances in which the government “fails in its protective mission,” they attribute fault “to the men who act on behalf of the state” (Karpas 1976:202). Similar to European peasants’ view of their monarchs, Turkish squatters viewed their government as benefactor. In such circumstances, it is completely rational to solicit subordination, consenting to monarchs’ and governments’ coercion.

Advantages of the bottom-up alternative

Adequately appreciating mass clientelist relations requires not only overcoming the shortcomings of gift and principal-agent theories of clientelism but showing that it helps accomplish new explanatory objectives. Specifically, I think a bottom-up theory of clientelism enables us to link changes in *clientelist relations* to changes in *government institutions*. There are two aspects of this problem.

The first is to account for the rise of national government institutional configurations by making explanatory recourse to an uptick in soliciting subordination. Many acknowledge that clientelism supports authoritarian regimes. But while it is less-frequently recognized, it is also the case that “clientelist relations are . . . intrinsic to representative democracy” (Combes 2011:21).²⁵ A theory of mass clientelism thus helps counteract liberal-institutionalist biases by bringing support for both kinds of regimes into a common field of view. It thereby also helps explain the rise of national government institutions per se on the basis of solicitations of subordination—a type of consent amenable to a variety of forms of coercion.

The second aspect of the relationship between clientelist relations and government institutions involves explaining episodes of institutional flux as a result of flux in solicitations of

²⁵ This helps explain why it has proven so difficult to pigeonhole clientelism as a form of non-programmatic politics separate and apart from programmatic politics (Pellicer, Wegner, Bayer, and Tischmeyer 2020:940-42).

subordination. If the rise of government institutions parallels the uptick of requests for subordination, what remains to be shown to conclude that institutions can ride on clientelism is the decline and fall of a government on the basis of the refusal or revocation of solicitations for subordination. Both clientelism (Singelmann 1981:75-76) and contentious politics literatures (Skocpol 1979:154; Xu 2013) suggest that such political instability is related to the accentuation, atrophy, or eclipse of patron-client bonds. I harness the explanatory potential of this insight to explain the decline and fall of government institutions, elaborating the Poulantzian insight that a government enters into crisis when it “no longer fulfill[s] its function of organizing the power bloc and disorganizing the subordinate classes” (Sablowski 2011:234).

Only such an approach is capable of explaining the dynamics of mass clientelism in 20th-century Latin America; top-down approaches are not. With a top-down approach, we might observe that this was a time when many offices became elective for the first time, when the franchise was extended, and when nation-building political elites sought to launch their political careers, and then argue that these political elites deputized intermediaries to buy support and/or bestow gifts on the urban poor, leading the latter to reciprocate with political loyalty. However, such an account would fail to appreciate the dynamics of mass clientelism. For if mass clientelism is a top-down affair (as both principal-agent and gift theory assume), and if political elites want to rule (which we can usually assume they do), their domination would endure indefinitely. Top-down theories can thus explain the rise of national government institutions but not their fall (at least not without making ad hoc recourse to extra-theoretical factors).

Centering the Gramscian-Poulantzian idea of *consent to coercion*—that is, focusing on *soliciting subordination*—casts both political intermediaries and the range of relations that qualify as “clientelist” in a new light. This, in turn, allows us to appreciate the implications of urban concentration and helps us explain the dynamics of mass clientelism. It also allows us to incorporate insights about intermediaries and variation in the phenomenal range of clientelist relations. Rural-to-urban migrants sought to secure denizen status and urban upgrades, for which their leaders offered political elites their support—soliciting subordination. This precluded an alliance with other popular classes and foreclosed the possibility of united disruptive protests capable of forcing political elites’ hand—which would have represented a move towards popular sovereignty. Soliciting subordination instead sowed divisions among the popular classes *and*

bolstered nation-building political elites. Soliciting subordination was a form of consenting to coercion.

Soliciting subordination was not, however, a constant; intermediaries could channel support from below towards nation-building political elites *or* peel support away from them. The difference between channeling support and peeling it away is the difference between an hegemonic state (expressed in the form of viable national government institutions, whether liberal or authoritarian) and a non-hegemonic state (taking the form of either Caesarism or intra-elite conflict). In 20th-century Latin America, the onset of soliciting subordination accounts for the advent of intra-elite convergence and accompanying national government institutions; the decline of soliciting subordination accounts for elite-level conflict and related institutional crisis. The dynamics of mass clientelism thus help account for a broader pattern of political development.

Types of intermediaries, moments of mass clientelism

In outlining this alternative, I posit that contrasting *types of intermediaries* correspond to different *moments of mass clientelism*. Focusing on premodern agrarian Europe, Weber (1978:264, 952, 1024, 1091) points to two forms of large-scale clientelism, one in which the patron retained relatively-undisputed supremacy (he calls this patrimonialism) and another in which the intermediary had relative autonomy from the patron (we often call this feudalism). So too do urban intermediaries vary, corresponding to two distinct forms of mass clientelism. Let me outline these forms and the intermediaries central to them; providing detailed evidence will be the chief task of subsequent chapters.

The first type of urban intermediaries is *needs-fulfillers*. Needs-fulfillers partake of two sets of gift-like relations: one with political officials, involving the delivery of community loyalty in exchange for material aid, and another with ordinary residents, involving the delivery of (much of) that material aid in exchange for residents' political support. The neighborhood association leadership works with political officials to equip neighborhoods with urban services in exchange for support (Álvarez-Rivadulla 2017; Gay 1994:56) and also helps the community identify needs, orchestrate self-help initiatives, and sometimes even organize tepid demonstrations of discontent (Auerbach 2020:93-97; Shefner 2008:40). Together, such relations

make possible needs-fulfillment in conditions of dependency. I refer to this pattern as *benevolent mass clientelism* (see Figure I.1).²⁶

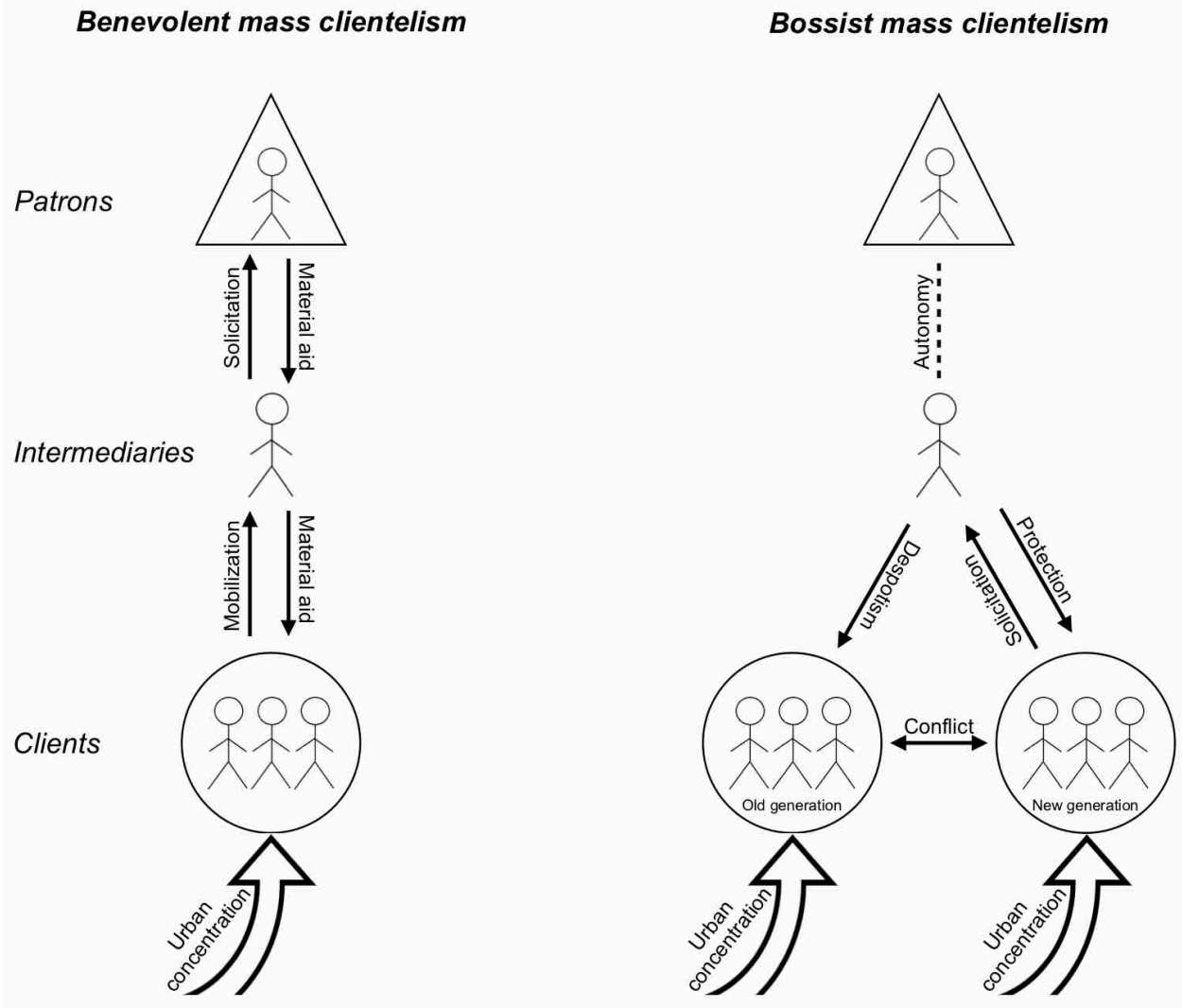


Figure I.1. Two moments of mass clientelism

The second type of urban intermediaries is *bosses*. When clients are locked into factional conflict, the most vulnerable may have little choice but to seek a benefactor. Bossist

²⁶ Analogous relations have obtained across a variety of types of cases, from Rome (Taylor 1949) to the Ottoman Empire (Barkey 1994:xi).

intermediaries capitalize on such a condition by mobilizing followers to autonomously reign over subordinates as “informal sovereigns” (Weinstein 2014:27; see also Cornelius 1975:141; Murray 2008:116; Paller 2019:150). They exercise their power by *controlling turf* (e.g., selling plots and evicting residents who do not conform to their terms) and *extracting rent* (e.g., embezzling neighborhood association dues and charging special levies). Bosses protect one faction of clients in exchange for their mobilization, which impels them to repress the protected faction’s opponents. Since their following is not a function of channeling resources from above, but rather stems from protection, their brokerage is localized (Roniger 1990:154): they are, in a sense, patrons unto themselves (cf. Wang and Tian 2022:819-20). Their role derives more from their ability to repress their clients’ opponents than it does from receiving gifts or orders from above. I call this pattern *bossist mass clientelism* (see Figure I.1).

Whereas under benevolent mass clientelism, the intermediary is somewhat accountable to both patron and clients, giving both patron and clients a degree of influence over the relationship, under bossist mass clientelism, one faction of clients gives the intermediary the ability to mobilize followers independently of superordinates in exchange for depriving another faction of its influence. Bosses’ accountability to some clients requires that they deny accountability to others and gives them autonomy from patrons. Thus whereas needs-fulfilling intermediaries are comparable to coopted social movement leaders (though they hail from the community, they are cozy with political elites), bosses pursue their own ends (they are autonomous).

Benevolent and bossist forms of mass clientelism are theoretical building blocks. As such, they can be used in a variety of ways. First, they can be used as ideal types against which to compare empirical observations. Second, they can be used as descriptions of distinct moments in a developmental sequence. Third, they can be used as descriptions of causal mechanisms or *explicantia* for substantive phenomena or outcomes. I use these building blocks in all three ways, but the last points most directly towards adjacent substantive problems and associated literatures.

Historically-Aligned Power Blocs

The clientelism literature and critical state theory, especially the work of Gramscian sociologist Nicos Poulantzas, have important unacknowledged affinities. Whereas the former helps one understand how vertical bonds of loyalty running from poor clients through

intermediaries to elite patrons sow horizontal conflict among the popular sectors, the latter directs attention to how the deepening of divisions among the masses helps unify distinct fractions of the elite (Poulantzas 1973:188-89, 275 ff.). Poulantzas's is the more panoramic view, however, a view which leads him to break with the Weberian conception of *the state* as an organization to define it as the outcome of a process in which elite groups constitute a *power bloc*, a configuration "establishing them as dominant" (Poulantzas 1978:127). The state is thus a "material condensation" (that is, a social configuration) reflecting the "relationship of forces . . . among classes and class fractions" (that is, a configuration in which one or more composite groups dominates the rest of society) (Poulantzas 1978:128, emphasis removed). The state is thus more fundamental than the set of organizations and individuals comprising the government (though the latter can and probably must weigh into the balance of forces giving rise to the former).²⁷

While states are a widespread outcome, their specific contents are historically variable. This is for two reasons. First, it is because power blocs are neither an instrument nor a subject (Poulantzas 1978:129). They instead represent a balance of forces. Each one therefore reflects the specific society in which it is embedded; or, as Nowak (2017:257) puts it, "the state is a machine that transforms hierarchical social relations with a basis outside class relations"—including hierarchical relations such as patriarchy (Poulantzas 1978:43-44)—into an ingredient serving ruling class power. When ruling groups agree enough about some substantive policy question such that they can pursue some kind of common political project of some kind, in spite of all the other disagreements they still have that make them different kinds of elites, they represent a power bloc; when they do not converge on a common political project, they do not constitute a power bloc. Thus, power blocs are defined as a partial convergence among otherwise

²⁷ I use the term *the government* to denote politicians, bureaucratic organizations tasked with public administration, and political parties involved in governance and the term *the state* to denote the society-wide features of elite domination, usually taking the form of a nation-building project. The distinction represents an alternative to the common overemphasis on bureaucratic conceptions of the state (Khachaturian 2019:715). The importance of the distinction is immediately apparent. The urban poor's patrons are embedded in the government; the government, then, is party to mass clientelism. The state, in contrast, is a relational configuration. Thus whereas government formation focuses on the genesis (e.g., Tilly 1990) and (im)partiality (e.g., Shefter 1994) of political bureaucracies, state formation and nation-building concern the origins of cohesion among elites (e.g., Lachmann 2000) and of the dominance of elites over the popular classes (e.g., Hobsbawm 1992). The latter tradition of political thought stems from Hegel, though it has been sufficiently compelling to attract Althusserians, the foremost anti-Hegelian school of Marxist theory (Anderson [1977] 2020:81-82).

discrepant political elites, not, as with a pact or conspiracy, in terms of explicit agreement or total harmony.

Second, however, precisely because they involve a balance of forces between fractions, power blocs are relatively autonomous from any particular fraction of the elite (Poulantzas 1978:127). This leads the state to sometimes “respond” to contingent events in ways that none of the elite fractions comprising them would respond on their own. Thus, for Poulantzas the capitalist state is both specific to capitalism and relatively autonomous from any particular fraction of the capitalist class. But whereas Poulantzas argues that state formation makes the bourgeoisie per se into a ruling class, such that the power bloc is given by preexisting structure,²⁸ I argue that the composition of a power bloc is, instead, given by historical conjuncture.²⁹ (This makes it helpful to draw from Bourdieusian field theory to describe the specific blocs I examine.)

There are two ways of conceptualizing the partial convergence of elite fractions: synchronic and sequential. The synchronic approach focuses on whether disparate elite groups make de facto compromises, and thus rule together at a specific point in time or period (e.g., Lachmann 2000; Spruyt 1994), or refuse to do so, and thus fail to coalesce an overarching national-political project (e.g., Mizruchi 2013). The sequential approach, which is the approach I pursue here, examines the relationship between different kinds of political elites as it develops over time, focusing on whether successor rulers build upon, or reverse, their predecessors’ initiatives. When later rulers build upon the initiatives of their predecessors, the earlier and later ones together constitute an *historically-aligned power bloc*; when successors reverse predecessors’ initiatives, they do not.

Only if overtime elite alignment meets two specific criteria does it qualify as an historically-aligned power bloc. The first concerns the inducement *to* align: the policy area providing a basis for possible convergence. Policy areas range from relatively peripheral,

²⁸ Poulantzas and his followers have difficulty making a convincing case in support of this contention (Manza and McCarthy 2011:171).

²⁹ In this way, my approach shares perhaps more in common with Poulantzas’s inspiration, Marx’s study of Napoleón III (Marx [1869] 1963) and Gramsci’s notes on Mussolini’s Fascism (Gramsci 1971), as well as with those who have followed in his footsteps (Barrow 2016; Jessop 2016; Mueller 2019:293), than with Poulantzas himself. I also differ sharply from a view Poulantzas advances in his last book, in an effort to theorize popular politics, that social cleavages also appear as cleavages in the state (Poulantzas 1978:142-43). I instead retain his earlier view, namely, that divisions among the popular classes help unify fractions of the elite (Poulantzas 1973:188-89, 275ff), a position which is both more theoretically rigorous and more compatible with the clientelism literature.

rendering convergence upon them politically moot, to pressing, ensuring any convergence will weigh heavily in national politics. Only those policy areas in the latter camp rise to a level of importance sufficient to contribute to historically-aligned power blocs. The second criterion concerns the implications *of* alignment, namely, the power of the fractions that may be brought into alignment and the depth of animosity between them. Only convergence between powerful fractions of the elite who had opposed one another qualifies.

Historically-aligned power blocs are particularly significant for political development in a very specific way. Their importance for political development lies not in their degree of comprehensiveness (do elites converge on enough policy questions to constitute an historically-aligned power bloc?), as important as this question is in practice. Nor does it lie in their depth of their convergence (don't elites continue to disagree about a variety of other things?), precisely because historically-aligned power blocs do not negate the differences between types of elites. Instead, the importance of historically-aligned power blocs lies in the social importance of the elite fractions they bring into relationship (would the elites who converge otherwise try to annihilate one another?). For by bringing powerful elites into alignment, they transfigure elite antagonism into mere agonism, making political development possible. Indeed, in the presence of elites with divergent interests and amidst changes in government, political development continues on a given trajectory *only* amidst an historically-aligned power bloc.

The Political Development Of Mass Clientelism

Critical state theory provides a foundation upon which we may grasp historically-aligned power blocs conceptually. This does little to provide an explanation for this outcome. But it is important because, in contrast to liberal-institutionalism, it allows us to sustain a distinction between the exercise of popular will and the existence of popular sovereignty. Clientelist theory takes over from here. On the one hand, *benevolent* mass clientelism serves the role of “disorganizing-dividing the dominated classes”—which is one of the preconditions for state formation (Poulantzas 1978:140)—and hails discrepant fractions of the political elite into an historically-aligned power bloc—the other precondition. On the other hand, *bossist* mass clientelism does not further the convergence of disparate fractions of the elite into an

historically-aligned power bloc, but instead allows intermediaries to peel support away from political elites.

Because benevolent and bossist mass clientelism came in succession in 20th-century Latin America, they help account for the advent and eclipse of government institutional configurations. The rise of benevolent mass clientelism hailed different kinds of political elites to a common political project in Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela; since the relationship between mass clientelism, state formation, and government institutions is poorly captured by the existing literature, I elaborate the relevant concepts by drawing on critical state theory, field theory, and decisionism. The further development of mass clientelism into the bossist form also harbored important implications by undermining the historically-aligned power bloc in Mexico, where urban concentration was most extensive; the dialectical nature of this overall rise-and-fall development is also poorly captured in the literature, so I clarify it epistemically and ultimately metaphysically by drawing on Hegelian-Marxian social theory.

The First Moment of Mass Clientelism

Precisely why did Latin American political elites come to form historically-aligned power blocs despite their divergent interests? Amidst urban concentration and the torrent of subordination requests, the desire to acquire supporters—and the basis of their prestige—brought discrepant kinds of elites into sequential alignment with one another in spite of the divergence of interests that distinguished them in other respects. Prestige is very alluring to political elites, and is thus key to understanding why mass clientelism gave rise to an historically-aligned power bloc. Due to the social relationships that urban concentration brought into existence, the influence of interests on behaviors diminished and was surpassed by questions of prestige—and prestige, in turn, was buoyed by urban concentration. While the number of clients determines the patron's prestige (Kettering 1986:28)—at least, as in Rome, when the size of one's following determines one's political success (cf. Martin 2009:230)—the patron's only control over the number of clients s/he enjoys is negative, i.e., the ability to jettison or refuse followers (cf. Barnes [1986] 2019:93). The patron's prestige is thus the product of a *social* process out of his or her direct control—i.e., the acquisition of followers who confer prestige stems from bottom-up requests for subordination—requiring only that s/he *abide*. As the size of their potential

following increased with urban concentration, some elites began to abide solicitations of subordination to amass a following, thereby consummating mass clientelist relations. The prestige stemming from a mass following attracted other elites to the same response, leading successors to abide solicitations of subordination as well. Thus, the potential of governing a following through urban concentration hailed different political elites similarly despite their divergent interests.

Comprised of actors who disagreed with one another but nevertheless tacitly coordinated due to the stakes of prestige, the government is, in such cases, a type of field. But it is not an ordinary field. For Bourdieu, fields are social spaces structured by disagreement about particulars and agreement about fundamentals (Bourdieu 1993:73), the relationship between these two aspects being that agreement about fundamentals makes disagreement about particulars possible (Bourdieu 1993:74). Bourdieu argues that the defining feature of the political field, as opposed to other fields, is that strategies inside this social space can only succeed if they converge with strategies outside of it, in as much as the overriding goal of those who compete with one another inside the political field is to mobilize the greatest number of followers outside of it (Bourdieu 1991:181).³⁰

I think this is on the right track: fractions of the political elite struggle to position themselves favorably vis-a-vis their political opponents by securing or retaining mass support. But, pace Bourdieu, it is precisely for this reason that the political field is fundamentally different from other fields. Whereas ordinary fields are spaces in which agreement about fundamentals makes disagreement about particulars possible, much the opposite is the case for the political field: the political field is a space in which preexisting fundamental disagreements—between discrepant elite fractions—are overcome in practice on the basis of de facto agreement about particulars.³¹ For the problem at hand, fundamental disagreements are put to one side in favor of

³⁰ Accordingly, the value of a political program lies not in its putative accuracy or even coherence, but rather in its ability to catalyze followers (Bourdieu 1991:181).

³¹ Someone interested in retaining a strictly-Bourdieuian conception of field could argue that the very fact of political elites' agreement to participate in the government represents a fundamental agreement. This, however, would assume government institutions are basic (just as solidarity is basic in Durkheimian theory). And insofar as explaining institutions is the goal, as it is in this dissertation, it would therefore result in a circular argument: it would mean arguing that participation in the government institutions in question was the fundamental reason why the institutions enjoyed political elites' participation. Only if we refuse the idea that institutions create fundamental interests can we use field theory cogently as part of an explanation for those very institutions.

a tacitly-joint political project, such as nation-building, via successive elites' mutual orientation to mass clientelism and thus indirectly and sequentially to one another. The political field does not arise from underlying consensus; it is rather the space in which overtime convergence—something like an apparent consensus—develops, taking form as a country's specific government institutions. The political field is the social space in which an historically-aligned power bloc takes form.

The reason the political field was even possible, then, lay in the fact that it was more three-dimensional than fields are ordinarily thought to be. Two of its dimensions were like most field theorists would expect, namely, they describe the *kind* and *volume* of capital deemed prestigious; on the plane of relations comprised of these two dimensions, political elites who enjoy sufficient capital recognize one another in mutual-opposition, in agonism. The third dimension, however, is both fundamentally different and more important—and distinguishes the mass political field from other fields.

The depth of the political field

The third dimension of the political field involves strategic mutual-recognition between particular political elites and mass groups. In 20th-century Latin America, these were nationally-oriented elites and squatter neighborhood association leaders. Since the latter approached the former with requests for subordination, they made the process by which poor rural-to-urban migrants secured and consolidated denizen status a fundamentally political one. At the outset, aspiring denizens—that is, those who sought to be accepted by the powers that be as legitimate residents of the city—confronted the possibility of eviction. Sociologists sometimes assume eviction is a negative economic event which may befall poor people who already live in the city (cf. Desmond 2016). But for rural-to-urban migrants, eviction represents failure to secure denizen status itself. While failure may be rendered in legal terms (e.g., illegal slum clearances), it is not reducible to legality per se since eviction may just as well befall the urban poor who enjoy a constitutional right to housing (Levenson 2022) and since those who have established non-legal settlements may just as well acquire legal ownership after settlement (Newman 2022). In much of the world, gaining denizen status is thus a *political* problem (Weinstein 2021).

Soliciting subordination was a pathway to denizen status. In the face of the possibility of eviction, political elites, who by definition are officially tasked with conforming to the law, have the ability to *make an exception* by allowing aspiring denizens to reside in settlements and construct dwellings that are not legally sanctioned (Holland 2016). But they have to opt in favor of such forbearance (Martin 2009:203). This requires that they *recognize the aspiring urban poor* as prospective political friends, rather than enemies (cf. Schmitt [1932] 2007). For only within such a relationship is the patron expected to supply the client with aid “in the form of intercession or mitigation”; though by the same token the client is thereafter on the hook for at least a “display of loyalty” (Martin 2009:205). Given the urban poor’s vulnerability vis-a-vis political elites, the relationship between them, when consummated, was thus a “lop-sided friendship” (Pitt-Rivers 1954:140).

Lop-sided friendship denotes a form of mutual-recognition that preserves categorical inequality. This distinguishes it. If the parties in question are equal in status, appeals for cooperation will likely be accompanied by contention, taking the form of demands (Gould 2003:54; McLean 2005:642). But for squatters, who are *not* political elites’ equals, concerns for survival and persistence overshadow the allure of rebelliousness (cf. James 2016:282). Aspiring denizens do not solicit subordination from a position of freedom; they did so out of a lack of alternatives (Wiebe 1975:119; cf. Martin 2009:202-03). For their part, political elites, who seek political supporters, do not abide these requests by making exceptions in a vacuum; they do so when confronted with a volume of aspiring denizens sufficient to make their requests for subordination difficult to ignore. The compulsion to foreswear bottom-up disruption in favor of loyalty, on the one hand, and the political dividends forthcoming if only political elites relax their commitment to rational-legal order, on the other, mutually-reinforced one another.

Soliciting and abiding subordination are not separate, individual-level actions. They instead lie along the third dimension of the political field, extending from political elites to followers—in the case of 20th century Latin America, to the urban poor. Soliciting and abiding subordination constitute the two poles of the third dimension of the political field. Whereas the elite politics plane is comprised of actors who are categorically equal, allowing them to agree about particulars (in the cases examined here, a political orientation to squatters) while still disagreeing about fundamentals (according to case), the third dimension is comprised of actors who are categorically unequal—political elites and mass constituencies—but who nevertheless

engage in the strategic mutual-recognition characteristic of fields (Fligstein and McAdam 2012; Steinmetz 2008).

This model fits Latin America. On the one side were political elites (a stylized group of heterogeneous men and women who, as government officials, had the power to make exceptions when they deemed the urban poor to be political friends). On the other were the urban poor themselves (a mass group initially lacking political allegiances who, for that reason, had the ability to support friendly political elites). Between the two stood the urban poor's representatives: neighborhood association leaders. By packaging aspiring denizens' urban aspirations as solicitations for subordination, they were the parties to the relationship who most clearly exhibited a clientelist habitus (Auyero and Benzecry 2017). Brokers enabled mutual-recognition between political elites and the urban poor. When political elites abided squatters' solicitations of subordination, they consummated a mediated form of clientelism—mass clientelism.

The dependence that the urban poor suffered subsequent to soliciting subordination did not endure forever. Though nor did it subside immediately upon recognition of denizen status. For soliciting subordination was henceforth also the chief means at the urban poor's disposal for myriad other ends—e.g., to secure political elites' help in equipping squatter settlements with urban infrastructure. Squatters may freely make demands of low-level officials (Auerbach 2020). But to compel political elites to make exceptions and treat a given neighborhood favorably, the most surefire means at the urban poor's disposal is to *continue* to solicit subordination (Nichter 2018:79-83; Shefner 2012). In sum, the urban poor can both secure *and* consolidate denizen status on the basis of soliciting subordination. But doing so leads political elites to abide their requests, leaving the urban poor in dependence relations which give rise to and perpetuate historically-aligned power blocs on the basis of mass clientelism.³²

The qualities of mass clientelism that were *sui generis* to *clientelism* were important in supporting the historically-aligned power bloc. Since clientelism represents real support which

³² Urban concentration does not promote dependence universally. Only given several scope conditions is it likely to spawn clientelism. First, the number of people seeking denizen status must be large. For only when contemplating a large number of people are political elites likely to view a “lop-sided friendship” with the urban poor as advantageous and thus opt in its favor. Second, the aspiring urban poor must be spatially proximate to political elites. This makes mass clientelism especially likely in capital cities. Third, and finally, rational-legal government control must be relatively weak. Political elites must not be compelled to follow the letter of the law; they must be relatively free to respond to opportunities to amass support (cf. O'Donnell 1993).

does *not* stem from ideological convictions per se, the brokers who mediate between patrons and clients can quickly shift client support from one patron to another. Students of clientelism often find this to be the case (Álvarez-Rivadulla 2012; 2017; Cotler 1967:242; Gay 1994; Hilgers 2008; 2009; Kettering 1986:28). This quality is normally thought to be a source of political instability (Singelmann 1981:75-76; Xu 2013). But, at least in 20th-century Latin America, it contributed decisively to historically-aligned power blocs. It was for this reason that political elites did not need to declare one another outright enemies—in which case the goal would have been to annihilate one another—and could instead try to usurp support from their opponents’ base, competing against one another to mobilize the *same* followers (cf. Jansen 2017). In a word, political elites who would have otherwise antagonized one another opted to instead tacitly work towards common ends—and elite-level agonism supported the continuity of government institutions—because each fraction could succeed politically by orienting to its opponent’s base.

In sum, in mid-20th-century Latin America, political elites had to go along with urban concentration to secure and retain mass support. The main elite fractions opposed one another on longstanding sociopolitical issues (different in each of the cases examined here, as adumbrated in Chapter 1) but nevertheless converged on the growth of squatter settlements as an agreeable solution to the shortage of housing (an aspect of the social question). The favorable orientation of discrepant fractions of the political elite to urban squatters led them to converge over time as an historically-aligned power bloc, supporting country-specific government institutions. Mass clientelism helped the urban poor secure their vital necessities, albeit at the cost of sowing horizontal divisions among the popular classes. Elite recognition of squatters as the urban poor—as denizens at all—hailed a new social group into existence, with two implications: first, in addition to workers and peasants, there was now a different salient identity among the popular classes, and conflicts of interest multiplied accordingly; second, even among the urban poor, there were horizontal conflicts between neighborhoods and latent conflicts within them. With elite convergence came popular division.

The Second Moment of Mass Clientelism

Political elites’ *orientation to* the urban poor did not guarantee them a specific kind of *relationship with* squatters. To the contrary. Insofar as political elites continued to orient to the

urban poor despite changes in the nature of the relationship between the two, they stood to lose their base of support. Such a scenario also implies less reason for discrepant political elites to align in practice, and thus spells the unravelling of historically-aligned power blocs with knock-on implications for government institutions. Concretely, this helps account for the PRI's decline. Among political scientists, the most common approach to explaining the advent of nation-building political elites in mid-20th-century Latin America is Collier and Collier's (1991) critical-junctures approach, according to which organized workers are said to have mobilized and forced populist politicians to incorporate them into government institutions, which thereafter exhibited continuity. To account for the fall of the PRI, one could try to characterize it as a critical juncture as well (Collier 1992:156), such that one critical juncture accounts for its rise and another for its fall (Roberts 2014). There are two problems with that approach. As a theory, it assumes what it ought to explain, namely continuity of government institutions.³³ Empirically, there are many cases in which organized workers and other groups do not mobilize but government institutions still undergo significant flux. It is a stretch to analyze such cases according to the critical-junctures approach. Nor is it necessary; there can be different causes for the same outcome of flux. The approach pursued here—dialectical explanation—represents an alternative to the critical-junctures approach.

I argue that benevolent mass clientelism and bossist mass clientelism both stem from urban concentration. Up to a point, urban concentration gives rise to benevolent mass clientelism, which draws different fractions of the political elite together into an historically-aligned power bloc by fielding the relations between them, and thereby resulting in a nation-building project. But beyond a certain point—specifically, in the case of Mexico, where urban concentration continued until it reached unparalleled levels—further urban concentration changes the nature of mass clientelism from benevolent to bossist, which in turn destabilizes the political field and compromises the continuity of the historically-aligned power bloc, allowing the nation-building project to unravel. Thus, the relationship between urban concentration and the confirmation of an historically-aligned power bloc is non-linear, or “dialectical.”

³³ There is by now a large literature on so-called path-dependence which implicitly assumes but fails to defend theoretically this assumption. The adoption of a path-dependence viewpoint is thus often more of a metaphysical assumption *of* institutional continuity than a substantive question *about* whether there is continuity and if so what supports it.

Dialectical explanation has recently been put forth as useful in explaining political development (Riley and Fernández 2014:492-93). But it is often poorly understood in American sociology. So let me briefly unpack the approach before moving on to my discussion of the dialectic of mass clientelism itself (see Appendix B for a fuller discussion).

Dialectical explanation proceeds by identifying historical episodes and disaggregating them into at least two “*distinct but inseparable*” moments (Bhaskar 1993:58). *Distinctness* means that consecutive moments appear to be near-opposites due to contrasting so strongly. Between any two such moments, the second stands in a relationship of negativity or contradiction vis-a-vis the first. Such a contrast between moments can be observed at the level of the set of elements comprising each respective moment: these elements themselves undergo a change from latent to manifest (in the case of actors, for example, this may involve a transition from a passive to an active state). The contrast can also be observed at the level of the way the elements hang together: while the elements *that* constitute a given social configuration retain considerable continuity from one moment to the next, the *way* they hang together changes. (Cases in which the elements that are related to one another themselves change—whether over time or across cases—represent instances of exogenous or Humean causation rather than dialectical or Hegelian causation.) In Hegel’s classic example, the elements comprising the slavery relationship—master and slave—persist, albeit in modified form, from the moment of servitude (in which the slave’s agency is latent) to the moment of manumission (in which it is manifest). On the one hand, the slave’s agency transitions from latent to manifest; on the other, there is a fundamental contrast in how these parties relate to one another during, as opposed to after, slavery (Hegel [1807] 2018: pars. 182-96).

The *inseparability* part of “distinct but inseparable” moments has two implications. First, a given earlier moment has an *influence* on a given later one. The idea here is perhaps best captured by Aristotle’s distinction between potentiality (*dunamis*) and actuality (*entelecheia*): potentiality (an earlier moment) has a major causal impact on actuality (a subsequent moment). Second, for any two consecutive moments that are related dialectically, the second one is a determinate negation, or *sublation* (*Aufhebung*), of the first. That is, the manifest characteristics of the elements and the overarching configuration characteristic of the later moment negates those of the earlier one while also taking the earlier one as their condition of possibility. This, in turn, implies that “the concrete connections linking different phases of any historical process are

as much a process of ‘negation’ as they are of production or causality in a Humean sense” (Riley and Fernández 2014:493).

The chief epistemic challenge confronting researchers who pursue dialectical explanation is to determine when such an explanation adequately describes an historical episode and when it does not. For it is simply not the case that every succeeding moment is adequately described as being necessarily related to every preceding one—and to assume otherwise would be to succumb to teleological thinking of the worst kind (see Sewell 2005:84). There are episodes whose moments are distinct but inseparable, but so too do properly contingent events (emphasized by the critical junctures approach) factor into history. From the point of view of dialectical causation, contingent events represent a failure of a subsequent moment to sublimate a prior one since the resulting change stems from factors beyond (exogenous to) those which were initially in question; from the point of view of Humean causation, sublimation represents deterministic change since it transpires despite or in the absence of exogenous causal stimulus. Some historical developments are characterized by sublimation and others by exogenous shocks. In other words, while dialectical change does occur, it is not the case that the *totality* or all of society and history behaves dialectically; one must concede part of the totality behaves contingently.³⁴ Methodologically, this points to the vital importance of negative comparison wherein aspects of human history following a dialectical pattern are combined in a single study with aspects of that same history that do not. Comparison is therefore part of the expository logic of this dissertation, in which I show that while a series of countries all shared a first moment, i.e., benevolent mass clientelism, in only one of them did a subsequent moment sublimate the first, giving rise to bossist mass clientelism.

³⁴ Though of course Hegel places emphasis on the idea that “the contingent is at the same time the possibility of an other,” i.e., a first moment that may be destined “to be sublated and to serve for the realisation of another one” (§146). His ability to insist on this point, in turn, stems from the assumption that it is valid to transpose relations of necessity from the realm of concepts to the realm of history, which, I agree with Taylor (1979:57-66), is not a reasonable assumption. Denying Hegel this assumption has a variety of implications. It becomes impossible to sustain absolute idealism, because that view is premised on complete necessity in human history (Taylor 1979:43). It becomes impossible to sustain the view that dialectics is a reflection of reality tout court, as Hegel does (Taylor 1979:55), leaving it a mere method (assuming we choose not to dismiss it entirely), which is how I treat it. And most importantly, it becomes evident that contingency is especially important in human history.

The sublation of subordination

Models of clientelism—such as benevolent and bossist mass clientelism—may be taken as ideal types, against which concrete cases can be compared to serve as an aid in description and analysis. They may also be used as benchmarks to study change from one form to another. Such transformations have been noted in both large- (Newbury 2003:13) and small-scale (Paller 2019:146-47) manifestations of clientelism, and may occur for a variety of reasons. One would be an exogenous shock. Another, which is what I focus on here, is that one form may *develop into* another. I argue that the factor that can itself give rise to mass clientelism to begin with, that is, large-scale rural-to-urban migration and the associated growth of squatter settlements, also caused benevolent mass clientelism to give way to bossist mass clientelism in the Mexican case.

Absent such urban growth, gift relations and patron-client dyads may be present, but neither the needs-fulfilling nor despotic intermediaries that constitute the two forms of mass clientelism will be present. *Some* growth, however, gives rise quasi-necessarily to benevolent mass-clientelist relations between political officials (patrons), neighborhood associations (intermediaries), and residents (clients). Intermediaries channel aid down from patrons to clients and channel support up from clients to patrons.

Even at moderate levels, this kind of urban growth has important effects. When patrons grant clients denizen status and access to the amenities they need, the latter are likely to behave with docility vis-a-vis the former. If the significance of the aid decreases (Schedler 2004:78) or clients grow less vulnerable (Nichter 2018:153-56), patron-intermediary-client bonds may atrophy; if not, they are likely to endure until squatter settlements are equipped with urban services (water and electricity hookups, the construction and staffing of schools, etc.).

With the influx of inhabitants into a given settlement, there will always be a difference between the existing generation of residents and a new or aspiring generation, each representing what Mannheim (1970:379) calls a “generation location.”³⁵ The comingling of multiple

³⁵ Mannheim conceptualizes “generations” as groups of people whose commonality lies in their comparable relationship to *social processes*, which give such groups latent or manifest characteristics. Demographers often conceive of generations as cohorts of individuals who share a common age range regardless of whether, much less how, they have been imprinted by their social contexts. In keeping with Mannheim, my conception of “generation” refers to people who share a common experience in settling in the community. This is not a strictly demographic conception, since the “older” generation may average fewer years of age than the “newer” one.

generations gives rise to a situation characterized by the “non-simultaneity of the simultaneous” (Knöbl 2022:113), ultimately pointing to a possible divergence of interests.³⁶ The older generation’s interests are to establish and retain working relationships with political elites so that government officials will (continue to) equip their habitat with urban services; the newer generation’s interests, in contrast, are to settle somewhere, which involves behaviors that, because they are extralegal, political officials are liable to view as transgressive. This difference leads to occasional divergences in political behavior between older residents and newly-arrived squatters (Alonso et al. 1980:310; Auyero 2000:58; Barry, Dewar, Whittal, and Muzondo 2007:184; Bayat 2004:43; Degregori, Blondet, and Lynch [1986] 2014:98-99; Gutmann 2002:215; Holzner 2004:231; Karst, Schwartz, and Schwartz 1973:15, 52; Matos Mar 2012:113-16; Roberts 1973:312-13; Vélez-Ibañez 1983:127, 184-85).

Insofar as the rate of urban growth is merely moderate, generation location, like class location, remains latent. But “as the tempo of change becomes faster, smaller and smaller modifications are experienced . . . as significant” (Mannheim 1970:393). Thus, *more* urban growth sharpens these opposing interests, leading squatter generations to crystalize as mutually-opposed factions (cf. Landé 1977).³⁷ Factional conflict between generations can stress and transform the links above and below intermediaries through a two-step process: first, the older generation reacts with hostility to the flood of new residents into the community (McMichael 2016:2729-33); second, the new generation responds as a collective body by rallying to neighborhood leaders who agree to protect them. This collective response converts the new generation of squatter residents from a latent “generation location” into a manifest “generation unit” (Mannheim 1970:398).

³⁶ Garrido (2019:93-94) traces such a divergence in metropolitan Manila, Philippines to a class difference in understandings of property. Levenson (2022:78, 85, 90-93, 126, 131, 134) traces one in Cape Town, South Africa to ties with outside patrons and government pressure. I trace it, in contrast, to the process of urban concentration itself.

³⁷ Urbanization has long been recognized as a potential source of conflict. Invasion-succession cycles driven by an expanding urban nucleus, initially assumed to be peaceful (Burgess 1925), have been shown to provoke conflict between invaders and current residents when they involve different racial groups (Katznelson 1981:130-33; Rex 1968:214). And entrepreneurs who spur commercial and residential growth that drives up the market price for rent provoke conflict between classes that do and do not benefit from increased rent differentials (Logan and Molotch [1987] 2007). The conflict I reference here is different. Rather than exacerbate pre-existing conflict (racial or class-based conflict), the conflict in question stems from urban population growth per se.

Residents' inclination to ingratiate themselves with a benefactor, in turn, promotes despotism. First, it inclines incumbent intermediaries to themselves become despotic. Second, it makes it viable for despotically-inclined challengers to assert themselves. Either way, the willingness of the new generation to rally in support of benefactors gives intermediaries a following they can mobilize irrespective of the benevolent mass clientelist relationships that once obtained between intermediaries, officials, and older residents. This, in turn, lends intermediaries a degree of autonomy vis-a-vis patrons and enables them to behave despotically vis-a-vis the older generation of residents.

In Mexico City, because the city experienced an exceptional amount of urban concentration, the two forms of mass clientelism constituted earlier and later moments of a single developmental arc. Urban concentration in Mexico grew so extensive during the late-20th-century that it triggered dynamics which undermined the continuity of the historically-aligned power bloc and thus jeopardized the incumbent government's base of support. While urban concentration helped the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) consolidate control during the early- and mid-20th century, even more urban concentration compromised its dominance during the late-20th century. Thus, the two kinds of intermediaries were developmentally continuous: urban bosses arose only after, and partially in response to, needs-fulfilling leaders. Nevertheless, the two kinds of intermediaries were functionally distinct from one another: vis-a-vis both clients and patrons, urban bosses contrasted sharply with needs-fulfillers. The second moment of mass clientelism was a sublation or determinate negation of the first.

In sum, benevolent mass clientelism resembles a mediated gift relationship initiated from below, while bossist mass clientelism represents a very different relationship which nevertheless presupposes the previous one: a more direct patron-client relationship between the intermediary, now a patron, and the new generation of squatters, now clients. Since the second moment followed from the first in 20th-century Mexico, the developmental dynamic of the mass clientelist mode of political intermediation was dialectical.

Overview Of Chapters

The rest of this dissertation is divided into two parts. Part I focuses on urban growth and its impact on politics in mid-20th century Latin America. It features an overview of the region, a

series of case studies—of Mexico City, of Lima, Peru, and of Caracas, Venezuela—based on primary and secondary sources, and a synthetic summary and theory chapter. Taken together, these chapters document benevolent mass clientelism and how it was related to the rise of an historically-aligned power bloc and thus to Latin American nation-building.

Chapter 1 outlines how my contribution helps chart an alternative to interpretations of Latin American political development that present the region as a deficient version of Europe or the U.S. It situates my contribution vis-a-vis the Latin American political development literature; this involves unifying two prominent themes in the literature on Latin American politics: on the one hand, the synthetic and comparative study of nationalist and populist coalition-building, and, on the other, the numerous rich insights about squatter neighborhood politics gleaned from single-country and single-city studies. The chapter outlines key elite cleavages; I furnish an analytical outline of the top of the political field by reconstructing the elite fractions corresponding to three major elite cleavages, each of which was foremost in one of the respective cases I examine. Finally, the chapter adumbrates the magnitude of the urban growth that occurred in 20th-century Latin America; this provides the relevant context in which mass clientelism arose.

Chapter 2 examines Mexico City from the 1930s to the 1950s, a period that started shortly after the armed phase of the Mexican Revolution came to a close, when the highly-mobilized peasantry forced the new political elite to undertake one of the largest agrarian reforms in history. The revolution gave rise to a new political elite divided into reformers and developmentalists. Meanwhile, *mestizo* and indigenous peasants migrated to Mexico City in great numbers, where they established squatter settlements. The leading elite fractions, first reformers and then developmentalists, oriented to the new urban poor to secure prestige and compete with their rivals, giving rise to benevolent mass clientelism. This helped stabilize and consolidate the PRI, a party-centered historically-aligned power bloc encompassing both reformers and developmentalists that proceeded to rule Mexico for several decades.

Chapter 3 examines Lima, Peru from the 1940s to the 1960s. Whereas the Peruvian political scene—where oligarchs were divided and populists gathered steam—was very unique, peasants migrated to Lima en masse in the 1940s, making the bottom-up features of benevolent mass clientelism in Lima bear a remarkable resemblance to those of Mexico City. But the foremost fractions of the political elite were totally different: remnants of the independence-era

warlords and nouveau riche agro-exporting elites chafed against one another. Nevertheless, since the one and then the other abided the urban poor's requests for subordination, they converged, forming an old guard historically-aligned power bloc on the basis of a shared orientation to the urban poor. This edged out popularly-oriented mass alternatives and ensured warlords and oligarchs remained fixtures of the political scene until at least the 1960s.

Chapter 4 examines Caracas, Venezuela from the 1950s to the 1980s. During this time, Venezuela transitioned to "democratic" two-party rule, bolstered by petroleum wealth. Despite the contrasting economic circumstances, and in part because of them the poor migrated to the capital en masse, and political parties based on longstanding political elite traditions—Liberals and Conservatives, respectively—embraced benevolent mass clientelism to orient to them, much as their analogues had in Mexico and Peru. Liberals' and Conservatives' convergence on this approach made these elite fractions an historically-aligned power bloc. This, in turn, bolstered the rise and persistence of Latin America's only enduring two-party liberal-democratic regime during that time.

Chapter 5 synthesizes from chapters 2-4 and summarizes how, during the first moment of mass clientelism, urban concentration furthered the concentration of power—promoting an historically-aligned power bloc—in all three countries. It summarizes the theoretical model. And it draws out several implications, conceptualizing the cases studied as "passive revolutions": neither experiences of full-on social revolutions culminating in state socialism nor dictatorial regimes that meted out savage repression to preserve capitalism. In a word, the exercise of popular will never successfully culminated in a phase of popular sovereignty nor provoked dictators by appearing it might.

Part II focuses on late-20th-century Mexico City, where urban concentration reached hitherto exceptional levels, giving rise to the second moment of mass clientelism. Chapter 6 picks up the thread of the Mexico City story where Chapter 2 left off. It interrogates the several factors which existing accounts emphasize in their explanation for the decline and fall of the PRI and outlines how more urban concentration led to between-resident conflict and thus to bossist mass clientelism. This sets the stage for the subsequent chapters, a series of historical-ethnographic studies which collectively show that, in contrast with the mid-20th century, when urban concentration furthered the concentration of power, during the late-20th century more

urban concentration gave rise to dynamics that no longer supported the historically-aligned power bloc and instead undermined PRI control.

Chapter 7 examines Nezahualcóyotl, the most iconic of the vast areas of squatter settlements that were established during this era, in eastern Mexico City. I show how the Neighborhood Restorer Movement (MRC) acquired considerable influence at the local level, leading residents to break their agreements with illegal land subdividers and escape the clutches of local government officials' extortion racket, and how the government's attempt to appease both sides amidst urban concentration accelerated the influx of new and aspiring residents. This spawned between-generation conflict between older and newer residents which, because they were especially vulnerable, drove the latter into neighborhood leaders' arms for protection. Their newfound ability to mobilize followers autonomously of political elites enabled neighborhood leaders to become bosses, controlling turf and extracting rent from residents.

Chapter 8 examines Naucalpan, a highly-industrialized municipality in the northern part of the city. I show how, by leading land invasions, the avowedly anti-PRI Naucalpan Popular Settlements Union (NAUCOPAC) made evictions a political problem from which political elites were unable to offer a solution to their liking. Oppositionist land invasions put the government in a double-bind. Insofar as NAUCOPAC succeeded at securing squatters a plot of urban land from which to live their urban life, they proved that the anti-PRI political opposition could deliver the goods. And insofar as the government succeeded at evicting residents, this proved that those currently in power did not want to. Each available option was a poor alternative for the PRI. The dilemma itself stemmed from urban concentration; on balance, then, urban concentration undermined the PRI.

Chapter 9 examines Iztacalco, a highly-mobile part of southern Mexico City. I show how, due to the between-generation conflict to which urban concentration gave rise, the settlement's main leader, a native of Oaxaca, was able to mobilize the urban poor for matters near and far. In the settlement, he used them to control turf and extract rent. He also mobilized followers to expand, leading land invasions in other areas of the city. He gained such a reputation for his ability to protect his followers that illegal minibus drivers approached him for protection as well, allowing him to branch out and form a powerful transportation syndicate. Together with his capacity to mobilize followers, his overland mobility enabled him to enter into electoral politics in his natal state of Oaxaca, challenging the PRI directly in the political arena.

Taken together, Chapters 2, 7, 8, and 9 show that between the 1930s and the 1980s, Mexico City's neighborhood association leaders evolved from dependent, during the first moment of mass clientelism, to autonomous, during the second, contributing first to the rise and then to the decline of a regime that held power for over half a century. While urban concentration at moderate levels led to political dependency, when it reached extreme levels, it furthered political independence. Chapter 10 examines the political events accompanying the PRI's decline and fall, highlighting the importance of the bossist moment of mass clientelism.

Finally, the Conclusion summarizes the theoretical and empirical contributions of the dissertation. I outline potential gains stemming from the simultaneous examination of *urbs* and *civitas*. I predict the growing appeal of clientelism as an analytical lens for a variety of sociopolitical relations and suggest the promise of reviving critical state theory. And I outline a research program flowing from the neo-Hegelian meta-methodology applied here, to which this dissertation may be deemed an early contribution.

**Part I. Urban Concentration and the Concentration of
Power: A Tale of Three Megacities**

Chapter 1. Political Development and the Unprecedented

Urbanization of Latin America

From the 1930s to the 1980s, Latin America experienced an unprecedented wave of urban population growth, driven largely by rural-to-urban migration. As the region's cities—especially its capital cities—ballooned in size, new denizens—who were typically too poor to pay for housing—established vast squatter settlements. A move to the capital city, the seat of national political authority, raised the possibility of government help. So, after seeking (tacit) permission to squat, the new urban poor naturally sought the good graces of political officials as part of an effort to equip their still-rustic urban environments.

Meanwhile, a variety of feeble new political elites had set their sights on supplanting rurally-based strongmen (*caudillos*), who had dominated Latin American politics after independence and often still lurked in the political sphere, in pursuit of a form of mass politics that, with hindsight, we can call nation-building. These new political elites varied considerably, though they were similar in one crucial respect: to compete with their respective rivals each needed a base of support. So, in spite of the illegality of squatter settlements, they embraced the new urban poor. They tacitly granted squatters access to residential land, gifted them building materials, and helped supply their communities with urban infrastructure.

I examine how the bottom-up process of urban growth and the top-down pursuit of mass politics combined to shape the region's 20th-century political development. Urban population growth compelled the new political elite to react, but they did so on their own understanding. They proceeded on the basis of an ideological inversion—if the urban poor lent new political elites their support, the latter suggested and many scholars have followed them in assuming, they could live in the city—harboring two major implications. First, it meant that mass clientelism

appealed to discrepant fractions of the political elite, each of whom needed supporters, helping to hail them into an historically-aligned power bloc. Second, it helped promote a new non-class political identity, “the urban poor,” thereby serving to fracture the popular classes.

My argument builds on, but also departs from, two prominent research traditions in Latin American studies. The first is the nation-building and populism research, which emphasizes how political elites forged alliances with peasants, workers, and an incipient national bourgeoisie (Collier and Collier 1991; López Maya, Gómez Calcaño, and Maingón 1989; Oxhorn 1998). The strength of this line of research is that it provides an over-arching account with which local developments can be put into dialogue. Its drawback is that it has largely failed to incorporate consideration of the urban poor and places what I consider to be undue emphasis on the putative pact-making agency of political elites. Those scholars who do discuss the urban poor tend to provide sparse detail (Germani 1978; Roberts 2006; Stepan 1978; Trimberger 1978) or focus on a single Latin American case (Conniff 1981; James 1988; Jansen 2017; Stein 1980), leaving largely unexplored the urban poor’s overall contribution to the political base required for nation-building and populist political projects. I begin to address this lacuna since, to an important extent, nation-building and populist projects relied on mass clientelism.

The second body of research upon which I build and from which I depart is the vast literature dedicated to a single city or country, studies which together show that the new urban poor constituted a crucial base of support for political elites in the particular countries of study (Collier 1976; Degregori, Blondet, and Lynch [1986] 2014; Dietz 1980; Eckstein 1977; Montaña 1976; Ray 1969). This research provides rich insights into urban clientelism, thereby providing a counterpoint to peasant-centric (e.g., Joseph and Nugent 1994; Mallon 1995; Padilla 2008; Powell 1971) and worker-centric (e.g., Conniff 1981; James 1988; Lear 2001) accounts of Latin American political history. But studies of the urban poor are often quite locally-circumscribed (Degregori, Blondet, and Lynch [1986] 2014; Shefner 2008; Vélez-Ibañez 1983) and/or focus on a fairly brief period (Auyero 2000; Dietz 1980; Gay 1994; Ray 1969), raising but not answering questions about how the phenomena and dynamics they identify influenced political development.

Building on themes from the Latin American urban clientelism and colonial legacy literatures, I contribute to the comparative and historical debate about nation-building and populism. The result is a new synthetic account of the region’s political development. This is an

alternative to the most prominent existing syntheses, which essentially address the question of whether Latin America developed differently from either Tillyan models of European political development (Centeno 2002; Centeno and López-Alves 2001; López-Alves 2000) or Tocquevillian conceptions of U.S. political development (Avritzer 2002; Forment 2003). My point of departure, in contrast to such analogical types of theorizing, is to assume that a unique pattern characterized Latin America—and to try to delineate and explicate it. Without fixing on the stubborn idiosyncrasies and recalcitrant fragments that afflict all efforts to synthesize, I try to identify broad features that make a significant part of the region unique.³⁸

Thus, I focus on the sociopolitical dynamics arising from the region's unprecedented urban population growth on the basis of a study of three of the region's capital cities: Mexico City, Mexico; Lima, Peru; and Caracas, Venezuela. These countries' respective social structures, political institutions, and economic circumstances contrasted sharply with one another: Mexico saw a revolution and one of the world's most far-reaching agrarian reforms in the early-20th century, after which the conservative wing of the post-revolutionary political elite built the PRI, a political party that secured control of all parts of the government apparatus, and pursued import-substituting industrialization; Peru had oligarchic rulers who dodged all significant social reform efforts until the late-1960s, barred the principal mass-oriented political party from power, and never pursued economic development; and Venezuela, blessed (or, perhaps, cursed) with vast petroleum reserves that retarded economic development but lubricated politics, saw the rise of the region's only two-party democratic political system, which obstructed deep social reforms. Benevolent mass clientelism cut across this political-economic variation, giving form to an historically-aligned power bloc unique to each case which, in turn, supported these distinct government institutional configurations.

The Legacy Of Colonialism

Pre-colonial American societies varied significantly. This variation interacted with the conquest, colonial administration, European settlement, and introduction of African slaves (each

³⁸ Prominent scholars of Africa (Mamdani 1996) and South Asia (Chatterjee 1993) proceed similarly.

of which also varied across the region) to produce a tapestry of race relations during the colonial and republican eras. And race relations, of course, affected political relations.

Spanish colonization and administration impacted race relations in two main ways, which directly affected two of the cases of study. First, since relatively few Europeans were involved in the conquest and the initial phase of colonization, the colonial officials had to build their administrative system on the basis of indirect rule. This meant that there was variation in the Spanish demand for native collaborators as a function of prioritization during the conquest and colonization processes. In the priority areas where Spaniards wanted to conquer and settle, they tended to want to collaborate with willing natives (McEnroe 2012:109, 116). Second, however, native elites themselves varied in their receptivity to collaboration. Few if any were wholeheartedly enthusiastic; but, beyond this extreme, there was a broad array of dispositions, ranging from a willingness to be convinced of the value of collaboration to steadfast opposition. Native elites tended to be more willing to collaborate with Europeans where they were on the losing side of the precolonial balance of political forces and less willing where they were firmly ensconced in power prior to the European invasions.

All told, these two factors meant that some natives collaborated more with the colonial government in places Spaniards targeted for prioritization than did others, especially insofar as they were on the losing end of the precolonial balance of forces (Oudijk and Restall 2007). The Spanish prioritized colonizing what is now Mexico and the vast area in and around what is now Peru. These two colonial theaters differed in that precolonial conflicts inclined some native elites to collaborate with the Spaniards more in Mexican than in Peru. This meant colonial administration was more multiracial in Mexico and more thoroughly European in Peru. This variation, in turn, meant that power relations did not map as closely onto the racial cleavage between European—and soon, creole (someone of European descent born in the Americas)—and native in Mexico as they did in Peru. And with time and so-called race-mixing, mestizos (people of mixed indigenous and European ancestry) became a correspondingly more prominent and less stigmatized group in Mexican than in Peruvian society.

Race relations were also impacted by the introduction of African chattel slaves to replace the declining indigenous population, which declined precipitously from overwork and the spread of diseases, especially on the landmasses around the Caribbean Sea. Beyond colonial crown jewels like Cuba and Hispaniola, chattel slaves were especially prominent in parts of “Latin”

America that had not been colonial priorities during the conquest and initial phase of colonial settlement. Some of these colonial backwaters became central to African slave-based agricultural production systems. African slaves were not stigmatized to the same degree in “Latin” America as they were in the British colonies, which meant there was no “one drop rule” and correspondingly greater amounts of so-called race-mixing.

By the 19th century, when the question of separation from Spain came to center stage, Latin American creole elites were divided on the question of whether Afro-descendent Latin Americans were deserving of recognition as citizens. Indeed, especially in the aftermath of the Túpac Amaru-led Andean revolt of 1780-1782³⁹ and the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804,⁴⁰ some creoles thought republicanism was too risky a proposition and that the Spanish crown offered a form of protection against unnecessary sociopolitical risk; this is one important reason why Peruvian creole elites did not pursue independence.⁴¹ Meanwhile, there were other creole elites who were so committed to republicanism they incorporated Afro-descendent Latin Americans into the republican armies at their command and were prepared to accept them as citizens of the republics they envisaged; this was the position of Simón Bolívar, one of the main leaders of the independence movement and the founding father of Venezuela.

In sum, the colonial conquest and administrative system, along with the introduction of African chattel slavery and its aftermath, shaped Latin American race relations and republican politics. The countries examined here occupy very different places in the resulting tapestry. In Mexico, mestizos were relatively prominent in both demographic and political terms. In Peru, the chasm separating Spaniards and creoles, on the one side, and natives, on the other, was especially wide (Cotler 1967; Lockhart 1972:105; Lynch 2014). And in Venezuela, some of the despotism befalling Afro-descendent people was less severe than it was elsewhere in the region due to their importance in the republican army. In all cases, however, whites (under various descriptions)

³⁹ Since it was unwilling to undertake thoroughgoing reforms, the Spanish crown was unable to prevent the uprising from inspiring native sympathy, but it did succeed at putting the revolt down with savage brutality.

⁴⁰ The Haitian Revolution—which saw an outpouring of cathartic anti-European violence and the ascent of the first Black republican government—represented a possible future that Latin American creoles found undesirable and feared might befall them.

⁴¹ The republic was foisted upon Peruvian creole elites by the region-wide republican army.

disproportionately occupied positions of power while non-whites (be they natives, mestizos, or Afro-descendent people) were overrepresented at the lower end of the sociopolitical hierarchy.

Colonial and Post-Colonial Capital Cities

The Spanish established Mexico City in the exact location of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlán, literally erecting Spanish-style buildings on (and with) Aztec ruins. This resulted in a process of forced acculturation under colonial rule. In the political realm, the colonial period saw a Spanish-endorsed, native-led form of government take shape in which native chiefs (*tlatoani*) became governors (*gobernadores*) (Connell 2012). The city government was whitened with time, but rather than concern themselves with participating in the affairs of the major town councils (*cabildos*), creoles tended to focus on the countryside by laying claim to rural estates (*haciendas*) and only then possibly participating in nearby city governments (*alcaldías*). After the country's early-19th century independence, Mexico City's forced acculturation contributed to the Mexican people's mixed-race (*mestizo*) national identity. When peasants flocked into Mexico City during the 20th century, they doubtless encountered what seemed to them like a foreign environment. But the city was already somewhat accustomed to, and indeed built from, cross-race interactions and relations.

Lima, on the other hand, was characterized by a sharp dualism from the beginning. In Peru, colonial administration was centered in Lima and was almost completely separate from native society—culturally, spatially, and administratively—until the 20th century.⁴² Nowhere else in Latin America was this the case (Matos Mar 2012:74). In other parts of the region, in which there were major prehispanic cities,⁴³ the configuration was not repeated because all major colonial cities were established, and national capital cities were further expanded, in the same locations as the prehispanic ones. And where there were no major prehispanic cities the indigenous populations were relatively small, so the act of establishing major colonial cities and

⁴² While there was a native population in the Lima area prior to conquest, it declined from about 25,500 households (approximately 204,000 people) in 1525 to about 545 households (approximately 2,037 people) by 1600 (Charney 2001: table 1.1).

⁴³ In addition to Mexico City, these cases include La Paz, Bolivia; Bogotá, Colombia; Quito, Ecuador; and Guatemala City, Guatemala.

their subsequent growth as republican-era capital cities did not give rise to the kind of dualism that characterized Peru.⁴⁴ The dualism was itself inspired by fear: the Spanish conquerors had considered establishing their administrative headquarters in Cuzco, the Incan capital high in the Andes, but feared they would be ambushed and routed.⁴⁵ They opted instead for Lima, a coastal outpost far from Incan strongholds, which they ringed with a defensive wall in the medieval European style, within which was its *cabildo*. Fears of Indian opposition were justified, as the region was never fully pacified: the Spanish invaders were almost ejected from Peru soon after settling Lima in 1535 (McEnroe 2020:139); during the 1560s the Taki Onqoy movement promoted complete refusal of participation in Spanish society and prophesied war between Andean and European gods (Spalding 1984:213); a short-lived indigenous revolt took place in 1750 a few dozen miles from Lima (Spalding 1984: chapter 9); and the rebellion initially led by Túpac Amaru II enveloped much of the central Andes in 1781-1782 (Penry 2019:168-70, figure 8.1). Meanwhile, Indian collaborator elites sent their children to the nearby town of Santiago de Cercado—adjacent to Lima’s eastern edge (and eventually incorporated into Lima)—for education, and often owned second homes there (McEnroe 2020:141-42). And in rural areas, Viceroy Francisco de Toledo (1569-1581) endeavored to resettle natives into camps (*reducciones*) in which non-natives were prohibited from living, equipped with their own separate system of *cabildos* (Penry 2019:54ff). Even after this initiative had mostly failed, Lima remained a world apart.⁴⁶ The dualism persisted after independence and into the republican period, when the nation-state’s political capital, Lima, continued to govern the indigenous majority from afar. It did, however, change when indigenous peasants migrated to Lima in huge numbers during the 20th century (Matos Mar 2012:216). Natives had long worked intermittently in Lima.⁴⁷ And by now the ring wall separating the city from the outside had long been removed.

⁴⁴ These cases are Buenos Aires, Argentina; Río de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil; Santiago, Chile; Asunción, Paraguay; Montevideo, Uruguay; and Caracas, Venezuela.

⁴⁵ Other impetuses for establishing Peru’s main city on the coast include its commercial utility and suitability as a defense outpost to combat seaborne opportunists (see Gibson 1966:123, 125).

⁴⁶ A 17th-century archbishop for Lima, Gonzalo de Campo, deemed the contemporary understanding of the hinterland so rudimentary that he decided to tour the Andes himself (Scott 2009:104).

⁴⁷ Natives comprised about 10 percent of Lima’s population as early as the late-18th century (Walker 2014:27).

But still, in spite of their new denizen status, rural-to-urban migrants arrived essentially as political outsiders.

Caracas adhered to a third pattern. The future site of Caracas was comprised of a set of valleys with relatively sparse, semi-nomadic Indian communities sprawling over a large area. Thus, in contrast to Mexico City, where the *cabildo* was initially an indigenous institution, in Caracas this institution was where Spanish colonists convened to make decisions, like in Lima. But in contrast with Lima, the native menace was relatively minor, since indigenous groups were relatively unorganized and thus did not appear to be such a threat to colonists and creoles. However, since a relatively large number of African-origin slaves were introduced into the country's agrarian labor force than was the case in Mexico and Peru, indigenous groups were not creoles' only cause for concern. The political relevance of Afro-Venezuelans was registered by the fact that they participated in the republican army. But since Afro-Venezuelans gained relatively little from independence, creole elites, who gained far more, feared their political aspirations. And the influx of rural-to-urban migrants into Caracas during the 20th century brought the wretched of the earth to creole elites' doorsteps.

In sum, the colonial legacy varied across these cities. It left their growing populations mixed, marginal, and menacing to the governing elite in Mexico City, Lima, and Caracas, respectively. These differences notwithstanding, the urban growth characteristic of the 20th century, and the advent of benevolent mass clientelism, served to implicate the urban poor into national politics in very similar ways: as the impetus for discrepant types of political elites to come into alignment, resulting in nation-building projects.

Cohesion And Dynamics Of Latin American Political Elites

Following independence, political power fell to regional strongmen (*caudillos*), who each ruled a little part of Latin America and periodically supplanted one another in each country's presidential office via military imposition. Then, during the late-19th and early-20th centuries, oligarchic groups rooted in family-based clans supplanted them across the region (Smith 2005:27). During this time, oligarchic groups represented "the region's ascendant classes" since they "accumulated great wealth . . . by direct or indirect connection with the export economy" and had "a privileged relationship" with the government (Gilbert 2017:54-55). Their ideological

outlook was what Bourricaud ([1967] 1970:201) famously called “creole liberalism”: they viewed the economy as a self-equilibrating system driven by the private pursuit of profits and opposed government interference. Peru’s oligarchy organized the Partido Civilista, which one oligarch’s son described as a party “comprised of merchants, lawyers, bankers, supreme court judges, presidents of San Marcos [University], and journalists knowledgeable about political affairs” (Miró Quesada Laos 1961:196).

In a word, during the late-19th and early-20th centuries, oligarchic elites tried to use the government as an *instrument* by means of which to ensure creole liberalism and pursue their primary commodity-exporting and banking ends. For them, the government was intended to be, and was, when they managed to hold power, essentially “a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie” (Marx and Engels [1848] 1978:475; see also Barrow 1993). The difficulty for them was they were vulnerable to external political-economic forces. Export booms, the conditions for which were out of their control, fortified these governments, giving them resources to fund national armies with which they were sometimes able to professionalize the military and pacify unruly masses (Gilbert 2017:58). By the same token, though, economic contraction was associated with political instability; oligarchic governments often fell during economic crises.

Things changed during the mid-20th century, and the instrumentalist view does not capture the ensuing relationship between economic elites and political power. A new configuration arose.⁴⁸ Within implicit limits, a properly political balance of forces prevailed. Indeed, this is probably in part because capitalists preferred it that way: it allowed them to focus on making money (cf. Gaspar and Valdés 1987:508, 515).

But it is also a somewhat puzzling phenomenon. Why didn’t the incumbents trounce the challengers? And what led the new challengers to converge rather than confront one another, new arrivals driving their predecessors out of power with force in an elite-level war of all against all?

⁴⁸ The bourgeoisie was very well organized, as regards *business* relations, on a formal and informal basis. In Mexico, for example, corporate board memberships facilitate a density of between-capitalist contacts that surpassed that of American capitalists (Camp 2002:59). Scholars inspired by Poulantzas have identified distinct fractions of the capitalist class (e.g., Gaspar and Valdés 1987:503-05). Nevertheless, as in the United States, Latin American capitalists tended not to pull the levers of government themselves during most of the 20th century (Gaspar and Valdés 1987:514). Indeed, it was not until the 1960s that Mexican capitalists even established a peak organization, the Mexican Council of Businessmen (CMHN), in part in response to a perception that then-president Adolfo López Mateos’s political agenda was too nationalist (Camp 2002:221). Once they had such organizations in place, if not before, capitalists certainly exercised a de facto veto power over unfavorable political decisions.

The challenge confronting students of modern Latin American political development is to explain why distinct fractions of the political elite, who would have naturally seen one another as antagonists, nevertheless oriented to one another agonistically during the mid-20th century, constituting an historically-aligned power bloc.

The explanations offered in the existing literature have met with some success for certain countries, but none succeeds at explaining elite politics in all three examined here. The alternative I develop performs well where the existing approaches succeed *and* where they fail. It involves showing how and explaining why different kinds of elites opposed but did not annihilate one another as they struggled to attain preeminence. The ensuing chapters comprising the rest of Part I demonstrate that this approach, in conjunction with the dynamics of mass clientelism, is suitable for the study of 20th-century Latin American mass politics. But before that, let me first explain why alternatives to such a theoretical alternative are *not* suitable, why a three-dimensional field approach *is*, and then outline the different kinds of elites who opposed one another in the respective political fields of the countries examined in subsequent chapters.

Existing Approaches

The existing literature offers three main approaches to conceptualizing the relationship between political elites: the compositional, networks, and cyclical approaches. Let me evaluate them in terms of how well each performs for Latin America.

Compositional

Perhaps the most prominent of the existing approaches involves following Moore (1966) in arguing that there are distinct elite classes, and that different combinations of them result in different kinds of regimes. Moore's approach proceeds by first parsing elites into bourgeois and agrarian elite classes and then observing whether the one, the other, or both control the government. The virtue of this approach is that the elite types and combinations thereof to which the theory points are closely associated with forceful predictions: when the bourgeoisie is preeminent, liberal democracy results; when the agrarian elite and bourgeoisie share power, the result is fascism. Its vice is that these predictions are almost certainly wrong about both the

social groups responsible for liberal democracy (Eley 2002; Rueschemeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992) and the origins of fascism (Mann 2004; Riley 2010). Moreover, due to Latin America's political-economic development, these classes were not really distinct in that region (Paige 1997:54-55; Schneider 2004:50 n. 45), making the approach inappropriate. After independence, export-oriented agriculture and mining prevailed and there was little industry, while foreign capital dominated much of the economy. In the aftermath of the Great Depression, Latin American governments adopted various policies to promote a domestic market and, to varying degrees, to promote industrialization by trying to spawn a national bourgeoisie, a suite of policies known as import-substituting industrialization (ISI).⁴⁹ These policies had very limited success at achieving their objectives, however. Indeed, they backfired: since in practice the approach involved importing labor-saving technology, the industrial sector failed to absorb a very large part of those who migrated from the countryside to cities in search of jobs (Dos Santos 1970).

The region's elite class structure did change over time, but since ISI failed to spawn a national bourgeoisie, for the most part, industrial and agrarian elites tended to interpenetrate well into the 20th century.⁵⁰ They were not distinct classes and regimes therefore did not vary principally as a function of elite composition. As opposed to capitalists and agrarians, groups of other descriptions occupied the arena of power during the 20th century. One way of breaking the variation down is to sort governments into exclusive, oligarchic and patrimonial regimes, on the one hand, and inclusive, labor-mobilizing and populist party-based ones, on the other (Roberts 2014:66-81). This approach is helpful for highlighting the ways the cases examined here were comparable, since Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela all arguably belong to the latter type of regime (Roberts 2014:78; more generally, see the discussion of "incorporation periods" in Collier and

⁴⁹ Tariffs and other barriers protected domestic industrialists from foreign competition; government subsidies and financing supplemented investment strategies; government-owned enterprises were established to compensate where domestic capitalists exhibited impotence; limits on foreign participation in the domestic economy made national economies the bailiwicks of national capitalists; and the manipulation of exchange rates helped facilitate the importation of otherwise-expensive machinery (Kingstone 2018:37-40).

⁵⁰ There was the definite possibility for a divergence of interests as regarded monetary policy, but not even this mapped directly onto a divide between industrial and agrarian elites. Urban industrialists' interests were for high tariffs, even if that meant weak currencies; agrarians preferred low tariffs and strong currencies when they sought to import farming equipment and weak currencies when exporting their goods. Hypothetically, industrialists preferred high tariffs, even if it meant weak currencies; however, they also sought to import machinery, making their interests align with those of agrarians.

Collier 1991). But by the same token, this conceptualization obscures both variation not captured by that distinction, like single- as opposed to two-party “populist” regimes (Mexico as opposed to Venezuela) and hybrids of the two types, like oligarchic holdovers in otherwise populist regimes (of which I think Peru is a case).

It is perfectly possible to proffer other group categories with which to both typologize and describe combinations, and in some ways the approach I pursue below resembles such a possibility. The more fundamental problem with Moore-type approaches is that types are a poor approximation of relations and composites are equally bad at capturing processes, and political development is nothing if not a question of relations in process.⁵¹

Networks

The *networks* approach in principal applies to all cases but has been applied most rigorously to Mexico. Its virtue is that it captures all the most important political elites in relationship to one another. Its vice lies in its inability to parse variation in the qualitative nature of the relationship between different kinds of political elites and its silence on questions of change which make it susceptible to confusing minuscule flux with monumental fracturing and vice-versa.

With reference to the Mexican case, the networks approach has been developed in considerable depth by Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996; Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 1999; Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 2005: chapter 1). These scholars argue that there were *two sub-networks* of the Mexican political elite between the 1920s and the 1980s—one based on *generals* who fought in the Mexican Revolution and the other based on officials who managed *financial* matters in various government posts—and that the latter replaced the former. After the presidential terms of generals Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) and Manuel Ávila Camacho (1940-1946) came the crucial presidency of Miguel Alemán (1946-

⁵¹ That is, while Moorian social science appears to borrow heavily from Marx due to embracing class categories of analysis, it is actually a form of Kantian Marxism insofar as it appeals to categories and compositions as explicantia rather than to relations and processes, as Hegelian Marxism does. Categories—like ideal types—are a poor conceptual basis on which to study change because they are inherently stylized, and thus already conjectural, and if one develops an additional concept of a trajectory between one conjecture and another, the distance from the concept and reality only grows (Knöbl 2022:135).

1952), who (in addition to support from generals) enjoyed support from and extended support to political operatives in key financial posts in the government. Gil Mendieta and Schmidt argue that this financially-oriented sub-network eventually gained power.⁵² This was no doubt the case during the presidency of Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988), the first president whose career “developed completely within the financial sector of the government” (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996:367). Gil Mendieta and Schmidt argue that this was also the case with his successor, Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994).⁵³ But the conclusion that one sub-network supplanted the other is difficult to sustain. Indeed, it can be argued that one of “the most notable feature[s] of the Salinas cabinet,” when compared to that of De la Madrid, “is its stronger ties to the military” (Camp 1990:104).⁵⁴

There are three big problems with the network approach. The first is *conceptual*: the idea that political elites were interconnected is a crude point of departure for a theoretical understanding of politics. And proceeding on this basis harbors unacceptable interpretive costs; specifically, viewing Mexican political elites as a single overarching network leads Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt to downplay the rupture of 1987-1988, when the PRI suffered a major split (see Chapter 6). Because they conceive of this monumental event as being fully contained within the network (after all, those who left and those who remained had had a relationship with one another), they view it as relatively unimportant:

“The hotly contested 1988 presidential election, in which two candidates from the network competed against each other, suggests that although something happened to the principles of discipline and hierarchy that gave so much reputation and strength to the Mexican political system, *the network was in control*[,] providing both major candidates.” (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996:368, emphasis added)

The inability to recognize 1987-1988 as a watershed—which Gil Mendieta and Schmidt later seem to implicitly concede⁵⁵—reveals the conceptual inadequacy of an approach which boils down to the idea that elites were interconnected.

⁵² Compared to general Ávila Camacho’s government, the civilian president Alemán more than halved the number of military officials who held high office during his term (Camp 1984:198 n. 79).

⁵³ They say Salinas left “no doubt about the political control of the financial sub-network and its continuation in power” (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996:367).

⁵⁴ Specifically, the Salinas government’s Secretary of Governance, Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios, was “the first graduate of the Heroic Military College to hold a nonmilitary cabinet post” since the Diaz Ordaz administration (Camp 1990:104).

⁵⁵ In an earlier version of one of their essays, Gil Mendieta and Schmidt write that “la sucesión presidencial fue

The second problem with the networks approach concluding that one sub-network replaced the other is *empirical*: both sub-networks factored into most elite-political developments from 1952 to 1982, as evidence Gil Mendieta and Schmidt themselves furnish shows (but not as they conclude).⁵⁶ The network of generals, extending from the revolution forward in time, was behind almost *all* presidents until the 1980s. Miguel Alemán (1946-1952) was the first civilian to hold office since the Mexican Revolution. Alemán thus represented something of a rupture with the preceding pattern. However, following Alemán was President Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958), who had not only served in the military but also enjoyed the support of generals Miguel Henríquez and Cándido Aguilar during his pre-candidacy (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996:359). His successor, Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964), also enjoyed “connections with different components of the network, including generals,” as well as “connections with the Alemán group” (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996:364). They say that Luis Echeverría (1970-1976) “seems to be the last one to clearly enjoy military support” (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996:365). But they also say the military continued to be important for his successor, José López Portillo (1976-1982), since he occupied “the intersection connecting both sub-networks” (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996:367; see also 2005:37). Thus while Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt argue that the financial sub-network replaced the generals-based one, the bulk of the evidence is that the latter held its own amidst the former for several decades. In sum, the only concrete empirical insight the networks approach furnishes is that political elites were interconnected. Specifically, after Cárdenas, Alemán became the foremost central political actor during the middle decades of the 20th century (Gil Mendieta, Schmidt, Castro, and Ruiz 1997: table 1; see also Gil, Schmidt, and Castro 1993).

apoyada hasta 1982 por políticos que aceptaron el proceso de selección y su resultado, y se mantenían leales al candidato del PRI” (1999:4). In a later version of the essay—included in a collection of essays which they describe as previously-published work (2005:17)—they add to the statement, saying “la sucesión presidencial fue apoyada hasta 1982 por políticos que aceptaron el proceso de selección y su resultado, y se mantenían leales al candidato del PRI, lo que se alteró en 1988 y ocasionó una fractura en el partido” (2005:30, emphasis added). In another earlier essay they also stress 1987-1988 as a rupture (Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 1999:40, 91-92). On balance, though, they equivocate on the point. Among other essays in the later collection of their research, they assert both that the 1987-1988 events did not fracture the Mexican political system (2005:135) and that they did mark a rupture between the two sub-networks (2005:137).

⁵⁶ Rath (2013) also argues that the military remained highly influential in 20th-century Mexico.

The third problem with the networks approach is that *neither* sub-network, nor both sub-networks combined, can account for some of the change, namely the advent of the Gustavo Díaz Ordaz presidency (1964-1970), which marked the beginning of a watershed in Mexican politics. Díaz Ordaz was in power when Mexico experienced some of its most politically tumultuous days since the 1930s, and he survived relatively unscathed, revealing the robustness of the political system. And yet he was insufficiently powerful to install a Mexico City mayor of his choosing, instead reappointing Ernesto Uruchurtu in that office “in what most saw as a concession to Alemán’s allies” (Davis 1994:164). What accounts for the advent and puzzling combination of strength and weakness of the Díaz Ordaz government? Díaz Ordaz shared a clique with Alemán (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996:371), but Alemán does not explain his ascent because he initially threw his weight behind the presidential pre-candidacy of Antonio Ortiz Mena *instead* of Díaz Ordaz. Nor were the generals closely linked to Díaz Ordaz. This man was supported by no one but nevertheless firmly ensconced in power. This combination of strength and weakness was definitive of Mexican politics, and the networks approach cannot furnish an explanation for it.

Cyclical

Cyclical approaches to the study of the relationships between political elites come in two varieties: those which emphasize pendulum-like oscillations and those which dwell on the replacement of an earlier generation of elites with a later one. Both are influential among students of Mexico and Venezuela. The virtue of cyclical theory is that it captures both persistent diversity, like the compositional approach, and ongoing dynamics, which both the compositional and the networks approaches fail to capture. Its vice is, in the case of the pendulum variant, that it fails to explain the pendulum’s “pivot,” which alone explains why inertia can be expressed in a back-and-forth motion, due to its excessive focus on the “bob,” where the oscillatory political effects can be observed; and, in the case of the elite-generations variant, its vice is that it fails to reveal over-time convergence between the generations. In other words, it does not explain *why* there is any cohesion at all—which makes it the opposite of the networks approach.

The pendulum variant argues that, when there are at least two viable political parties or party factions, the right- and left-wing ones will alternate in and out of power. (This idea resembles thinking prominent in Polanyian social theory about the inevitability of a “double

movement” response to liberal excesses and from median voter theories of electoral politics which posit that serious political parties hew towards the political center.) Applied to the Mexican case, the “pendulum” interpretation argues that the PRI moved its policy appeals from left to right and vice-versa to furnish policy responses to voters’ demands (Needler 1971:47-49; Cornelius and Craig 1991:39-40). Agustín Salvat, who organized youth support for President Manuel Ávila Camacho’s 1940 presidential campaign and then served on the PRI’s secretary of finances from 1952 to 1964 (Camp 2011:873), characterized Mexican politics as constantly oscillating: “Political life is like a pendulum in Mexico, [swinging] from one extreme to another” (quoted in Camp 1984:143). Some students of Mexican politics take Salvat’s comment to heart, characterizing the entire 1934-2000 period as a series of pendulum-swings (Greene 2007:73-96), but this characterization is based on partially-fabricated quantitative data.⁵⁷

Students of both Mexico, Peru,⁵⁸ and Venezuela⁵⁹ advocate the elite-generations variant of the cyclical approach.⁶⁰ Its virtue, to reiterate, is that it tracks undeniable change over time. Its vice is that it fails to account for the positive relationship between groups who replace one another, which makes it especially suitable for describing decline-and-fall dynamics but poor at explaining the rise to power of political elites.

Camp (2002:250-51) advances a generations-based account of for the fall of the PRI centering on generations he calls “traditional politicians” and “upstart technocrats,” respectively (Camp 2002:238).⁶¹ There are two components. The first is demographic in nature. All presidents

⁵⁷ This is my conclusion based on correspondence with Kenneth Greene (16 September and 13 October 2021), in which he stated that he guessed about datapoints for 1934 and 1940, and from Kathleen Bruhn (8 November 2021), who shared the data upon which Greene supposedly drew, which contrast with the “data” Greene presents in his book (Greene 2007: figure 3.1) for 1949, 1952, and 1958. Greene’s characterization of Mexican politics as a series of oscillations thus has little relationship to evidence until the 1960s.

⁵⁸ Gilbert (2017:108) views the rift in the Partido Civilista between the Pardo wing and the Aspillaga wing (see Chapter 3) as a between-generations dispute wholly internal to the elite. This is an example of how the generations view captures a perennial source of intraelite conflict: the “young Turks” phenomenon, wherein an ambitious newer generation supplants a sclerotic older one.

⁵⁹ See Martz (1964) on the “generation of 1928.”

⁶⁰ Gil Mendieta and Schmidt eventually dropped the idea of two sub-networks and explored the idea of three distinct generations (Gil Mendieta, Schmidt, Castro, and Ruiz 1997).

⁶¹ He also uses the concept of generations to refer to politicians influenced by the revolution and those relatively uninfluenced by the revolution (Camp 1984:38-40) and those influenced by José Vasconcelos’s and Manuel Ávila Camacho’s respective bids for the presidency (Camp 1984:45-46).

in office between 1958 and 1988 (from López Mateos to De la Madrid) were born between 1910 and 1929. Important events took place during their childhoods (the Revolution, the Cristero revolt) and formative years (the nationalization of the petroleum industry, the pacification of national politics) (Camp 2002:230-31). But starting in 1988 with Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the new crop of presidents was born after 1945. The latter leaders came of age in a vastly-different context from that of their predecessors. On the international level, the Cold War had seen the U.S. government ramp up its hostility towards Cuba and interfere in the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran revolutionary civil wars (Camp 2002:232). At the domestic level, the economy grew significantly during the economic “miracle” starting in the 1950s, but there was no substantial improvement of workers’ purchasing power (Camp 2002:232). And if the 1968 student massacre failed to shake their confidence in tried-and-true approaches to governing Mexico, the fact that they witnessed economic crises in 1976, 1982, 1986, and 1994-1995 probably did (Camp 2002:233). Seen from this perspective, Camp argues, Salinas represented a watershed in large measure simply because he hailed from a younger generation (Camp 2002:231).

The second component of his account centers on mentoring and recruitment. In general, Camp argues, Mexico’s political elite of 1970-2000 was “overwhelmingly the product of elite mentors” (Camp 2002:21), that is, people who influenced their “career choice, professional and ideological values, and professional achievements” (Camp 2002:26). Educational experiences were especially important; a full 61 percent of his sample of politicians had benefitted from the mentorship of their university professors, who often boosted their political careers (Camp 2002: table 6).

But mentors did not have solutions to all problems, and mentees did not blindly follow their mentors’ respective approaches to politics. Thus, the older generation’s incorporation of newer actors into the ruling elite, largely in an effort to facilitate continuity, ended up having the opposite effect, ushering in political change—since the new generation, hailing from a different set of experiences, weighed in on politics differently than their predecessors. Thus, after the older generation of political elites had incorporated their mentees, this younger generation of political elites pushed for liberalization. As Camp (2002:238-39) puts it, “the technocrats up-staged Mexico’s traditional politicians in the 1980s.” While technocrats only sought to liberalize the economy, the argument is that by pursuing major changes they essentially opened the floodgates to political change as well.

The problem with this account is that it is at odds with a conception of the political elite according to which they shared anything in common. It is powerful approach for explaining change. But because it downplays convergence, the change it references is in regards to people who just happen to occupy positions of government, not social changes that shape the prospects of exercising and potential to exercise power. It thereby fails to capture the change of interest by failing to treat political elites *as* elites.

The Three-Dimensional Field

At root in the shortcomings of the existing approaches is a failure to account for why the fractions of the political elite agreed to orient to one another when they disagreed about fundamental political questions. A descriptive solution is to view the political arena as a field rather than a composite group, network, or cycle. Yet whereas the generic analytic category of “field” is typically defined as a social space in which actors disagree on particulars but agree on fundamentals, as I argued in the Introduction, the *political field* is best described as the reverse: a social space in which distinct fractions of the political elite agree on particulars in spite of their disagreement about fundamentals. A modified field-theoretic approach thus facilitates explanations for why political elites who disagree about so much else—who are essentially enemies (Schmitt [1932] 2007)—nevertheless orient to one another agonistically.

The field approach maintains that political elites compete with and periodically supplant one another (changes of the guard which some view as cycles) because they are comprised of mutually-opposed fractions—in Mexico, they are called *camarillas*, each of which promoted a different political agenda (leading some to mistake them for different classes, when in fact their origins traced to different phases of post-revolutionary reconstruction, for which reason others view them as generations)—who nevertheless interact with one another agonistically in and around government (thus making them amenable to depiction as a network).

Elite Cleavages

Let me detail the two top-level political elite groups who competed with one another in the countries examined here.

Liberals and Conservatives

One major elite cleavage—between Liberals and Conservatives—stretched back to independence. A series of major social, ideological, and economic changes accompanied the break with the colonial system and rise of independent nation-states. With the fall of the colonial order, economic elites who were most closely associated with the Spanish crown lost influence and a new economic elite, principally comprised of Englishmen, came to dominate commercial activity. Parallel to this process, domestic groups who had been subjugated under the colonial system—especially creole traders and large landlords, often somewhat indistinguishable from one another—began to wield political power (Bértola and Ocampo 2012:70).

Over the course of the 19th century, these domestic elites polarized into Liberal and Conservative camps. Liberals, who had the upper hand immediately after independence and saw themselves as the standard-bearers of independent politics, tended to defend commercial and political freedoms, to prefer the separation of Church and government, oftentimes with anticlerical fervor, and to favor republican and federated forms of government based on the principle of equality (for some) before the law. Conservatives, who took several decades to coalesce as an elite fraction, tended to defend existing hierarchies and privileges, to think the Church should continue to play a prominent role in society, at least as regarded social policy, and to advocate centralized government—and, in the case of 19th-century Mexico, even favored a constitutional monarchy headed by Maximilian von Hapsburg (Smith 1979:29). Both camps shared the view that the government should play a very limited role in the economy and that there was little to no room for the masses to participate in political affairs; they felt that mass political participation could pose a greater threat to private property than the relegation of political power to a small group of military officials (Bértola and Ocampo 2012:70-71).

The 20th-century transition to mass politics invariably impacted these elites. In Mexico, Liberalism definitively gained the upper hand over Conservatism during the Reform War of 1858-1861 and the Mexican Revolution and its aftermath, which was stridently anticlerical. Specifically, suppression of the Cristero rebellion, a Catholic revolt, resulted in “a significant residue of mutual distrust and resentment on the part of the clergy, secular elites, and the officer corps” (Camp 1997:28). The Church considered ensuing relations with political and military elites so icy that they established a major seminary in New Mexico in 1937 (Camp 2002:114)

and, during the 1930s and 1940s, tried to isolate students from social and political affairs. A constitutional prohibition against priests and nuns voting remained in effect until 1992 (Camp 2002:168).

But Conservatism was not vanquished everywhere. In Colombia, Conservatives trounced Liberals in the 19th-century civil wars. This essentially muted mass politics in the 20th century. The economy remained predominantly agrarian. The country urbanized relatively slowly. And the traditional political parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives, were elite-orchestrated electoral alliances, not mass parties. In Venezuela, in contrast, the 19th-century civil wars endured much longer, ruining the traditional elite, and Liberals won a series of decisive battles, setting Conservatives back relative to Colombia (Levine 1981:58-59). The Church tried to build itself up again during the first decades of the 20th century (Levine 1973:32-33). Meanwhile, though, with the discovery of oil, the national government secured considerable revenues. This was sufficient to support a standing army, which wiped out regional militarism, to take control of what social services existed, like welfare and education, and to accelerate economic change and urban growth, supporting the transition to mass political involvement (Levine 1981:59-61). Meanwhile, both reconstructed Liberals and Conservatives reconciled themselves to mass politics.

Caudillos and Oligarchs

The early-republican period was characterized by internecine warfare among the generals who had fought for independence and a variety of other militaristic opportunists. These warriors, known as *caudillos*, had regional strongholds from which they launched campaigns to secure the presidential seat, leading to a rapid succession of warlord-presidents for the first several decades of the 19th century (Langley 1996:255-60). Then, by the late-19th and early-20th centuries, primary commodity and agricultural exporting opportunities gave rise to a new class of elites, the *oligarchy*,⁶² which, to ensure a propitious investment climate, had more of an interest in national-

⁶² I use the term “oligarchy” because it is the convention in Latin American studies, especially in Peruvian studies. There is a debate about the origins and nature of the Peruvian “oligarchy”—namely, some argue a group of people rooted in Peru ruled the territory from the late-19th to mid-20th century and call this group the “oligarchy” (Bourricaud [1964] 1969; Favre 1969) while others argue that imperialist interests really dominated Peruvian affairs during that time so the term, which seems to designate domestic rather than international forces, is misleading (Bravo Bresani [1966] 1969)—but it does not bear directly upon the argument advanced here about the political

level policymaking.⁶³ They found the turbulence of *caudillo* rule a nuisance and, in some cases, preferred civilian rule as a means of harmonizing their interests as regarded monetary and other policy matters.

Both *caudillos* and oligarchs were by and large descendants of the Liberals, albeit somewhat half-hearted ones who also amalgamated features of Conservative traditionalism such as a preference for hierarchical deference.⁶⁴ They subscribed to different principles—regional autonomy versus central control—and thus had a difficult time getting along politically, the one often preferring more military spending and the preservation of warrior customs and the other fiscal “responsibility” and military professionalization. These differences made elite convergence difficult, though not impossible, for *caudillos* and oligarchs. In Mexico, Porfirio Díaz hybridized the *caudillo* and oligarchic forms of rule, retaining power for an exceptionally long time, until the Mexican Revolution. In Peru no hybrid was feasible. These elite groups remained largely separate, and elite politics was especially turbulent as a result.

Reformers and Developmentalists

In addition to the 19th-century independence revolutions, some Latin American countries—namely Mexico and Cuba—experienced major 20th-century revolutions. In such cases, the legacy of revolution can itself give rise to an elite cleavage with reformers who seek to ride the wave of profound social upheaval on one side and developmentalists who try to stem these processes and channel them into government-aided capitalist development on the other. Cuba and Mexico contrast as regards which of these elite fractions prevailed: whereas in the former, reformers won out, giving rise to a scenario of permanent revolution (i.e., a socialist

differences between this group and *caudillos*, on the one hand, and mass groups and classes, on the other.

⁶³ Oligarchs were not nationalists, but instead family-oriented clan leaders. As Gilbert (2017:15) explains, “oligarchic enterprises were family enterprises. Oligarchic careers were shaped by family needs. Oligarchic political strategies were family strategies, built around family interests. Those who dealt with the oligarchs in politics or business thought of them as representatives of their kin.” They were patently *not* intent on nation-building in the inclusionary sense of the term. But they *were* interested in national policy insofar as it affected the investment climate, which is why they competed with the *caudillos*.

⁶⁴ Mexico’s Antonio López de Santa Anna was technically a Liberal, but while he was in power he “was anathema to them, negotiating loans with the clergy and forging an alliance with the army and with powerful hacendados [landowners]” in his effort to pacify the civil war (Langley 1996:258).

revolution in a country with relatively little capitalist industrial development, following soon after a nationalist revolution), in the latter, developmentalists eventually triumphed, halting the revolutionary process. In the meantime, though, in Mexico developmentalists had to meet reformers where they were at, which meant that the primary cleavage in Mexico was that between developmentalists and reformers. Both fractions of the political elite were organized into informal umbrella groups known as a *camarillas*.⁶⁵

There were two main *camarillas* in post-revolutionary Mexico to which “most [other] significant *camarillas*” could be traced, namely, that of Lázaro Cárdenas and that of Miguel Alemán (Camp 1990:105). Cárdenas’s *camarilla* (the *camarilla cardenista*) was associated with Cárdenas’s major reforms, including his agrarian reform and nationalization of the petroleum industry. Following Lázaro Cárdenas, his son Chauhtémoc inherited the leadership of the *camarilla cardenista*. Miguel Alemán headed the other main *camarilla* (the *camarilla alemanista*). Alemán was the consummate post-revolutionary professional politician (Camp 1990:92). (But although he lived for politics, he also lived off politics, benefitting economically from deals his political power made available to him [Niblo 1999]). His *camarilla* was associated with industrialization and developmentalism. *Camarillas* disagreed, in that they opposed one another and wanted to steer the political machinery in different directions, but they did not orient to one another as enemies per se. Their relationship was agonistic, not antagonistic. Thus, when a particular trial to acquire the levers of power was met with failure, those who failed did not advocate open conflict.⁶⁶ Instead, “the *camarillas* that lost an electoral competition waited peacefully until the next contest, while they tried to regroup and secure new political positions” (Gil et al. 1993:104). These groups “compete[d] for power,” but they did so within limits; consequently, rather than escalate into elite conflict, their competition “[gave] stability to the political system” (Gil, Schmidt, and Castro 1993:103).

⁶⁵ It is possible to combine the generations and *camarillas* interpretations of Mexican politics. Thus, Camp (1990:90) argues that there were three generations that contributed to contemporary *camarillas*: “the generations of the post-revolutionary political class, represented by Generals Plutarco Elias Calles and Alvaro Obregón (1880-1899); the civilian post-revolutionary generation (1900-1919), represented by President Miguel Alemán; and the grandchild generation, represented by Presidents José López Portillo and Miguel de la Madrid.” But this is to obscure what makes the focus on *camarillas* distinctive.

⁶⁶ The exception to this rule describes *camarillas* that entered into abeyance, such as the *henriquistas*.

Camarilla membership was one of the most important conditions of entry to the political field. It was a precondition to—though not a guarantor of—political power. For individuals to be politically successful, just as for *camarillas* to be successful, *camarillas* grew. Relative upstarts and seasoned operatives alike tried to become known commodities and to make a good impression to *camarilla* heads, since the latter took a passive approach, seeking to be “*impressed* with a peer’s performance, an older politician’s experience, or typically a younger figure’s potential,” and to enlist the impressive person into his⁶⁷ *camarilla* accordingly (Camp 1990:101, emphasis added). By the same token, promising individuals naturally drifted away from *camarillas* perceived to be unsuccessful and towards ones they thought would fare well (Camp 1990:106). For these reasons, *camarillas* shifted and changed over time. The result was that, as regards the people who comprised them, *camarillas* were not completely mutually-exclusive (Camp 1990:105).⁶⁸ One way to make a good impression to someone with the ability to recruit to a *camarilla* was naturally to appear to enjoy or know how to get support from important mass groups. And among those more firmly ensconced in a *camarilla*, support was also prestigious. This was the case regardless of the *camarilla* to which we refer.

Moreover, since abiding requests for subordination portended success in their competition with one another via a desirable base of support, recognition of the urban poor’s denizen status was attractive to both *camarillas*. Agreeing on a common strategy by which to oppose one another—agreeing that mass clientelism was a source of political capital—drew the *camarillas* into partial alignment, a degree of overtime convergence which made them an historically-aligned power bloc. In part on this basis, the *cardenista* and *alemanista camarillas* both coincided in the PRI without major splits and, more importantly, alternated in and out of power, for several decades.

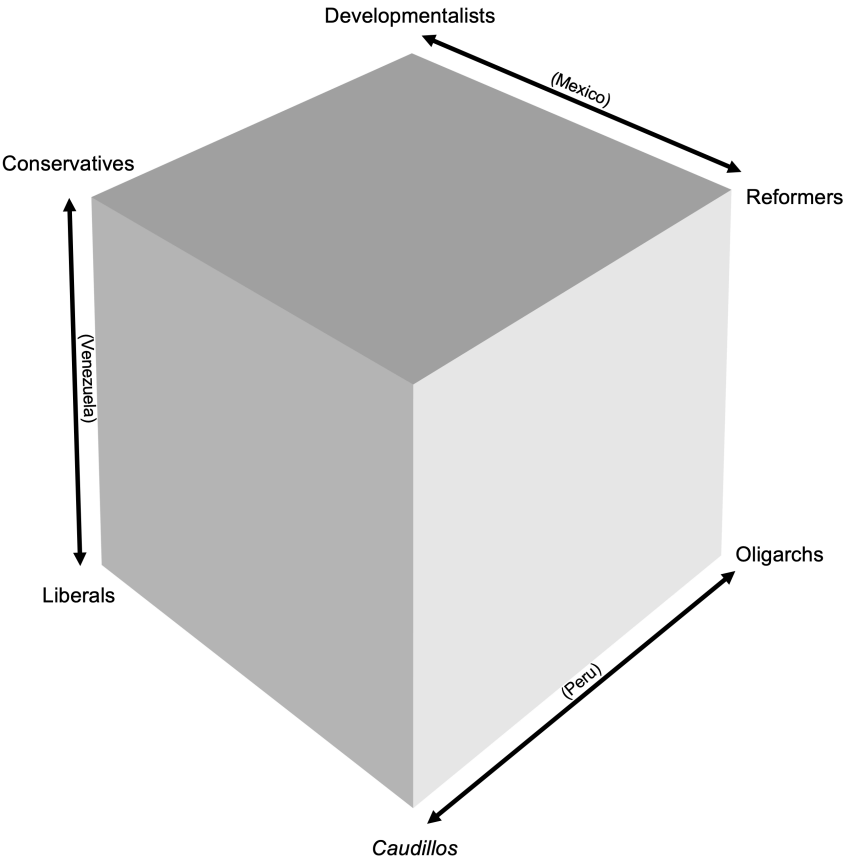
⁶⁷ All *camarillas* were dominated by men.

⁶⁸ Indeed, there was even some overlap between Cárdenas’s and Alemán’s actual administrations: Ramón Beteta served as both Cárdenas’s assistant secretary of Foreign Affairs and Alemán’s Treasury secretary (Camp 1990:95).

Synthesis

Elites disagreed about the nature of the political future they sought after Spain lost control of Hispanic America. Decolonization was itself a centrifugal event, leading a loosely unified colonial system to fracture into 15 separate countries. During the course of the 19th century, one fraction of the elite (often called *caudillos*), typically based in the countryside, sought continued decentralization. Against them stood a variety of opposing elite fractions, based in urban centers, who had ambitions of reversing the fragmentation process via different kinds of centralization. This rural-urban cleavage, undeniably important for a time, receded as the centralizing urban elites gained the upper hand, at least as regarded setting the national policy agenda. But there was significant variation within the urban-based, nation-building political elite. As a result, several major elite cleavages structured the political field by the advent of mass politics, e.g., Conservative/Liberal, *caudillo*/oligarch, and reformer/developmentalist. These are summarized in Figure 1.1. There was a cleavage *between* each distinct pair of elite fractions, each axis representing a disagreement about political fundamentals. Some sort of practical solution to this fundamental disagreement was a major prerequisite to nation-building in the respective countries. It was forthcoming, I argue, because the fractions on both sides converged on an orientation to benevolent mass clientelism, an orientation borne of urban concentration.

Figure 1.1. The Latin American political field, axes representing principal elite cleavages

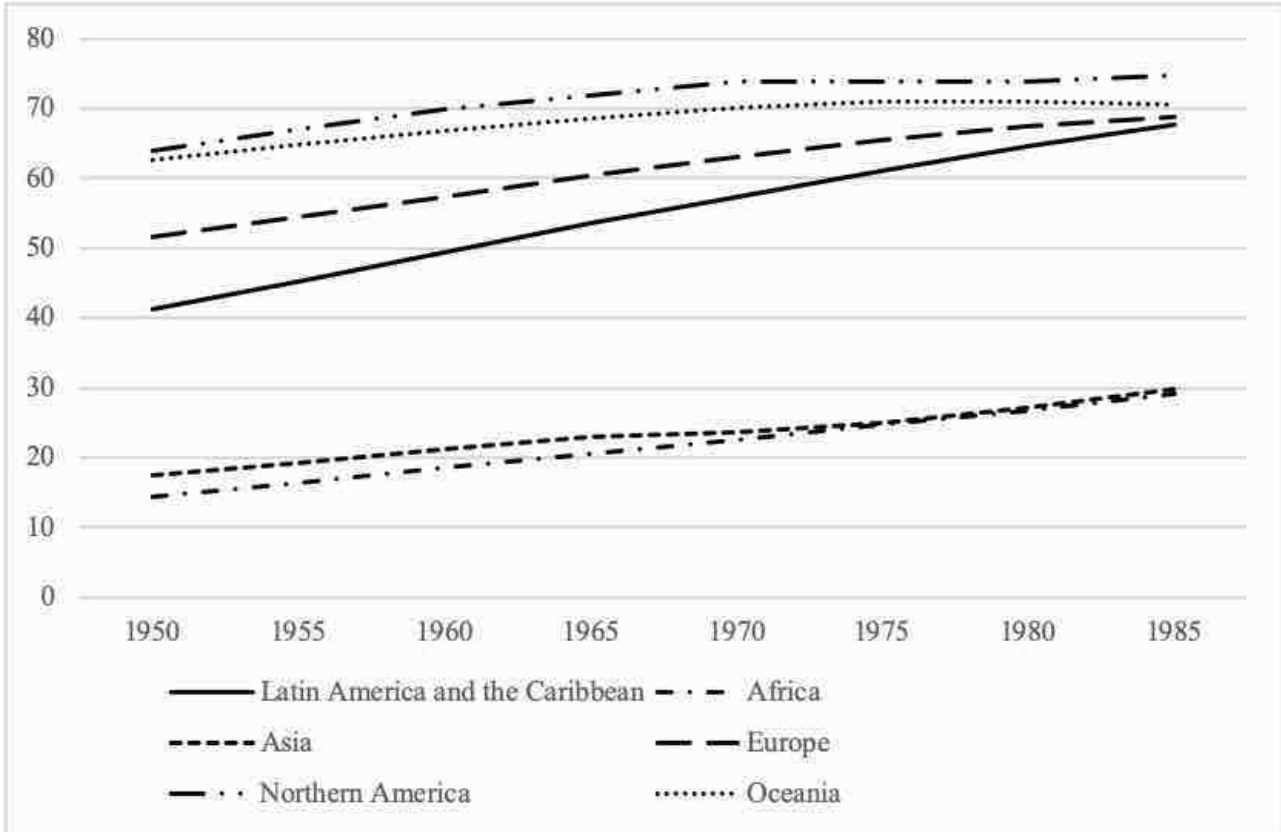


Source: the author.

Urban Growth

Urbanization is, by definition, concentrated in cities; in 20th-century Latin America, it was concentrated in *capital* cities (Bernard et al. 2017:3; Koth, Silva, and Dietz 1965:14). Moreover, not only was it the case that “urban growth in Latin America was more rapid than that of the advanced industrial world in its comparable period of growth” (Roberts and de Oliveira 1995:256). It was also the case that Latin America led the world in terms of urban growth during its boom period, as Figure 1.2 shows.

Figure 1.2. Percentage of population living in cities, by world region, 1950-1985



Source: the author, based on United Nations (2014).

Drivers of Urban Growth

What caused the urban growth that took place in most Latin American countries and in a number of others, including Turkey, the Philippines, and India? Some argue that industrialization attracted rural-dwellers to the city. It is true that many rural-to-urban migrants got industrial and other manual jobs upon arriving to the city.⁶⁹ But this does not seem to have been the main driver of urban concentration per se. In the Mexican case, there are both spatial and temporal reasons we should not consider this the main driver of urban concentration. Spatially, more of Mexico’s textile workers were in Puebla (25 percent) and Veracruz (22 percent) than in Mexico City (16

⁶⁹ In the case of Peru, 56.9 percent of men and 74.1 percent of women who migrated to Lima during the 1956-1965 period acquired “manual” jobs (Alers and Appelbaum 1968:38).

percent) by 1910 (Lear 2001:59). So if industrial employment patterns drove rural-to-urban migration, it would have been somewhat attenuated in Mexico City and more significant elsewhere in the years thereafter; in fact, however, it targeted Mexico City. Temporally, there was also a mismatch. Industrial takeoff in Mexico City started in earnest only in the late-1940s and 1950s. But squatter settlement growth had already ramped up over the course of the late-1930s and early-1940s (Perló Cohen 1979:797-98); this was, in part, because of what economists call “market failure”: by the early-1930s, apartments already cost “significantly more than the average monthly salary” (Vitz 2018:166). In Peru, rural-to-migrants often reported economic considerations as chief among motivations to migrate (Alers and Appelbaum 1968:12-13). But Lima’s earliest squatter settlements date to the 1920s and 1930s, prior to the country’s half-hearted attempts to industrialize (Matos Mar 2012:79-86). Thus, just as with the *colonias proletarias* in Mexico City, the initial growth of Lima’s *barriadas* cannot be explained by industrialization. So urban concentration cannot be fully attributed to industrialization. There was, however, a relationship between the two: the prospect of industrial and related jobs was a major reason rural-to-urban migrants flocked to major cities—such as Mexico City, where they often did end up finding such jobs, and to Lima, where they often did not—even though it was not the main reason.⁷⁰

Case studies often point to case-specific factors. Students of Mexico, for example, suggest that the rural violence characterizing the 1910-1917 Mexican Revolution the wave of urban growth (Cruz Rodríguez 2004:381; González Navarro 1974:176, 253; Lear 2001:304).⁷¹ However, this argument is not very convincing because as early as 1910 half the population was already made up of rural-to-urban migrants (Lear 2001:259) and most urban concentration took place well after the revolutionary war had ended. The argument seems to say more about the stature of revolutions in the mind of the analyst than it does explain urban concentration. Accordingly, students of Peru sometimes claim that the failure of revolutionary transformation in the Peruvian countryside drove the rural poor to migrate to Lima (Matos Mar 2012:44). Some Mexicanists also see second-order implications of the Mexican Revolution as drivers of urban

⁷⁰ The availability of cheap labor power was a boon to Mexico City’s industrialists, leading some to call the mid-20th century pursuit of ISI “urbanization-led industrialization” (Davis 1994:21).

⁷¹ See Perló Cohen (1979:797-98) for a dissenting view.

growth. Cárdenas expropriated a considerable amount of land in the Federal District and converted it into commonly-held agricultural estates (*ejidos*) and communal land.⁷² The argument is that this put pressure on the pool of land available for urban development, exacerbating demand for the remaining land (Davis 1994:94), serving to increase land resale values and edge the urban poor out of the market, leaving them with few alternatives to squatting. The problem with this explanation is that Mexico's agrarian reform was unique to that country, whereas the mid-20th century proliferation of squatter settlements was a more general phenomenon seemingly in need of a more general explanation.

While there are many possible causal pathways that can result in urban concentration, one seems especially important: national agrarian political economies became increasingly bound to international markets, and this meant that the post-depression, and especially post-war, economic boom had a major impact on agrarian relations. Agrarian elites usurped smallholders' land and applied a huge amount of pressure on agrarian laborers. This, in turn, simultaneously undermined the peasantry's sustainability, motivated the rural poor to escape the countryside, and gave them the means (money income and transportation infrastructure) to seek a better life in the city (Singer 1973; Williams 1986). That is, the mid-20th-century agro-export boom propelled urban concentration.

Political Elites' Short-Lived Opposition to Urban Concentration

Political elites responded to urban growth in general and urban concentration in particular in a variety of ways. One was to demolish squatter settlements. Before the era of mass clientelism, Venezuelan political elites opted to demolish squatter settlements in a so-called "war on *ranchos* [squatter settlements]." Outside the region, other governments, like that of the Philippines, sometimes demolished squatter settlements as well (Garrido 2019:63). In Mexico, even after the revolution—the definitive beginning of mass politics in that country—the government sometimes razed squatter settlements. Nevertheless, demolition was nearly futile in the face of urban concentration.

⁷² According to Perló Cohen (1981:14), the Cárdenas-era expropriations converted 821 square kilometers—54.8 percent of the Federal District's 1,499 square kilometers—into *ejidos* and communal lands. According to Cruz Rodríguez (2004:379), the total was 70 percent of DF's land.

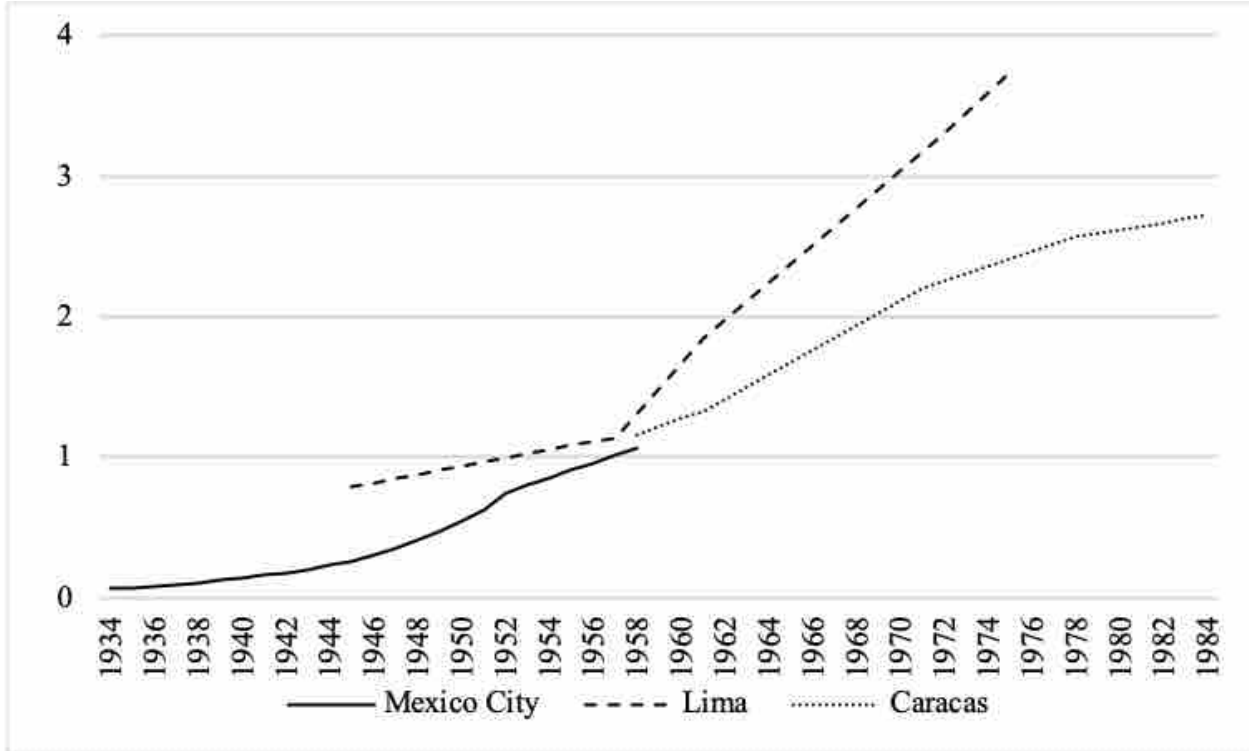
Another reaction was to promote return migration. In Venezuela, during the dawn of the mass-politics era, the political elite developed a return migration scheme, angling to compel rural-to-urban migrants to turn around and make themselves over into urban-to-rural ones (Myers 1978:246). They were unable to sustain the initiative, however. Peruvian political elites did the same during the era of mass politics (Collier 1976:89; Cotler 1970:97), as did some governments outside the Latin American region. In the Philippines, the government gave squatters one-way bus tickets to the provinces, a piece of agrarian land, and some training in farming techniques (Garrido 2019:62). But just as with demolitions, so too were return migration schemes futile in the face of urban concentration.

Such initiatives never really got off the ground in Latin America. Nor did they approximate South Africa's de-urbanization through forced removals, which was the only country in which governing officials were capable of reducing the size of the urban population (Mamdani 1996:102). Eventually, Latin American political elites acquiesced to urban concentration, and even recognized squatter settlements by presidential decree and legislative action. Recognition, in turn, is thought to have encouraged even more squatters to settle in Lima (Calderón Cockburn 2005). A similar dynamic characterized Manila (Garrido 2019:71). The fundamental cause, though, was the pressure put on the agrarian sector, as described above. Regardless, the result was the same: a proliferation of squatter settlements.

The Magnitude of Urban Concentration

Figure 1.3 charts the estimated number of squatters who lived in each of the cities examined in the following three chapters during the respective periods of study. It shows that there was steady and significant growth in the number of squatters in each case.

Figure 1.3. Squatter settlement growth by case and period of study (in millions)



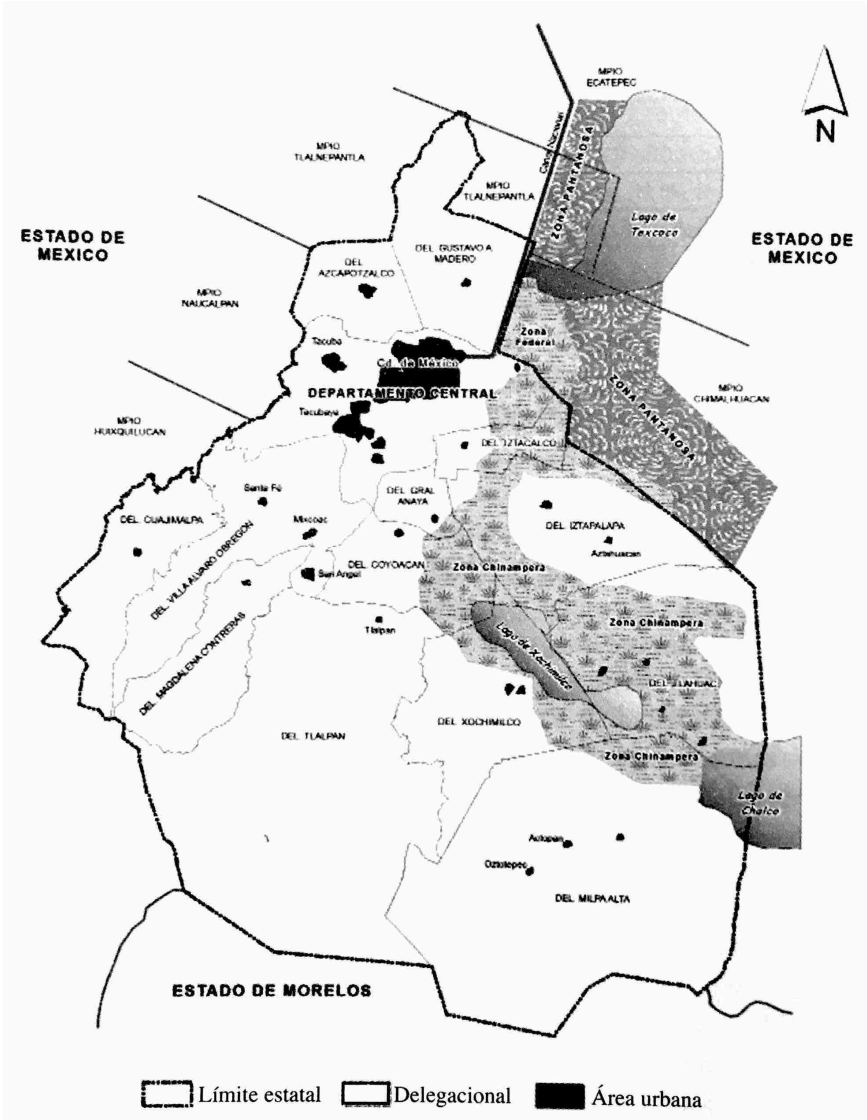
Sources: Calderón Cockburn (2005: table 6.1); Cymet (1955:68-73); FUNDACOMUN (1978b: n.p.); Gilbert (1998: table 5.1); Matos Mar (1977: tables 4, 5); Matos Mar (2012: table 1, 118); Myers (1978: table 2).

Note: Extreme values interpolated linearly. For Mexico City, early years are interpolated based on the assumption that all settlements had linear growth from the year they were established (as reported in Cymet 1955) until 1952, when their respective populations were censused.

The built-up area of each of the cities examined here grew significantly as a result. Maps 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 depict the growth of Mexico City from 1929 to the 1970s. Maps 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 depict the growth of Lima’s squatter settlements from 1954 to 1986.⁷³ And Map 1.7 depicts the growth of Caracas from 1948 to the 1970s.

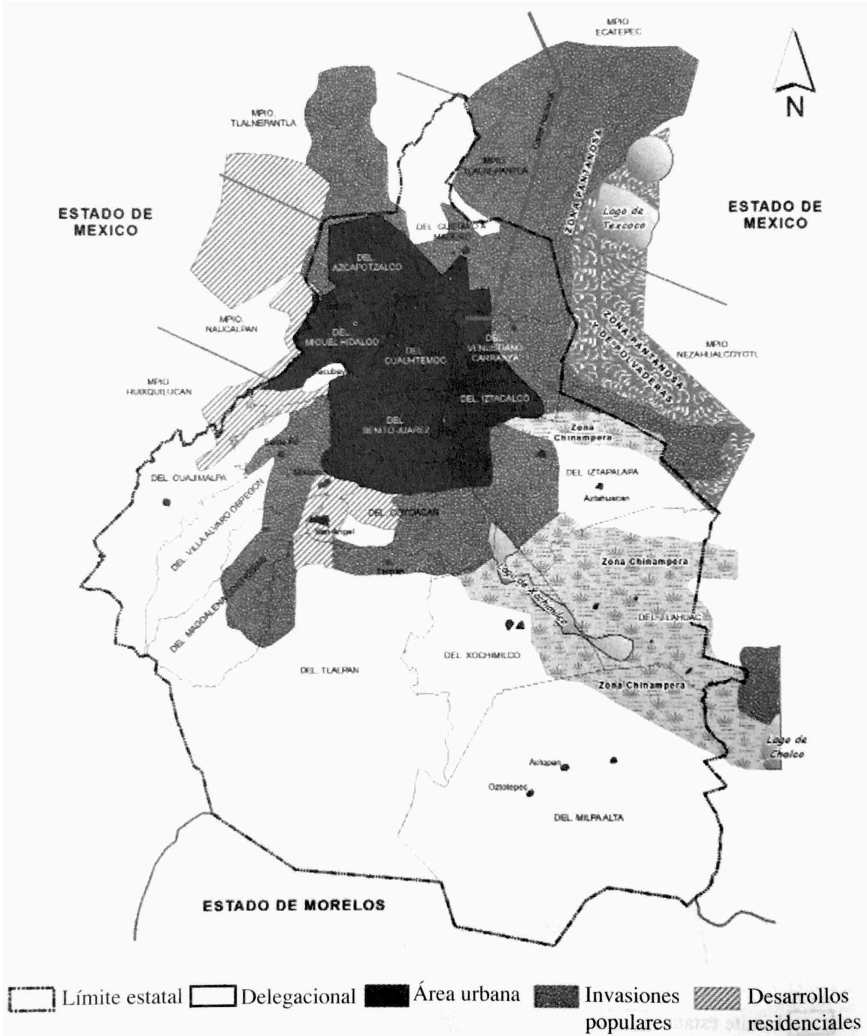
⁷³ According to the neoliberal thinktank Instituto Libertad y Democracia, Lima comprised 3,500 hectares in 1940, whereas in 1986 it had an official area of 28,000 hectares plus an additional informal area of 13,500 hectares (Instituto Libertad y Democracia 1989: table 14).

Map 1.1. Mexico City's built-up area and its squatter settlements, 1929



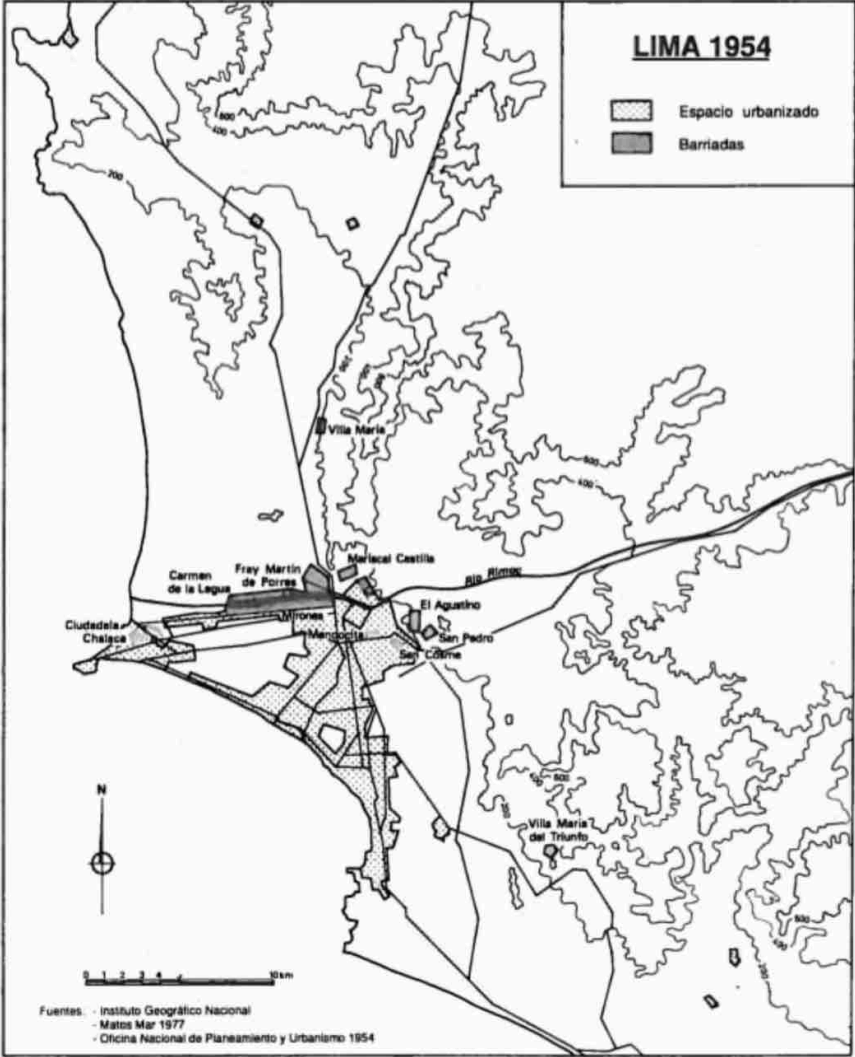
Source: Rodríguez Kuri (2012:426).

Map 1.3. Mexico City’s built-up area and its squatter settlements, 1970-1979



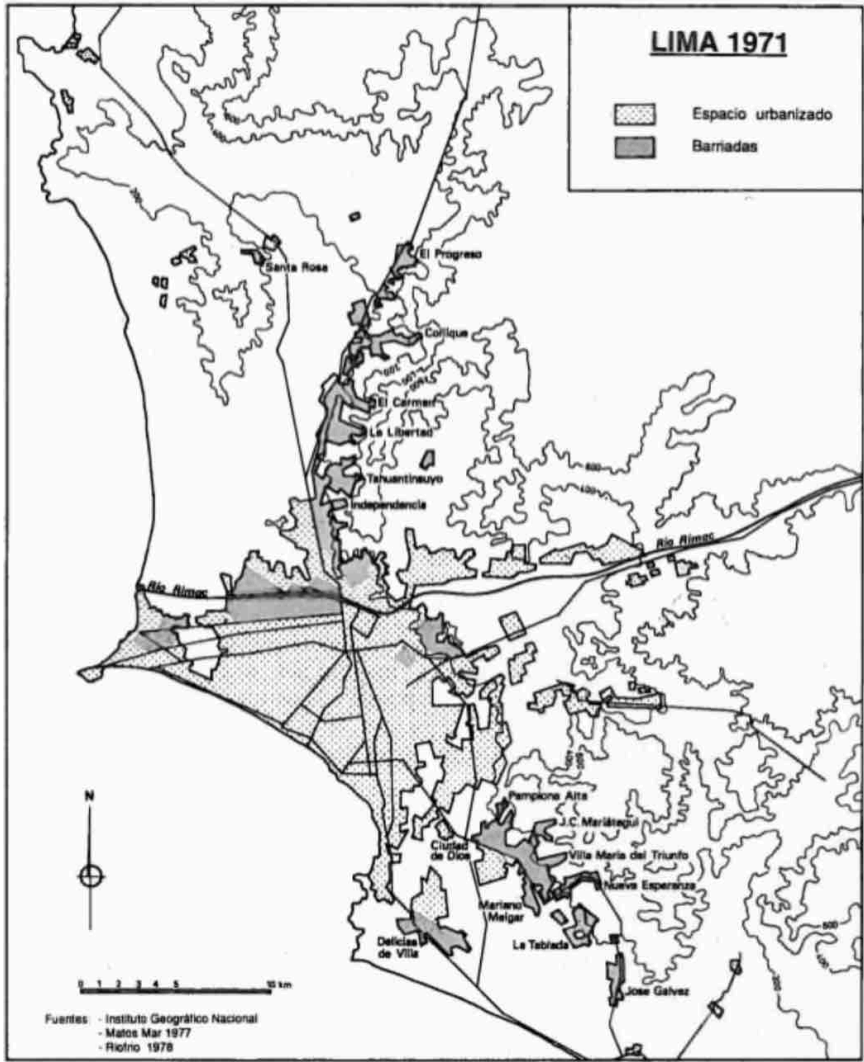
Source: Rodríguez Kuri (2012:428).

Map 1.4. Lima's built-up area and its squatter settlements, 1954



Source: Driant (1991: map 11).

Map 1.5. Lima's built-up area and its squatter settlements, 1971



Source: Driant (1991: map 12).

Map 1.7. Caracas's built-up area and its squatter settlements, 1948-1970s



Source: FUNDACOMUN (1978a:22-23).

Neighborhood Associations

Neighborhood associations were present in most Latin American squatter settlements.⁷⁴ They came to occupy an intermediary position between the urban poor and political officials either as leaders of land “invasions,” in which the urban poor requisitioned open spaces,⁷⁵ and/or as the spokespersons for aspiring residents who sought to purchase land that was not zoned or equipped for urban development, land often not owned by the “seller” or not legally saleable.⁷⁶ As an instance of *civitas*, they took their place alongside ethnic or regional associations that were established in urban centers such as Mexico City (Yee 2022) and Lima (Altamirano 1984). In their role as intermediaries between residents and political elites, neighborhood leaders feature

⁷⁴ Alonso et al. (1980:308-61, 367); Auyero (2000:36-39); Cornelius (1975:154); Gay (1999:50); Holzner (2004:228-30); McCann (2006:151-53); Perlman (2010:102, 133); Ray (1969:44); Roberts (2010:610); Vélez-Ibañez (1983:99-100).

⁷⁵ Azuela (1989:98); Cornelius (1975:138).

⁷⁶ Alonso et al. (1980:343-44); Azuela (1989:89-93); Calderón Cockburn (2005:148-49); Durand (1983:73-75); Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández (2005:259); Gilbert and Ward (1985:76); Montaña (1976:153).

prominently in nearly every major empirical work on urban politics in 20th-century Latin America.⁷⁷

Their very ubiquity presents a challenge to gift theory. And, just as with the failures of principal-agent theory in general, the literature on urban Latin America shows that neither political elites⁷⁸ nor the urban poor⁷⁹ were able to unilaterally control Latin American neighborhood associations. The relationships they mediated were, however, based on what appears to many as a political exchange: as a neighborhood leader in Quito, Ecuador described the situation, “we do something for them [political elites] and they do something for us [residents]” (quoted in Horn 2019:140). These relationships were enduring: neighborhood association leaders often survived changes on both the patron and client sides of the relationships they mediated.⁸⁰ And once they were established, they could serve as the point of departure for other forms of political relations.⁸¹ The following three chapters are dedicated to showing how neighborhood associations were central to benevolent mass clientelism.

⁷⁷ E.g., Azuela (1989:85-86, 91, 94, 97-104, 112, 126-27); Castells (1983:201); Bolívar (1987:312-24); Cornelius (1975:135-65, 182-97); de Sousa Santos (1977:40-49, 89-90, 103); Eckstein (1977: chapter 3); Fischer (2008:239-41, 246-52); Karst et al. (1973: chapter 6); Ollivier (2017: chapter 3); Perlman (1976:184-85); Ray (1969:59-63, 68-70); Roberts (1973:307-30).

⁷⁸ Alonso et al. (1980:306, 316, 319, 349-50, 357, 359, 361-65); Castells (1983:209-12); Collier (1976:59-62); Conniff (1981:12, 68-69, 75, 81, 101, 106-07, 116, 148); Fischer (2008:59-61, 75, 236-37, 266); Montaña (1976:67-73); Ray (1969:31, 33-34, 55, 78, 91-94, 98-102, 109-26, 165); Roberts (1973:320-30).

⁷⁹ Alonso et al. (1980:313, 315, 317, 319, 321, 332-33, 339, 355); Álvarez Rivadulla (2017:147-50, 152-55); Auyero and Benzecry (2017:181); Burgwal (1995:85); Cornelius (1975:147-52, 158-60, 194-96); Fischer (2008:61, 234); Gay (1999:51); Horn (2019:121-22, 140); Karst et al. (1973:49); Montaña (1976:95, 100, 137-38, 153, 207-08); Ollivier (2017:270-72, 280-81, 283-85, 303, 305, 310, 313, 315, 323, 329); Perlman (2010:102, 107, 109-10); Ray (1969:34, 48, 55, 61, 91, 121); Roberts (1973:320-30); Shefner (2008:64-70); Vélez-Ibañez (1983:98-100, 129-32, 139-40, 144, 149-50, 156).

⁸⁰ Collier (1976:75); Cornelius (1975:160); Ollivier (2017:313, 318-19, 330); Ray (1969:62, 88).

⁸¹ Auyero, Lapegna, and Page Poma (2009); Hilgers (2009).

Chapter 2. Agrarian Revolution, Urban Concentration, and Single-Party Hegemony: Mexico City, 1934-1958

Politics were highly fluid in the decades immediately following the armed phase of the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917). Over the course of the subsequent two or three decades, the eventually-dominant party gradually congealed, becoming the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Political elites with divergent agendas increasingly oriented to one another *within* the party, especially from 1946 onward; even though reformers (mostly of the *cardenista* variety) and developmentalists (mostly of the *alemanista* variety) pursued very different political goals, rather than split away, the one remained within the party when the other held power and vice versa, with few exceptions, until 1988.

Why did reformers and developmentalists orient to one another, in the framework of the PRI, rather than oppose one another, splitting and forming mutually-opposing parties each intent on vanquishing their respective enemies? Accounting for the rise and longevity of the PRI has attracted numerous students of Mexican politics. The leading accounts, which I survey in greater depth in Appendix B, emphasize the pacification of peasants, the cooptation of workers, and how the exceptional circumstances borne of the Second World War enabled the post-revolutionary political elite to consolidate power. While each of these emphases captures a dimension of the problem, they all attribute what I think is too much agency to the PRI and its predecessors at a time when the organization's eventual preeminence was far from certain. My argument about the contribution of benevolent mass clientelism to the consolidation of the PRI thus not only contrasts with leading accounts but also compliments them by trying to account for the organization's eventual strength. In this chapter, I argue that urban concentration and mass clientelism contributed decisively to bringing reformers and developmentalists into alignment

and thus supporting the rise of an historically-aligned power bloc, which sustained the PRI, in post-revolutionary Mexico.

The relationship between these fractions of the political elite and squatters—who grew in number in Mexico City due to urban concentration—contributed decisively to the advent of an historically-aligned power bloc. Whereas urban worker militancy was a prominent feature of the political landscape prior to and after the Mexican Revolution, and whereas the peasantry weighed in during as well as after the revolution, the urban poor did not play a protagonistic role before, during, or after the 1910-1917 period. As regarded the question of how to halt the revolutionary restructuring of Mexican society while retaining mass support, squatters represented a political windfall. Accordingly, during post-revolutionary reconstruction in the 1930s and 1940s, when both workers and peasants seemed to furnish insufficient political support to allow political elites to retain power, President Lázaro Cárdenas, and especially the interregnum government of President Manuel Ávila Camacho, recognized the urban poor. The support dividends borne of this approach, in turn, inclined the next president, Miguel Alemán, to orient to the urban poor as well.

By the 1950s, squatters were thoroughly enmeshed in a relationship of benevolent mass clientelism. Following unwritten rules, albeit often working through a maze of formal government institutions, neighborhood association intermediaries offered political elites the new urban poor's political support in exchange for denizen status. This informal exchange left the new urban poor in a condition of clientage, a condition which precluded them entering into an alliance with insurgent workers or peasants, tethering their destiny instead to that of political elites. Meanwhile, the prospect of support attracted distinct fractions of the political elite to orient to the urban poor. The result was not only the advent of a tradition among both reformist *cardenista* and developmentalist *alemanista* fractions of the political elite to orient to the urban poor. It was, at a broader level, a convergence between discrepant fractions of the political elite who shared little else in common. That is, urban concentration led the urban poor to solicit subordination, giving rise to relations of benevolent mass clientelism which drew mutually-divergent fractions of the political elite into alignment with one another, making them an historically-aligned power bloc and allowing them to coincide within the same party. In brief, urban concentration furthered the concentration of power.

I proceed as follows. After touching on the pre-revolutionary history of Mexico City, I discuss the orientation of the post-revolutionary political elite to a variety of urban problems, especially housing, showing that between 1915 and 1940 urban concentration and the housing deficit became burning political issues. I detail the key political initiatives taken in response to urban concentration, initiated by the reformer fraction of the new political elite and then deepened by the interregnum government, which consummated benevolent mass clientelism by the time the developmentalists came to power. I conclude by discussing how this united the destinies of the radical and developmentalist fractions of the post-revolutionary political elite, making them an historically-aligned power bloc that supported the continuity of the PRI.

Historical Context

The Mexican Revolution was a watershed in modern Mexican political development. Some Mexicanists attribute such profound downstream effects to this one event that, they imply, nothing before 1910 really mattered by the 1930s. One need not adopt an extreme version of this view to acknowledge that the revolution fundamentally changed elite and mass politics alike as it absorbed the whole of Mexican society in sociopolitical turbulence. Of course, many—some of them products of the revolution itself—did not like the turbulence. These forces were in luck, for subsequent political development was largely a matter of halting the revolutionary process.

From Colonization to the Revolution

Mexico City, originally called Tenochtitlán, was founded by the Aztecs in 1345, as the capital of the Aztec empire. Spanish conqueror Hernán Cortés decided to found the capital of New Spain on its ruins. Native successors of the Aztecs ran the colonial city government for the decades immediately after the conquest (Connell 2012). The Spanish conquest and exploitation of indigenous people reduced the city's population from around 300,000 in 1521 to about 30,000 at the time of the founding of the colonial capital city in 1548 (Garza and Scheingart 1978:52). The city grew slowly during the 18th and 19th centuries. Since the territory's economy was based on agriculture, and since quasi-feudal relations prevailed, the city's population growth was relatively slow compared to that of the territory as a whole.

The Mexican independence war (1810-1821) was not accompanied by a pro-democracy movement, but instead transferred power to regional strongmen, or *caudillos*. In the mid-19th century, Liberals pressed for mechanisms of greater political representation in the Reform War, led by Benito Juárez, which defended a newly-established constitution (of 1857). In reaction to this process, President Porfirio Díaz (1876-1910) wrested hold of the government machinery and pursued a technocratic (“positivist”), pro-growth policy, improving infrastructure and opening the country to foreign investment. Industrialization began, and capitalist waged workforces became the dominant approach to organizing labor relations in both agrarian and industrial relations by the end of the 19th century. A working class started to take shape. The majority of peasants did poorly. And the middle classes grew relatively wealthy (Joseph and Buchenau 2013:20-26).

Díaz had an especially important impact on Mexico City. He built a number of major infrastructural works—streets, sewage systems, drainage canals, etc.—and built class-specific neighborhoods. The north was set aside for lower-class people like artisans, factory workers, and railway workers, while the west was largely dedicated to the wealthy. Rural dwellers flocked to the capital, often using the new railroad system as transportation; Mexico City was “a city of migrants” by 1900 (Lear 2001:54). By the end of Díaz’s reign in 1910, the city was class-segregated (Garza and Schteingart 1978:68; Lear 2001:27-30, 43-46; Vitz 2018:25).

Meanwhile, in a challenge to the increasingly-despised Porfirio Díaz regime, middle-class reformer Francisco I. Madero sought to resume the process started during the Reform War by promoting a moderate political slogan: effective suffrage and no reelections. While not actually his intention, the slogan struck a chord and precipitated armed uprisings by Emiliano Zapata, who represented indigenous peasants from the south, and Francisco “Pancho” Villa, who represented migrant laborers and smalltime ranchers from the north, in addition to inspiring rioting in Mexico City (Lear 2001:302). Díaz refused to cede power to Madero after the 1910 election, but he was unable to put down Zapata’s and Villa’s rebellions. Forced to resign (1911), power fell to Madero, who had little idea what to do in this increasingly-volatile context.

The Revolution and its Aftermath

For the next three decades, elite conflict precluded the formation of a bloc capable of sustaining a nation-building project. Severe intra-elite conflict plagued Mexican politics during the armed phase of the revolution. Victoriano Huerta ousted Madero in a counterrevolutionary coup, and Madero was assassinated (1913). This, in turn, prompted Venustiano Carranza, a wealthy northern rancher who led the most effective revolutionary-era army, to eject Huerta from power (1914). But when Carranza tried to pass power to a puppet successor, he too was assassinated (1920). President Álvaro Obregón (1920-1924)—chief strategist of Carranza’s army and mastermind behind his assassination—succeeded Carranza. Obregón passed the presidency to Plutarco Elías Calles (1924-1928), who faced the Cristero revolt, a counterrevolutionary Catholic uprising (1926-1929). Obregón decided to challenge the presidency again—which would have betrayed the principle of no reelections—and met with his own assassination (1928). By then, in fewer than two decades, there had been two counterrevolutionary initiatives and three of the four presidents who had held power since the fall of the dictator and the outbreak of revolution had been assassinated.

Society remained highly mobilized during both the armed phase of the revolution and its immediate aftermath. Due to elite conflict, on the one hand, and significant peasant and worker mobilization, on the other, the governing elite had to grant significant concessions to secure support. This balance of forces led to the ratification of a constitution that was “undoubtedly the most advanced in the world” at the time (Gilly [1971] 2005:233),⁸² marking the end of national-level armed conflict (1917). But even after ratification, workers and peasants continued to mobilize, and the political situation continued to be very fluid.

The labor movement had taken many beatings, but it experienced a major resurgence during the revolution (Lear 2001:192-340). Mexican and U.S. government security forces had persecuted the anarcho-syndicalist wing of the movement, led by the Flores Magón brothers, during the Díaz era (Joseph and Buchenau 2013:44). But the excitement surrounding the Madero government rekindled hopes. A series of mass actions centering on Mexico City during and

⁸² The constitution allowed for greater worker power and called for the expropriation of foreign capital, land reform, and the suppression of the Catholic Church. It also obliged employers of more than 100 workers and those outside major cities to provide decent, affordable housing (Davis 1994:32-33).

immediately following the Madero government—a streetcar workers’ strike (1911), a textile workers’ strike (1911-1912), a citywide action on May Day (1913), and another streetcar workers’ strike (1914)—helped revive the labor movement, leading it to grow in both scale and political sophistication (Lear 2001:201-37). The resurgence of organized worker militance forced political elites to respond. Huerta opted to repress the Casa del Obrero Mundial, the main Mexico City-based labor organization (Lear 2001:216, 238-39). But in the context of a highly-mobilized society, this proved not only unsustainable but counterproductive. After Huerta was toppled, Mexico City exploded with an unprecedented wave of labor organizing and strikes (Lear 2001:216, 266, 295).

The fall of Huerta and the uptick of worker militancy coincided with a deepening of elite conflict. The key revolutionary generals failed to come to a political accord at their late-1914 summit in Aguascalientes. The Convention group, led by Villa and Zapata, declared themselves the sovereign power of Mexico. The Constitutionals, led by Carranza, protested the declaration and left for Veracruz intent on conquering the country militarily.⁸³ The Convention represented the possibility of a social revolution, but it remained politically unsophisticated, largely failing to join forces with urban workers and mostly uninterested in industrial and urban affairs (Gilly [1971] 2005). The Constitutionals were shrewder politically, but they were committed to preventing the revolutionary process from deepening.

The dynamic during these crucial months was one in which the working class, especially the Casa del Obrero Mundial, grew increasingly capable of mobilizing workers and increasingly aware that the political future was being forged in real time, but still lacked political direction. The Convention failed to make clear overtures to the urban working class (Gilly ([1971] 2005: 172; Lear 2001:264, 267-69, 294)⁸⁴ while the Constitutionalist forces excelled at this (Lear 2001:248-53, 268, 271-75). As the workers’ movement mobilized, it inevitably raised the question of codifying gains in labor relations. Since its roots lay disproportionately in apolitical anarcho-syndicalism (Lear 2001:172-76, 231), the Casa approached blindly the ensuing

⁸³ In addition to control in their strongholds, in the northern Bajío and southern Morelos regions, respectively, Villa and Zapata retained nominal control over Mexico City for most of the time between late-1914 and mid-1915.

⁸⁴ While Gilly ([1971] 2005:165) says the “occupation of Mexico City was distinguished by its orderly character,” that “there was no looting,” and that “the troops neither committed excesses nor provoked disorders,” Lear (2001:265) argues Villa’s forces actively alienated Mexico City elites with carousing and violence, which made matters worse.

relationships with political benefactors and government institutions (Lear 2001:212-13, 217, 253, 255, 281-82). The Constitutionalist, meanwhile, took decisive pro-Casa action during the short time that they controlled Mexico City in early-1915, which left a lasting impression on a large portion of the Casa leadership (Lear 2001:274-75, 280). Mexico City's economy was racked by the war, which affected supply chains and gave rise to a succession of currencies (Lear 2001:256-57). This made it logical for the Casa to press for policy changes; it therefore advanced programmatic political positions for the first time, focusing on consumption, including housing (Lear 2001:254).

The Casa soon opted to enter into a pact with the Constitutionalist army (1915) (Lear 2001:256). Mexico City suffered an acute crisis under Convention rule, and the Convention had failed to recruit soldiers from Mexico City's unemployed (Lear 2001:264, 268-69). Now heading blindly into politics, the Casa mobilized workers for so-called "Red Battalions"—approximately 5,000 to 7,000 volunteers who went to war against Zapata and Villa (Lear 2001:284), pitting the best-organized part of the working class *against* the most advanced peasant armies (Gilly [1971] 2007:190-218)—in exchange for Carranza's promise of pro-worker laws (Carr 1979; Davis 1994:34; Lear 2001:278-79).⁸⁵ On the one hand, the pact represented de facto Constitutionalist recognition of the value of an alliance with the Casa del Obrero Mundial and its member unions (Lear 2001:281); on the other, the only concrete policy to which Carranza agreed concerned improving the housing situation (Davis 1994:33). The Casa, lacking political experience and a political program of its own, approached the alliance naively. The Constitutionalist approached it with apposite foresight, using housing to draw Mexico City's labor leaders away from leftism and divide them from peasant leaders.

Meanwhile, the war-borne crisis grew acute in Mexico City. Amidst the "weakening of the formal associational life of unions among the most unskilled, informal, and unemployed sectors in the absence of the Casa" (Lear 2001:303), and against the background of an economic crisis dipping to such a low that "the only constant currency recognized by both

⁸⁵ Carranza dispatched the six Red Battalions to different fronts, ensuring that they did not influence the social nature of the Constitutionalist campaign. Comprised disproportionately of arms manufacturing and streetcar workers (Lear 2001:283), the Red Battalions' contribution to the military outcome was probably not decisive (Lear 2001:288); indeed, viewing the potential cost of continued mobilization of armed workers more significant than the military contribution of their mobilization, Carranza prematurely disbanded the Battalions with two months' pay (Lear 2001:315).

[Constitutionalist and Convention] factions . . . was the cardboard tokens issued as change by the streetcar company” (Lear 2001:304), a general discontent settled in and “poor and working people came to distrust all revolutionary authorities as either corrupt or incompetent in their management of food supplies and paper money” (Lear 2001:304-05). Women-led riots soon erupted, especially during the May-August 1915 period (Lear 2001:303), typically targeting small merchants who sold basic necessities (Lear 2001:307-08) but also staging a sit-in during a Convention-controlled Congressional session, thereby extracting a series of pro-consumer legislative concessions (Lear 2001:310). These events further pushed organized labor to acknowledge broader community problems and to incorporate more women (Lear 2001:314).

Together with the cooptation of the labor movement leadership, growing discontent produced a volatile combination, and Mexico City worker mobilization reached unprecedented heights between the summer of 1915 and July-August 1916 (Lear 2001:315). Workers in sectors offering only precarious job security, disproportionately women, formed unions for the first time (Lear 2001:319-20). Amidst growing mobilization, rank-and-file workers acquired an emboldened sense of entitlement, and Constitutionlists were increasingly unable to ignore organized labor’s demands. President Adolfo de la Huerta tried to gain traction by giving the Jockey Club’s building, the ornate Casa de los Azulejos, to the Casa del Obrero Mundial to serve as its new headquarters (Lear 2001:317).⁸⁶ But given the Constitutionlists’ political moderation, the honeymoon was brief. And given the Casa del Obrero Mundial’s moderation, it had to scramble to get out in front of the ensuing wave of mobilization with endorsements and backing (Lear 2001:320). Together, these factors made political space for an inclusive, city-wide labor federation dedicated to class struggle and “the socialization of the means of production,” formed in January 1916 (quoted in Lear 2001:321). Led by Luis N. Morones and claiming 90,000 members, the city-wide federation backed a number of successful strikes in Mexico City in the spring of 1916 and even projected a national vision (Lear 2001:322-23).

In general, the labor movement (both the Casa and the new federation) drifted into politics, starting to insist that their demands represented the interests not only of workers but also of the “humble class” (quoted in Lear 2001:325). This turn of events prompted Constitutionlists

⁸⁶ The provisional governor of Veracruz, Hariberto Jara, also legally recognized unions in the state for the first time (Lear 2001:317).

to react, and general Pablo González opted for repression. He evicted the Casa del Obrero Mundial from the Casa de los Azulejos and returned the building to the Jockey Club, shuttered the Casa's newspaper, and threw key leaders in jail; meanwhile, the Federal District mayor, general César López de Lara, decreed that unions must secure his approval if they wished to have meetings in which political affairs were to be discussed (Lear 2001:326). None of this touched the economic dire straits, and the economy continued to deteriorate.

In May 1916 the citywide labor federation issued a demand that Federal District employers pay wages pegged to a gold standard, as were most prices. Receiving no response, it then called for a general strike in which electricity, telephone, and streetcar workers participated, and which received support from those in the city's main factories and shops (Lear 2001:327). The Constitutionalist government offered to arrange a meeting between workers and the city's leading industrialists and merchants in exchange for returning to work; although only a meeting was in question, this political intervention was unprecedented. The decision taken at the meeting, especially controversial among workers' representatives, was that merchants had to accept the government's new currency and that no worker could be fired for participating in the strike for a period of three months (Lear 2001:328-29). Real wages continued to deteriorate. Riots broke out. Popular pressure forced governor López de Lara to decree a rent freeze.

Meanwhile, the citywide labor federation broadened its outlook from production politics to issues of consumption, protesting hoarding and price-gauging (Lear 2001:329), and policy, broaching matters of wages and job security. And they took their demands directly to President Carranza (Lear 2001:330-31) where they undertook a form of insurgent political blackmail: they explained to the president that they did not have the power "to prevent the breakout of a strike movement originating in hunger" (quoted in Lear 2001:331) and placed blame for any ensuing events at the feet of the government, in the event that the government did too little, specifically, that they did not legislate to pin wages to the value of gold. This was a bold move not only because it represented a foray into politics. It was also bold because Carranza's monetary and fiscal policies were what allowed him to finance the Constitutionalist army (Lear 2001:332) and because the Constitutionalist army was waging a war against the peasant insurgency coordinated by the Convention group. By foraying into politics—amidst peasant insurrection tearing through and stretching Constitutionalist forces thin—the Mexico City labor movement raised the question of who would rule.

Carranza could not be bothered to reply—one wonders what sort of reply was even possible given the relationship of forces—leading organized labor in Mexico City to break definitively with the Constitutionals and prepare for an immediate general strike (Lear 2001:332). Electrical workers cut the electricity to the city on the morning of 31 July, paralyzing production and transportation, with the support of the majority of workers in public utilities, factories, and shops behind them; perhaps 82,000 workers participated (Lear 2001:333). Carranza responded by declaring a state of emergency, banning meetings and rallies at the pain of execution, and jailing various workers and union leaders (Lear 2001:334-35), which he followed with a vicious campaign to tar strikers as fifth-columnists (Lear 2001:335-37). Strike leadership declared defeat three days later, though many workers refused to return to work for the subsequent two weeks (Lear 2001:335). The Casa was dissolved and the citywide labor federation dedicated itself to prisoner-defense (Lear 2001:335). Nevertheless, although the strike was defeated, so too was Carranza's monetary policy initiative; in October 1916 he decreed that wages be paid in gold-equivalents, restoring a gold standard (Lear 2001:338).

The July-August 1916 general strike was an inflection point for both organized labor and Mexican political development. On the one hand, it set the tone for the following years, when strikes became more frequent (Lear 2001:344). It was in the strike's aftermath that the constitutional convention took place, which resulted in one of the world's most progressive constitutions in spite of little worker representation among delegates. Union density in Mexico City soon surpassed that of 1916 and there was an uptick of union organizing and the formation of worker-oriented political parties like the Socialist Workers Party (1917) led by Luis Morones and the Socialist Party (1918) (Lear 2001:344-45).

On the other hand, the government emerged from the contest stronger than ever. Already during the Casa mobilization of Red Battalions, Morones and others had formed the left-wing General Confederation of Workers (CGT). In the aftermath of the general strike defeat, in 1918, the Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers (CROM) was established (Lear 2001:345-46). It proceeded to support Álvaro Obregón in his power struggle with Carranza (Lear 2001:346). It enjoyed considerable influence in Mexico City politics in general after Obregón came to power, and CROM-affiliated governor of Mexico City, Celestino Gasca, enjoyed considerable influence over labor arbitration in particular (Lear 2001:347). For a time, the CGT continued to represent a left-wing current in the labor movement averse to collaboration with the government (Lear

2001:350). But, in 1923 a streetcar strike fell apart and descended into violence. In the aftermath of government repression, a breakaway streetcar union joined the Obregón-oriented CROM (Lear 2001:352-53).

Before fully domesticating organized labor, however, housing became a flashpoint: tenants increasingly pressed for reform. Between 1914 and 1921, the rent for a single-room tenement more than doubled. Under pressure, revolutionary-era governments—both the Convention group and the Constitutionalists—flirted with rent control (Lear 2001:355). Then a militant renters' movement took off in the city of Veracruz (1922), successfully wresting rent control concessions from the government (González Navarro 1974:181-84). The Communist Party saw this as perhaps the most promising struggle in Mexico and turned to trying to recruit renters. On 1 May 1922, the Renters' Union staged a rent strike, in which about 30,000 residents of Mexico City refused to pay rent, and defended strikers against eviction (Lear 2001:356). By June the number of rent strikers rose to over 50,000. Landlords pressured the city government, headed by Gasca, who reinforced the police, who carried out evictions (Lear 2001:357). The renters' movement unraveled in the ensuing weeks (Lear 2001:358).

But housing was irrevocably on the political agenda. Obregón developed a scheme to demobilize and conservatize renters by giving them land on which to build houses (González Navarro 1974:185)—the first time in Mexican history that a proactive housing scheme was used as a political cudgel. Calles turned away from workers and oriented towards government bureaucrats, giving the office in charge of the government pension fund the authority to extend them home loans (Perló Cohen 1979:784). Then, during the depression, Mexico City renters staged another rent strike (1934) (Perló Cohen 1979:786). As this series of events suggests, it was apparent to all that housing was an important part of the social question. Pre-revolutionary elites had done little, and needs continued to be great. The question was whether this would continue to serve as a catalyst for the left and redistributive initiatives or somehow help the incipient political elite.

The Post-Revolutionary Political Elite

It was in the context of ongoing agrarian, worker, and tenant mobilization, on the one side, and the Catholic uprising, on the other, that Calles established the PRI's predecessor, the

National Revolutionary Party (PNR) (1929). Although the party's name would change to the Party of the Mexican Revolution (PRM) and its structure was in constant flux for the next two decades, this marked the birth of the party that would rule Mexico for over half a century. After his presidential term, Calles was able to exert a great deal of behind-the-scenes control over the political agenda of his three successors to the presidency. Calles tapped Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) as a fourth successor, whom he thought would be just as manipulable.⁸⁷ But Cárdenas bucked Calles's plans. And, amidst ongoing peasant and worker mobilization, the search for his own base of support required that Cárdenas move to the left (Knight 1990:13). This led him to significantly deepen the country's agrarian reform—making him the darling of radical “agrarianist” (*agrarista*) peasants—and to nationalize the railroad and petroleum industries, amidst a massive strike-wave. In the case of railroads, nationalization was followed by a period of workers' control (Knight 1990:39-41). In the case of the petroleum industry, nationalization is said to have “quickly and overwhelmingly united the country, including the Catholic hierarchy” (Camp 2002:116; González Casanova 1982:51).

The unity in question however was a form of mere unity in action, in pursuit of the vague nationalist goal of Mexican control of Mexican resources; it was not an organizationally-bound or -mediated form of national unity. Indeed, the central government and political parties as such exercised little nationwide influence throughout the entire period. Nor was there even much elite-level unity or convergence. Iconic in this regard was the case of Saturnino Cedillo, who had served as a Constitutionalist general in the revolutionary war and then served as governor in his home state of San Luis Potosí (1927-1931). As a sympathizer of the Cristero cause, he ensured that Calles's anticlerical laws were not enforced. And he established agricultural colonies for veterans of his army. His political authority belied not the growth of a Leviathan but instead a Roman Empire-type dynamic in which de facto control was devolved to the provincial elite. He was in favor of agrarian reform, but thought it should result in private farms, not collective ones. He supported Cárdenas in marginalizing Calles, and Cárdenas appointed him Secretary of Agriculture. But the relationship between the two soured. Cedillo explicitly opposed the 1938 oil nationalization and Cárdenas removed him from his cabinet, curtailed resources to San Luis

⁸⁷ Cárdenas did appear to be a safe choice: he had risen through the ranks of the Constitutionalist army, held major command positions in the 1920s, and then ascended to the president of the party and to the Ministry of Defense; he had crushed mutinies and disarmed peasants, and he lacked his own base (Knight 1990:11).

Potosí, and marginalized him politically. Cedillo took up arms in response in 1938. Cárdenas had to have him routed and killed, to which toll his agents added several of Cedillo's family members. This episode reveals that power was very decentralized well into the 20th century, representing not the growth of a powerful government but rather a return to *caudillo*-based rule.

It took a considerable amount of time for the institutions to emerge that were capable of ensuring “political conflicts would be negotiated within the party” (Navarro 2010:1). The process extended from the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) to that of Miguel Alemán (1946-1952) (Gillingham 2021:7; González Casanova 1982:42-62). Meanwhile, by the late-1930s, the vying social forces had begun to stalemate (Knight 2014:62-63). Whereas Cárdenas's presidency represented the zenith of the reformer fraction of the new political elite, his successor, Manuel Ávila Camacho (1940-1946), marked the ascent of a reactionary fraction of the new political elite, a trend whose complete triumph awaited Alemán. Given the recent revolutionary mobilization on the one side and an uptick of counterrevolutionary discontent on the other, Ávila Camacho appeared as the compromise candidate. Indeed, given the party had just unveiled its radical Six Year Plan calling for worker-government co-management of industry, among other things, given the party endorsed him, and given that one of its conditions for endorsement was that he not reverse Cárdenas's legislative initiatives, Ávila Camacho initially appeared to superficial observers to be a radical *cardenista* (Niblo 1999:80, 86). In reality, though, Ávila Camacho was a conservative and there was no doubting he represented a turn to the right and a reversal of important Cárdenas-era social gains. Even on the campaign trail, Ávila Camacho appealed to the right, chastising workers for their militancy, placating property owners, and praising northern industrialists (Knight 1990:59, 64). In part this was an effort to compete with the challenger to his right, general Juan Andreu Almazán. But it was also a reflection of his true colors, which became unmistakable after the election when he adopted much of his right-wing electoral challenger's program and the right-wing opposition announced that it would henceforth be “Avila's best ally” (quoted in Collier and Collier 1991:408).

Ávila Camacho broke sharply with the reformist policy orientation of his predecessor. He worked hard to placate investors, halted the agrarian reform with military force, undermined the *ejidos*, returned plantations to former agrarian elites, opposed the anticlerical initiatives of his predecessors by bragging about his Catholicism, ended the Cardenas-era humanistic socialist education initiative in favor of a curriculum promoting national pride and technical skills, started

a witch-hunt targeting communists, and brought the labor movement to heel through divide-and-conquer tactics, the use of favoritism and violence, and by providing funding to the CTM (Niblo 1999:92-107). Although the economy tanked, and by 1944 there were food lines, hunger marches, and even a riot in Mexico City (Knight 1990:73), the workers' movement leadership had been sufficiently domesticated by this time that it mounted little resistance, and the spontaneous challenges that did bubble up from below were quickly suppressed. The same was true of the countryside, where large agrarian estates ceased to occupy the government's crosshairs. For the right, Ávila Camacho came to be seen as "the first bulwark" against a resurgence of the left (Niblo 1999:113). All of this made *cardenistas* feel betrayed (Niblo 1999:95, 108, 135). It would have been natural for them to break away from this political initiative.

On housing matters, though, a rupture with the Cárdenas era was more difficult to affect. To be sure, Ávila Camacho instructed the courts not to uphold the Cárdenas-era law requiring employers to provide workers with decent housing (Niblo 1999:135). But he did have to respond to the housing problem. During the Second World War, Ávila Camacho decreed a rent freeze and the extension of rental contracts then in effect (González Navarro 1974:191; Perló Cohen 1979:803)—contracts that were extended multiple times thereafter (González Navarro 1974:192)—in exchange for a pledge from organized labor not to strike for wage increases for the duration of the conflict (Sánchez Mejorada 2001:276).⁸⁸ On the one hand, this reflected the fact that the labor movement, including the Casa del Obrero Mundial (Lear 2001:282), had long been infected with near-jingoistic nationalism. On the other, it reflected the fact that housing was a substantive policy area where divergent social agendas could come to an accord.

Upon assuming power, Alemán adopted a developmentalist orientation which, given recent social and political history, was quite reactionary. A constitutional reform reversed the ban on large agrarian landholdings (González Casanova 1982:60). His position on agrarian matters

⁸⁸ While in the abstract this may seem quite progressive, due both to the context and to their content, Ávila Camacho's measures represented a compromise position: on the one hand, radical reformist congressmen had introduced measures comparable to those that featured in the radical Veracruz law (González Navarro 1974:193), trying to take a significant stride to the left; on the other, there was little by way of resistance, because the rent freeze only impacted one small part of the economic elite (those with certain kinds of rental property of a certain age in certain parts of Mexico City), and it actually benefitted Mexico City merchants and craftspeople who rented the property in question (Perló Cohen 1979:804-06).

involved upholding the rule of law around property and educating farmers to be more productive. As he stated in a retrospective interview from 1976:

“Mexico cannot be left behind in the area of food production. The Mexican Revolution was really an agrarian Revolution. In dealing with the agrarian problem we cannot forget that there are laws and institutions which we must enforce and use to solve the problem. But to solve the agrarian problem, our farmer needs to obtain a better education so that he will be totally responsible for his land and for the production of crops” (quoted in Camp 1984:144-45).

Alemán also appeared reactionary on the workers front. Among the Alemán government’s accomplishments was the “isolation and emasculation of the left, and its concerted campaign against organized labour” (Knight 1990:79; see also González Casanova 1982:59-61). It opposed strikes and oriented to rapid industrialization (Collier and Collier 1991:408).⁸⁹ Finally, the Alemán government also sought to divide peasants’ from workers’ organizations, in order to ensure “the political stability of Mexico” (quoted in Smith 1990:97). In sum, he deepened each of Ávila Camacho’s initiatives except perhaps the rapprochement with the Church (Niblo 1999:183-244).

Political Elite Fractions

By the 1940s, the foremost political elite, and the party it populated, was divided into two fractions: reformers (*agraristas* and *cardenistas*) and developmentalists (*desarrollistas* and *alemanistas*). The sources of inspiration for the former were mainly domestic and agrarian in nature, stemming in the first place from the 1910-1917 revolution, although there were also important international influences; indeed, during the 1920s, Mexico City was a point of convergence for Latin American leftists and aspiring revolutionaries from across the region,⁹⁰ and during the 1930s, Cárdenas extended asylum to no less a revolutionary than Leon Trotsky. Radical *agrarista* politics became associated with Cárdenas, giving rise to a lasting political

⁸⁹ The government routed leftist labor leader Vicente Lombardo Toledano and undermined railroad worker leader Luis Gómez Z. by 1948, and banned the Communist Party from elections in 1949 (Collier and Collier 1991:412).

⁹⁰ Some even lived together in the same house. The most important aspiring radical reformers included Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, founder of the Peruvian political party American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), and several of his collaborators, like Jacobo Hurwitz; Gustavo Machado, one of the founders of the Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV), and his brother and collaborator, Eduardo (who lived with Hurwitz in Mexico City); and, of course, Augusto César Sandino, leader of the resistance to the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua in the 1920s and 1930s (Bao 2003; Carr 2010).

brand, *cardenismo*, due to his association with the agrarian reform of the 1930s, which was characterized by a symbiotic relationship between bottom-up peasant militance, on the one hand, and a government that was willing and able to concede insurgent demands, on the other.⁹¹ A perception of continuity between the Mexican Revolution and *cardenismo* did not mean the Mexican Revolution made *cardenismo* widely popular. Indeed, in his sample of political elites during the 1946-1970 period, Roderic Camp finds that 35 percent of Mexican political elites' parents were anti-revolutionary. A variety of factors, including the consecration of revolutionaries as a national pantheon, made it difficult to publicly disavow the revolution, but misgivings persisted, and they were especially prominent among *alemanistas* (Camp 1984:33, see also 38). Thus, as regards the political field, the key point is that, compared to developmentalist *alemanistas*, the *cardenistas* represented a relatively radical strand of reformism.

The main idea behind developmentalism was to promote and protect a national bourgeoisie through a set of policies that would stimulate import-substituting industrialization (ISI). Its principal inspiration was international; ISI was a regional and even worldwide movement among nationalist political elites.⁹² Domestic factors were, nevertheless, crucial for its instantiation in the Mexican political scheme, ensuring that developmentalism there took a sui generis form, namely, *alemanismo*. One of these domestic factors was José Vasconcelos's presidential campaign in 1929, which took place in the aftermath of the assassination of Álvaro Obregón. Along with Cárdenas, Vasconcelos was the politician who most inspired the 1946-1970 generation of Mexican political elites to enter politics (Camp 1984:21). But the path taken was indirect. As one student supporter of Vasconcelos put it in 1975, referencing the campaign: "We

⁹¹ Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt (Gil-Mendieta and Schmidt 1996; Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 1999; Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 2005) argue that *cardenismo* is part of the network of generals who fought in the revolution who went on to become key political elites between 1920 and the 1980s. For them, the big story is that one sub-part of the network of political elites (officials who managed government finances) replaced the other (officials tied to revolutionary generals). This overlooks the substantive disagreements between *agraristas* and *desarrollistas*, which were important both to the political elites themselves and to Mexicans more generally.

⁹² Although developmentalism was a relatively conservative position (compared to that of both *agraristas* and state socialists), there were hybridized forms, such as radical developmentalists who favored government control of the economy. Alfonso Pulido Islas, who was one of the founding members of the PNR (Camp 2011:770), exemplified this position as late as 1976, when government involvement in the economy was at an all-time high: "I think planning is necessary in all phases of life to achieve the goals of our country. This is the only road which we can follow. . . . I believe that the government should be more involved in the economy" (quoted in Camp 1984:147).

had the opportunity to control the political apparatus of Mexico, but we lost—so then we had to learn how to win” (quoted in Camp 1984:26). Thus whereas in contrast *cardenistas*, who were backwards-looking in that they *continued* to be *cardenistas* in new circumstances, many *vasconcelistas* found it impractical to continue being *vasconcelistas*, and instead made themselves over into *alemanistas* (Camp 1977). The reason is obvious: whereas the Vasconcelos campaign had failed, the Alemán one represented a fresh opportunity in 1946. And it turned out to be a viable one: Alemán went on to become a central political actor, second only to Cárdenas, during the middle decades of the 20th century (Gil Mendieta, Schmidt, Castro, and Ruiz 1997: table 1), his nodal centrality equaling Cárdenas’s by 1950 (Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 1999: table 3.4a) and surpassing it during the 1951-1955 period (Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 1999: table 3.5a).⁹³

It would have been natural for these fractions to form two separate and antagonistic groups of political elites. That this did not transpire, at least for several decades, is testament to social forces which remain under-appreciated. Especially since, in some ways, these fractions drew closer together politically, forming an historically-aligned power bloc.

Urban Concentration

Squatter settlements began proliferating in Mexico City starting in the mid-1930s. The very earliest two date to the mid- and late-19th century, respectively, and there were another 42 formed during the first third of the 20th century. Then, from 1934 to 1952, squatter settlements grew in prominence, as another 230 were established (Cymet 1955:68-73). In 1934, there were fewer than 64,000 squatters in Mexico City; by 1958, there were over 1 million.⁹⁴

⁹³ Alemán’s node exceeded Cárdenas’s if we average across the entire 1920-1990 period (Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 1999: table 3.1c). Alemán was the most cliqued political elite in 20th century Mexico (Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 1999:39).

⁹⁴ These are linear interpolations based on the figures found in Cymet (1955:68-73) and Gilbert (1998: table 5.1).



Plate 2.1. Antonio Villalobos addresses crowd assembled to inaugurate the Conjunto Urbano Presidente Alemán multi-family (*multifamiliar*) housing estate, 1949

Source: AGN(M)/Archivo Fotográfico/Hermanos Mayo/Concentrados/HMCN 1737-N.

Urban population growth put immense pressure on the housing market, especially in the absence of much social housing. It was not until the Alemán presidency that the Mexican government oriented to the construction of public housing,⁹⁵ especially in Mexico City (Davis 1994:121). Rallies during the inauguration ceremonies for housing estates provided opportunities

⁹⁵ After defeating Huerta and Villa, Carranza proposed building houses for workers as a public health measure (1916) (González Navarro 1974:198). Obregón went further, planning to build mass housing for workers (1921), giving rise to a workers' subdivision in the former Peralvillo hippodrome, in Mexico City (1923) (González Navarro 1974:198). Calles inherited actual institutions dedicated to housing, and initiated worker and middle-class housing in Balbuena and housing for court employees in San Jacinto, Mexico City (González Navarro 1974:199-200). These projects were costly, however, and the housing units were "set aside for the labor brass" accordingly (González Navarro 1974:200). Cárdenas's efforts involved building a few overpriced houses for peasants in Xochimilco (at the southern extreme of the Federal District, in what was then the countryside) and a few dozen houses for workers in Lomas de Chapultepec, in Mexico City (González Navarro 1974:202-03). Ávila Camacho opted for popular urbanization (see below).

to address the Mexican masses for Alemán and other leaders, such as Antonio Villalobos, former president of the PRM (1940-1946) and then ambassador to Brazil (1946-1953), as Plate 2.1 depicts. But the Mexican government had built enough housing for only about 1.5 percent of Mexico City's population by 1960 and about 2.5 percent by 1980.⁹⁶ This was a drop in the bucket in terms of addressing the housing deficit stemming from rural-to-urban migration.

As poor people flocked to cities, especially Mexico City, landlords evicted tenants to increase rent prices and take advantage of the heightened demand.⁹⁷ Obviously, many among the urban poor were not in a position to pay rent, much less at exorbitant rates. This problem grew with the economic crisis of the 1930s. As Ángel Ladrón de Guevara described the situation to Cárdenas, there was a “caravan of Mexican misery that demands affirmative aid.”⁹⁸ The urban poor began invading land. Urban land invasions involved about 73,214 people between 1934 and 1940 (Perló Cohen 1981:50) and ramped up thereafter.

On the eve of the revolution, most urban property owners were also agrarian elites. In the context of agrarian reform, the housing market pressure led them to pursue all sorts of maneuvering and speculation, like dividing up their estates into smaller properties, in an effort to avoid expropriation (Cruz Rodríguez 2004:379). Although the revolutionary-era governments eventually expropriated many of their rural estates, it left most of their urban property intact. This put them in a strong position from which to pursue urban land speculation (Vitz 2018:176), especially with the benefit of the government's investments in infrastructure (Garza and Schteingart 1978:68). Thus, rural landlords affected by the revolutionary war made themselves over into urban ones (Davis 1994:27). Indeed, a number of revolutionary elites (namely Juan Andreu Almazán, Plutarco Elías Calles, and Luis N. Morones) were themselves real estate moguls (Perló Cohen 1979:776 n. 16). Manuel Ávila Camacho's brother, Maximino, started a construction firm (Niblo 1999:86-87).

⁹⁶ These figures are based, respectively, on the number of housing units built through 1958, as reported in González Navarro (1974:212); those built through 1962 (excluding the year 1959, for which I was unable to find information), as reported in the same source; the number of housing units built between 1963 and 1980, as reported in Schteingart (1989: table 40); and the population estimates for 1960 and 1980, as reported in Schteingart (1989: table 31).

⁹⁷ Since the 1920s, urban landowners had sold undeveloped plots—lands lacking urban services that were only officially recognized when services were installed—for self-built homes (Cruz Rodríguez 2004:382-83).

⁹⁸ Angel Ladrón de Guevara to Lázaro Cárdenas (LCR) (1 February 1935), AGN(M)/LCR/Exp. 418.2/7.

Self-proclaimed revolutionary landowner Macario Navarro established several squatter settlements seemingly as part of a strategy to prevent expropriation, naming one Colonia Lázaro Cárdenas and another Colonia Macario Navarro. In the former, he entrusted Ángel Ladrón de Guevara with managing the process, and Ladrón de Guevara began trucking families who were in need of a place to live into the *colonia* (Vitz 2018:172-74). A number of other *colonias* were also formed “under the lurking specter of redistribution” (Vitz 2018:176).

Table 2.1 summarizes urban growth, broken down by geographic unit and period. It shows that during the 1940s, the metropolitan area’s average annual growth rate reached 5.9 percent; an estimated 45.4 percent of this growth was the result of migration from elsewhere in the country.⁹⁹ New denizens tended to settle mostly in the northern part of the city, parts of the city long slated for the working classes where the city’s new industrial estates became disproportionately concentrated (Davis 1994:85; Garza and Schteingart 1978:68). The northern district of Gustavo A. Madero—the epicenter—grew 599.6 percent between 1940 and 1950, an estimated 79 percent of which was due to rural-to-urban migration. Growth rates continued to impress in the 1950s, when the epicenter of growth shifted to Iztacalco and Iztapalapa, in the city’s east, where again most growth was driven by rural-to-urban migration. There was also considerable international migration during these years, especially from the Middle East. The squatter neighborhoods in which the urban poor often settled after moving to Mexico City (*colonias proletarias*) tended to be located on the outskirts of the city.¹⁰⁰ The Mexican urban poor (*colonos*) built their own homes, first with rudimentary materials, as depicted in Plate 2.2, and then gradually upgraded them, typically with bricks and concrete.

⁹⁹ Before 1935 and from 1935 to 1954, most migrants to Mexico City hailed from relatively-nearby states like Guanajuato, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Michoacán, Puebla, and the State of Mexico (Muñoz, Oliveira, and Stern 1977: table 8.2). The proportion of migrants to Mexico City hailing from localities of fewer than 2,500 people grew over time: it was 27.4 percent before 1935, 31.7 percent from 1935 to 1944, and 34.2 percent from 1945 to 1954 (Muñoz, Oliveira, and Stern 1977: table 8.4).

¹⁰⁰ This was new. At least until the beginning of the 1930s, the main low-income quarters were city-center tenement houses (*casas de vecindad*) (Lear 2001:36; Perló Cohen 1979:789-90).

Table 2.1. Mexico City population size and growth rate, 1940-1960

	Population					1940-1950 ^b			1950-1960		
	1940 ^a	1950	1960	1970	1975	Decennial Growth Rate (%)	Annual Growth Rate (%)	% Growth Due to Migration ^c	Decennial Growth Rate (%)	Annual Growth Rate (%)	% Growth Due to Migration
Metropolitan Area	1,670,314	2,960,686	5,144,462	8,889,100	11,550,075 ^c	77.3	5.9	45.4	66.1	5.2	38.4
Federal District	1,670,314	2,931,542	4,833,102	6,963,286	8,157,558	75.5	5.8	44.4	59.9	4.8	38.0
<i>Delegations:</i>											
Benito Juárez		336,649	521,415	589,867	577,004				54.9	4.4	24.6
Cuauhtémoc	1,448,422	990,572	966,888	925,752	858,949	46.6	3.9	18.9	-2.4	-0.4	---
M. Hidalgo		420,716	612,428	604,623	608,149				45.6	3.8	18.6
V. Carranza		375,848	570,194	747,513	767,972				51.7	4.3	27.5
Atzacapoztalco	63,000	188,596	372,244	542,994	543,400	199.3	11.6	70.0	97.4	7.0	62.4
G. Madero	41,567	290,826	701,333	1,224,536	1,386,776	599.6	21.5	79.0	141.1	9.2	65.7
Ixtacalco	11,212	37,328	200,066	480,412	517,999	232.9	12.8	71.9	435.9	18.3	74.5
Ixtapalapa	25,393	74,240	264,876	555,980	844,194	192.3	11.3	69.3	256.8	13.6	78.9
Coyoacán	35,248	68,952	156,603	319,794	468,815	95.6	6.9	53.0	127.1	8.5	67.6
A. Obregón	32,313	125,771	274,923	501,856	766,332	289.2	14.6	74.5	118.6	8.1	64.5
M. Contreras	13,159	22,044	40,873	99,881	148,349	67.5	5.3	40.0	85.4	6.4	43.6
Cuajimalpa			19,278	37,212	99,173				102.9	7.1	51.1
Tlalpau			61,426	149,335	233,588				86.7	6.5	40.5
Xochimilco			70,552	119,079	231,129				49.5	4.1	39.9
Tláhuac				64,454	105,729						
State of Mexico		29,144	233,764	1,907,003		99.2	7.2	54.5	214.0	12.1	68.9
<i>Municipalities:</i>											
Tlalnepantla		29,144	106,301	387,378	---	99.2	7.2	54.5	264.7	13.8	71.6
Ecatepec			41,067	232,687	---				169.0	10.4	64.8
Naucalpan			86,396	407,826	---				187.6	11.1	66.6
Nezahualcōyotl				651,000	---						
Chimalhuacán				18,811	---						
La Paz				34,297	---						
Zaragoza				47,729	---						
Tultitlán				55,162	---						
Coacalco				13,902	---						
Cuautitlán				42,421	---						
Huixquilucan				34,601	---						

Source: Garza and Schteingart (1978: table 6).



Plate 2.2. Squatters build a house in Colonia Flores Magón, ca. 1935

Source: AGN(M)/Archivo Fotográfico/Hermanos Mayo/Cronológico/Sobre 3341.1.

Soliciting Subordination

The urban poor needed places to live but were not in a position to pay considerable sums of money. This drove them to form squatter settlements and to seek tacit permission to settle land and ask government officials for help developing it. They interfaced with both the national presidential office and the city government—the Federal District Department (DDF)—whose mayor, a presidential appointee, held cabinet rank.¹⁰¹ Squatters faced significant obstacles of both legal and existential varieties, making political elites’ help a significant consolation.¹⁰²

Before receiving government recognition of their settlements, the urban poor’s very denizen status was uncertain (de Antuñano 2017:129). That is, squatters were sometimes evicted. Military police enforcing an eviction in Colonia Rojo Gómez is pictured in Plate 2.3. Another eviction took place in Colonia Buenos Aires, where 1,200 people were “thrown out of our humble homes.”¹⁰³ However, while squatters *could* be summarily removed, wholesale repression was both impractical (given urban concentration, it bordered on impossible) and undesirable (given their need for supporters, political elites had more to gain by allowing squatter settlements to form).

¹⁰¹ Much more is known about the former than the latter, because whereas presidential correspondence is available for consultation in the Archivo General de la Nación, the city government’s political records (the DDF’s Dirección General de Gobernación records) are not available for consultation at the Archivo Histórico de la Ciudad de México. Nevertheless, given the power of the president over the mayor, most people naturally saw the national executive branch as the government body most relevant to their life chances, and thus may have preferred petitioning the president rather than the mayor.

¹⁰² Carlos Valencia Flores et al. to Miguel Alemán (MAV) (30 October 1939), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/108 [Gertrudis G. Sánchez].

¹⁰³ *Excélsior*, 5 April 1952.



Plate 2.3. Military police force residents to comply with eviction order in Colonia Rojo Gómez, 2 June 1949

Source: AGN(M)/Archivo Fotográfico/Hermanos Mayo/Cronológico/Sobre 3966.

Solicitations continued as neighborhoods were equipped with infrastructure. Residents were responsible for defraying the appraised value of the recognized settlement's land as well as the estimated cost of public goods that would be installed. Importantly, both amounts varied widely.¹⁰⁴ With regards to land, the monetary price the DDF demanded of *colonos* was used to compensate landowners and, sometimes, to profit. Occasionally, leftist agitators mobilized residents to demand lower prices for land, putting them at odds with landowners and causing problems for DDF officials.

Moreover, delays—between the settlement of an area and official recognition, and between recognition and installation of public goods—were often interminable.¹⁰⁵ For example,

¹⁰⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Exp. 112/2-1/260/86/Folio 1 [Escuadrón 201].

¹⁰⁵ Cruz Rodríguez Garduño et al. to Manuel Ávila Camacho (MAC) (29 March 1944), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/104 [Emiliano Zapata]; Vicente Minero Meza et al. to MAV (30 December 1946), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp.

even though residents of Colonia Emiliano Zapata had paid for the service, they complained to Alemán, there was still no water.¹⁰⁶ This and numerous other services continued to be lacking more than two years hence.¹⁰⁷ Since the size of the burden and duration of the delay hung in the balance, local leaders naturally sought to demonstrate their political good will by playing nice with government officials and political elites. Residents had every reason to think the amounts and delays would be correspondingly less burdensome to the degree that they exhibited more political obedience.

The Role of Intermediaries

Neighborhood associations mediated the relationship between political officials (patrons) and residents (clients) from the time of initially settling the land through the process of outfitting it with urban services. Residents and their allies applied pressure on neighborhood association leaders from below, demanding that they deliver the goods. They supported broad initiatives to ensure that neighborhood associations would be accountable to residents.

One broad initiative was the Coalition of Popular Residents of the Federal District (CPCDF), led by Salvador Flores Rodríguez. Flores had a storied career that saw him organize conferences to coordinate the resolution of common problems across squatter neighborhoods;¹⁰⁸ combatted stigmatization (when a public-health movie commercial depicted Colonia Daniel Garza in a bad light he appealed to the president to try to counteract this messaging); and intervened in squatter settlements across Mexico City (and as far afield as the city of Acapulco), often provoking positive responses from neighborhood-level leaders¹⁰⁹ but sometimes provoking angry ones (presumably from local leaders who benefitted from mutually-beneficial agreements

418.2/28 [Emiliano Zapata]. See also De Antuñano (2017:143) and Perló Cohen (1979:801).

¹⁰⁶ Cruz Rodríguez Garduño et al. to Manuel Ávila Camacho (MAC) (29 March 1944), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/104 [Emiliano Zapata].

¹⁰⁷ Vicente Minero Meza et al. to MAV (30 December 1946), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/28 [Emiliano Zapata].

¹⁰⁸ AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 545.2/69; AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 103/Exp. 1/Folios 146-48.

¹⁰⁹ José Avendaño et al. to MAC (7 October 1943), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 545.22/50.

with officials).¹¹⁰ He decried several cases of official corruption;¹¹¹ in one case, centering on Colonia Gertrudis G. Sánchez, Flores and allies denounced the head of the DDF's Oficina de Colonias, José Garibay, saying his leadership "has been characterized by a continuous series of ploys, abuses, plundering of lots, fraudulent deals, and mischief of all kinds." Since its founding seven years earlier, they claimed, Garibay had collaborated with the original landowners to direct income to them with the knowledge and help of mayor Rojo Gómez. The Oficina de Colonias had threatened *colonos* with eviction if they did not make payments. Flores and his allies observed that the Oficina de Colonias did not own the land nor have the legal right to receive payments—making this all appear very nefarious.¹¹² Flores may have crossed a political line, for he spent a short time in jail.¹¹³ This did not muzzle him, however: he continued to decry alleged corruption after his release.¹¹⁴

Residents themselves also denounced and discredited those neighborhood leaders they deemed corrupt and self-serving. Residents of Colonia Gertrudis G. Sánchez focused on Fidel Martínez and Felipe Rosas.¹¹⁵ Residents of Colonia Daniel Garza denounced Domingo Garduño, saying he obstructed urban service installation and, just as bad, he blocked off a street to have "public dances, and according to him, the proceeds go to improving the *colonia*."¹¹⁶ Since top-level political operators sought residents' support, they were probably happy to see despised neighborhood leaders ousted just as they were happy for corrupt street-level officials to be scrubbed from the political scene; patrons' and clients' interests aligned in this one important way.

¹¹⁰ Miguel Sánchez Romo et al. to MAC (18 September 1946), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 545.2/69.

¹¹¹ Salvador Flores Rodríguez to MAC (14 September 1943), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 545.2/69; Salvador Flores Rodríguez to MAC (31 January 1946), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 545.22/50.

¹¹² Salvador Flores et al. to MAC (10 May 1945), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/97 [Gertrudis G. Sánchez].

¹¹³ Comité de Defensa de los Colonos del Distrito Federal to MAC (16 September 1946) and Comité de Defensa de los Colonos de Nativitas to MAC (10 October 1946), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 545.2/69.

¹¹⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 103/Exp. 1/Folios 146-48.

¹¹⁵ Comité de Defensa y Unidad de la Colonia Gertrudis G. Sánchez to MAC (3 May 1944), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/97 [Gertrudis G. Sánchez].

¹¹⁶ Colonos de la Ampliación de la Colonia Garza to MAC (13 April 1946), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/23 [Daniel Garza].

The top-down and bottom-up constraints ensured that, for a given neighborhood association leader, only a limited and specific range of action was viable. Neighborhood association leaders had to conform to pressure from below, but only in ways that were consistent with political elites' interests, shaping both the form and content of neighborhood association leaders' utterances and actions. Thus, for example, since residents wanted services for a reasonable price, and since political elites demanded loyalty, the leader of Colonia Emiliano Zapata, Antonio Solano, covered both bases by begging (*suplicar*) the president to ensure that they be charged only half of the estimated cost of urban services installation.¹¹⁷ (There was also enough slippage between locally-rooted leaders and party operatives like Leonilo Salgado for occasional conflict to arise between intermediaries.¹¹⁸)

By and large, neighborhood leaders requested exceptional government intervention on behalf of residents for *political* reasons, making the case that they were valuable (subordinate) partners for political elites who would have them. They solicited subordination. Neighborhood association leaders employed a moral discourse according to which officials that helped urbanize their habitats were exalted and those whom they thought obstructed the process were painted as not just the reason for the lack of services¹¹⁹ but, in a word, as unpatriotic villains. And they left no room to question their own patriotic convictions. In *colonias* Moderna and Gertrudis G. Sánchez, there was considerable conflict between neighborhood leaders and street-level bureaucrats¹²⁰—which, in Moderna, was driven by the landowner's energetic defense of his property¹²¹ (involving the courts¹²²), and in the case of Gertrudis G. Sánchez, was driven by an engineer who worked for the Oficina de Colonias, who allegedly tricked the neighborhood leader into selling land to residents that he did not have the legal authority to sell.¹²³

¹¹⁷ Antonio Solano E. to LCR (23 October 1937), AGN(M)/LCR/Exp. 418.2/12 [Emiliano Zapata].

¹¹⁸ A. U. [Aurora Ursúa] Escobar to MAC (23 June 1943), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/3 [Moderna].

¹¹⁹ Alfredo Serratos and Ignacio de la Torre to LCR (20 August 1938) and Alfredo Serratos et al. to LCR (16 August 1938), AGN(M)/LCR/Exp. 418.2/37 [Romero Rubio].

¹²⁰ Aurora Ursúa de Escobar to MAC (8 August 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/48 [Moderna; Magueyitos].

¹²¹ *Excélsior*, 24 September 1948.

¹²² Francisco Guzmán L. and Jorge López Corona to MAC (10 June 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/3 [Moderna].

¹²³ Juan Guzmán Gómez to Fernando Ramírez (Sub-Jefe en la Oficina de Colonias del D.F.) (13 August 1941),

Colonia Moderna's leader Aurora Ursúa de Escobar displayed the political logic inherent to this moral discourse to the president. She intimated that people blame *him* for whatever problems they face, not understanding that it is others who are really at fault; the President should, therefore, resolve the problems forthwith (which would benefit both the President and squatters).¹²⁴ Requests for subordination permeated squatters' outlook, making them approach political elites *as if* the latter were their friends. In Colonia Gertrudis G. Sánchez, residents lacked evidence that Ávila Camacho was inclined to resolve their problem; they nevertheless requested that he *again* intervene against administrative officials on their behalves,¹²⁵ thus constructing Ávila Camacho as an ally. Domingo Garduño Fuentes, leader in Colonia Daniel Garza, said that the head of the Oficina de Colonias (José Garibay Centeno) was provoking conflict in the *colonia* and that *colonos* were not likely to continue tolerating these attacks. In the name of residents, he demanded that "the excesses of Garibay Centeno be stopped to preserve the government's prestige and good name."¹²⁶ Colonia Moderna residents praised the president, attributed most problems to officials whom they said disobeyed him,¹²⁷ and pointed out that residents were politically available.¹²⁸ Presidents seem to have not infrequently sided with residents, reaching over the head of the bureaucracy and party to honor requests for subordination.

Clientage

When government officials and political elites abided requests for subordination, for the urban poor the result was mass clientage. There were both ideological and organizational expressions of clientage, at both the citywide and neighborhood levels. A general ideological

AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/97 [Gertrudis G. Sánchez].

¹²⁴ Aurora Ursúa de Escobar to MAC (8 October 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/48 [Moderna; Magueyitos].

¹²⁵ Alberto Villa et al. to MAC (24 April 1946), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/97 [Gertrudis G. Sánchez].

¹²⁶ Domingo Garduño Fuentes to MAC (14 May 1945), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/23 [Daniel Garza].

¹²⁷ Aurora Ursúa de Escobar (Presidenta, Liga Femenil; Directiva, Liga Femenil de la Moderna) et al. to MAC (19 May 1943), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/48 [Moderna; Magueyitos].

¹²⁸ Aurora Ursúa de Escobar to MAC (23 October 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/48 [Moderna; Magueyitos].

expression was that residents named several of their new settlements after government-sanctioned heroes and contemporary politicians.¹²⁹ Residents also praised the regime directly. Even the CPCDF's Salvador Flores Rodríguez—whom Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández (2005:244-45) argues constantly confronted Federal District authorities and even the President in his efforts to defend residents' interests, and even though he ruthlessly criticized the Oficina de Colonias at this event—emphasized to the 60 delegates and 800 people in attendance at the CPCDF's 1949 convention that all *colonos*' problems would be resolved by working with Alemán and mayor Casas Alemán and that all of the Federal District's *colonos* supported them. As a government spy put it, “he said that the settlers support the President and [mayor] Casas Alemán and that they only ask [that] they resolve their problems.” That is, “good sense and the desire to cooperate with the regime in solving their problems prevailed among the delegates.”¹³⁰ Although he denounced party-aligned leaders like Leonilo Salgado,¹³¹ the conferences Flores organized provided party elites with opportunities to address a captive audience of neighborhood leaders.¹³²

Mass clientage was a function of the needs that arose with urban concentration, for to secure and improve their urban status, poor denizens had to appeal to patrons for favors. In Colonia Gertrudis G. Sánchez, neighborhood association leaders couched their requests for aid in a language of self-help. Thus, they asked for sewage and water hookups to a school built one year before, saying that parents will furnish the benches.¹³³ As noted above, residents there also faced significant legal and existential obstacles, making political officials' help a significant consolation. Even when their request had not yet been fulfilled, they were sure to convey their gratitude, stating “for all the attention you deign to pay to our request, we express to you that we

¹²⁹ Squatter settlements were named, e.g., after Romero Rubio (a member of governments spanning from Benito Juárez to Porfirio Díaz), Gustavo A. Madero, Emiliano Zapata, Gertrudis G. Sánchez (a revolutionary general and then governor of the State of Michoacán de Ocampo), Emilio Portes Gil (President of Mexico, 1928-1930), Lázaro Cárdenas, Miguel Alemán, Javier Rojo Gómez, and Fernando Casas Alemán.

¹³⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 112/Exp. 2-1/260/86/Folio 30.

¹³¹ Salvador Flores Rodríguez to MAC (27 November 1944), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 545.22/50.

¹³² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 103/Exp. 1/Folio 146-48; AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 112/Exp. 2-1/260/86/Folio 20-22. More generally, see de Antuñano (2017:137-43).

¹³³ Asociación Pro-Mejoramiento de la Colonia Gral. Gertrudis G. Sánchez to MAV (December 1947), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/108 [Gertrudis G. Sánchez].

will be forever grateful to you.”¹³⁴ The leaders of Colonia Emiliano Zapata were more direct; they asked the government to issue land titles, furnish a school, and provide public transportation, saying that “with this we will support the government.”¹³⁵

Colonia Moderna residents made a conscious effort to try not to embarrass Ávila Camacho during a parade that passed by his house when he was enjoying the visit of a foreign dignitary.¹³⁶ They also made explicit statements of support for the government and sitting politicians, especially the president, typically while also putting him on notice. They signed a petition to Ávila Camacho saying they had great affection for him and his ideology, and would be willing to spill their blood to ensure it is respected, and also asked that the residents be given some land and provided with more street asphaltting “in order to be able to better support your honorable government.”¹³⁷ Previous leaders of Colonia Moderna had told Cárdenas they considered the asphaltting in their community a “sign of the altruism of the government so honorably and correctly headed by you.”¹³⁸ One school teacher there requested that the government build a school, saying that “[the] people and teachers here will live forever indebted to your government.”¹³⁹

These expressions do not seem reducible to empty gestures to secure government handouts. Instead, they were often seemingly-genuine expressions of support. Francisco Guzmán López and Jorge López Corona of Colonia Moderna invited Cárdenas to visit their neighborhood to pay homage during his lame-duck period, when he was not in a position to undertake the lengthy process of granting more material aid.¹⁴⁰ This would have only been logical on the basis of genuine political sympathy with the president; it was not a viable pathway to securing aid in

¹³⁴ Carlos Valencia Flores et al. to MAV (30 October 1949), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/108 [Gertrudis G. Sánchez].

¹³⁵ Vicente Minero et al. to MAC (10 October 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/104 [Emiliano Zapata].

¹³⁶ Aurora Ursúa de Escobar to MAC (24 May 1943), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/3 [Moderna].

¹³⁷ Agrupación de Colonos de la Colonia Moderna to MAC (29 December 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/3 [Moderna].

¹³⁸ Francisco Guzmán et al. to LCR (16 July 1940), AGN(M)/LCR/Exp. 418.2/11 [Moderna].

¹³⁹ Margarita Castañeda to MAC (9 June 1943), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 545.22/291 [Moderna].

¹⁴⁰ Francisco Guzmán López and Jorge López Corona to LCR (23 October 1940), AGN(M)/LCR/Exp. 418.2/11 [Moderna].

such cases. Aurora Ursúa de Escobar articulated residents' support for the new political elite best when she said that they were not attracted to opposition politicians because they thought Ávila Camacho had treated them well, and that he "is an honorable man and governs for all, and this is how you unify the country."¹⁴¹

Political Elites' Response

Loosely arrayed within an incipient party framework, the post-revolutionary political elite had a difficult time in the aftermath of revolutionary mobilization, especially in Mexico City. In the late-1930s and early-1940s, it looked as if their time in power could end up a mere passing phase. Many scholars place emphasis on the political party in explaining political elites' rebound from the 1920s onward (see especially Garrido 1982). But in reality the party suffered from a lack of support for many years. Electoral support for the party decreased at both the national and Federal District levels in each successive election from 1934 to 1952 (Becerra Chávez 2005: tables 1, 2). Given the party's dim and darkening prospects, it would have been logical for different fractions of the political elite to go their own way.

It was by responding similarly to the pressure of urban concentration—by converging on a strategy to compete with one another and a means to trounce challengers, based on recognition of the new urban poor as supporters—that different fractions of the post-revolutionary political elite oriented to one another over time. This prevented them from fracturing into an antagonistic opposition and made mutual involvement in party-building possible. The party structure itself thus changed in response to the stabilization of the political field by orienting to the urban poor. Initially established by Calles in 1928, Cárdenas modified its organizational structure by furnishing the party with two great pillars—a peasant division (eventually called the National Confederation of Peasants, CNC) and a worker division (eventually called the Confederation of Mexican Workers, CTM)—and rechristened it as the Party of the Mexican Revolution (PRM) (1938). Ávila Camacho renamed it the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in 1943, after adding a third pillar—eventually called the National Confederation of Popular Organizations (CNOP)—in which squatter neighborhood association leaders were included. While technically a

¹⁴¹ Aurora Ursúa de Escobar to MAC (23 October 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/48 [Moderna; Magueyitos].

national organization, most of the CNOP's membership "came from organized groups in Mexico City," especially from squatters (*colonos*) (Davis 1994:101).

Acknowledging the Housing Problem

Due to the pressure of urban concentration, beginning under Cárdenas, the new political elite began to conceive of land invasions and *colonias proletarias* as "an effective housing alternative for the popular urban sectors" (Cruz Rodríguez 2004:385). I do not mean to suggest that they made everyone happy, but that land invasions served as an escape valve on the housing market (Perló Cohen 1979:799).¹⁴² The pressure of urban concentration was almost unbearable.

It was clear that this required a political response from the early days of the Cárdenas government, as evidenced by the initiatives of top *cardenistas*. In 1935, minister of the economy and *cardenista* theoretician Francisco Múgica proposed an expropriation law, which congress proceeded to debate the following year, that sought to undermine the power of landowners by redefining property as a "social function" rather than an "absolute right" (Vitz 2018:177-78). He argued that expropriation could be applied to "the division of the great Latifundios or their colonization as much as the division and urbanization of lands destined for affordable and hygienic homes for workers" (quoted in Vitz 2018:178). While agrarian reform was a major motivator, as the existing literature emphasizes, "Múgica also had in mind an urban reform to redistribute land and resources and thus create an urban commons that would complement the extensive agrarian commons" (Vitz 2018:178).

Many *cardenistas* saw Múgica, perhaps the foremost *cardenista* after Cárdenas himself, as the President's natural successor (Niblo 1999:79).¹⁴³ Thus the *camarilla cardenista* was

¹⁴² One problem was that they alienated middle class residents, some of whom owned invaded lands (Davis 1994:93). Mexico City residents had long had an anti-rural bias (Davis 1994:42-44), but by the mid-1930s they displayed anti-rural and racist sentiments towards recent migrants; they articulated "concerns about hordes of Indians, rural peasants, and a steady inflow of Middle Eastern immigrants," whom they accused of "destroying the traditional character of old neighborhoods, undermining the activities of small *comerciantes* [shopkeepers] and taking jobs away from other central city residents employed in small shops and workshops" (Davis 1994:86).

¹⁴³ Múgica led what Gilly ([1971] 2005:233) calls the "Jacobin" wing of the Constitutionalists. At the 1917 constitutional convention, this was the main force behind the successful effort to force through the most progressive articles—3 on education, 27 on land and subsoil rights, 123 on workers' rights, and 130 on secularization—against Carranza's resistance and amidst Obregón's ambivalence (Gilly [1971] 2005:233-38).

clearly in favor of expropriation, not only of rural but also of urban lands. Consequently, a leader-masses dynamic took hold during Cárdenas's tenure, starting around 1938: the urban poor participated in a bottom-up invasion, and, when it did not meet them with repression, the president expropriated the land and thereby initiated the process of transferring legal possession to squatters.¹⁴⁴ Manuel Ávila Camacho, in numerous other ways the antithesis of *cardenismo*, adopted this orientation to expropriation and built on the approach. Given the magnitude of urban concentration, politics in general began to be affected this social force, which drove Ávila Camacho to converge on the approach pioneered by Cárdenas. There is little to suggest Ávila Camacho consciously planned to build from Cárdenas's approach. The overtime convergence was, instead, a product of the dynamics of political competition to which he was subject as much as it was a direct object of his cognition. That is, since *others* oriented to the urban poor, and since the urban poor solicited subordination, it increasingly appeared apposite to those who wished to be politically competitive in the overall political field that they should comport themselves accordingly. Political elites could intuit—if they couldn't directly see—the writing on the wall.

Dissident politician Aarón Camacho López supported squatters who invaded land in Colonia Moderna.¹⁴⁵ Such responses to the opportunities latent in urban concentration indirectly incentivized Ávila Camacho to favor urban land allocations to undermine the opposition's base of support. And once he oriented to squatters, Ávila Camacho availed himself of incumbent advantages. His wartime presidential decrees were aimed at the urban population in general (a rent freeze) and at squatters in particular (free services for settlements in which at least 80 percent of residents had built their own homes above a minimum threshold of quality) (Sánchez Mejorada 2001:276-77).¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Sometimes Cárdenas opted for repression (as did his successors). For example, in 1939, there was a land invasion of Hacienda de los Morales, "a once-lavish estate that predated the Revolution," that Cárdenas opted to forcibly dislodge (Davis 1994:96).

¹⁴⁵ Emilio G. Quiroz to MAC and Carolina Quiroz de Leal to MAC (both June 1942), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/3 [Moderna].

¹⁴⁶ The preamble of a decree of 16 February 1944 conveyed the official rationale for government intervention: "it is of urgent national need to raise the living standards of the population and especially as regards their economic situation, moral-education, and hygiene, in order to incorporate the great masses that, due to a lack of resources and their overall living conditions, constitute a sector of society that has been left behind by the rest of the sectors," and it is "totally possible to secure better conditions on the basis of self-help and government aid." *Diario Oficial*, 21

Special powers and the nationalism-promotion they supported were especially useful given that many former-peasants and agricultural workers brought revolutionary sensibilities with them to the city (Davis 1994:51). Much as peasants had fought against landed elites during the revolution, some rural-to-urban migrants denounced those in Mexico City whom they thought had too much land in a context in which they needed access to some. Decrying land scarcity, a former general in the revolutionary war made the case for continuity between rural and urban settings as regarded land: the revolutionary battle cry that each peasant household should have a plot of land, “[when] brought to the capital,” becomes the ideal that “each destitute family obtain [a] small plot on which to establish its rudimentary home.”¹⁴⁷ This very idea had driven the new urban poor to requisition urban land under Cárdenas just as the rural poor drove land redistribution in the countryside.

These views were still alive in the 1940s. Domingo Garduño and other neighborhood leaders from Colonia Daniel Garza argued that the government was obligated to “to ensure the best welfare of the inhabitants in general, but in particular for the helpless people who are truly in need and who need the protection of the men who emerged from the Mexican Revolution.” They further asserted that “we cannot believe, Mr. Mayor, that we are being thrown from lands that were wetted by the blood of our elders and also by many of us, lands that we have the legal and human right to possess.”¹⁴⁸ Fidel Romero Guerra and other leaders of Colonia Ricardo Flores Magón decried what they deemed “insatiable landlord capital” and described a judge’s ruling in favor of landowners as “immoral and anti-revolutionary.”¹⁴⁹ Promoting national unity was exactly what it took to defuse these views.

Ávila Camacho cited the fact that housing was not being provided to the urban poor, and turned to urban land expropriations. During his term, the government used agrarian law (article

July 1943.

¹⁴⁷ Maurilio Mejía and A. M. Molina Henríquez to MAV (19 December 1948), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/139 [Plan de Ayala].

¹⁴⁸ Domingo Garduño, Mario del Valle, José Díaz, Francisco Soto, Candelario Martínez C., José Becerra, and Manuel Gómez to Waldo Romo Castro (MAC’s Oficial Mayor) (20 August 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/23 [Daniel Garza].

¹⁴⁹ Unión de Colonos de la Colonia R. Flores Magón (antes Portes Gil) to MAC (8 April 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/16 [Flores Magón].

27 of the constitution) as the legal basis upon which to intervene.¹⁵⁰ The government made over 70 expropriation decrees (which yielded 28,272 residential lots)¹⁵¹ and negotiated sale from private landowners (for 48,082 additional lots) (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:118), and then transferred these lots to the urban poor as inalienable usufruct property.¹⁵² This represented a convergence on a particular policy orientation among political elites who otherwise disagreed about fundamentals.

Of course, expropriation decrees were often contested. But the urban poor stood strong, insisting that they were in the new political elite's interest. When landowners clamored to reverse such measures, neighborhood residents from Colonia Moderna, for instance, denounced their intentions as anti-patriotic.¹⁵³ In this way, the demand for land mingled with nationalism, which was especially potent during and immediately after the Second World War. Arturo Velasco and Trinidad Riquelme de Canul, leaders of Colonia Escuadrón 201—named after the troops Mexico committed to the Second World War, Squadron 201—had a longstanding dispute with landowner Vidal Alonso, a Spaniard. They framed the sluggishness of bureaucratic processes as political betrayal and the landowner as *persona non grata* in Mexico: “It is embarrassing that an official of a regime that proclaims itself a friend and defender of the humble sectors of our people becomes, via a small-minded person, the protector of Vidal Alonso, a foreigner who should have been expelled from Mexico a long time ago.”¹⁵⁴ Nationalism and xenophobia were ideologies with

¹⁵⁰ Although the government used agrarian law to expropriate these lands, it did not treat the problem as it had rural land; the Ávila Camacho government did not consider urban landed elites to be an enemy that needed to be defeated, as the Cárdenas government had considered agrarian elites during the agrarian reform (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:125).

¹⁵¹ These decrees affected 4,845,134 square meters, 3,673,180 of which were dedicated to residential lots and the remainder of which went to streets, parks, etc. (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:118, 118 n.). The vast majority of these expropriations affected private lands (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:116), but they affected a small number of *ejido* lands as well (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:117 n.).

¹⁵² The government used expropriation in 67 percent of the 107 *colonias* in which it intervened (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:118). These *colonias* were concentrated in the northern and eastern peripheries of the city, in the *delegaciones* of Gustavo A. Madero, Azcapotzalco, and Iztapalapa, but also included the southern *delegación* of General Anaya (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:116). The ultimate owner of expropriated land was the DDF (Cruz Rodríguez 2004:388).

¹⁵³ Agrupación de Colonos de la Colonia Moderna to MAC (29 December 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/3 [Moderna].

¹⁵⁴ *Popular*, 9 October 1948.

which conservative political elites could work.¹⁵⁵ And to their relief, while the verve of agrarian radicalism applied to the urban sphere tended to diminish with time, xenophobic sentiments grew. Several days after Velasco and Riquelme denounced the Spanish landowner, 15,000 *colonos* rallied in Mexico City to demand that Alonso be expelled from the country.¹⁵⁶

The Ávila Camacho government's orientation to the urban poor followed shortly after the transition. By this time, there was an evident lack of basic amenities in new squatter settlements. Accordingly, upon ascending to the presidency, Ávila Camacho's appointee as the new head of the DDF, Javier Rojo Gómez, "announced a change in the policy followed until then regarding the paving of the capital: henceforth it would go 'from the periphery to the center, from the humble and most destitute strata of the population to those at the top'. . . . Specifically, schools, markets, sports fields, etc., would preferably be created in poor neighborhoods and towns" (González Navarro 1974:203-04). The new government wasted little time before abiding requests for subordination.

Promoting Neighborhood Associations

The convergence also supported concrete institution-building. Whereas Cárdenas had responded to urban concentration in an ad hoc manner, directing his concerted attention to peasants and workers, Ávila Camacho systematically promoted squatter settlement neighborhood associations. To be legally eligible to receive expropriated lands and urban upgrades, squatters in a given *colonia proletaria* had to organize themselves into a single neighborhood association—an Asociación Pro-Mejoramientos—and elect a president vetted by the government; recipients of land had to be members of the association. These and other requirements were spelled out in great detail in the 1941 Reglamento de las Asociaciones Pro Mejoramiento de Colonias del Distrito Federal.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Popular hostility towards foreigners—specifically foreign merchants—dated to at least as early as the revolutionary war-era economic crisis, sentiments upon which Obregón had capitalized (Lear 2001:305-06).

¹⁵⁶ *Popular*, 12 October 1948.

¹⁵⁷ *Diario Oficial*, 28 March 1941.

After praising the spontaneous formation of groups and organizations for the just aim of acquiring a residence, cautioning that sometimes unspecified parties abused squatter groups, and noting that such groups sometimes conflicted with one another, the Reglamento called for the DDF's Oficina de Colonias¹⁵⁸—which had already been established under Cárdenas (Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández 2005:239)—to intervene (preamble). It beckoned squatters to form themselves into Asociaciones Pro-Mejoramiento de Colonias Populares (article 1) and promised them legal recognition (article 2). It specified the process by which new associations were to be recognized¹⁵⁹ and the leadership structure that they were to adopt.¹⁶⁰ (Associations were required to register with the Oficina de Gobierno y Trabajo in their locality, and with the DDF's Oficina de Colonias, which was responsible for recording any noteworthy particulars for each association [article 6].)

In corporatist fashion, the Reglamento tried to eliminate redundancies in interest representation by limiting the number of associations to one per *colonia* (article 8) and by prohibiting unauthorized organizations that worked for the same ends as the Asociaciones Pro-Mejoramiento (article 9), warning that unauthorized associations would be dissolved immediately by sending in a DDF auditor (*interventor*) who would report them to government authorities (article 10). The Reglamento forbade the associations from collecting dues from members, noting that only the DDF could charge *colonos* for land (article 11). It specified how each *colonia's* finances would be organized (article 14). And it noted that the DDF would sell land that belonged to the DDF and land that it expropriated to heads of household (article 15). After expropriation of the land and recognition of the association, the Reglamento stipulated (article 16) that the Oficina de Colonias would give *colonos* a form of inalienable residential

¹⁵⁸ Called the Oficina de Cooperación at this time.

¹⁵⁹ Associations had to be formed on the basis of a petition from at least 20 percent of the *colonos* to the DDF to hold an official assembly at which at least 75 percent of heads of family were to attend, which had to be promoted in the local press (if one existed) and one of the main newspapers of Mexico City, and new *colonia* associations had to have a minimum of 200 heads of families (article 3). The Reglamento further stipulated that a DDF official was to attend the assembly in which the constitution was passed to ensure that it conformed to all requirements (article 7).

¹⁶⁰ Associations' leadership structure was to be comprised of a Comité Directivo (with an odd number of members numbering between three and nine) one of whose members was to be a president, who legally represented the *colonia* (article 4), and another of whose members was to be a secretary, who would maintain a DDF-authorized minute book (article 5).

property (usufruct) that could not be seized/repossessed or encumbered, known as *patrimonio familiar*.¹⁶¹

The associations were required to interface with the Oficina de Colonias for all matters of importance; these ranged from initial registration (article 6), to general assistance (article 13), to matters of construction (article 12), the latter signaling that squatter settlements were to be regulated differently than formal neighborhoods.¹⁶² The Oficina de Colonias was responsible for the *colonias* in general (preamble), as well as for access to land in particular (article 15). The Oficina de Colonias was subordinate to the DDF's Dirección General de Gobernación, the *political* branch of the city government, rather than the Dirección de Obras Públicas, the relevant *administrative* branch (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:127-28). *Colonos* thus had to comport themselves according to what was implicitly a *political* formula outlined in the Reglamento.

Moreover, since the DDF did not consider *colonos'* social interests serviceable unless they were organized as a recognized Asociación Pro-Mejoramiento, starting with the passage of the Reglamento in 1941, DF squatter politics pivoted on recognition of neighborhood associations (Azuela 1989:99)—so much so that association recognition was spoken of as recognition writ large (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:127). To secure official recognition of their lots, *colonos* had to belong to the associations of their respective *colonias* (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:120). The government organized 182 such associations in DF between 1940 and 1946 (Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:119).¹⁶³ If the formation of squatter settlements was a form of redistribution, redistribution

¹⁶¹ This kind of property is based on the constitution (article 27) and is included in the civil code (articles 723-746). It was the form that expropriated agrarian property took after the Congreso Constituyente in Querétaro but before it metamorphosed completely into *ejidos* (the latter being commonly-held property intended to be used for agriculture). Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez (1989:125) argue that the DDF resuscitated *patrimonio familiar* and used it for urban problems—the problem of squatters—by including it in the Reglamento. It continued to be used in the urban sphere until the aftermath of the 1985 earthquake, where it began to fall out of favor. Meanwhile, the prohibition on sale of *patrimonio familiar* led to many illegal sales (Azuela and Duhau 1998:165).

¹⁶² Whereas the Reglamento stipulated that the residents of squatter settlements were to interface with the Oficina de Colonias as regarded matters of construction, the permitting requirements made of formal settlements, spelled out in the 1941 Ley de Fraccionamientos, did not involve the Oficina de Colonias (Perló Cohen 1979:795-96). The chief difference between the two kinds of settlements was that land dedicated to the former did not have service hookups installed prior to settlement, whereas the land dedicated to the latter did. Allowing them to refuse to install service hookups represented a boon for land developers, as well as a way for the government to foist responsibility for collective goods provision onto the urban poor.

¹⁶³ Only 17 of these were registered in the Registro Publico de la Propiedad, however (Azuela and Cruz 1989:119)

hinged on recognition. And recognition was closely related to political affiliation (Azuela 1989:99; Azuela de la Cueva 1993:142).¹⁶⁴

Incorporating the Urban Poor into the Party

Squatters' representatives, alongside a variety of other social groups, were included in the third pillar of the PRI, the National Confederation of Popular Organizations. Given its poor performance in 1940, it was apparent to the reactionary wing of the new political elite that the party needed to change course from the focus on peasants and workers that had characterized the Cárdenas era. Accordingly, Ávila Camacho committed himself and much of the government machinery, including the military, to organizing the so-called "popular sector" (Garrido 1982:323)—a category so capacious that it was applied to virtually any group that did not fall neatly within the CTM or the CNC—into the CNOP.¹⁶⁵

The historical context was extremely propitious for a bold new organizing initiative. Due to the wartime mobilization behind the banner of "national unity," the country's key labor leaders—from Fidel Velázquez (head of the CTM) to Carlos Sánchez (CGT) to Luis N. Morones (CROM) and beyond—formed a pact to support the government and abstain from both infighting and striking (except in extreme circumstances) (Garrido 1982:327), though strikes did occasionally erupt (Niblo 1999:121-23). His exceptional wartime powers also enabled Ávila Camacho to intervene in the CNOP, removing its radical leadership and placing colonel Gabriel Leyva Velázquez at its head (Garrido 1982:329). With both workers and peasants temporarily

n.).

¹⁶⁴ The neighborhood association system was seen as partisan from the start. In 1941, one of Asociación Pro-Mejoramiento de la Colonia Emiliano Zapata's petitions to Ávila Camacho was numbered "P.R.M./8," PRM being an abbreviation of the official party's name at the time. Regardless of whether the numbering convention was because the association saw itself or saw the government as partisan, it viewed partisanism as part of the squatter neighborhood association-government relationship. See Vicente Minero et al. to MAC (10 October 1941), AGN(M)/MAC/.Exp. 418.2/104 [Emiliano Zapata].

¹⁶⁵ The CNOP "included a grab bag of occupations, mainly urban-based, including artisans, small agriculturalists, small industrialists and shopkeepers, professionals, youth workers, students, groups of revolutionary women, schoolteachers, bureaucrats, agricultural cooperative members (*cooperativistas*), neighborhood organizations (*colonos*), artists, bus drivers, and the military, who together comprised 33.7 percent of the party. At its founding, the CNOP was larger than the labor sector (30.4 percent) and held almost as many members as the peasant sector (35.9 percent)" (Davis 1994:101).

pacified, major Antonio Nava Castillo (the PRM's Secretary of Popular Action) stepped up to head the CNOP organizing drive as the president of the National Organizing Committee; by the end of 1942, there were CNOP organizations all across Mexico (Garrido 1982:331). At its first national convention in February 1943, Nava Castillo was appointed the CNOP's first general secretary (Garrido 1982:332).

The CNOP did not appear on a blank slate as regards squatter organizations. Existing umbrella organizations ranged from highly partisan to somewhat autonomous. The Comité Central de Colonos (CCC) was highly partisan. Its leaders were present at the CNOC's first swearing-in ceremony in 1943, at which time its president, Leonilo Salgado, pledged squatters' support to the official party (Instituto de Capacitación Política 1984:147). Salgado organized squatters in *colonias* Moderna and Niños Héroes. Similarly submissive were the Bloque Nacional de Colonos and the Frente Nacional de Colonos. During Rojo Gómez's tenure as mayor (1940-1946), these organizations' amiable relations with the city government ensured that their neighborhood affiliates received disproportionate attention (Sánchez-Mejorada 2005:244). On the other extreme was the Coalition of Popular Residents of the Federal District, mentioned above, which had about 20 neighborhood subscribers (Sánchez-Mejorada 2005:244). The CPCDF's main leader, Salvador Flores Rodríguez, was a persistent advocate for squatters during the 1940s and 1950s. The CPCDF was affiliated with the CNOP, but it often took positions opposed to those of political officials, displaying considerable autonomy.¹⁶⁶

And once it did make its debut, at least initially, the CNOP included a wide variety of squatter organizations with different political orientations. Some of these organizations—like the Federación de Colonias Proletarias del Oriente de México (FCPOM), which was present in Colonia Patria Nueva (formerly Colonia Lázaro Cárdenas)—predated the CNOP, and may have even inspired the political elite to form it. In 1938, José Muñoz Cota, an important member of the *camarilla cardenista* (Camp 2011:666) and now president of the PNR's Federal District branch and congressperson for the city's first district, expressed a great deal of confidence in the

¹⁶⁶ There were numerous other organizations that ranged widely in terms of loyalty versus autonomy. Other umbrella organizations included the Federación de Organizaciones del Distrito Federal, the Frente Único de Colonos de la República, the Confederación Mexicana de Colonos Proletarios, and the Confederación de Colonos de México.

political promise of the FCPOM, calling it “the basis on which to establish the complete unification of the Federal District.”¹⁶⁷

The advent of the CNOP constituted a major development for the PRM. The PRM was no longer Cárdenas’s concoction of peasants, workers, and a military third wheel, in which political contestation from below was both routine and important in influencing the party’s program; it became one that had an increasingly multi-class complexion and that was increasingly unified at the top. Indeed, “the incorporation and enlistment of a whole series of social categories . . . constituted a violation of the spirit and the letter of the PRM’s official documents” (Garrido 1982:333). This was all excellent news, of course, for the new political elite. And the timing was impeccable: the CNOP was formed on the heels of the raucous 1930s and aimed to harness support for the party amidst formidable worker militancy (Davis 1994:303). Thus, while “the CNOP’s objectives seemed . . . poorly defined, and in the following weeks the Party leadership had difficulty explaining them to the press,” the party leadership demonstrated remarkably apposite foresight in its “most helpful explanation,” in which it emphasized “the need to consolidate ‘national unity’” (Garrido 1982:333).

Towards this goal, the leftists who had initially been instrumental in organizing the popular sector were marginalized and excluded from the CNOP’s leadership (Garrido 1982:334), while squatters were increasingly brought into the political elite’s orbit via the CNOP. The historically-aligned power bloc was based, in large measure, on the mass clientelism the CNOP channeled (Davis 1994:303). Although it was technically a national organization, the CNOP’s “principal membership still came from organized groups in Mexico City proper” (Davis 1994:101).

The CNOP worked hand-in-glove with the administrative bureaucracy. According to Alonso et al. (1980:362), this enabled the new political elite to harness support from the urban poor on the following basis. In 1952, the Oficina de Colonias instituted a system of “block delegates,” or local-level representatives, across Mexico City. It carried out a detailed inspection to determine who should head each *colonia*. Once they found the right person, s/he was summoned to the offices, told that s/he would be the neighborhood association president, and

¹⁶⁷ “SALUDO A LOS COLONOS DEL PRIMER DISTRITO DE LA CIUDAD DE MEXICO” (20 March 1938), AGN(M)/LCR/Exp. 418.2/3 [Patria Nueva].

instructed to nominate people for the remaining committee positions. An election meeting was then called at which someone from the Oficina de Colonias served as chair. The president and the remainder of the committee was “elected,” even though the result had already been determined. The upshot, Alonso et al. argue, was to enhance institutional control over the urban poor.

Blocing the Field

With the expropriation and upgrading scheme in place, and amidst the development of the neighborhood association system and the CNOP, the urban poor’s gestures of political support fell primarily to party insiders. Upon receiving land, neighborhood leaders like Colonia Lázaro Cárdenas’s Ángel Ladrón de Guevara and Jesús López said that “the initial problem for us has ended, and we have no other problem than the support of our children and gratitude to the men of the Revolution,” for which reason “from now on we will do whatever is necessary to defend your Government.”¹⁶⁸ The executive committee of the PNR was the first sponsor of the ceremony at which residents of Colonia Lázaro Cárdenas (now called Colonia Patria Nueva and organized under the leadership of Tomás Calvo Leyva) were to be given official land contracts; as if at a political rally, the head of the Oficina de Colonias’s report was sandwiched between two PNR speakers.¹⁶⁹ In squatter settlement after squatter settlement, neighborhood association leader intermediaries proposed a political bargain whereby the new urban poor were to be given tacit permission (often ex post facto) to build squatter settlements, and were to be given help equipping their settlements with urban services, in exchange for political support.

This made it make sense for political elites to play ball with the government and to retain membership in the party. Government officials received solicitations in writing—some of which entered the archival record—and undoubtedly also in spoken and gestured forms as well. And they seem to have responded accordingly, when the political time was right, since not only was the problem of official land contracts politicized during rallies like the one described above, but services such as street paving appear to have been timed to coincide with electoral campaigns.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Ángel Ladrón de Guevara and Jesús López to LCR (15 July 1935), AGN(M)/LCR/Exp. 418.2/7.

¹⁶⁹ Flyer (March 1938), AGN(M)/LCR/Exp. 418.2/3 [Patria Nueva].

¹⁷⁰ *Excélsior*, 8 September 1952 [Emiliano Zapata].

This was a good arrangement for those seeking to move up in politics; it also ensured that they do so inside the party.

The trickle of government assistance for the infrastructural outfitting of squatter settlements put political officials in a position to accept and even promote some leaders and informal settlements while harassing other settlers and leaders, depending on political considerations (Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández 2005:250). In order to receive favorable agreements on urban services, neighborhood association leaders were most successful if they pledged residents' loyalty to the regime (Azuela 1989:99; Perló Cohen 1979:798, 801). Obviously residents did not always obey. But, many gradually tipped in that direction. For their incorporation into the official party, Azuela (1989:99) argues, "what the settlers received in return was . . . a kind of promise of non-aggression that eliminated the danger of eviction" and "the initiation of the paperwork for the introduction of services." One campaigning politician allegedly told squatters that if they did not vote for him, their land would be taken and given to those who *were* loyal.¹⁷¹

Federal District mayors Javier Rojo Gómez (1940-1946) and Fernando Casas Alemán (1946-1952) were in a position to turn a blind eye when the urban poor invaded empty land and formed squatter settlements. But neither was blind to the opportunity that lay before them, and both had ambitions to move up in politics. So, just as the 1941 Reglamento and the CNOP were used to secure political loyalties, so too Mexico City's mayors seem to have permitted land invasions with the hope that residents would support them politically in return (Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández 2005:245). This was politically strategic insofar as the aim was to move up in the ranks of one or the other *camarilla*. The behaviors of Casas Alemán are telling in this regard, in that he was a loyal *alemanista* (which is why President Alemán tapped him for the mayoral position) but based his bid for the PRI's presidential nomination in part on demonstrating his ability to secure squatter support in collaboration with congressman César Cervantes (Perló Cohen 1979:823 n. 151, 829)—that is, he revealed that the *camarilla alemanista* recognized Ávila Camacho's capital—even though he was not ultimately nominated.

Neighborhood association leaders channeled support behind Cárdenas, and then Ávila Camacho, making it clear by the time of the next presidential campaign that the conservative

¹⁷¹ Elodia Sánchez de Ortíz et al. to MAC (15 June 1943), AGN(M)/MAC/Exp. 418.2/57 [Romero Rubio].

wing of the new political elite had a mass base. Leftist *cardenistas* could not help but to take note. Vicente Lombardo Toledano, the only major figure on the labor left at the time, whose stature suffered major blows as the revolutionary boil cooled to a simmer, tried to prove himself useful by throwing his weight behind Ávila Camacho's most viable successor, Alemán (Niblo 1999:165). Miguel Henríquez Guzmán, the highest-profile leader of the *agrarista* wing of the *cardenista* movement, announced he would not run, ensuring the *agraristas* had no position from which to put forward a dissenting voice. Taken together, this represented a convergence of the reformers with Alemán. And as reformers converged with conservatives, this blocage of the political field blocked political alternatives, both left and right. Alemán excelled, championing developmentalism and catalyzing the rise of the *camarilla alemanista* to power. Miguel Alemán tried to slow the formation of new squatter settlements by refusing to issue expropriation decrees after 1947 (Azuela de la Cueva 1993:142) and focusing on developing existing ones. But rather than stop the formation of squatter settlements, his orientation led the process to take a more bottom-up form. Nevertheless, the top-down implications were here to stay.

Between the early-1940s and the early-1950s, following on the heels of the transition in power from the *cardenista* reformists to the conservatives and then *alemanista* developmentalists, Mexican mass politics came to center on the PRI. The before-after contrast is striking. Ávila Camacho campaigned for the presidency by securing endorsements from “parallel organizations” and, only once his preeminence was clear, securing the PRM's endorsement (Knight 1990:58). Alemán's campaign, in contrast, was based on securing endorsement from the party's three pillars: the CTM, the CNC, and the CNOP (Knight 1990:76). The 1940 election was marked by violent clashes, especially between PRM forces and right-wing oppositionists (Navarro 2010:45-50). The 1946 election, in contrast, was largely free of violent incident, and the non-PRI challengers proved far weaker than six years prior (Knight 1990:77). The 1952 election saw a group of leftist pro-Cárdenas members split from the PRI, form the Federation of Parties of the Mexican People (FPPM), and field Miguel Henríquez Guzmán as a presidential challenger to the PRI's candidate, Adolfo Ruiz Cortines. Henríquez's defeat confirmed what Lombardo Toledano had suspected: beyond the PRI was the political wilderness. The events of that year “produced the final adjustments to the political machine in Mexico that enabled the PRI leadership to dominate the country for decades” (Navarro 2010:255). Substantive political opposition was seemingly gone for good.

Benevolent mass clientelism saw both *cardenistas* and *alemanistas* adopt the same strategy—recognizing the urban poor—in their rivalry with one another, thus issuing in an historically-aligned power bloc. It was in part on this basis that the PRI not only remained united for the most part but was able to extend its control to almost all elected offices in Mexico. With the urban poor soliciting government control, and with the political elite becoming an historically-aligned power bloc, the PRI reached its apogee. By the election of President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958), the party was firmly ensconced in power. The alignment of distinct fractions of the elite—the reformist Cárdenas government tentatively oriented to squatters, and then the conservative Ávila Camacho and developmentalist Alemán governments retained this orientation, rather than adopt a different policy orientation—was borne largely of urban concentration and the benevolent mass clientelism to which it gave rise. Since different fractions of the political elite worked together by the end of Alemán’s term, the institution excelled. Indeed, “until the 1960s the PRI did little more than tinker with Alemán’s system” (Joseph and Buchenau 2013:158).

Conclusion

Starting in the mid-1930s, urban concentration brought a growing number of poor people who needed housing into Mexico City. The reformist fraction of the post-revolutionary political elite, led by Lázaro Cárdenas, opted to allow the proliferation of squatter settlements as a partial solution to the housing deficit, a policy that was of a piece with its progressive position on agrarian reform and labor militancy. Subsequently, the conservative government of Manuel Ávila Camacho and the developmentalist government of Miguel Alemán both preserved this policy orientation and built upon it.

From the 1910s to the late-1930s, Mexican workers and peasants had exercised a major influence on Mexican political development, fundamentally disrupting business as usual and forcing those who picked up the pieces—the new political elite—to make major concessions. The country adopted one of the world’s most progressive constitutions in 1917 and carried an agrarian reform second only to those of Russia and Cuba in the 1930s. Politics inched towards popular sovereignty. But by the 1940s, with the new urban poor increasingly requesting

subordination to the new political elite, a very different dynamic took hold, ensuring overall movement in the opposite direction.

In part, this was because abiding requests for subordination affirmed a new political identity: the urban poor (*colonos*). Leaders like Salvador Flores Rodríguez organized at the city-wide level because an incipient identity made space for them, and the popularity of his work was evidence of its promise. This new identity would become the basis for the emergence of urban social movements in the 1960s and 1970s. In the meantime, it helped ensure a large part of the popular classes did not identify as workers or peasants. Whereas workers and peasants had radical traditions, the urban poor's political roots were shallow and its outlook shaped in a conservative way in real time.

Cognizant of the political elite's need for supporters, neighborhood association leaders solicited subordination, stipulating that if political elites helped them consolidate their denizen status, they would reciprocate by delivering residents' support. Many squatters supported the regime, though a lot did not, and too few voted for the PRI and its predecessors to counteract the steady erosion of its base of electoral support. Support was enough, however, to help the PRI consolidate control. It helped unite the destinies of the *cardenista* and *alemanista camarillas*, the main fractions of the new political elite: both henceforth oriented to one another within the party as mere agonistically-related political tendencies. In this twofold way, through giving rise to benevolent mass clientelism, urban concentration furthered the concentration of power. Meanwhile, squatter settlements continued to grow¹⁷² and the Asociaciones Pro-Mejoramiento model continued to be applied systematically until the early 1970s (Azuela de la Cruz and Cruz Rodríguez 1989:130-31).

¹⁷² By 1952, 24 percent of the DF population (724,000 people) lived in its 273 *colonias* (Connolly 2013:524).

Chapter 3. Dependence, Urban Concentration, and Old-Guard Convergence: Lima, 1945-1968

In contrast to Mexico, where the 20th century saw a major revolution lead to the downfall of personalistic politics and the rise of the institution of the PRI, in Peru, high politics remained very personalistic.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, in both countries urban concentration served as a basis for elite political convergence. Different fractions of the Peruvian political elite had different interests and agendas, which often put them at odds with one another. When oligarchic elites could not ensure social peace, they called upon the remnants of the *caudillo* elite and military officials took the reins of power. Oligarchs and *caudillos* constituted the two primary elite fractions. Both came to converge on support for squatter settlements, under pressure from urban concentration, at a time when they agreed about little else. Domesticating the urban poor (in the most cost-effective way possible) appealed to both the oligarchic and the *caudillo* elite.

The advent of benevolent mass clientelism was, however, the product of much more bottom-up pressure in Peru than in Mexico. Through the process of urban concentration, people who were poor, marginalized, and oppressed impelled elites to converge on a political project that included them. Mass clientelism did not, for this, champion the urban poor's interests per se. Moreover, in equal measure as it helped unite the different fractions of the political elite, mass clientelism deepened popular class cleavages by creating a new, salient sociopolitical agent—the urban poor—with a discrepant set of putative interests centering around denizen status and urban services. They were increasingly loyal to the political elite, while worker and peasant interests

¹⁷³ These two cases invert the features found in each other in other ways as well: nationalization of petroleum resources and implementation of agrarian reform measures predated the apogee of urban concentration in Mexico, whereas comparable, albeit less profound, measures postdated the height of urban concentration in Peru.

lay in the redistribution of wealth and power and in the autonomy necessary to demand such concessions.

Over the course of this chapter, I briefly survey existing explanations for modern Peruvian political development, summarize the political-historical background, and describe the chief elite political cleavage. After relating the magnitude of urban concentration, I then describe how the urban poor compelled the political elite to undertake a political response, giving rise to benevolent mass clientelism, and how distinct fractions followed the same overarching policy, making them an historically-aligned power bloc.

Historical Context

Peru was characterized by considerable continuity from the colonial period to the late 20th century. Indeed, Julio Cotler (2005:47), the foremost historical sociologist of Peru, maintains that there was no developmental rupture between colonization in the 16th century and the government of general Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968-1975). We need not adopt such an extreme view—and indeed I will argue below that the nation-making project started in earnest two decades earlier—to concede that the impact of colonization and colonial governance continued to be monumental for republican-era Peru, all the way up to the mid-20th century.

Coloniality and the Capital City

Lima played an important part in Peru's colonialism-dominated saga. Francisco Pizarro founded Lima in 1535, eight years before Cortés ultimately conquered Tenochtitlán (Mexico City). It became the seat of the Spanish Viceroyalty, the so-called Ciudad de Los Reyes, in 1542. After the founding of New Spain (Mexico), it served as the preeminent administrative center for the Virreinato Colonial de América del Sur, and its preeminence in Spanish South America lasted at least until the Bourbons established the Virreinato del Río de la Plata (1776) and the Capitanía de Chile (1778).

The approach to administering the conquest of South America contrasted with that taken for Mexico. Whereas in Mexico the Spanish conquerors decided to establish the colonial outpost on the same exact location as the capital of the prehispanic Aztec empire, in Peru the Spanish

conquerors opted not to build their capital in Cuzco, the capital of the Incas, due to the ruggedness of the terrain and the fear that they would be vulnerable to ambush without easy escape routes. They instead chose a stretch of the coast where the Rímac River departed the Andean foothills and crossed 12 kilometers of flat land before emptying into the Pacific Ocean. This oasis had no powerful prehispanic people with whom to contend. There had, of course, been some indigenous people in the area (the Ichma and Collique peoples),¹⁷⁴ though the Incas had probably subdued them before the Spanish arrived. Nevertheless, security concerns were significant enough to motivate the construction of a wall surrounding the outpost at the end of the 17th century.

From the conquest onward, Peru was therefore characterized by a Lima-provinces, and especially a Lima-Andes, dualism.¹⁷⁵ Political power, economic linkages, and status were concentrated in Lima, and “the further one got from Lima the more despotic and poorer it was” (Matos Mar 2012:41). Spanish was the primary language in Lima, whereas Quechua was the primary language in Andean Peru, where most Peruvians lived; light-skinned Spaniards and people of Spanish descent (creoles) predominated in Lima, whereas dark-skinned descendants of the Incas and other prehispanic people predominated in the Andes; political decisions were made in Lima, whereas the province was administered from the coastal city; and the bulk of the commercial activity took place in Lima, whereas the rest of Peru was largely dedicated to primary commodity extraction.¹⁷⁶ Lima’s population remained small. In 1586, there were about 6,000 inhabitants, approximately two-thirds of whom were slaves of African descent; the rest were mostly Spaniards and creoles (Leonard 2000:433).¹⁷⁷ The same essential pattern—Lima, dominated by a creole minority, and the rest of the country, mostly indigenous—persisted for

¹⁷⁴ While few seem to agree, at least one observer posits that there may have been an even denser Indian population on the coast than in the Andes (Wachtel 1973:114).

¹⁷⁵ Viceroy Francisco de Toledo (1569-1581), who otherwise shaped colonial Peruvian society profoundly, especially through his forced resettlement initiative (*reducciones*), seemed to recognize the liabilities flowing from this. He petitioned the crown to move the capital to Cuzco, though his petitions were rejected (Mumford 2012:113).

¹⁷⁶ Peruvian Marxist José Carlos Mariátegui was the first to popularize the idea that Peruvian society was comprised of two disarticulated segments along these lines (Fuenzalida 2009:147-48).

¹⁷⁷ The city was highly polarized. But for many decades, there was no clear spatial segregation between the aristocracy and the urban plebes; very near conquerors’ palaces there were slave, Indian, and caste slums (*callejones*)—the first form of popular rental housing in Lima.

centuries. In the early-19th century, Alexander von Humboldt remarked that in Lima he did not learn anything about Peru, since it was more isolated from the rest of the country than London, its foremost trading partner (Cotler 2005:33).

Colonial Peru's creole elites did not want to rule a republic. Indeed, for the most part they supported the Spanish crown during the independence movement that swept across Spanish America during the early-19th century, hoping that the Bourbon monarchy would reward their loyalty with a reversal of its centralizing reforms, and fearing that a nationalist struggle for independence would unleash an Indian uprising they would not be able to control.¹⁷⁸ Other Latin American creole elites nevertheless thrust independence upon Peru's in 1824,¹⁷⁹ making them foster parents of the republic rather than founding fathers (Cotler 2005:33-34; Bonilla and Spalding [1972] 2015). (The Spanish, meanwhile, felt sufficiently comfortable in Peru that they took an additional five years to remove their garrison from the port of Callao, during which time Peru was only nominally independent.) Naturally, there was no legitimate political authority in the new country. This condition endured for over a century, leaving military strongmen and regional bosses (*caudillos*) in control of large swathes of the country (Cotler 2005:34). A string of generals occupied the presidential palace in succession.

The advent of mass politics stemmed from the growing stature of Lima in the national scheme. Part of this centrality was commercial, as already described. But there were three other important parts. First, in the mid-19th century opportunities for commodity exporting activity expanded considerably, giving rise to a new class (or reinforcing the same pattern established during the Spanish conquest, depending on one's perspective), the "oligarchy." Second, increased revenues, borne of export taxes, strengthened the central government and allowed it to carry out centralizing political reforms that gradually marginalized the Andean landed elite from national political control. Third, by the mid-20th century, rural dwellers increasingly migrated to the city, especially to Lima. Consequently, Lima's population, which had grown gradually since independence, spiked in the mid- and late-20th century. Rural-to-urban migration stoked fear among the traditional urban middle and dominant classes, who saw the peasantry as a danger to

¹⁷⁸ Indian elites did participate in the independence struggle, however (Spalding 1984:237).

¹⁷⁹ The Battle of Ayacucho, which was the decisive turning point, was led by Antonio José de Sucre, Simón Bolívar's most loyal officer and fellow Venezuelan.

their way of life (Colter 2005:259, 262). But it was precisely here that prospects for nationally-oriented political elites also lay.

Mass Politics and the Fractured Peruvian Elite

The main cleavage in the 20th-century Peruvian political elite was between traditional *caudillos* and the “new” oligarchic elite. It took several decades after independence for anything like an oligarchic elite to begin to emerge, and when it did it was plagued by internal cleavages and political splits borne of members’ different relationships to the changing political economy. In the mid-19th century, president Ramón Castilla awarded natural resource extraction concessions to private individuals in exchange for a fixed government fee. Both established and new elites lurched at the opportunity to exploit sugar and cotton, availing themselves of Castilla’s fiscally responsible investment conditions, and a coastal agro-exporting elite emerged. This gave rise to a cleavage within Peru’s economic elite between highland, *hacienda*-oriented *caudillos* and coastal, export-oriented elites. Soon, the latter elites gained overwhelming influence over “whoever was in control of the national government” (Astiz 1969:37). The agro-exporting elites organized a political party, the Partido Civilista, and advanced Manuel Pardo as their presidential candidate. The *civilistas* mobilized followers to defeat the *caudillos* in street fighting, leaving Pardo the first civilian president and establishing what Peruvianists call the Aristocratic Republic (a Romanesque form of civilian democracy among plutocratic elites).

Nevertheless, due to variations in interests among the oligarchs, the *civilistas* had trouble retaining power as a group. With Peru’s defeat at the hands of Chile in the War of the Pacific (1879-1883), *caudillo* Nicolás de Pierola took power (Astiz 1969:39). José Pardo (Manuel’s son) made considerable strides at rebuilding the party, then passed the torch to his protégée Augusto Leguía. Leguía ended up being a wild card. He alienated much of the oligarchy because he sought to replace “democracy among plutocrats” with “his own rule” (Gilbert 2017:108). Deeming the party irredeemable, the prominent oligarchic Prado and Miró Quesada families split and formed a rival party; they wanted an executive committee of a representative cross-section of the ruling class, not just a Leguía dictatorship. But the split set them back politically. It made political room for reform-oriented Guillermo Billinghurst to win the presidency in 1912.

Two of the Prado brothers tried to pick up the pieces. They overthrew Billinghurst with the collaboration of Óscar Benavides, who ruled briefly before returning power to José Pardo for a second term, thus restoring the Aristocratic Republic. The incipient labor movement grew increasingly radical and well-organized during this time, and there were widespread strikes. The government tried repression, but it was ineffective. A radical labor federation was formed, Peru's first socialist party was established, and an incipient student movement aligned itself with the workers' movement. The First World War caused high inflation which precipitated a cost of living crisis, and in January 1919 there was a brief general strike supported by students. To restore order, Pardo called upon the army but also conceded the 8-hour day. Then another general strike broke out in May, to which Pardo again responded by calling upon the military, as well as decreeing a state of emergency (Gilbert 2017:110).

Elections were held at this time and Leguía returned from abroad to run as the un-Pardo. He adopted a quasi-Bonapartist orientation to the election, presenting himself to the upper classes as a cautious reformer capable of preventing a revolution and to workers and students as the harbinger of far-reaching reforms (Gilbert 2017:110-11). He retained the same orientation after the campaign, staging a preemptive coup (even though he swept the elections), suppressing the radical forces, developing ties with highland elites, and banishing the old oligarchic families from the political arena (even though he defended their interests more energetically than Pardo had). In the meantime, the election of a new congress put to bed the plutocratic democracy that had been in place since 1895 (Gilbert 2017:111). Leguía ruled for 11 years, during which the oligarchy was unable to unite its ranks sufficiently well to restore the Aristocratic Republic.

Things went from bad to worse for the oligarchy during the crisis of the 1930s. Again, mass discontent proved politically unbearable. In August 1930 a popular military uprising toppled President Augusto Leguía. Commander Luis Miguel Sánchez Cerro came to the fore, first taking the helm of the military government and, after the 1931 election, ruling again as the constitutional president (during which time he was assassinated). Sánchez Cerro became a popular political figure, painting himself as the "protector of the poor" by distributing food to urban paupers, banning evictions, and abolishing forced labor levies (*conscripción vial*) (Cotler 2005:212-13). Amidst the generalized depression-era hardship, Sánchez Cerro's leadership in the uprising and his ascent to the presidency stoked mass enthusiasm with the prospect of participating in national political life. These years were characterized by a major wave of popular

mobilization. Between Sánchez Cerro's military and his eventual constitutional terms as president, four other executives held stage in succession, only the last of whom, David Samanez Ocampo, ruled for more than a few days.

Given the heightened politicization, the Samanez Ocampo government allowed APRA leader Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre to return from exile in July 1931 as a concession. The wave of popular mobilization served as wind in APRA's sails. Haya de la Torre quickly gained majority support among the popular and middle classes, especially outside of Lima. Leading up to the election, he and Sánchez Cerro tried to outdo one another at mobilizing a populist coalition (Jansen 2017; Stein 1980). After losing the 1931 election, APRA pivoted to an attempt to undermine the constitutional Sánchez Cerro government (Bertram 1991:414). For his part, Sánchez Cerro came out strongly against grassroots radicalism, ruthlessly repressing striking workers and popular mobilizations (Cotler 2005:213-14). Someone tried to assassinate Sánchez Cerro, which he used as pretext to jail Haya de la Torre. Sánchez Cerro then put down an APRA-led uprising in the northern city of Trujillo in 1933, after which violence spiraled out of control.¹⁸⁰

For the first time in Peruvian history, political elites had no choice but to take the masses into account.¹⁸¹ Thus not only did Sánchez Cerro enjoy popular appeal, and his successor, general Óscar Benavides (who had been tapped to rule after Sánchez Cerro was assassinated in 1933), who did not enjoy broad support, had to respond to the masses. He established a social insurance scheme to provide workers with benefits and pensions funded by workers, employers, and the government, which helped mollify workers (Bertram 1991:416). Across these years, APRA was capable of mass mobilization, as was demonstrated forcefully when it orchestrated a general strike in 1944.

Meanwhile, the economic situation had divided the oligarchy. During the 1930s, foreign markets for exports were no longer an option. Divergent responses to economic developments out of their control left the oligarchy divided into two main camps (Portocarrero Maisch

¹⁸⁰ Since the insurgents executed military officers during the uprising, large swathes of the military became virulently anti-APRA.

¹⁸¹ Both fractions of the political elite also had to take the economic elite into account. The economic elite was divided at this time between those who favored an intransigent reaction to the mass involvement in politics, among whom Pedro Beltrán and the Miró Quesada family loomed large, and those who favored paternalistic reformism, among which was the Prado family business empire.

1983:81). First was an old guard. It remained committed to a pure form of creole liberalism and remained skeptical about coexisting with mass politics, instead preferring to back repressive dictators. Its main representative was Pedro Beltrán, a far-sighted politico who used his wealth to further the interests of his class (Portocarrero Maisch 1983:86). The Miró Quesada family was also among the hardliners (Bertram 1991:416). Second was a more moderate wing of the oligarchic elite, represented by the Prado family. Manuel Prado and others proposed lowering interest rates (to encourage financial flows via borrowing) and a tax on luxury goods, to allow the government to spend and create demand (a form of spontaneous proto-Keynesianism) (Portocarrero Maisch 1983:21-23). The moderate wing of the oligarchy preferred increasing public spending and flirted with industry-promotion, and even tried to coopt APRA to defuse its revolutionary potential and institute a liberal democracy. This worked well for Manuel Prado; APRA used its organizing muscle to support him for the presidency in 1939, propelling him to the apex of Peruvian politics.

Given the heightened mobilization, repression was less and less a viable option. Benavides had tried both carrot and stick, revoking civil liberties and repressing the popular movements but also amnestying Haya and promising that rights would soon be restored. Not only did the state of emergency provoke APRA, but the amnesty provoked a reaction on the part of those gathered around the Unión Revolucionaria, which, formerly a mass organization in the military camp, moved into the opposition, leaving Benavides with little mass support. This forced Benavides to renege on his promise to restore liberties; but nor was this viable. APRA and Haya took advantage of the discontent to promote military uprisings, further eroding the military's base of support (Colter 2005:225-28). Thus, political elites well knew they could not rely too strongly on repression. It was also clear the oligarchy could not restore the Aristocratic Republic, at least given its internal division. There was no alternative to a government more responsive to the masses.

When José Luis Bustamante y Rivera won the 1945 election (with 66 percent of the vote), the country convulsed with a euphoria hitherto unknown to Peru. Workers' and peasants' unions multiplied and proceeded to demand improved wages and working conditions. The student movement reawakened and student governments coalesced in the universities for the first time. Writers took up popular demands. And popular mobilization did not cease. One indicator is union formation. From 1936 to 1939 Benavides recognized 33 new unions and from 1940 to

1944 Prado recognized 118 more (Colter 2005:232). Then, after Bustamante took office, there was a wave of strikes, and worker and peasant organizing accelerated: between 1945 and 1947, the Bustamante government recognized 264 unions (Colter 2005:241). There were also over 100 peasant uprisings in the late-1940s (Matos Mar 2012:44). And although APRA had gained control of the legislative branch and even much of the cabinet concomitant with Bustamante's ascent to power (Portocarrero Maisch 1983:67, 103-11), the legislative wing of the party had grown cautious, unwilling to risk alienating its elite allies by pressing for structural reforms (Bertram 1991:427-28; Cotler 2005:239). They preferred to play by the rules of parliamentary politics. This did not impress the oligarchy, however, which did everything in its power to obstruct the Bustamante government, helping precipitate a deep economic downturn and political crisis (Portocarrero Maisch 1983).

The military brass, meanwhile, grew impatient with the chaotic times that accompanied civilian rule. Bustamante's January 1946 appointment of a cabinet that included APRA members was an initial attempt to gain political traction; but elites opposed APRA influence, and Bustamante had little choice but to force the resignation of the pro-APRA cabinet in January 1947. Bustamante appointed a cabinet comprised of a mixture of military officials and civilians; but this cabinet soon resigned amidst a general crisis of government. In February 1948, he then appointed a cabinet comprised entirely of military officials, with general Manuel Odría, a hardline opponent of APRA, as the Minister of Government and Police; but they, too, left the government because Bustamante refused to sanction their demand to repress APRA.¹⁸²

Meanwhile, APRA radicals were busy organizing an uprising among the lower echelons of the military, which had considerable appeal. However, it was so poorly executed (probably because Haya himself, seemingly peripherally involved, tried to stall to secure military brass support) that the intended concerted action never came to fruition. Some marines led a premature charge but were quickly isolated and defeated; the plot was routed, and the whole initiative ended up an utter disaster politically (Colter 2005:245-46). The opinion that APRA had to be repressed, which had started with the 1932 Trujillo uprising, spread to moderate military officials

¹⁸² There is some disagreement about whether this last fateful cabinet resignation was *because* or *in spite* of Bustamante's wishes. Cotler (2005:245) interprets it as a protest against the Bustamante government's refusal to repress APRA "agitation" and the opening salvo of the subsequent Odría-led coup, which put a government in power that was committed to such repression. Bertram (1991:431), in contrast, maintains that Bustamante "forced the resignation of the entire cabinet, Odría included."

(Bertram 1991:432). Within three weeks, on 27 October, general Manuel A. Odría staged an uprising, the military high command reinforced his coup, and Odría became provisional president.

Odría initially resumed the repressive orientation to mass politics characteristic of the Sánchez Cerro era. In particular, he turned immediately to hunting down APRA leaders and Communists and to repressing the unions tied to their respective organizations. More generally, he responded to the embers of mass mobilization by suspending the right to organize politically. Ironically, though, with time mass mobilization indirectly helped Odría, allowing him to grow relatively autonomous (Cotler 1991:452). Odría's persecutions pleased the oligarchy, but under this pretext he increased the military budget considerably and gave officers plum business opportunities, which alarmed them. Nevertheless, as far as the oligarchy was concerned, at least during the initial phase of his government, he got one thing right: he eliminated Bustamante-era exchange controls, more than doubling oligarchic exporters' net profits (Astiz 1969:139). But politics were not merely a question of fiscal policy.

Taking advantage of the commodities boom brought on by the U.S.'s war on North Korea, he increased social security, mandated overtime pay for work on Sundays, and required that industrialists do worker consultations (Colter 2005:263). He ran for president in 1950. His authoritarian credentials were impeccable: he leaned on the Junta Nacional Electoral to invalidate the candidacy of his only opponent, general Ernesto Montagne Markholtz, leaving his candidacy unopposed and making the 2 July election a rubber-stamp affair (Bertram 1991:437-38). His campaign slogan cut to the meat of the matter: "deeds, not words!" (Bourricaud 1964:94). He built a number of important public works (Matos Mar 2012:224). And he recognized that to cultivate a base of support "required the provision of material benefits for the lower class" (Bertram 1991:438).

It would have been natural for the oligarchy to respond to Odría as he increasingly behaved towards them: antagonistically. And to a degree, this did happen: by 1955, at which time Odría's orientation was quite clear, hardliner oligarch Beltrán used the pages of his newspaper *La Prensa* to attack him repeatedly (Astiz 1969:140-41). But on balance, these two fractions of the political elite—on the one side, the remnants of the *caudillos* of the sierra, led by Odría, and on the other side, the coastal oligarchy, increasingly led by Manuel Prado—converged over time. This convergence even affected Beltrán and APRA. The reason these formerly-antagonistic

political elites related to one another's legacy agonistically is that they were affected similarly by the overpowering social force of urban concentration.

Urban Concentration

Peru only recovered its precolonial population size in 1940.¹⁸³ This demographic recovery accompanied a massive wave of provincial migration to Lima, a process that ramped up over the course of the 1940s and continued at a rapid pace until at least the 1960s. At the time of independence, Lima had 63,315 inhabitants; the population declined to 54,600 in 1836 (representing about 4 percent of the national population), and then rebounded to 103,956 by 1891 (Calderón Cockburn 2005:55). It then grew massively in the 20th century.¹⁸⁴ The big jump in proportional terms was from 1940 to 1961, when the city almost trebled in size. These were the same years during which rural-to-urban migration was most rapid (Alers and Appelbaum 1968:7), and indeed much of this growth was driven by rural-to-urban migration. Between 1940 and 1961 at least a million people migrated from the internal regions of Peru to the coastal areas (Cotler and Laquian 1971:111). Lima's population grew almost three times faster than Peru's during that time (Matos Mar 2012:61).¹⁸⁵ By 1961, 47 percent of Lima's population was comprised of migrants (Alers and Appelbaum 1968:3);¹⁸⁶ in 1970, 75 percent of squatters over 15 years of age were migrants (Collier 1976:33).

¹⁸³ There were an estimated 7 million people in Peru prior to Spanish colonization. The population shrunk dramatically as a result of the conquest, the introduction of new diseases, the reorganization of society, and the exploitation of indigenous labor power. Only in 1940 did the population surpass 7 million people (Matos Mar 2012: graphics 1, 5).

¹⁸⁴ Matos Mar reports the population of metropolitan Lima as follows: 300,977 in 1920, 443,300 in 1931, 661,508 in 1940 (9.4 percent of the national population), 1,901,927 in 1961 (18.3 percent of the national population), 3,418,453 in 1972 (24.2 percent of the national population), 4,835,793 in 1981 (27.2 percent of the national population), and 6,434,323 in 1993 (28.4 percent of the national population) (Matos Mar 2012:54-55, 58, 59). Calderón Cockburn (2005:60) reports the city's population as follows: by 1930, Lima and its surrounding areas had 332,118 inhabitants; in the 1940s, the population grew to 614,000; and in 1961, it was 1,783,719. .

¹⁸⁵ Migrants from rural areas did not generally move directly to Lima. The process instead unfolded according to a pattern of "step-migration" wherein people from small towns moved to Lima and people from the countryside proper moved to small towns (Alers and Appelbaum 1968:2-3, 8, 34; Collier 1976:33, 156 n. 41).

¹⁸⁶ Alers and Appelbaum (1968:7) also reference estimates of 40 percent and 62 percent by around the same time.

Equally spectacular was Lima's footprint in national politics. Whereas in 1919 the Department of Lima represented only 9.7 percent of Peru's electorate, already by 1931 it represented 28.2 percent, and in 1961 its electoral stature in the national scheme reached 41.7 percent (Collier 1976:42). With urban concentration, not only did squatters become increasingly synonymous with Lima in demographic terms, but so too did Lima become increasingly synonymous with Peru in political terms.

Housing for the poor was very limited. The city center had numerous slums (*corralones* and *callejones*), though they were less extensive than *vecindades* were in Mexico City. Unlike in Mexico, rent control was relatively unimportant in Peru. When in effect, it led to the same problem in Lima as in Mexico City: landlords refused to maintain their properties, and they fell into disrepair (Driant 1991:94). But the amount of housing stock affected by rent control was more limited in Lima: a census of slums conducted in 1967 found that there were only 96,644 such housing units, sheltering 488,648 residents (see Driant 1991:95). Many rural-to-urban migrants settled in these slums temporarily, prior to settling permanently in *barriadas* (Alers and Appelbaum 1968:8-9).

This was in part because the Peruvian government provided little public housing, most of which was built by the mid-1950s (Calderón Cockburn 2005:138). Benavides had responded to the 1936-1939 upsurge in worker militancy with a series of pacifying reforms: social security, health protections, new dining halls, and worker housing—namely Barrio Obrero, located in what would become San Martín de Porres, completed in 1940 (Matos Mar 2012:105). He also started the construction of three other workers' housing estates (Matos Mar 2012:219). The crisis-ridden Bustamante government did little as regarded housing. It did freeze rent (Matos Mar 2012:222). It established the Corporación Nacional de la Vivienda (CNV) and the Organismo Nacional de Planeamiento y Urbanismo (ONPU) in 1946. And it started construction of Unidad Vecinal N° 3, the first of seven public housing estates planned for the city, and facilitated the formulation of a city plan (Matos Mar 2012:222). But Unidad Vecinal N° 3 was completed only under Odría (Zapata Velasco 2003:192), who, taking advantage of an uptick in fiscal resources from exports borne of the U.S.'s war on North Korea, inaugurated Unidad Vecinal N° 3 and began the construction of additional housing estates for middle-income families (Matos Mar 2012:223). The approximately 2,900 government-built housing units were too expensive for most residents; they were also far too few to fulfill the needs of the 30,000 to 50,000 migrants

who moved to Lima each year between 1948 and 1956 (Driant 1991:100). By 1961, Lima's public housing units were sufficient to house only about 1 percent of the city's population.¹⁸⁷

In the face of the government's failure to furnish enough public housing, and being priced out of market-based housing, rural-to-urban migrants tended to settle in *barriadas*, and *barriadas* tended to be populated mostly by rural-to-urban migrants, especially from the sierra (Alers and Appelbaum 1968:3-5). The new urban poor had little choice but to form squatter settlements. The earliest *barriadas* were established in and around Lima in the 1920s and 1930s—formed by agricultural laborers and sharecroppers (Armatambo, established in 1924), fisherpeople (Puerto Nuevo, established 1928), a hodgepodge of rural-to-urban migrants (Mendocita, established in 1931), and victims of a flood whom Sánchez Cerro rescued and allowed to settle on Cerro San Cristóbal, a hill just beyond the historic center of Lima (Leticia, established in 1933) (Matos Mar 2012:79-86). But the first true *barriada*—Cerro San Cosme, in La Victoria—was settled in 1945.¹⁸⁸ An estimated 150,000 rural-to-urban migrants had been arriving in Lima each year, according to the 1940 census, putting incredible pressure on limited housing stock; then, in 1940, a large earthquake destroyed much of the dilapidated housing stock;¹⁸⁹ finally, with Bustamante's ascent to the presidency in 1945, there was, as discussed above, a considerable outpouring of popular mobilization. Just as workers and peasants were mobilizing to advance their interests, the urban poor “solved the housing problem in their own way,” forming squatter settlements and leaving the government to “consent to them” (Matos Mar 2012:222). These seismic social forces combined to give rise to the first *barriada* (Matos Mar 2012:87)—and, indeed, continued to give rise to *barriadas* thereafter. One tally reports that, between 1943 and the Odría's coup, 23 *barriadas* were formed, nine through invasion (Meneses Rivas 1998: annex 1); another reports that nine settlements were founded before the Second World War, five were founded during the war, 12 were founded between 1947 and 1950, six were founded in 1951, and seven were founded in 1954 (Cotler and Laquian 1971:122).

¹⁸⁷ This figure is based on the population as reported in Gilbert (1998: table 5.1), the average number of occupants per home as reported in Sánchez León and Calderón Cockburn (1980: table 15), and the number of government-built housing units as reported in Sánchez León and Calderón Cockburn (1980: tables 6-7) and Kahatt (2015:269, 347).

¹⁸⁸ Meneses Rivas (1998: annex 1) reports that San Cosme was established in September 1946.

¹⁸⁹ Scholars disagree about the significance of the 1940 earthquake. Matos Mar (2012:87; cf. Driant 1991:46) argues that its effects were significant. But Zapata Velasco (2003:191) argues that its destruction of housing stock was very limited.

As Table 3.1 shows, the city's *barriada* proliferated. Most squatters settled in San Martín de Porres (initially called Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre) through the early 1950s, with the Cono Norte (the area to the north of Lima), Ate-El Agustino, and Rímac absorbing many squatters by the early-1960s and the Cono Norte and Cono Sur (the area to the south of Lima) absorbing most squatters by 1970. Sometime around 1963 Peru became majority-urban (see Matos Mar 2012: graphic 6).¹⁹⁰ Concomitantly, Lima's population became increasingly provincial: the percentage of Lima residents from other parts of Peru grew from an estimated 31 percent in 1920, to 34 percent in 1940, to 44.5 percent in 1961, and then began to stabilize (it was 45.8 percent in 1972 and 45.4 percent in 1981) (Driant 1991:83). The bulk of the migrant-origins population increase in Lima was from people of the Andes (Matos Mar 2012:60). The new denizens were largely former-peasants: a survey conducted in 1956 found that the plurality of migrants had worked in agriculture prior to moving to Lima (39.5 percent); after migration, of course, agriculture was the least likely job (1.2 percent) (Cotler and Laquian 1971:126-27).

Table 3.1. Lima's squatter population by location, 1956-1970

District or area	Population in <i>barriadas</i> (absolute)			Percentage of population in <i>barriadas</i>		
	1956	1961	1970	1956	1961	1970
Ate-El Agustino	7,862	41,854	67,700	7.21%	13.23%	8.89%
Callao	16,019	34,063	71,176	14.70%	10.76%	9.34%
La Victoria	13,937	15,722	19,546	12.79%	4.97%	2.57%
Lima (Breña)	16,361	36,689	52,445	15.01%	11.59%	6.88%
Rímac	17,408	40,355	38,170	15.97%	12.75%	5.01%
San Martín de Porres ^a	29,512	77,867	92,049	27.08%	24.61%	12.08%
Cono Norte	351	37,516	216,565	0.32%	11.86%	28.43%
Cono Sur	6,044	15,949	144,639	5.55%	5.04%	18.99%
Cono Este	1,337	7,883	28,431	1.23%	2.49%	3.73%
Other districts	157	8,528	31,034	0.14%	2.70%	4.07%
Total	108,988	316,426	761,755	100%	100%	100%

Note: ^a Then called Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre.

Source: Driant (1991: table 5).

¹⁹⁰ The 1972 census was the first to report that a majority of Peru's population was urban (Matos Mar 2012:57-58).

Soliciting Subordination

Most migrants to Lima came from the Andes, bringing their “rural culture” and “way of life” with them (Matos Mar 1961:179, 174). Rural Andean customs entailed two prevalent sets of labor mobilization practices: a system of in-kind exchanges reciprocated between parties over time (Fonseca Martel 1974:86-96) and mandatory collective work drives for community infrastructure maintenance and improvements (Isbell 1978:176-77; Mayer 2002:124-25). Rural elites benefitted from the exchange system until the 1970s when the agrarian reform “eliminate[d] the most salient forms of this exploitative relationship in rural Peru” (Mayer 2002:118). So did Lima’s urban elites: Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre’s new arrivals of peasant extraction “frequently established clientage relations” with notables from their province of origin and with employers (Degregori et al. [1986] 2014:65-66, 81-84).

The urban poor accepted that they would have to mostly fend for themselves. Neighborhood associations drew from the “transplanted provincial cultural values” (Matos Mar 1984:86) to mobilize residents for collective work drives to build urban infrastructure.¹⁹¹ Urban infrastructure was the product of residents’ mobilization behind neighborhood associations supplemented by limited government aid (Degregori et al. [1986] 2014:120) and occasional Catholic charity.¹⁹² Rather than pay the government for the estimated cost of public goods installation, as in Mexico City, in Lima residents did most of the work to install public services themselves, often relying on the government only for the work that could not be done without heavy machinery. Squatters themselves helped install water and electricity lines, build public spaces and schools, and lay pavement and sewage lines, as depicted in Plate 3.1 (Matos Mar 1984:87-88). The government lent squatters a limited amount of aid, but always expected them to match its help by providing the unskilled labor for infrastructural works; that is, squatters received government help “on the condition that residents are the ones who do the manual labor,” as one said.¹⁹³ Residents had to participate in collective labor drives to build the

¹⁹¹ *La Crónica*, 7 November 1960 [San Martín de Porres].

¹⁹² AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.40/Exp. 131-P-4 [Rímac]; AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.38/Exp. 86-P-2 [Cerro San Cosme]; *El Comercio*, 9 February 1961; *O Cruzeiro Internacional*, 1 April 1963.

¹⁹³ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.44/Exp. 100-P-7 [Cerro San Cosme].

infrastructure for their neighborhoods, “on our own account and to protect the health of our family members,” as one put it.¹⁹⁴ To do so, they drew on their rural customs by mobilizing according to what one association leader called a “communal system” of “collective work.”¹⁹⁵



Plate 3.1. Men participate in a collective works project to install a neighborhood sewage line, ca. 1956

Source: Matos Mar (1977:149).

The relationship between Peru’s rural and urban grassroots politics was the inverse of that in Mexico. Whereas Mexicans brought revolutionary agrarianist ideology from the countryside into the city, Peruvians brought their traditional customs, many of prehispanic and colonial

¹⁹⁴ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.72/Exp. 329-P-234 [San Martín de Porres]; see also *La Voz de las Barriadas*, November 1957, p. 2. See also Altamirano (1984:170), Chipana Rivas (2013:155), Degregori et al. ([1986] 2014:93, 106), Isbell (1978), Mangin (1959:29), and Matos Mar (1984:87-88).

¹⁹⁵ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.38/Exp. 86-P-2 [Cerro San Cosme].

origins. Whereas in Mexico the urban sphere modified insurgent agrarianist ideology, giving rise to its specific variety of benevolent mass clientelism, in Peru, the insurgent practice of organizing the poor to requisition land was developed and refined in Lima—definitively with the massive invasion of Ciudad de Dios (see below)—and then reproduced in the countryside thereafter (Matos Mar 2012:122).

The Role of Intermediaries

Neighborhood associations mediated between political officials (patrons) and residents (clients) since initially settling squatted land through the entire process of outfitting it with urban services. Neighborhood associations tried “to link up with the whole governmental system. For official papers such as voting registration, certificates of marriage, birth and death and other needs, they go to city hall. They approach the police in cases of crimes and misdemeanors. They depend on the public schools for the education of their children. Health and sanitation services are extended to them by the proper government authorities” (Cotler and Laquian 1971:130). So neighborhood associations and government officials entered into a relationship. And the relationship changed over time, especially as it increasingly elicited responses from political elites.

The basic move was for neighborhood leaders to solicit subordination, presenting the urban poor as the political elite’s clients. In this, Felipe S. Carrión Ortiz and Celestino Romero Ayala (the Asesor Organizador Institucional and the initial Presidente, respectively, of the Asociación de Padres de Familia Pro-Vivienda Propia 27 de Octubre) set a precedent. First, they genuflected to Odría. Thus, for example, they invited the president and his wife (along with other officials, like the prefect, and his wife¹⁹⁶) to a solemn mass to wish him a speedy recovery from a recent surgery, adding that his health was “what the Peruvian People need.”¹⁹⁷ As was customary,

¹⁹⁶ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 30-26-535 (9 February 1950).

¹⁹⁷ Celestino Romero Ayala and Felipe S. Carrión Ortiz to Manuel Odría (9 February 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 30-26-535.

they also invited Odría's wife, María Delgado de Odría, and other officials, like the prefect, along with his wife.¹⁹⁸

Carrión Ortiz and Romero Ayala's second move was to assert that what they were doing was unprecedented, for insofar as this was the case, peculiarities could be rationalized. They asserted that their neighborhood association was one of a kind in their letter to the Minister of Government and Police (Augusto Villacorta), from whom they tried to secure official recognition. They explained that the association had submitted the relevant paperwork and advanced their opinion that "in the not too distant future [the association] can be officially recognized," reminding this official that "the objective of achieving national unity is concentrated" in the association, "since the Army and the Proletarian People must be one." They conveyed their aim to "recognize the representative who represents" the government, and with it represents the family, "which in this case is the only beneficiary."¹⁹⁹ They carried the same exceptionalist logic over into their lobbying for the government to create a new district. Carrión Ortiz and Romero Ayala made the case to the Minister of Foreign Relations (naval captain Ernesto Rodríguez) that 27 de Octubre "must be officially recognized by Decree Law."²⁰⁰ (A week later, the Secretario de la Presidencia de la Junta Militar de Gobierno, Rivera y de Pierola, informed them that their proposal "is being studied carefully by the respective departments."²⁰¹ The initiative *was* one of a kind, especially since 27 de Octubre was Odría's darling district. However, just as important is that it was precedent-setting.

In addition to genuflecting and making the case for exceptionalism, Carrión Ortiz and Romero Ayala promoted Odría's candidacy prior to his 2 July 1950 rubber stamp election—and they were sure to forward copies of their pro-Odría propaganda to government officials.²⁰² This

¹⁹⁸ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 30-26-535 (9 February 1950).

¹⁹⁹ Celestino Romero Ayala and Felipe S. Carrión Ortiz to Augusto Villacorta (Ministro de Estado en el Portafolio de Gobierno y Policía) (9 February 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 30-26-535.

²⁰⁰ Celestino Romero Ayala and Felipe S. Carrión Ortiz to Ernesto Rodríguez (Ministro de Estado en el Portafolio de relaciones Exteriores y Culto) (13 March 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 49-26-536.

²⁰¹ A. Rivera y de Pierola (Secretario de la Presidencia de la Junta Militar de Gobierno) to Señores Representantes de la Asociación Padres de Familia Pro-Vivienda Propia en el Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre (12 March 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 75-26-537.

²⁰² E.g., Celestino Romero Ayala and Felipe S. Carrión Ortiz to Augusto Villacorta (Ministro de Estado en el Portafolio de Gobierno y Policía) (9 February 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 30-26-535; Celestino Romero Ayala and Felipe S. Carrión Ortiz to Ernesto Rodríguez (Ministro de Estado en el Portafolio

served to inform government officials of their political allegiances: that is, the clients selected the patron.²⁰³ Accordingly, the way Carrión Ortiz and Romero Ayala promoted Odría's candidacy was quite sophisticated. Political organizing had been severely repressed, so it would have been impolitic to make any kind of political demand. Cognizant of the parameters within which they acted, these leaders advanced the following logic: the neighborhood association was apolitical, but it was also pro-family; Odría's political program was also pro-family; therefore, the neighborhood association supported Odría. Technically, they did not necessarily support Odría for political reasons. In practice, though, the support was political in nature: they mobilized voters and championed candidate Odría. Initially, the idea was that this was due to the happy coincidence that both were pro-family. Thus, when requesting that the prefect give them permission to hold a meeting and then join a workers' rally at the Plaza de Armas—"to witness the voluntary adherence of the workers of Peru to the national social policy directed in the country today by the President of the Military Government Junta, Brigadier General Don Manuel A. Odría"—they explained that "our Asociación's principles are to help the defense of families' homes, free from partisan slyness, [and it] only supports the national Social policy, which by its very nature benefits the Constitution of the family."²⁰⁴

The association made land available to squatters with the pro-family pretext. One leaflet read: "The general public is advised that registrations are open every business day . . . The lands are extensive so notify your family, friends and other unselfish people, since the measures being taken are to benefit the people, the Peruvian proletariat, since on this basis Peru is being led to progress and aggrandizement. Fathers, mothers, and representatives with legal documents are prioritized . . . The Asociación welcomes only free citizens within its ranks who do not have any partisan commitments of a commercial nature, its purpose being clearly family-oriented. The

de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto) (13 March 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 49-26-536; AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 75-26-537 (25 March 1950); and AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 140-P-2 (9 June 1950).

²⁰³ According to what Carrión Ortiz and Romero Ayala said when they asked for permission to circulate on city streets in a vehicle broadcasting propaganda via loudspeaker, this allegiance was "with the purpose of obtaining the greatest success in the meeting that will be held by the workers' groups in favor of the national social policy" headed by Odría. Celestino Romero Ayala and Felipe S. Carrión Ortiz to Juan C. Gómez H. (Director General de Tránsito) (n.d.), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 49-26-536.

²⁰⁴ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 49-26-536 (14 March 1950).

national justice social policy is the only one of its kind. The Asociación was reestablished on 9 September 1948, together with the current regime, and has as its motto the provisions of natural law that proclaims: to GOD, the COUNTRY, the STATE, and, as its sacred symbol, the HOME.”²⁰⁵

Their logic was impeccable. In effect they said: we are pro-family; we do not support the government for political reasons; the government is, however, pro-family; therefore, we support the government. But the relationship afforded two different interpretations of the meaning of this logic. First was that they were non-partisan *but* that they supported Odría’s family policy.²⁰⁶ The second meaning was that they supported Odría politically *because* of his family policy.²⁰⁷ The second interpretation gradually supplanted the first. Thus, in one of the association’s flyers, they summoned men of legal age to come to their headquarters “to receive instructions and leave for the Government Palace, so that as parents and workers in general, they testify to their frank adherence to the current Social policy of our Godfather President of the Military Junta Government, Mr. Manuel A. Odría, that with it lies the defense of the home of the Peruvian family.”²⁰⁸

²⁰⁵ “PLAN DE ORIENTACION DE LA ASOCIACION PADRES DE FAMILIA PROVIVIENDA PROPIA EN EL ‘DISTRITO OBRERO INDUSTRIAL 27 DE OCTUBRE’” (n.d.), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.40/Exp. 109-P-70. In general, squatters eventually came to enjoy what Matos Mar refers to as a kind of “patrimonio familiar” (the same term used to refer to the usufruct rights that the Mexican government granted to *colonos* in the 1940s and 1950s), by which he means a community feat rather than a legally-backed individual right (as in Mexico). That is, by two or three decades after the formation of a given squatter settlement, “inhabitants accumulated *patrimonio familiar* through construction, equipment, services, and work to have their own home. Not only for each family but for the entire new urban community, which constituted a factor of economic and social stability and security that freed them from a burden and a vital need” (Matos Mar 2012:174). Mass-recognition of squatter residents’ freehold property rights (i.e., regularization) would not come until the 1990s (Newman 2022).

²⁰⁶ Thus, when asking the mayor for permission to drive around broadcasting pro-Odría propaganda, Carrión Ortiz and Romero Ayala noted that the association “only defends the National social policy that fully benefits the home of the Peruvian family.” Celestino Romero Ayala and Felipe S. Carrión Ortiz to General de Brigada Pedro Pablo Martínez (Alcalde del Concejo Provincial de Lima) (14 March 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 49-26-536.

²⁰⁷ They made it clear that people whose politics were not pro-family were not welcome: “ATTEND THIS CALL WITHOUT OBJECTION, WHICH IS THE DUTY AT THIS TIME OF EVERY PERUVIAN CONSCIOUS AND FREE OF PARTY COMMITMENT OTHER THAN THE NATIONAL SOCIAL POLICY THAT BENEFITS FAMILY FORMATION.” “¡ATENCIÓN! ¡ATENCIÓN! LLAMADO URGENTE” (n.d.), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 49-26-536.

²⁰⁸ “¡ATENCIÓN! ¡ATENCIÓN! LLAMADO URGENTE” (n.d.), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 49-26-536.

The Asociación Padres de Familia del “Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre” tied requests for land in the new district to membership in the association, and membership in the association to support for Odría. Thus, in one of its flyers, it beckoned people: “Sign the minutes of the Asociación, and the PROCLAMATION OF SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE MANUEL A. ODRÍA, as future CONSTITUTIONAL PRESIDENT.” They urged people to hurry by saying “it is anticipated that the registration of support [will] only [be] accepted until 29 May, and whoever does not do so before this date will be seen as a simple opportunist.”²⁰⁹ But 29 May came and went, and those who begged to channel mass support couldn’t be choosy about supporters. Less than a month before the election, Carrión Ortiz and Romero Ayala summoned their followers to the neighborhood association’s headquarters “with their electoral book[s] containing the seal of the Asociación to prove their attendance at 7pm on the dot, so that the multitudes receive vital instructions regarding national social security [Odría’s policy proposal].”²¹⁰

With Odría’s recognition, the second interpretation—residents supported Odría politically—completely eclipsed the first. Odría decreed the formation of the Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre in February 1951. By 1952, according to Carrión Ortiz, the association was “on the move, hand-in-hand with the masses, who [were] in motion for the historic election, [and] only aspire to a home, which without cost to the state [i.e., government], will know how to serve you with their own revenues, as they have been demonstrating by the side of our current government, like children, submissive and obedient to the norms of the State Constitution, following the morality of the teacher.” The Asociación had managed to secure unanimity of support for the President, they claimed, which “was demonstrated in the elections in which 30,000 families gave the Leader [a] rewarding and glorious triumph, as a test of loyalty, in the 2 July 1950 elections [Odría’s rubber-stamp election].”²¹¹ (In truth, Odría ran unopposed; support

²⁰⁹ “ODRÍA PRESIDENTE, PRO-VIVIENDA PROPIA DISTRITO OBRERO INDUSTRIAL ‘27 DE OCTUBRE’ CON CIUDADANOS: LA POLITICA DE ODRÍA ES DEL PUEBLO Y PARA EL PUEBLO” (n.d.), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.40/Exp. 109-P-70.

²¹⁰ “ATENCIÓN ASOCIADOS, 27 DE OCTUBRE, ATENCIÓN SIMPATIZANTES, PRO VIVIENDA PROPIA DEL DISTRITO OBRERO INDUSTRIAL ‘27 DE OCTUBRE’” (5 June 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.40/Exp. 109-P-70.

²¹¹ Felipe S. Carrión Ortiz, “MEMORANDUM” (12 April 1952), p. 4, AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.40/Exp. 109-P-70.

was not instrumental to Odría's victory, but it was central to neighborhood leaders' requests for subordination.)

The offer of loyalty was neither exclusive to Odría nor short-lived. The Asociación Padres de Familia Pro-Vivenda Propia del Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre also rallied support for Domingo López de la Torre, who had sat on the board of directors of the Banco Central de Reserva under Manuel Augusto Olaechea and Pedro Beltrán from 1931 to 1933²¹² and who was then elected to the senate in 1950 to represent Lima.²¹³ They praised him in both their private communications with political officials, calling him “a true friend of our new Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre in the Legislative Chambers,” and in their public propaganda, where they also dubbed him an “authentic friend of our new district.”²¹⁴ There was no evidence he did anything for squatters; these statements were requests for subordination, not summaries of his behavior.

The relationship between Odría and other political elites and the Distrito 27 de Octubre neighborhood association set a precedent that other neighborhood associations adopted. This kind of political relationship could be discerned in Zarumilla (which had been established via invasions in 1947 and 1949). The government had installed potable water services in the neighborhood, and residents were expected to defray the outlays associated with installation. Leaders wanted to hold a meeting at which they aimed to raise the money. But during the Odría dictatorship, public meetings had to be sanctioned by the government, which afforded an opportunity to pledge political loyalty. Thus, the president of the Asociación Mutualista de Vecinos del Barrio Zarumilla (Pedro Vizarreta V.) requested permission to hold the assembly, noting that “This Asociación . . . is made up of Odría supporters who have promised their

²¹² *Historial de autoridades del Banco Central de Reserva del Perú desde 1922* (<https://www.bcrp.gob.pe/docs/sobre-el-bcrp/historial-de-autoridades-del-banco.pdf>), n/p.

²¹³ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 146-P-2 (17 June 1950). That he was a senator for Lima is evidenced in the *Diario de los debates del Senado, 2ª Legislatura Extraordinaria de 1950* (Lima: Imprenta Torres Aguirre, S.A.), p. 171.

²¹⁴ “Candidatura Del ‘Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre’, CITACION URGENTE” (16 June 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.40/Exp. 109-P-70.

adherence to the current regime, out of sympathy for the Government that installed water in Zarumilla.” Permission was granted.²¹⁵

Much the same political relationship was also clearly expressed in a flyer circulated in Piñonate during Odría’s 1950 election campaign. Residents *assured* that their political sympathies were with Odría, saying “we will be able to express to you with sincerity and courage our support and applause” for “our BENEFACTOR”; they *recalled* Odría’s past help acquiring water, namely that he had ordered “the installation of two main networks, to provide drinking water to thirteen public services [filling stations] with which the entire population was supplied”; and they *specified* that he will now give them property rights, saying he “will culminate his work by giving us the long-awaited PROPERTY TITLES.”²¹⁶ That is, they not only struck a balance between promising the urban poor’s support and requesting that they be given concessions; they put Odría on notice, saying that, as his clients, Odría was expected to reciprocate aid for their support.

Statements of political support were also forthcoming in Cerro San Cosme. The leaders of the Asociación de Pobladores del Cerro San Cosme reported to the prefect that, in an assembly, they passed a resolution to support Odría—“in the presence of nearly 5,000 members, the motion with which your worthy headquarters is familiar, proclaiming the candidacy of General President of the Military Junta Government, Mr. Manuel A. Odría, for the Presidency of the Republic, passed unanimously.” They noted that the resolution was “both in recognition of his merits for the country” and because it they predicted it would mean “greater benefits for the progress and enhancement of nationality.” They also related that they had formed a Comité Político Pro-Candidatura del General Odría, which was slated to work with the neighborhood association “in favor of the political campaign that has begun, and for this it is essential that the Asociación plan out the support that it will provide to said Committee.”²¹⁷

And when new leaders were elected in Cerro San Cosme, they felt the need to reach out to the political elite to ensure political elites of their loyalties. Agustín Rebaza Rodríguez had

²¹⁵ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.36/Exp. 90-P-11 (4 April 1951).

²¹⁶ “¡POBLADORES DE PIÑONATE! Ciudadanos del Distrito O. I. ‘27 de Octubre’” (22 June 1950), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 154-P-2.

²¹⁷ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.34/Exp. 21-26-535 (30 January 1950).

appeared to be the most outspoken supporter of Odría, but he lost the association leadership election. This put the incoming leaders (German Zacarias Tueros Herrera and Marciano Galvez Villfuerte) in a difficult position. Rebaza claimed to have been backed by Coronel Pérez Godoy, general secretary of Odría's political organization, the Partido Restaurador.²¹⁸ The new leaders therefore secured a letter of support from a different powerful political elite: naval captain Manuel D. Faura, then senator for the Department of Junín.²¹⁹ Their political sympathies were much clearer with that. To tip the scales, they also clarified their support for Odría's politics by claiming that, as led by the Junta Directiva, the "the general population . . . has repeatedly shown its agreement with the Peru's Great Restorer," and relating that residents had mobilized numerous times in his support.²²⁰ By these means, the new leaders seem to have hoped they would enjoy the political elite's blessings, even though they had not been known as the most outspoken Odría supporters.

Besides organizing support for Odría, neighborhood associations' main activity was organizing land invasions and trying to secure services. This took a considerable amount of skill. The 1954 invasion of Ciudad de Dios was "carefully planned and promoted by individuals and political organizations" (Matos Mar 2012:122). Alejandro López Agreda, the main leader, organized the invasion for Christmas Eve 1954, a date that was chosen in order to avail the invaders of charitable public opinion (Matos Mar 2012:124). This was also a time when there was considerable opposition to the Odría regime emanating from various parts of Peruvian society, especially traditional agro-exporting elites. This led Odría to try to compensate by doubling down on his orientation to squatters and thus granting some government aid to this new settlement: "to reinforce its popularity, Odría sought to gain followers, establishing close relationships with the residents of the neighborhood, offering them more services and advantages in their urban setting, as [he had done] before with others" (Matos Mar 2012:124). Odría was not alone in this; numerous political organizations on both the right and the left sought to do the same. In this context, "the leaders of the association, and especially its skillful leader López

²¹⁸ Dev. N° 551 (7 April 1956), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.46/Exp. 273-P-34.

²¹⁹ Manuel D. Faura (Capitán de Navío, Senador por Junín) to Alberto Rey Lama (Prefecto del Departamento de Lima) (18 October 1955), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.48/[unnumbered exp.].

²²⁰ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.46/Exp. 273-P-34 (19 December 1955).

Agreda, realized that given the circumstances, their case would be the object of political sympathy and they would secure tolerance and help” (Matos Mar 2012:124).

Clientage

Intermediaries pioneered requests for subordination during the Odría era, but squatters’ clientage status endured after the Odría government. That clientage status transcended government periods was evident in, among other things, nomenclature. Residents often named their new settlements after sitting politicians starting in the Odría era and continuing during Prado’s second government (1956-1962).²²¹ The same was true of neighborhood associations.²²²

Clientage status gave rise to both backward-looking sentiments and forward-looking patterns of behavior. Some residents had long memories concerning Odría’s beneficence. Many years later, one gushed with a story, the more revealing of her political emotions to the degree it was apocryphal:

“When we just arrived in San Martín de Porres [27 de Octubre] and my husband was sick . . . Odría had just come to power. I went to . . . the house of the President, and I told him that my husband was very ill, [and] that I already had three children. So he gave me a letter . . . and directed me to the Insurance, and at the Insurance they immediately sent a doctor to my house . . . with vitamins and milk for my kids. He gave [my spouse] shots, . . . a saliva test, everything, X-rays—he ordered everything” (Degregori et al. [1986] 2014:119).

²²¹ Leticia, arguably the very first *barriada*, was named after a part of the Peruvian territory that was ceded to Colombia in 1930, after which a band of pro-government landholders who opposed the concession seized control of the territory in 1932, leaving Sánchez Cerro with little choice but to back them before Colombia re-claimed the land a few months later (Bertram 1991:414-15; Matos Mar 2012:86). Subsequent neighborhood names often referenced politicians and their families. These included 27 de Octubre (the date Odría led the coup overthrowing President José Luis Bustamante y Rivero); 28 de Julio (the date Odría commenced his constitutional term as president, subsequent to his 1950 election); Villa María Delgado de Odría (Odría’s wife); Clorinda Málaga de Prado (President Manuel Prado’s wife); Leoncio Prado (Manuel Prado’s brother); and Pedro Beltrán (prominent oligarch and President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Hacienda y Comercio, 1959-1961).

²²² Under Odría, the 27 de Octubre neighborhood association adopted this patriotic date as its namesake. Under Prado, neighborhood associations and settlements continued to be named after prominent personages associated with the government. The Clorinda Málaga de Prado association was established in mid-1958; the settlement Pedro Beltrán (also known as Santa Rosa) was formed in August 1959 (Matos Mar 2012:149).

Given that these expressions of gratitude and admiration were uttered years after Odría stepped down, clientage is not reducible to cynical attempts to secure government handouts but instead involved real feelings of loyalty. For some, these feelings endured for years. There was even a rally to greet Odría in 1961, upon his return from a long absence from the country (Bourricaud [1967] 1970:289).

Others adapted quickly to new political patrons, displaying forward-looking clientelistic behavior. Much as they had rallied to support Odría during his election, neighborhood association leaders continued to ally with, and channel votes to, politicians during the Prado era (Meneses Rivas 1998:127). Many of them were even the very same people. Thus, shortly after Prado's ascent to the presidency, local leaders in El Agustino formed a chapter of Prado's party, the Movimiento Democrático Peruano. Of the 14 leadership positions and three spokespeople (*vocales*), seven had been leaders of one or more of Odría's Partido Restaurador chapters.²²³ Meanwhile, as the city continued to grow, it became increasingly clear to squatters what neighborhood associations' goals should be, and somewhat difficult for the associations to respond accordingly. The Asociación Urbanizadora La Libertad Pampa de Comas was established to "seek official help to solve the private housing problem; defend its associates; arrange a solution to this problem with state [i.e., government] offices" (Matos Mar 2012:148). Solnit (1965:25) synthesizes, drawing largely on the Comas case:

"The typical *barriada* association acts as a semi-governmental unit whose basic function, at first, is the protection of property and the development of the community. As such, it tries to obtain basic urban services and outside assistance from the national government. The associations are financed by assessments paid by *barriada* residents. An elected directors['] committee usually runs the internal affairs of the *barriada*, passing on applicants to settle there by cutting new lots out of vacant areas, on requests to sell, etc."

²²³ Inf. 786 (13 November 1956), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.52/Exp. 97-P-439. More local leaders might have carried over from the Partido Restaurador to the Movimiento Democrático Peruano chapter had circumstances been different. Most local Partido Restaurador leaders had been accused of embezzlement of neighborhood association funds. See Inf. 787 (14 November 1956), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.52/Exp. 93-P-397. This must have represented something of a local scandal. In such circumstances, it would have been difficult for the entire group of local leaders to persist in a leadership capacity amidst the changeover of national presidents. In less scandalous situations, though, more continuity was probably possible. However, it was also the case that the changeover stimulated conflict between those who supported Odría and those who supported Prado. See, for example, AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.49/Exp. 99-P-354 (1 June 1956).

The Comas association proceeded to solicit land from government agencies accordingly (Matos Mar 2012:148). However, “the demand for registration continued to grow, each time exceeding the capacity of the association and making the new members anxious to receive their lots” (Matos Mar 2012:149). The association distributed plots, but people’s impatience led them to requisition open space and seek the association’s blessing only afterwards (Matos Mar 2012:149).

Political Elites’ Response

Government recognition of squatter settlements was initially a piecemeal affair. The opening salvo was in the 1930s. Sánchez Cerro issued a decree recognizing the proto-*barriada* Leticia, granting the residents legal possession of the occupied area, at the time of settlement-relocation there in March 1933 (Matos Mar 2012:84, 86). Then, in September 1946, Odría, who was Minister of Government at the time, recognized the Santa Clara de Bella Luz *barriada*, in El Agustino, when he halted the police’s eviction effort (though he did not extend such beneficence to those who continued to try to settle the area immediately thereafter by invading the “left side” of Cerro El Agustino—people whose homes were razed and whose leaders were jailed) (Matos Mar 2012:101). Odría also implicitly recognized the Cerro San Cosme *barriada*, in La Victoria, when he ordered the prefect, colonel Ciurlizza, to desist from efforts to evict the squatters in January 1947 (Matos Mar 2012:93).

A pattern emerged in the late-1940s. After his coup in 1948, Odría needed supporters; urban concentration had also ramped up considerably. He put two and two together by continuing to allow new informal settlements to proliferate and abiding the urban poor’s requests for subordination, in part on the basis of ad hoc recognition (Matos Mar 2012:104). Several distinct concentrations of squatter settlements took shape under Odría. But the northern-Lima settlement that came to be known as Distrito Obrero Industrial “27 de Octubre”—eventually renamed San Martín de Porres—was, by all accounts, Odría’s darling (Collier 1976:59-62, 64; Calderón Cockburn 2005:94; Degregori, Blondet, and Lynch [1986] 2014:119-20; Matos Mar 2012:109; Stepan 1978:179 n. 41). On 22 May 1950, “in order to consolidate its clientele,” Odría decreed the creation of the new district (Degregori, Blondet, and Lynch [1986] 2014:40). Soon thereafter (albeit after much of the area had already been settled), he gave the 27 de Octubre

Family Fathers' Association the power to distribute plots.²²⁴ In exchange, its leaders were, of course, expected to mobilize participants for occasional pro-government rallies (Collier 1976:61-62). In a tell-all account, co-founder and advisor of the association, Felipe S. Carrión Ortíz, described this neighborhood association as “a social movement with ties full of patriotic civility under the spirit of loyalty,” which was established “with the full conviction of following the line that . . . Brigadier General Manuel A. Odría’s policy will draw for us.”²²⁵

Responding to Bottom-Up Pressure

While political elites had a stake in the proliferation of *barriadas*, since 1946, the process was driven from the bottom up. Without appreciating this, benevolent mass clientelism and its effects cannot be adequately understood. The 1946 invasion of Cerro San Cosme was led by two ordinary men, the brothers Especioso and Jerónimo García Romero, who ran a kiosk bordering the recently built La Parada wholesale and retail markets nearby. They organized the Asociación de Pobladores del Cerro San Cosme, which orchestrated residents’ defense of their new homesteads in the face of opposition from the landlord, a judge’s ruling in the landlord’s favor, and police repression. Only after the death of Margarita Vargas, who was injured when the landlord’s agents destroyed her house, and a march through Lima that targeted the Government Palace and Congress building, in which protestors demanded to be allowed to settle the hill, were squatters allowed to stay put (Matos Mar 2012:88-93).

Bottom-up pressure was also crucial in the El Agustino squatter settlements. The squatters comprising the 1947 invasion giving rise to San Pedro formed the Comité Manzanilla Pro-hogar Propio N° 1 to defend their possession in the face of arrests of their leaders and police attempts to evict them (Matos Mar 2012:100); those who invaded Santa Clara de Bella Luz, Cerro El Agustino the same year formed the Asociación Pro-casa Propia El Agustino, which, after a clash with the police, came to control the *barriada*’s settlement pattern (Matos Mar 2012:101). Not least in the case of the “left side” of El Agustino did residents organize

²²⁴ Ley N° 11588 (14 February 1951), article 3.

²²⁵ Felipe S. Carrión Ortíz, “MEMORANDUM” (12 April 1952), AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.40. The account was written subsequent to being accused of corruption, as part of Carrión Ortíz’s appeal for redress.

themselves; a group of people who were unable to join the Bella Luz land invasion formed the Asociación Mutualista de Pobladores del Cerro El Agustino Margen Izquierda in order to orchestrate the defense of the settlement in the face of landlord opposition and police repression (ultimately persevering despite Odría's disavowal in this case) (Matos Mar 2012:101).

Even Odría's darling, Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre, was a creature of bottom-up pressure. Prior to large-scale settlement of the area, Odría had begun to organize a shantytown association and offer rural-to-urban migrants home plots on what was then the northern fringe of Lima. (The Zarumilla and Prolongación Zarumilla neighborhoods had already been formed in 1947 on the basis of a series of invasions supported by functionaries of the Bustamante government.) The neighborhood association grew impatient, and in January 1949 led an invasion of what became Zarumilla Alta. Residents immediately sought official adjudication of the land (Matos Mar 2012:108). The imminent settling of Urbanización Perú triggered a legal dispute as to property rights.²²⁶ The case dragged on for several years. Although some people found alternative means of acquiring land,²²⁷ the bulk of the neighborhood association's members grew impatient. Then, in the predawn hours of 27 October 1953 (the Odría government's fifth anniversary), thousands of members occupied the lands that had been promised them, Peruvian flags in hand, and proceeded to build their provisional homes (Degregori et al. [1986] 2014:40).

As rulers, Odría and his inner circle were not in a position to turn against a large group of people they wished to count among their supporters; that is, even in Odría's darling district, the government had little choice but to grant residents the land. Whereas in Mexico City, squatters had to relinquish their revolutionary ideology to secure denizen status from political elites, in Lima, political elites had to adopt a revolutionary proposition—de facto urban land reform—to acquire the new urban poor's support. Faced with this bottom-up pressure, at least when it was packaged as requests for subordination, the government leaned in (Matos Mar 2012:108). Amidst greater lenience, Distrito 27 de Octubre continued to expand, reaching 29,512 inhabitants by 1957 (Degregori et al. [1986] 2014:40). Taken together, over the course of three years, Cerro San

²²⁶ The dispute was between *hacienda* Condevilla Señor, which claimed ownership of the land, the sharecroppers (*yanaconas*) who had long cultivated the land, and the government.

²²⁷ Some neighborhood association members purchased land from the sharecroppers; others invaded land in cases where possession was unclear (Degregori et al. [1986] 2014:40).

Cosme, El Agustino, and Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre “legitimized mobilization for the right to housing and inserted a new settlement type into Lima” (Matos Mar 2012:108).

The bottom-up pattern persisted as the *barriadas* moved from the hills to the riverbanks to the desert flatlands north and south of Lima, as massive invasions in the Cono Norte and Cono Sur gave rise to settlements such as Ciudad de Dios (established in 1954, later renamed San Juan de Miraflores) and Comas (established in 1958), and as the government’s response changed from certain and severe repression to a softer opposition and sometimes seeming encouragement.

In particular, the 1954 invasion of Ciudad de Dios, in the Cono Norte, marked a turning point, representing a “national phenomenon of great importance due to its irruption, for the first time, in non-urban areas outside the city center, in the desert, demonstrating the strength of the residents’ association and the feasibility of a well-planned invasion of a huge stretch of sand” (Matos Mar 2012:120). Over 5,000 people participated in the initial invasion, and many more continued to flow into the area for the next several months (Matos Mar 2012:124).²²⁸ The rate of growth and the eventual size of Ciudad de Dios exceeded all expectations, leaving Peruvian politics significantly affected. In a major departure from the piecemeal approach initiated just eight years earlier, in order to process aspiring residents, the Ministerio de Fomento set up an office at which about 20,000 families (100,000 people) registered (Matos Mar 2012:124).²²⁹

Until that moment, elite political discourse had been aloof from housing. But henceforth the national press—especially *La Prensa*, edited by plutocrat and eventual number two to Manuel Prado during his second presidential term, Pedro Beltrán²³⁰—reported on the growing Ciudad de Dios settlement extensively, making housing Peru’s number one political issue (Matos Mar 2012:124). Beltrán advanced a policy proposal to address the housing shortage. Given that urban concentration was impossible to ignore, it amounted to putting a liberal veneer on the approach Odría was already taking, namely, advocating for rustic single-family urban homesteads as a solution to the housing problem (Collier 1976:70-71). Like the *caudillo* Odría,

²²⁸ Many, however, did not remain, although Ciudad de Dios was still by far the largest squatter settlement in Lima at the time. A 1955 census counted 4,841 people (936 families) from all over Lima (Matos Mar 2012:128). Due to the fact that many of the residents were children (18.5 percent were nine years old or younger), the majority of the population (52.4 percent) was born in Lima; the rest were from the provinces (Matos Mar 2012:129). Ciudad de Dios was thus the product of the 1.5 generation of rural-to-urban migrants.

²²⁹ Gyger (2019:85-92) summarizes the Ciudad de Dios invasion based on reports appearing in *La Prensa*.

²³⁰ On *La Prensa*’s editorial line, see Bourricaud ([1967] 1970:194-201)

oligarch Beltrán preferred to frame the problem in a way that obscured inequality and precluded ambitious social policy initiatives (Collier 1976:72). Also like Odría, Beltrán also seems to have been intimately involved with squatter settlement association leaders, probably advising the leaders of the Ciudad de Dios invasion (Collier 1976:70). His only real “innovation” as regarded housing policy proposals was to promote savings and loan schemes (Bourricaud [1967] 1970:205-06; Collier 1976:70). Manuel Prado was essentially swept along by the course of these events.²³¹

The Prado government did, however, study the issue. Prado knew housing was a major problem and could not deny that it was linked, via migration, to the agrarian relations prevailing in the countryside. He formed the Comisión para la Reforma Agraria y Vivienda (CRAV), whose mandate was “to present a comprehensive plan for the dissemination of small and medium urban and rural property and for the solution of the housing problem to the government” (quoted in Driant 1991:100). (As a scheme to conservatize the population, this policy was quite far-sighted, anticipating aspects of the Kennedy-era Alliance for Progress approach to combatting the influence of the Cuban Revolution.) At the helm was Pedro Beltrán, doyen of Peruvian liberal thought and opponent of public housing (Collier 1976:75; Zapata Velasco 2003:193), who anchored the policy outlook in a liberal interpretation of what was already taking place. The CRAV identified the foremost goal to be doubling down on the settling of bare land by building “satellite cities” (*ciudades satélites*) in which the urban poor would be segregated from the rest of the city, just like in the massive Ciudad de Dios squatter settlement that had formed south of Lima towards the end of the Odría government (Driant 1991:100-01).²³² As regarded what to do about housing the masses, the Prado government opted for a laissez-faire approach and by and large allowed the proliferation of squatter settlements to continue. Its overarching policy perspective was to completely abandon the possibility of government housing in favor of facilitating the acquisition of single-family homes (Zapata Velasco 2003:199). As the head of

²³¹ The Prado family was heavily invested in the Banco Popular, one of whose main lending activities was mortgages for single-family homes. It also had raw land and cement factory investments in its portfolio. At least amidst a spike in cement consumption (Bourricaud [1967] 1970:204), all of this made the president disinclined to comprehensive urban planning of any sort (Zapata Velasco 2003:189, 198).

²³² This policy drew from the government’s ownership of massive undeveloped land reserves and dovetailed perfectly with a liberal form of nepotism, in which the most desirable land was made available to land speculators and the urban poor were forced to purchase construction materials at retail prices from companies in which the Prado family was heavily invested (Driant 1991:114).

CRAV, Beltrán helped ensure the government would play no serious part in housing Lima's urban poor, instead capitalizing on the urban poor's deep desires to own property as a conservatizing force to prevent class identification (Andrews and Phillips 1970:218; Collier 1976:76-79).²³³

So the trend—massive bottom-up requisitioning of public space, followed by official recognition—deepened. In 1958, another massive flatland *barriada* was formed in the Pampa de Comas, north of Distrito 27 de Octubre, pictured in Plate 3.2. As with the formation of Ciudad de Dios during the end of the Odría era, the invasions in Comas were massive in scale: within the year, all 200 hectares of the Pampa de Comas were completely occupied by 4,531 families (Matos Mar 2012:149); in fewer than two years, there were almost 11,000 lots housing 80,000 residents (Matos Mar 2012:150). One observer likened the “advance planning and organization” characteristic of this and other invasions to

“a Marine amphibious assault. Whole families strike at an area previously platted. They reach their objective—the lot they've chosen—in trucks and taxis carrying bamboo poles and 6x6 reed mats, which are almost instantly transformed into little huts. . . . The invading groups usually choose the small hours of the morning.

“By dawn the police are likely to find the huts up, streets and property lines scratched out in the dirt and demarcated by whitewashed stones. Peruvian flags will be flying from each hut, for it is widely held that the police do not molest structures bearing the national emblem. The flags also may indicate the patriotic pro-government image the people wish to convey, so as to offset any impression of rebellion or uprising against the established order” (Solnit 1965:24).

²³³ Prado had been concerned about urban unrest since his first term in office (Bertram 1991:424) and his prime minister this time, Pedro Beltrán, was worried about communism and thought promoting small-scale property ownership was an effective means to combat it (Zapata Velasco 2003:193).

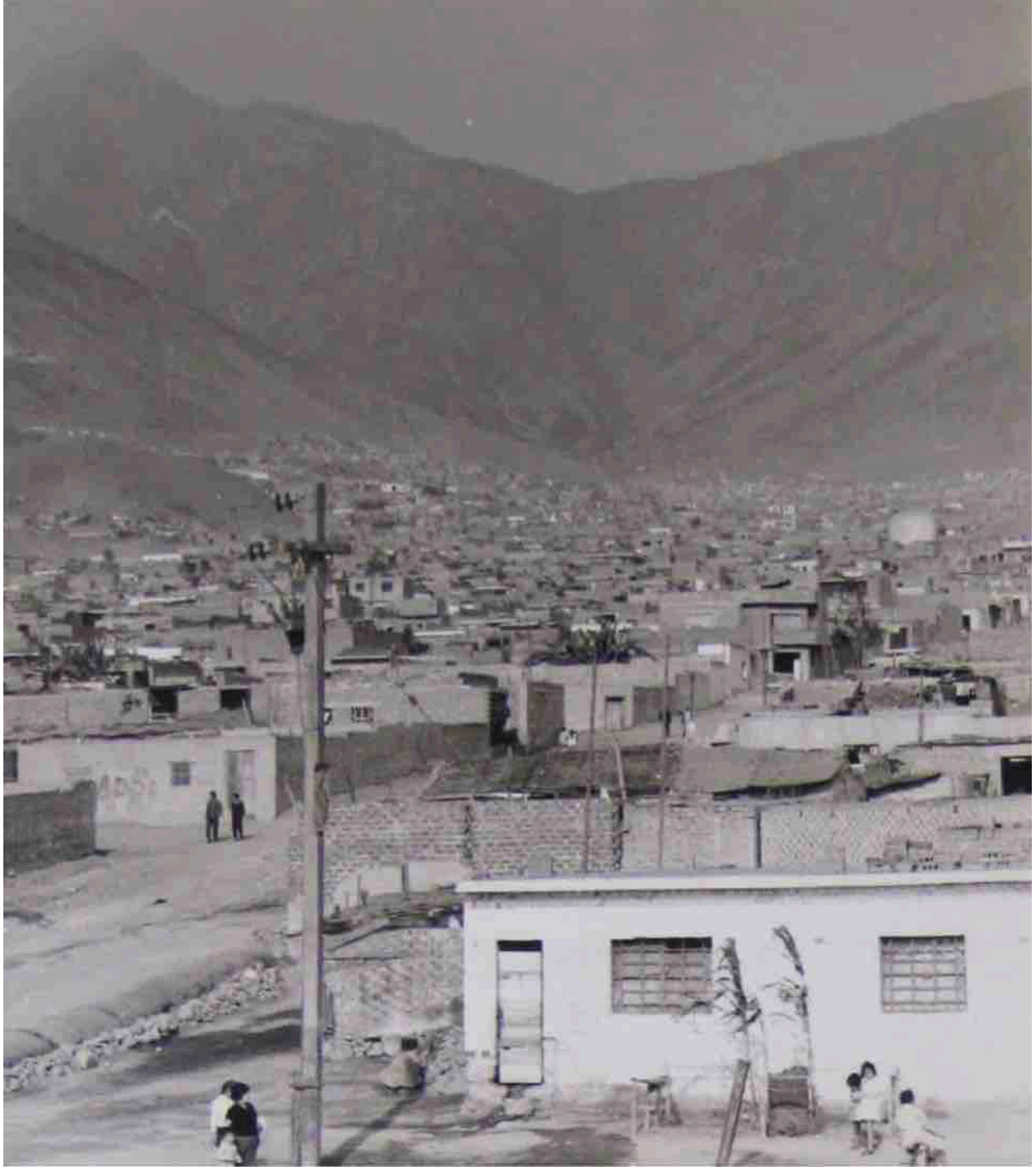


Plate 3.2. Pampa de Comas, looking eastward, 1967

Source: JFCT/Box 13/Lyndon Starr Williams, *The Suburban Barriadas of Lima: Squatter Settlements as a Type of Peripheral Urban Growth in Peru* (Master of Arts Thesis, Department of Geography, California State College at Long Beach, January 1969), p. 62, figure 12.

Although he was not interested in extending government involvement into squatter settlements (Newman 2019:23-24), Prado nevertheless abided the pattern that had been established under Odría. The Prado government made no meaningful attempt to increase the housing supply. Its limited presence in squatter settlements was felt in the fact that those that were established on flat land had a gridiron layout rather than sinuous paths, as characterized Cerro San Cosme, San Pedro, El Agustino, and the other hillside *barriadas* (Driant 1991:54).²³⁴ The pattern, now familiar, became increasingly entrenched.

The Institutionalization of Inequality

Prado refused government commitment to affordable housing, but he was unable to pursue a completely laissez-faire approach. The foremost reason was continuing bottom-up pressure. The Comas invasion in particular “was a great escape valve for the growing housing needs in the city,” releasing pressure which would have otherwise translated into discontent with the Prado government (Matos Mar 2012:150). The source of this pressure was the urban poor’s dim economic prospects, given the deep inequality characteristic of Peruvian society and given Peru’s place in the worldwide division of labor. To release this pressure, to capitalize politically on squatter settlements, Prado institutionalized inequality.

There were two steps in this process. The first was that during the first phase of his presidency, Prado continued to use the government to organize the *barriadas* politically.²³⁵ He did so through the Departamento de Barriadas (sometimes referred to as the Departamento de Control de las Barriadas), which was part of the security apparatus, the Prefectura del Departamento de Lima. According to an unnamed prefecture official, the Departamento de Barriadas was based on the idea that “in essence, *barriadas* are the latent factor from which will emanate the political power of whoever, reaching out to them, organizes them, educates them, provides them with the means that human beings need to survive and incorporates them as a

²³⁴ Also continuous was the Prado government’s piecemeal approach to recognition, implicitly recognizing Ciudad de Dios in 1958 when it offered residents the chance to purchase their land (Driant 1991:53).

²³⁵ This conclusion, based on the documents cited below, has not yet been registered in the secondary literature; as a result, discontinuity between the Odría and Prado governments as regards squatter policy has been overemphasized.

powerful civic force.”²³⁶ While Collier (1976:55-56) and others view Odría alone as paternalistic towards squatters, the vision articulated by the Departamento, during Prado’s term, was perhaps even more paternalistic than what we know of Odría’s view. The Departamento de Barriadas was disbanded on 9 January 1957, four and a half months after Prado came to power.²³⁷ The reason appears to have less to do with principled opposition to its political role and more to do with the fact that its director (Tulio Campana Reyna) was accused of “Usurpation of Authority and Usurpation of State Land, and in the latter crime with the concurrence of the members of the Board of Directors of the Asociación Padres de Familia Pro-Vivienda and Confraternidad ‘Leoncio Prado’.”²³⁸ The initiative collapsed in a corruption scandal. It was an embarrassment, not a *bête noire*.

The next step in institutionalizing inequality was, naturally, to develop the institutions themselves. The government assigned the Corporación Nacional de la Vivienda, in collaboration with the Fondo Nacional de Salud, to formulate the Plan de Saneamiento y Mejoras de las Barriadas Marginales (Matos Mar 2012:149). As a result of both popular pressure and a parliamentary initiative led by APRA-aligned Alberto Arca Parró, this snowballed into the Ley Orgánica de Barrios Marginales (Law 13517, 14 February 1961). This law had two major institutionalizing effects. On the one hand, it committed the government to medium-term involvement in squatter settlements for the first time (Calderón Cockburn 2005:132-35; Collier 1976:86). Thus, it mandated that street grids, uniform-sized lots, and remodeling were to be completed, for which residents were required to pay, after which *barriada* residents were eligible to receive titles (Collier 1976:85). The implementation of the law’s provisions fell to the Corporación Nacional de Vivienda (National Housing Corporation, CNV), which was largely ineffective.²³⁹

²³⁶ AGN(P)/MI/Legajo 662/Exp. Lo-736/Folio 4 (n.d.).

²³⁷ Alberto Manini G. (Prefecto del Departamento de Lima) to Señor Director General de Gobierno (9 January 1957), AGN(P)/MI/Legajo 662/Exp. Lo-736/Folio 27.

²³⁸ Dirección General de Investigación, Vigilancia e Identificación, Memorandum N° 73 (11 January 1957), AGN(P)/MI/Legajo 662/Exp. Lo-736/Folio 29.

²³⁹ The CNV was authorized to expropriate land on which *barriadas* had been formed and to establish new hybrid squatter settlements (Matos Mar 2012:152). But its foremost innovation—the idea of “planned squatter settlements,” comprised either of plots of raw land with only service hookups or plots with a rudimentary dwelling as well, which costed approximately as much as fully-equipped public housing units would have costed—could only appear to be forward-thinking to the kind of myopic liberal who thinks that single-family homes are the only way to house

On the other hand, the 1961 law represented a major stride towards recognizing the urban poor. In large measure this was because of what the law said about neighborhood associations. It exhorted the government to stimulate neighborhood associations and provide them with materials to be used in self-help urban development (article 6), codifying the policy that had been implicit since Odría. The law's Reglamento recognized squatter neighborhood associations as *barriada* representatives (Meneses 1998:129). This formal recognition of the role of neighborhood associations, albeit couched in the language of civic participation and self-help, mimicked Mexico's recognition of the role of neighborhood associations in its corporatist scheme two decades earlier.²⁴⁰ (Unlike in Mexico, however, there was no law in Peru stipulating that only one neighborhood association could represent each neighborhood. Accordingly, multiple such associations often existed in a single settlement—often giving rise to conflict (Sección de Investigaciones Sociales 1960:72).)

Field Blocage

The mid-1950s marked an inflection point, comprised of two parallel developments, giving rise to an historically-aligned power bloc. On the one hand, there was a massive “boom” in squatter settlement formation; “every month a new invasion appeared” (Matos Mar 2012:117), ultimately producing a “belt” of squatter settlements around the historic center of Lima (Matos Mar 2012:110). On the other hand, by the end of the Odría term and continuing through Prado's, and beyond, the government increasingly resigned itself to squatter settlements—a fate which was, of course, also partially a boon—as a large and growing number of people set out to live in Lima's *barriadas*. Squatter settlement formation took off under Bustamante (Collier 1976: table 3), a time when popular participation exploded.

By 1948, amidst already-trying economic circumstances, the oligarchy's boycott brought the Bustamante government to its knees. But amidst heightened popular mobilization their

people. Nor was the number of residences made available to low-income people in this way (a total of 10,601) anywhere near sufficient to meet the demand of the number of migrants who arrived in Lima between 1956 and 1962 (from 50,000 to 55,000 each year) (Driant 1991:103).

²⁴⁰ The law expressly barred recognition of new settlements—those formed after 20 September 1960 (article 2)—the formation of which had been one of neighborhood associations' chief purposes.

traditional approach to governing—democracy among exclusionary civilian plutocrats—was no longer politically viable. There were two candidate political partners: the masses, led by APRA, or the military. Not all fractions of the oligarchy were amenable to either of these potential partners. But APRA was particularly unappealing to them. It pursued a relationship between the masses and political elites that adhered broadly to a strategy involving mass disruptions to extract concessions from the elite (Collier 1976:62), an approach that inched towards popular sovereignty. As an alternative to that prospect, part of the oligarchy backed general Manuel Odría, closely associated with the highland remnants of the old *caudillo* elite, to topple Bustamante.

Odría's regime was supposed to be a mere provisional government that would return power to the oligarchy (Collier 1976:68). And top government posts were initially held by a broad array of important oligarchs such as Pedro Beltrán, a stalwart liberal opposed to concessions (appointed to head the central bank), Julio de la Piedra (to preside over the senate), and a member of the Prado family, which was more moderate on the question of concessions (to preside over congress) (Gilbert 2017:131). However, in spite of his government's initial oligarchic backing, Odría ended up charting a pioneering political course by abiding neighborhood association leaders' requests for subordination. This involved increasing government support for the infrastructure in Lima's new squatter settlements, where rural-to-urban migrants ultimately tended to settle. Odría increased public spending dramatically; it reached 13 percent of GDP between 1950 and 1955, most of which was dedicated to public works (Colter 2005:263). Parallel to this, the governing group also organized the Partido Restaurador "as a patronage mechanism for the popular migrant masses" (Colter 2005:263). But the most important ingredient was almost completely out of Odría's hands: squatters approached the government with requests for subordination. The government merely abided them to consummate benevolent mass clientelism.

Initially, oligarchs recoiled. Beltrán denounced Odría repeatedly in his newspaper. But Odría's political accomplishments were impossible to ignore. And his approach was both natural—while other orientations to the masses were logically possible, none was politically viable—and ultimately quite appealing. Given the APRA menace, some sort of approach to the masses was needed. Mass clientelism afforded the old guard a relationship to the masses that did not have the same political liabilities. Thus, after Odría oriented to the urban poor, Beltrán was

attracted to the subject, proposing a series of housing proposals (Collier 1976:69). Soon, Beltrán “chose to fight Odría on his own ground by supporting settlement formation” (Collier 1976:70).²⁴¹ The oligarchic elite was playing according to *caudillo* Odría’s game of orienting to the urban poor as a mass constituency, with Beltrán promoting the massive Ciudad de Dios squatter settlement. The result was “a curious situation in which a leading member of the landed oligarchy, a class presumably deeply committed to the sanctity of private property, was involved in sponsoring a major settlement invasion” (Collier 1976:71). Politics was beginning to grow semi-autonomous from class interests.

Perhaps even more curious than Beltrán’s favorable attitude towards squatters was Manuel Prado’s. Civilian oligarch Manuel Prado returned to the political fray after winning the presidency for another term (1956-1962).²⁴² Rather than reverse course, the Prado administration built on the pattern established under Odría, institutionalizing it (Matos Mar 2012:225). This was curious not only because it was associated with Odría, a man hailing from the old *caudillo* elite whom Prado and his oligarchic milieu had antagonized. It was also curious because it was associated with Beltrán, perhaps the foremost leader of the hardliner oligarchs, a group opposed to the Prados, who were more moderate. In part, Prado’s failure to put forward a different initiative was because he was a liberal and therefore preferred a *laissez faire* approach. It was also because revenue shortfalls made public housing especially difficult to pursue fiscally. Most importantly, though, it was because urban concentration left him with few alternatives. Meanwhile, judging from his behaviors, Manuel Prado found requests for subordination attractive as well, since he initially retained government institutions that served to abide these requests and later collaborated on a major legislative initiative that recognized *barriadas*.

²⁴¹ Collier (1976:72) argues there were two reasons Beltrán converged with Odría: (1) both wanted support and (2) both benefitted from framing the problem of property and poor housing in ways that precluded more fiscally burdensome and more radical political proposals. While these factors accurately capture the elite’s desiderata, they were not causes that can account for why Beltrán did what he did. The cause, it would seem, had to do with requests for subordination, because they were an avenue towards fiscally responsible and politically conservative support.

²⁴² Prado’s victorious return was the result of two main factors. First, the wave of rural-to-urban migration meant there were more voters in 1956 than there had been probably ever before (Colter 2005:265). Second, APRA supported Prado as part of a pact in exchange for freedom of political action (Bertram 1991:441). By then the APRA leadership had retreated from its radical approach, opting to control popular mobilization, abandoning its maximum program and methods in favor of gradualism (Colter 2005:265).

Continuity across the Odría and Prado governments, in turn, meant the two leading fractions of the political elite—Odría, who hailed from the remnants of the *caudillos* of the sierra, and Prado, who hailed from the relatively moderate coastal oligarchy—converged on an orientation to the urban poor. This meant the major fractions of the political elite had come into alignment with one another over time on the basis of their common orientation to the urban poor. Peru saw “the legitimation of the *barriada*” (Matos Mar 2012:109). A series of new districts—comprised almost entirely of squatter settlements—were established. Odría recognized Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre on 22 May 1950. In 1961, the Prado government decreed the formation of the districts of Villa María del Triunfo (where the Ciudad de Dios invasion had been the impetus) and Comas (where the Pampa de Comas settlement had been the impetus) (Matos Mar 2012:154). Formerly-antagonistic political elites agreed about something particular—but politically decisive—despite their fundamental disagreements about other matters, transfiguring their competition into mere agonism. This made them an historically-aligned power bloc and set in motion a major social policy orientation that endured for years thereafter.

Field blocage impacted outsiders who sought political power as well. APRA had to acknowledge that old guard now had a mass base. As the 1962 election neared, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre proclaimed agreement with Beltrán—the leading spokesperson of APRA’s foremost enemy, the oligarchy—on questions of agrarian reform and fiscal and monetary policy—perhaps the most important parts of APRA’s historic “maximum” political program from its inception in 1931 (Aguirre Gamio 1962:199). Similarly, APRA’s leading intellectual, Manuel Seoane, also broke with the party’s historic program, renouncing economic planning and saying that if APRA pursued such a policy agenda “we would scare away foreign capital” (quoted in Aguirre Gamio 1962:200). APRA was now playing by the rules of the new political game, which presupposed old guard continuity. In recognition of the party’s new collaborative orientation, and after an unsuccessful attempt to launch his own presidential campaign (Collier 1976:83), Beltrán, the Prados, and other oligarchs backed Haya’s candidacy for the presidency in 1962. APRA and the oligarchs, formerly one another’s sworn enemies, were now allies (Gilbert 2017:135).²⁴³

²⁴³ Even general Ricardo Pérez Godoy, head of the military government that ensured Fernando Belaúnde Terry would take power after Prado rather than APRA, was impelled by urban concentration to orient to mass clientelism (Collier 1976:88).

Thus, political operatives gradually agreed on such important particulars that this convergence began to overshadow their disagreement on fundamentals. This neutralized the only real opposition to the oligarchy's policy preferences, and a modified form of creole liberalism was able to persist indefinitely. The political field was not responsible for creole liberalism as such; it was, however, the social location of elite convergence, which ensured that the main alternative was unable to challenge it. And the political elite's orientation to the urban poor had such force that even after city-level democratic reforms were implemented in Lima, local politics came to revolve around the squatter issue as well (Collier 1976:91).²⁴⁴

After the government had recognized them as the urban poor, abiding their requests for subordination, the urban poor themselves embraced that identity and comported themselves in the political sphere accordingly. In the mid-1960s, squatters staged a series of protests that forced the government to allow legalization of squatter residences before the hitherto required neighborhood physical improvements had been completed (Calderón Cockburn 2005:195-96, 235-36; Matos Mar 2012:228; Meneses Rivas 1998:135; Zapata Velasco 1996:75). Gone were workers' concerns for workplace power and in their place stood demands for individual property. In 1979 the Comité Organizador de la Federación Departamental de Pueblos Jóvenes y Urbanizaciones was established, with committees in many squatter settlements, and soon the Confederación General de Pobladores del Perú was formed, which aggregated department-level federations at the national level (Driant 1991:122-23). The urban poor's political identity thus came into sharper relief, and was accordingly for the most part increasingly distinct from that of workers and peasants.

Conclusion

Starting in the mid-1940s, a wave of urban concentration brought poor people who needed housing into Lima. Neighborhood association leaders solicited subordination, starting especially with the military *caudillo* government of President Manuel A. Odría, presenting the urban poor as aspiring government supporters and putting political elites on notice that pretty

²⁴⁴ The exceptions were the military junta of 1962-1963, which energetically repressed squatters, and the Fernando Belaúnde Terry government of 1963-1968, which remained aloof as squatter settlements proliferated (Newman 2019).

much all they wanted in return was denizen status. Odría tacitly permitted land invasions and the growth of squatter settlements, sealing the deal and giving rise to benevolent mass clientelism. His acquiescence to this major social force was somewhat inevitable, given the power of urban concentration. It was also useful for him in consolidating power, for which reason it set a precedent.

The subsequent government of civilian oligarch President Manuel Prado Ugarteche retained the permissive policy orientation towards squatters. He also took major strides to institutionalize the relationship between the government and the urban poor. Taken together, this meant that the foremost leaders of the two chief elite fractions—*caudillos* and oligarchs—converged on a pro-squatter position, making them an historically-aligned power bloc. Henceforth, most subsequent governments retained the same basic pro-squatter orientation for the rest of the 20th century.

Mass clientelism helps explain why APRA, the only major force which challenged the old guard, never took power, and why different kinds of elites were able to remain sufficiently cohesive as to ensure that creole liberalism persisted into the late-20th century. APRA tried to bring about an elites-masses relationship according to which the masses caused disruptions, like strikes, to which elites had little choice to respond other than with concessions, a strategy that representing an effort to capitalize on popular will to inch towards popular sovereignty. In contrast to such contentious politics, requests for subordination represented a form of popular will that did not threaten to evolve towards demands for popular sovereignty. This was attractive to political elites, for which they opted to abide these requests, which drew the old guard into alignment with one another despite their myriad fundamental disagreements. Once aligned, APRA could see the old guard had a base, and it dropped its old disruptive strategy and opted to play by the rules of their game instead.

Meanwhile, affirming the urban poor as a social group helped establish a new mass identity. This in turn divided the popular classes. First, it divided the urban poor from workers, leading the urban poor to individualistic political pursuits as opposed to redistributive politics. Thus, on behalf of residents the mayor of the district formerly called Distrito Obrero Industrial 27 de Octubre and now called San Martín de Porres pressured the city government to legalize residences prior to the completion of urban upgrades as required by the 1961 law. Given mass identification as members of the urban poor, this resonated widely in Lima. Within a matter of

months a march was planned to demand that the measure be extended to the rest of Lima. The appeal of this demand appears to have been so significant that the city government granted the concession in exchange for calling off the march on 2 August 1968 (Collier 1976:91). This was a major victory for an *individualistic* policy goal, not a redistributive one that would benefit the working class per se; it made it politically more difficult to, for instance, tax the rich to make urban upgrades since the problem of legal limbo could now be solved.

Second, such approaches divided the urban poor from peasants. While urban land invasions certainly inspired rural land invasions, soliciting subordination provided a poor model of popular politics to apply to the countryside. This helped ensure that Peru's agrarian reform was an especially top-down affair and that there was not an urban-rural convergence among Peru's popular classes. In other words, political unity at the apex of Peruvian politics came at the cost of political division among the popular sectors.

Chapter 4. Urban Revolt, Urban Concentration, and Two-Party “Democracy”: Caracas, 1958-1984

As in Mexico and Peru, so too in Venezuela, urban concentration facilitated a convergence on the part of the two main fractions of the country’s political elite—Liberals and Conservatives—giving rise to an historically-aligned power bloc. In contrast to the other cases examined here, each of these fractions came to inhabit a major political party; the emergence of the historically-aligned power bloc was therefore synonymous with their peaceful alternation in power and a bipartisan power-sharing scheme. These parties alternated in power at five-year intervals from 1964-1984. This was far from a foregone conclusion, especially since, unlike in Mexico City and Lima, Caracas’s urban poor were initially radical. In a seeming confirmation of the shantytown radicalism hypothesis, they were a major factor in the 1958 overthrow of general Marcos Pérez Jiménez.

Most students of Venezuela emphasize the importance of petroleum wealth in transfiguring political conflict into the country’s “exceptional” two-party “democracy.” Petroleum was certainly important, but, as I relate more fully in Appendix B, I think existing accounts are quite incomplete as regards explaining precisely how. Moreover, when we appreciate how petroleum wealth featured in the interaction of *urbs* and *civitas*, Venezuela actually appears rather similar to the countries examined in the previous two chapters—neither very exceptional nor especially democratic.

Amidst urban concentration, I argue, it was especially rational for the urban poor to solicit subordination given the government’s petroleum wealth. These requests, in turn, hailed both of the main political parties—the social democratic Acción Democrática (which represented a reconstructed form of Liberalism) and the Christian democratic COPEI (which represented

reconstructed Conservatism). When they abided the requests, the result was benevolent mass clientelism, which had a two-fold effect. First, they made these political parties comprise an historically-aligned power bloc. And second, they inclined squatters to settle into a political identity as the urban poor which set them apart from workers and peasants. Together, these effects ensured oil revenues work in a specific way to transfigure political conflict and thereby prevent both a deepening of the urban revolt that had toppled Pérez Jiménez and a revanchist military intervention against the new government. Benevolent mass clientelism was the crucial ingredient in Venezuela's "exceptional democracy." By abiding the urban poor's requests for subordination, the major parties were able to steer its development away from the leftist menace and towards clientage.

In this chapter, I provide historical context and describe the timing and extent of urban concentration. I outline the political elite's response to it as well as the urban poor's political initiatives, and then delve into the advent and nature of benevolent mass clientelism in Venezuela. I conclude by discussing how this helped unite Liberals and Conservatives into an historically-aligned power bloc.

Historical Context

In addition to petroleum wealth, the distinguishing feature of 20th century Venezuela was the urban revolt that toppled general Marcos Pérez Jiménez. Unlike with the Mexican Revolution, this revolt did not completely restructure elite politics. But it did furnish evidence that mass politics was urgent. Other than a brief episode in the 1940s, this was essentially new, and it was sufficiently significant to shape the overall political dynamics.

From Colonial Backwater to Urban Revolt

Spanish colonists established Caracas in 1567. It remained a relatively unimportant frontier outpost until 1777, when Spain combined the Venezuelan provinces into a single Captaincy-General with Caracas as its administrative center. The city began to grow; after more than doubling in size, by 1812, it had 50,000 inhabitants (Myers 1978:227). Soon thereafter Caracas became a major center of Liberalism and anticolonial struggle against Spain.

After independence, Venezuela was racked by civil war and ruled by a string of strongmen (*caudillos*). Only in the late-1920s did the masses begin to try to weigh into national politics and did a cadre of political leaders arise, especially in conjunction with a series of protests against dictator Juan Vicente Gómez. Even though they competed with one another, many of these leaders—the so-called “generation of 1928,” since they faced-off with Gómez that year—eventually co-led the political parties during Venezuela’s transition to two-party “democracy.”

In the interim, after arising through the 1920s events, the best-organized political party, Acción Democrática (AD), joined forces with a group of politically-ambitious military officers to overthrow general Isaías Medina Angarita in 1945. Unlike Mexico’s Porfirio Díaz or Peru’s Augusto Leguía, Venezuela’s Medina Angarita was viewed as relatively forward-thinking. The coup put AD in a power-sharing arrangement with military officials. This allowed them to pursue social reforms such as land redistribution. But since Medina Angarita was viewed as a progressive, it also made the party appear hungry for absolute control. The AD-military government’s popularity declined accordingly, and with it AD’s prospects for becoming an hegemonic party (like the PRI). Its overthrow in 1948 ushered in a decade of military dictatorship in which general Marcos Pérez Jiménez ruled with an iron fist.

Pérez Jiménez resumed some of Medina Angarita’s modernizing initiatives, including major urban renewal and infrastructural projects centered in Caracas. But he also became increasingly intolerant of both political opposition and squatters. He drove political parties underground and, in 1953, started a “war on *ranchos* [squatter residences],” carrying out massive evictions to make way for large public housing estates in Caracas and neighboring Maiquetía (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:37; Villalobos 2011:XVII). The Partido Comunista de Venezuela (PCV) and leftist members of AD took to organizing a Fanonian resistance, concentrated in Caracas’s squatter settlements. The 1958 overthrow of Pérez Jiménez was an urban-based political revolution that issued forth principally on the basis of a general strike and the almost-spontaneous mobilization of the urban poor (Ellner 1993:4, 7). Not only did the dictator fall but political structures jostled, giving rise to a dual-power scenario: “for one week following the flight of Pérez Jiménez, the labor movement took over civic responsibilities from the police force, which was completely absent from the streets of Caracas” (Ellner 1993:5). And even in 1963 a majority of squatters—along with a majority of industrial workers across the

country—favored nationalization of all Venezuelan industry (Silva Michelena 1967a: table 3.10). Mass political parties surged to the fore once again, only this time AD was not in a position to press for complete control.

In an effort to get out in front of this groundswell of mobilization, the provisional government, headed by admiral Wolfgang Larrazábal (1958-1959), which worked closely with the Unión Republicana Democrática (URD), implemented the Plan de Emergencia, providing jobs to the unemployed (and indirectly encouraging urban concentration). Major social policy initiatives had to be incorporated into the new political elite's strategies and political party programs insofar as they sought popular support.

The urban revolt precipitating the fall of Pérez Jiménez in 1958 could have given way to a rise of the revolutionary left, and, had that happened, could have also provoked a subsequent revanchist counterrevolution. A highly fluid, near-revolutionary situation prevailed during the Larrazábal government. And the subsequent brief caretaker government held power during the July 26th Movement's overthrow of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba—which represented either a source of inspiration or a bad omen, depending on one's politics. In this context, the possibility that its intervention might backfire and trigger a revolution like Cuba's encouraged the military to stay in the barracks (Alexander 1964:116).

AD's principal leader, Rómulo Betancourt (1959-1964), succeeded Larrazábal. During this time, organized labor collaborated closely with business elites to defend the fledgling democratic government. In contrast, the urban poor—whose numbers grew rapidly after the fall of Pérez Jiménez—participated in increasingly “increasingly belligerent” street protests (Ellner 1993:10). As organized labor conservatized and some of its number argued urban poor mobilization fed revanchism, the PCV and the URD were among the only organizations to defend their right to protest (Ellner 1993:11). This put them at odds with the Betancourt government, whose security forces “frequently opened fire on street demonstrators and rounded them up to send to special work colonies” (Ellner 1993:18). Soon labor leaders were unable to keep a lid on discontent. Telephone workers sympathetic to the URD, by then moving into the opposition, walked out in November 1960; transportation workers did so in January 1962. Students and the urban poor joined in the street actions associated with first strike and clashed with police, who netted hundreds of casualties, including many deaths (Ellner 1993:19).

Between April 1960 and June 1962, there had been a series of revolts, two led by right-wing forces followed by two led by left-wing forces (Alexander 1964:110-11; Ewell 1991:757).²⁴⁵ Over the course of 1961, leftists were essentially driven out of leadership positions in the Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela (CTV) (Ellner 1993:20). Ellner (1993:23-24) argues that the left misjudged the level of sympathy for leftist insurrection. This seems quite right. But by the early-1960s there was a major gap between the political outlooks of the government and the masses. Venezuelan government officials were relatively conservative; on one ranking, in 1963 they were only 1 percent to the left of oil executives. But Venezuelan society had moved far to the left, and *rancho* dwellers were the most radical group surveyed (61 percent of whom agreed with leftist statements)—more than student leaders, labor leaders, industrial workers, etc. (Silva Michelena 1967b: table 4.17).²⁴⁶ Thus, even conceding that insurrections were ill-conceived, the political compromise that the Betancourt government represented was growing intolerable. Indeed, Betancourt himself was intolerant: he maintained Venezuela in a state of emergency, decreed five times during his term in office, for a total of 42 percent of his time in office (778 out of 1,847 days) (Levine 1973:50). This was unsustainable.

Both an advance towards social revolution and a retreat into counterrevolution were live possibilities. And yet, politics ultimately stabilized around the Liberal-Conservative cleavage. Those partisans with the inclination to see their political opponents in terms of divergent political interests deserving of antagonistic opposition were marginalized from the leadership of the main political parties. As a result, between 1964 and 1974, “the formerly rightist COPEI met the formerly left-leaning AD halfway” (Ellner 2008:64; see also Ray 1969:99). Each party became compatible with the other as a loyal opposition.

²⁴⁵ The first conservative revolt was in April 1960 at San Cristóbal, Táchira, led by former general Jesús María Castro León, and the second in June 1961 at Barcelona, Anzoátegui, which had support from civilians in the URD—which had collaborated with the Larrazábal government. The mutinies with left-wing support, from both the MIR and the PCV, were in May and June 1962, at the Carúpano and Puerto Cabello naval bases, respectively. Casualties reached several thousand in the latter (Alexander 1964:110-11).

²⁴⁶ Indeed, Ellner (1993:23-24) is the first to recognize that “far more dramatic [than leftism among organized workers] were the disturbances unleashed by students and the urban poor.”

Leading Fractions of the Political Elite

The traditional explanation for this convergence centers on the skill of Betancourt and other members of the political elite, and on the putative pact-making inclinations among the new political elite (see especially Levine 1973:43-47). Not in a position to press for total AD dominance, Betancourt orchestrated a deal with business and labor leaders and the leaders of the other non-leftist political parties—namely the URD’s Jóvito Villalba and COPEI’s Rafael Caldera—excluding the PCV. These leaders then agreed to the Punto Fijo pact, the most important part of which was that all signatories would respect the outcome of the 1963 elections. A followup agreement specified that ensuing reforms would not touch capitalism nor revoke the Church’s place in education. While the URD eventually left the pact, amidst a decline in popular mobilization and a drift to the right on the part of the pact’s other members, AD and COPEI stuck with it. AD swept the 1963 elections, and Raúl Leoni ascended to the presidency to steer the new government. The system enjoyed relatively smooth sailing from then onward for two decades, the conventional wisdom maintains, especially because AD passed power to COPEI’s Rafael Caldera in 1968, initiating a lengthy period of alternation in power.

This view represents a combination of ahistoricism and wishful thinking. Betancourt was not a moderate at the outset. He had been a leader of the underground Partido Democrático Nacional (PDN) in the 1930s, in which the communist left played a major role prior to the formation of the PCV proper (Caballero 2008:170; Ewell 1991:741). Nor was AD initially a centrist party.²⁴⁷ AD conservatized. And not everyone was happy with this. The schisms internal to the AD proper were always the product of disputes about *how left* the party should be as it drifted towards the center. And even in the 1970s, AD flirted with the left wing of the Second International (Ellner 2008:73), although while in power it pursued a modernized type of Liberal politics.

Nor was COPEI really a moderate party inclined to compromise. Its undisputed leader Rafael Caldera had sympathized with Francisco Franco’s fascist regime during the Spanish Civil War (Ellner 2008; Ewell 1991:741). It remained committed to Christian values like religious

²⁴⁷ Levine (1973:40) claims AD was anti-communist from its inception.

education. It was cut from Conservative cloth. This was anathema to the quasi-leftist AD. To AD, in a word, COPEI was its “greatest enemy” (Ahumada 1967:15).

When in power, of course, AD was willing to try anything. Guided by unquestioned Liberal principles—an embrace of creole liberalism pared with secularism and a commitment to a rational government—Betancourt pursued several avenues to build a base. One was among workers. Betancourt and his allies tried to harness the organized working class’s support by mixing the carrot and the stick to establish firm control over the CTV (Ellner 1993; Ewell 1991:757-58). CTV executive committee member Francisco Urquía Lugo complained that the Betancourt government imposed leaders on unions.²⁴⁸ However, since Venezuelan industrialization never took off,²⁴⁹ and since the limited industrial base tended to be highly mechanized and require few workers (Ewell 1991:772), a large industrial proletariat never took shape. The party’s working-class base was therefore quite limited.

AD also made an effort to secure support from peasants. The Betancourt government resumed the agrarian reform initiated during the 1945-1948 government, and it was careful to ensure that agrarian radicalism did not spiral out of its control (as in Mexico). On the one hand, the government distributed land to landless peasants; almost half of this land was public and much of the rest was willingly sold to the government or was expropriated from exiled allies of Pérez Jiménez (Ewell 1991:760). On the other hand, Betancourt’s Guardia Nacional prevented peasants from seizing rural lands “without the blessing of the agrarian reform bureaucracy” (Ewell 1991:757). In these ways, the agrarian reform helped shore-up AD’s rural base of support, channeled through the Federación Campesina de Venezuela (FCV) (Powell 1971). But it did not represent a major transfer of wealth. While this meant it “caused relatively little conflict” (Ewell 1991:760), it also meant it was a relatively weak catalyst of support. To make matters worse, as AD moved to the right, its peasant support base splintered. Ramón Quijada, president of the FCV, left AD during one of its first splits (Ellner 1993:28; Ewell 1991:758; Mathiason

²⁴⁸ “Ley de revolver utilizan adecos,” *La Verdad*, 16 November 1966, p. 1.

²⁴⁹ AD continued Pérez Jiménez’s government-led development initiatives. But the continuing centrality of oil—which made it unusually difficult to devalue the currency and thereby raise the price of imported commodities to incentivize domestic production (Ewell 1991:771)—shortcircuited import-substituting industrialization. Meanwhile, Venezuelan statesmen busied themselves with forming the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), with four other countries, in September 1960.

1967:141). Moreover, given the ongoing flow of rural-to-urban migration, AD's efforts in the countryside were of steadily diminishing importance compared to those in the city.

Urban Concentration

Over the course of the early-20th century, the major dictators that ruled Venezuela—Juan Vicente Gómez, José Eleazar López Contreras, and Isaías Medina Angarita—all made important advances in Venezuela's transportation infrastructure. Together with cheap fuel, this laid the ground for Caracas's urban growth, since "most of the new roads led to Caracas" (Ewell 1991:735). With the taming of malaria and an influx of European immigration, Venezuela's population grew steadily: in 1920, there were 2,479,525 Venezuelans; in 1936, there were 3,364,347; in 1950, there were 5,034,838; and in 1961, there were 7,523,999 (Ewell 1991:736). The population living in cities of over 100,000 inhabitants also grew steadily: in 1936, there were 313,352 such denizens; in 1946, there were 405,000, and in 1958, there were 1,697,000 (Ewell 1991:735). European immigration, especially from Italy, Spain, and Portugal, ramped up starting in the 1940s and especially in the 1950s (Myers 1978:229).²⁵⁰ Caracas grew rapidly during this time. Whereas in 1920 the city's population was only 118,312, between 1941 and 1961 it expanded from 354,138 to 1,336,464 (Morse 1971: table 9).

The Decline of Public Housing

A gradual disavowal of public housing on the part of the post-1958 political elite accompanied urban population growth. Public housing had been central to Venezuelan social policy during the preceding era. The Banco Obrero (BO) was established in 1928, initially with the goal of financing workers' mortgages. Ironically, minimum income eligibility requirements made BO-financed housing unaffordable to most people living in the *barrios* (Sosa Franco 1971:49-50). In the late-1930s, BO oriented to the construction of affordable housing for unionized, low-income workers. It then expanded to urban renewal, starting with El Silencio,

²⁵⁰ In 1941, foreigners comprised only 1.3 percent of the population, whereas in 1961 they reached 7 percent (Ewell 1991:749).

pictured in Plate 4.1, in 1941 (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:36). (Thus, unlike Mexico City and Lima, by the time squatter settlements really began to proliferate in Caracas, in the late 1950s, the city essentially had no inner-city slums.) During the 1945-1948 government, BO formulated a Plan de Vivienda involving the replacement of *ranchos* with decent housing. During the dictatorship that followed, the government oriented to public works and housing construction as its foremost objective. During Pérez Jiménez's reign, the government used an especially large portion of its oil revenues to build public housing, making Venezuela the foremost Latin American country in public housing units per capita.



Plate 4.1. Street view of the El Silencio slum prior to its demolition (ca. 1940)

Photographer: unknown. Source: Caracas Cuéntame (2016: n.p.).

During the mid-1950s, Caracas gained over 23,000 government-built homes (70 percent of the national total) (Martín Frechilla 1996:199; see also Almandoz 2012). Government-built housing took two principal forms: massive superblocs (*superbloques*)²⁵¹ and medium-sized apartment blocks. These buildings punctuated the urban environment. One estimate is that, by 1959, BO had built 85 superblocs and 1,250 buildings of over four stories in Caracas, totaling 17,310 apartments for over 160,000 people (Acedo Mendoza 1967:138)—enough to house some 12 percent of Caracas’s population (Acedo Mendoza 1967:139).²⁵² The public housing construction boom predated the era of “exceptional democracy,” when acquiescence to squatter settlements prevailed. The rate of public housing construction decreased during the early-1960s,²⁵³ though it did recover somewhat—albeit now more often taking the form of smaller housing blocks—starting in 1965 (Acedo Mendoza 1967:152), and public housing construction continued through the 1970s (Instituto Nacional de la Vivienda 1989:447-49).

Urbanization and Demographic Change

Some argue that the 1945 coup triggered a large wave of rural-to-urban migration, as the government sought popular support for the first time in Venezuelan history (Sosa Franco 1971:38).²⁵⁴ Under Pérez Jiménez, in contrast, repression had been so severe that “the new migrants usually had to seek out worthless bits of land” (Ray 1969:31). Unsurprisingly, then, at least given the pressures on peasants in the countryside, the overthrow of Pérez Jiménez “ushered in a new and entirely unprecedented phase of barrio development. Restrictions on land settlement were immediately lifted, and families poured out of their crowded ranchos to grab up

²⁵¹ *Superbloques* are large apartment buildings containing between 150 and 450 apartments for 1,100 to 5,000 inhabitants situated in urban developments with schools, medical posts, etc.

²⁵² Another estimate is that between 1953 and 1958, BO built 97 large 15-story buildings and 78 medium 4-story buildings in Caracas and neighboring Maiquetía, totaling 19,580 apartments, enough housing for 180,000 people (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:37-38).

²⁵³ This was due in part to the economic slump that followed the fall of Pérez Jiménez, driven by a wave of capital flight and the emigration of many foreign business people (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:38, 39).

²⁵⁴ Ray is a leading proponent of this interpretation: “The campesinos . . . who moved mainly to Caracas and the towns and cities near the oil fields, met little resistance when they started constructing their rancho communities. The Acción Democrática administration (1945-48) was anxious to maintain and further its support among the poor and therefore tended to be very permissive toward their demands” (Ray 1969:31).

vacant land on the outskirts of the cities as quickly as possible. When campesino families still in the countryside heard about the new opportunities, the flow of migration speeded up tremendously, thus increasing further the demand for new barrios” (Ray 1969:32).

As Table 4.1 shows, Caracas grew steadily during these years. The population increased by 625,818 inhabitants, an 89 percent increase, between 1950 and 1961. Over the same period, the number of squatters grew from 114,453 to 265,582, a 132 percent increase. The land area occupied by *ranchos* grew from 10 percent of the city’s land surface in 1951-1954 to 19.7 percent in 1959-1966 (Sosa Franco 1971:41). The city continued to grow rapidly through the 1960s and 1970s, driven largely by rural-to-urban migration. A survey conducted in 1978 found that 62.1 percent of Caracas *barrio* residents were rural-to-urban migrants (Sánchez Rodríguez 1980:189).

Table 4.1. Housing composition in metropolitan Caracas, 1950-1966

Type of Housing	1950			1961			1966		
	Number of Occupants	Percent	Average Per Unit	Number of Occupants	Percent	Average Per Unit	Number of Occupants	Percent	Average Per Unit
Rancho (slum shacks)	114,453	16.27	4.65	265,582	19.98	5.01	393,634	21.90	5.22
Houses	428,130	60.85	5.64	490,207	36.88	5.87	589,908	32.82	6.04
Apartments	75,371	10.71	4.00	380,537	28.62	4.56	547,902	30.49	4.83
Rented rooms	--	--	--	81,949	6.17	2.79	116,553	6.49	2.79
Condominiums	75,775	10.78	14.75	100,795	7.58	22.81	135,147	7.52	27.00
Other	9,764	1.39	4.13	10,241	0.77	2.15	14,018	0.78	2.15
Total	703,493	100.00		1,329,311	100.00		1,797,162	100.00	

Source: Myers (1978: table 2).

A Radical Inflection

Unlike in Mexico City and Lima, the late-1950s part of this influx of migrants to the Venezuelan metropolis took place in the aftermath of a major urban revolt in which the urban poor had played a significant role. After toppling Pérez Jiménez, the urban poor invaded thousands of apartments in the 2 de Diciembre housing estate (Matos Mar 1968:329); the estate was itself renamed 23 de Enero to commemorate the revolution.²⁵⁵ And many of those already

²⁵⁵ Renaming the estate was almost inevitable, given that the name “2 de Diciembre” commemorated the 1948

living in them refused to pay rent (Ray 1969:88, 155)—by one count, about 4,580 residents (Matos Mar 1968:285). Larrazábal yielded to the urban poor's pressure by suspending rent payments for public housing (Ellner 2008:58; Ewell 1991:753).²⁵⁶

Their political significance during these raucous years also led the provisional government to make significant concessions to squatters, especially via Larrazábal's Plan de Emergencia. He made credit available to government agencies so they could install piped water, streets, and staircases in the *barrios*, for which residents were often paid to do the work (Ray 1969:32). Consequently, Caracas became even more attractive, and *barrio* formation ramped up accordingly (Ray 1969:40). One report estimated that 100 new squatter residences (*ranchos*) were established every day (Ray 1969:33).

The urban poor was not the only group for which housing was a political problem. So was it a political problem for military brass—and in this case, it was related to the problem of loyalty. Betancourt wanted to ensure the military did not intervene against his government. He also knew that housing was an important factor in many peoples' lives, and even toured military installations to gain familiarity with living arrangements. Perceiving an opportunity, he developed a scheme to subsidize home-buying for officers and non-commissioned officers. Many among the military brass seem to have availed themselves of the program (Alexander 1964:107). It was clear, then, that the problem of housing was not only urgent, as the urban poor made clear, but also a potential political boon.

military coup.

²⁵⁶ For the most part, superblock residents continued to refuse to pay rent until around 1963 (Ray 1969:88 n.), and, as debt-collecting pressure mounted, many vacated between 1965 and 1967 rather than pay rent (Ray 1969:156 n.), probably usually moving to the *barrios*.



Plate 4.2. Squatters in Caracas’s self-built hillside *barrios* (background) stood in sharp contrast with the advanced urban environment, much of which construction was subsidized, funded, or built by the government, such as the city’s modern highway overpass system (Autopista Sur de Caracas), built 1966-1967 (foreground)

Source: UCV/Biblioteca Central/Soledad Mendoza (ed.), *Así es Caracas* (Caracas: Editorial Ateneo de Caracas, n.d.), n.p.

Soliciting Subordination

Since 1958, the promise of “democracy” raised mass expectations of meaningful political participation (Romero 1987:31). In a country whose polity rested on oil wealth, this often meant assistance in terms of material wellbeing: inclusion into an oil polity meant receiving some part of the wealth borne of petroleum extraction (Coronil 1997). A good part of the impetus for this kind of aspiration for participation inhered in Caracas’s urban form. Squatters were constantly

confronted with evidence of the government's wealth, not only in the form of housing blocks, but also when they beheld Caracas's urban infrastructure. For Caracas had some of the region's tallest buildings and most sophisticated architecture, including one of Latin America's most advanced highway overpass systems, pictured in Plate 4.2. Caracas's squatters were constantly confronted with a tension between the Venezuelan government's vast petroleum wealth and regionally-unsurpassed urban planning capacity, on the one hand, and their rustic, self-built *barrios*, on the other. In addition to an intellectual understanding of the country's petroleum wealth, this jarring contrast inspired in squatters considerable expectations of the government, sustaining the view that there was plenty of wealth to go around (Naím and Piñango [1984] 1996:547-48; see also Rey 1991:545-46).

Lowering Expectations

The anticipation of inclusion in the country's resource spoils would have been far less prominent had the advent of "democracy" not heightened the urban poor's expectations of the government. But herein also lay a political opportunity. Caracas's squatters believed that the government should assist them with virtually all manner of social and economic advancement, largely due to the fact that the government actually did have, and showed that it had, the resources to help (Ray 1969:85). Members of the urban poor were outraged when, after they had invaded superbloc apartments with the fall of Pérez Jiménez, they were later asked to pay rent, since "for many the free use of the superbloques represented one of the major victories of the Revolution, and to be denied that was to be denied one of their legitimate rights as lower-class citizens" (Ray 1969:88). The sense of entitlement to government aid was general and persistent: many *barrio* residents relied on the government for jobs (Ray 1969:86). The urban poor thought not only that the government "*could* supply most of the benefits of urban life—jobs, educational facilities, running water, diversions, transportation, and so on—but [that] it *should* supply them" (Ray 1969:85, emphasis added).



Plate 4.3. Municipal council member Francisco Olivio (Acción Democrática) inspects the flood damage to a retaining wall, street, and nearby buildings in Barrio 24 de Julio, Parroquia La Pastora, caused by a leaky pipe (1974)

Photographer: Unknown. Source: AGSCM/Caja año 1974, B (V034LAC495)/Exp.

“VEINTICUATRO (24) DE JULIO” Barrio (Reparación de Tuberías), Barrios Reivindicaciones.

Once a settlement was established, self-help was relatively seldom in Caracas’s squatter settlements, in stark contrast to Lima. This was the case “even of minor problems: the residents are just as disinclined to get together to mend a broken water spigot as they are to build their own schoolhouse” (Ray 1969:74). Observers were able to discern that there was an “unwillingness of barrio dwellers to work on community projects unless accompanied by a number of their neighbors” (Ray 1969:79). This is not to say that Caracas’s squatters did not pony-up physical labor to urbanize their habitats—for this they certainly did (Bolívar 1987; Ray 1969:46-47).

However, they expected considerable government help. Refusal to do much of the self-help work put the government in the position of having to accede to “outright provision of community improvements which were originally designed to be exercises in self-help” (Ray 1969:135). Residents often waited for politicians or government officials to take note of their needs, as captured in Plate 4.3. Delaying was strategic: if the political elites expected political support in exchange for material aid, clients stood to gain by putting patrons on notice about their needs, and then waiting. They solicited subordination, awaiting delivery of the goods. If political elites wanted their support, they were expected to show it.

Initially expectations were quite high, and the government responded accordingly. The rural-to-urban migrants who moved to Caracas in the late-1950s and early-1960s established many illegal connections to the Electricidad de Caracas (ELECAR) electrical grid. When ELECAR sent employees “to disconnect the illegal installations,” “armed slum dwellers” confronted them, “threatening to use force to guarantee that electricity would continue to reach their ranchos” (Myers 1978:249). The AD government then in power was contemplating nationalizing the company, but, of course, also thought squatters’ loyalties would flow from free access to this service. In exchange for allowing the private firm to continue operating, the government forced ELECAR to not only accept the illegal connections, but also to provide Caracas’s squatters with inexpensive electricity and install connections to the city’s *ranchos* for a nominal fee (Myers 1978:249). The urban poor had no rights to this service; nor, however, did they have a duty to pay—or to pay the market rate. Service was, instead, a favor the government secured on their behalves.

Electricity installation was only the beginning—usually the first step—in the process of equipping *barrios* with services. As Ray explains: “Next is street repair. Filling and leveling are constantly required during the rainy season, and the city government can offer immediate relief at little expense. Water, which the residents consider their most urgent need, is usually the last of these three improvements to be supplied” (Ray 1969:46). Also at a late stage, sewage lines were installed, as depicted in Plate 4.4.



Plate 4.4. A government delegation visits a *barrio* during a collective work drive (*cayapa*) to install sewage lines, in which relatively few residents participated (1966)

Source: *La Verdad*, 29 July 1966, cuerpo I, p. 7.

The Role of Intermediaries

An intelligible game surrounded aid. The extension of government assistance to a *barrio* for the first time represented de facto recognition (Ray 1969:46), initiating the game. Early in a settlement's history, if residents were able to secure some gesture of government support—for example, electricity connections in the settlement—they knew that the existential phase, during which they defended their settlements against eviction, was over (Ollivier 2017:271). For this reason, in order to avoid eviction, the leaders of new settlements were keen to develop ties with politicians (Karst, Schwartz, and Schwartz 1973:48). This was the job of neighborhood associations.

The typical squatter neighborhood association, or *junta*, Ray explains, was a “small committee consisting of between seven and nine residents. Its declared function is to represent the *barrio* before the city officials and try to obtain basic community facilities. Juntas exist or have existed in every *barrio*. They are considered a natural part of its early existence, as natural

as ranchos and dirt roads, the result of the conviction shared by most families that a barrio can realize its role as a new community within the city only when it has an organized body to represent it” (Ray 1969:43-44). The very earliest juntas—Juntas Pro-Mejoras and Ligas de Colonos—date to the late-1930s, when they arose in the context of opposition control of the Municipal Council won in 1938 (Martín Frechilla 1996:195). During the 1960s and 1970s, these associations were usually established in Caracas’s squatter settlements at the time of settlement formation (Karst et al. 1973:47; Ray 1969:92).²⁵⁷ During the land-settlement phase, juntas distributed plots among would-be squatters (Karst et al. 1973:19-20); they measured parcels and allocated them to newly-arriving squatters both during initial settlement and when new residents sought to settle in an established settlement (Karst et al. 1973:52).

Residents expected local leaders to secure aid. This, however, was somewhat difficult, and residents’ wishes often outstripped neighborhood association leaders’ capacities. By the mid-1960s, this configuration therefore gave rise to a “relatively sophisticated political climate . . . in the barrios. . . . In order to maintain any degree of support within a community, a leader must produce; if he does not, his neighbors ignore his supposed authority. As a consequence, the rate of turnover of leaders is quite high, and in a number of barrios no one leader has stayed on top for very long” (Ray 1969:70).

²⁵⁷ Ray provides the following synthetic description of junta formation and early activities: “To form the junta a public meeting is called, in the evening or on a Sunday. Representatives from about half of the families attend. They probably have had disappointing experiences with juntas in other barrios: big plans and promises but no results. Nevertheless, most of the families feel that this is a new start and that maybe this time they will get a good junta; consequently they are animated. The meeting is opened by the invasion leader, who is accompanied by several of his lieutenants and probably by two or three important outsiders, often government officials. He talks of the needs of the community, and the men and women of the barrio express their views. There is common agreement that the most urgent are water and electricity. The subject of the junta is then brought up, and one of the principals declares that it must be nonpartisan and ready to ‘fight for the progress of the barrio’. When nominations are called for, the leader is the first to be proposed for the presidency. He is duly elected by a raising of hands, and his lieutenants are then elected to fill lesser offices. The remaining members are undistinguished residents known and liked by a number of families and with no partisan ties. Usually at least two are women. The officers of the junta are typically president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, secretary of sports, and secretary of culture; the other members are simply called vocales [spokespeople]. . . . [During the] first public meeting, the junta members announce their intention of going to the Municipal Council to inquire about the possibilities of getting water. They mention other projects as well The people leave the meeting in an optimistic mood; the future looks bright.” But then “the wait for results begins. When it becomes obvious that the expected assistance is not forthcoming, more meetings are held at which the junta explains the delays. Gradually the attendance diminishes, and the president stops calling them. This state of inactivity can exist for months or even a few years. Disenchanted junta members drop out and new ones are added. Unless the junta is smart or lucky enough to divert the community’s attention from obtaining water to another feasible project, thus justifying its continued existence, it eventually ceases its efforts and fades into retirement or disbands completely. Subsequently, when the prospects for success are better, a new group is formed or the old reemerges” (Ray 1969:44-45).

Clientage

In the abstract, government officials stood to gain most—that is, had to grant the fewest requests—if they delayed. And, in fact, in most cases, “a new barrio fails to get government assistance at least during its first year” and “many barrios have been waiting several years for attention.” But “all of them periodically petition the municipal offices” (Ray 1969:46).

Petitions afforded opportunities to request subordination. For example, after listing several services that were still lacking, including piped water, drainage, electricity, garbage removal, and schools, leaders of Barrio Fe y Alegría told the municipal council offered that “we will vote for the swift attainment of the services just mentioned.”²⁵⁸ Putting political elites on notice was something that had previously happened at the highest levels of politics in Venezuela. In 1962, on the eve of the crucial 1963 elections which would ultimately result in the beginning of the 20-year period of “exceptional democracy,” COPEI threatened to withdraw from the government if it was not given more administrative positions.²⁵⁹ Squatters learned from the best.

In practice, then, delays involved liabilities; they enabled squatters to leverage political competition. Supporting—or, more to the point, *threatening* to support—an opposition party was one of the most effective ways to elicit “greater and fairer attention from the government” (Ray 1969:97). Since repression in response to such threats would have been politically costly, there was room for maneuver; one could “speak out in protest against official policy . . . with no fear of reprisal” (Ray 1969:164). Threatening to support the opposition was also effective because opposition parties “represent a serious threat or challenge to the government” insofar as they drew votes away from the party in power (Ray 1969:97). For this reason, when pursuing grievances “which do not focus on specific, tangible problems but which are broadly related to the barrio dwellers’ desire for greater and fairer attention from the government, . . . the most realistic means of exerting pressure is through the opposition parties” (Ray 1969:97).

Oppositionist political sympathies were typically expressed very tentatively, and accompanied by an outline, however implicit and vague, of what could be done to make good by

²⁵⁸ Bernardina Zorrilla et al. to Presidente y Demás Miembros del Ilustre Concejo Municipal del Distrito Federal (2 June 1972), AGSCM/Caja año 1972, A (V033LBC423)/“FE Y ALEGRIA” Barrio-Calle Bolívar-Urb. Arvelo-Pquia. San Juan. Alumbrado Publico 1972.

²⁵⁹ “Copei se retira del gobierno si no le dan más cargos,” *Clarín*, 11 March 1962, p. 3.

the settlement in question—satisfaction of which could circumvent oppositionist sentiment. Venezuela’s newspapers and radio stations frequently featured reports with statements from leaders about outstanding needs,²⁶⁰ reflecting the fact that “the barrio people can count on much better results if they apply indirect pressure by putting their grievances before the public, thereby making them a matter of general concern” (Ray 1969:96). One example comes from Barrio Las Brisas, in Petare, where Señora Belloso approached the newspaper *La Verdad* to complain that the municipal council’s water truck driver had refused to deliver water to residents not affiliated with COPEI. The president of the municipal council of Sucre, Estado Miranda (the eastern part of Caracas, where Petare is located), was controlled by COPEI at the time. Belloso addressed her complaint to an AD council member, Carlos Starke, in full public view (i.e., it was published in the newspaper). To those familiar with the political game, the message was clear: if COPEI failed to do far better for her than it currently did, she would double-down on support for AD. Starke naturally agreed, saying such arbitrary service delivery decisions were unacceptable and promising to resolve the issue.²⁶¹ Belloso surely knew that the 1968 elections were approaching, and that the logic of the situation would make AD especially receptive to hearing about and responding to her problems. Anything that reflected poorly on COPEI would—given that electoral options were narrowing to two mass parties—make AD look relatively good.

Thus while partisan bias was prevalent in the delivery of services, squatters could still expose this to the public as an outrage, which helped them access government aid. Residents of La Vega endured a 15-day spell during which no water was delivered because of between-party rivalry. As one explained, “with the change of administration, they changed the old man who opens and closes the valves. The outgoing AD member . . . did not want to show the [incoming] COPEI member where the valves were, so the latter didn’t do his job, causing our water shortage.”²⁶² Residents of Valle Santo faced much the same problem, and viewed it as so much politics as well. They said they “want to report to the public that the entire water problem is a

²⁶⁰ This was possible because, in the context of considerable partisan disagreement, the Venezuelan press opted not to deny political speech but rather to publicize the views of partisans *and* the views of their opponents (Bonilla 1970:110).

²⁶¹ This example, from 13 May 1967, is discussed in Ollivier (2017:278-79), albeit with a somewhat different interpretation.

²⁶² “Habitantes de La Vega toman instalaciones del I.N.O.S.,” *La Vega Dice* N° 9 [ca. March 1980], p. 12.

political issue between AD and COPEY [sic]. At the moment, for example, AD is sabotaging the COPEI government, and when AD is in power then it is COPEI who sabotages [AD's service delivery]."²⁶³ This problem was a major embarrassment to governing officials. Its resolution was a favor to squatters.

As their settlements grew, squatters asked for help and comported themselves as docile collaborators. Residents of Barrio Cultura told *La Verdad* they had already received government aid installing water and drainage services, but that these services had since become insufficient for the growing community. And meanwhile, they noted, with additional help to buy materials they could improve their homes, as most residents were very poor and could not afford to buy the materials themselves. They also said the sidewalks were not paved and they were ready to work if they got the necessary materials.²⁶⁴ All the government had to do was abide their requests for subordination to confirm their status as clients.

The (apparent) favors constituting the bread-and-butter of benevolent mass clientelism relegated the urban poor to the status of clients. This made them obsequious towards the government and towards neighborhood associations. Ray explains: "Well aware that authority is capable of causing them damage, people are very reluctant to take any public action that might offend it. When confronted with such an opportunity, they reveal their concern with remarks like 'We must ask permission', 'That wouldn't be proper', or 'It must carry the junta's stamp'" (Ray 1969:81). Squatters grew disinclined to unite with one another in disruptive collective action, fearing that political elites may retaliate: "The conventional and accepted method for dealing with community needs is the petition, and people are afraid to try new approaches, such as direct action, lest they be reprimanded by some figure of authority. Even leaders associated with the locally dominant party conform so as not to appear to be stepping out of line" (Ray 1969:81). As in Mexico City and Lima, although to a lesser degree, clientage was also reflected in nomenclature.²⁶⁵

²⁶³ "Valle Santo: En pie de lucha contra el I.N.O.S.," *La Vega Dice* N° 10, late April 1980, p. 9.

²⁶⁴ "Mejorar sus viviendas con ayuda oficial desean habitantes del Barrio Cultura: Tienen suficiente agua, pero necesitan recipientes para depositar la basura," *La Verdad*, 13 November 1965, cuerpo II, p. 2.

²⁶⁵ *Barrios* were named after political figures (Ray 1969:37). Some *barrios* took the names of famous figures like Bolívar, Andrés Bello, and José Gregorio Hernández; other names highlighted historical dates, the most popular being 23 de Enero, the day Pérez Jiménez fell (Ray 1969:44-45).

Political Elites' Response

The Venezuelan political elite oriented to the urban poor in part because they sought to disavow the repressive legacy of the Pérez Jiménez government. The orientation was not, for that, instantaneous. Nor, however, was the idea that *barrios* were an acceptable part of Venezuela's future totally novel. Eduardo Gallegos Mancera (PCV) and Raúl Díaz Legórburu (URD), members of the Federal District Municipal Council, proposed squatting as a means to address the housing shortage in 1948, prior to Pérez Jiménez's war on *ranchos*. By then, these two men recognized that the proliferation of squatter settlements was unavoidable (Martín Frechilla 1996:197-98). The subsequent ten years saw this idea go into hibernation. But with urban concentration ramping up in the post-1958 era, it became politically fashionable.

Accordingly, in the campaign to elect Larrazábal's successor, "three presidential candidates competed with one another, each trying to offer the barrio dwellers the assurance that a government run by him would represent the best hope for their advancement" (Ray 1969:88). AD had initially oriented to the peasantry rather than to the urban poor. But while the interior of the country voted in massive numbers for AD, the party failed to secure a majority in the congressional race at the national level and proved quite unpopular, with only 14.2 percent of the vote, in the Federal District, as shown in Table 4.2. When news of the 1958 electoral returns from the interior was reported in Caracas, reflecting Betancourt's victory, "mobs in the capital marched on the presidential palace, demanding that the provisional revolutionary government prevent AD from assuming power" (Myers 1978:229; see also Ellner 1993:8). Nor was there good news for AD as regarded its performance in Caracas in 1963, or even 1968.

Table 4.2. National and Federal District congressional ticket electoral returns for Venezuela's four leading parties, 1958-1978

	1958		1963		1968		1973		1978	
	National	DF	National	DF	National	DF	National	DF	National	DF
AD	49.5%	14.2%	32.7%	13.6%	25.6%	16.6%	44.4%	37.9%	39.7%	36.1%
COPEI	15.2%	15.3%	20.8%		24.0%	15.0%	30.2%	30.5%	39.8%	34.1%
URD	26.8%	59.8%	17.4%	11.8%						
PCV	6.2%	7.1%								
IPFN			13.3%	32.1%						
MEP					12.9%	10.7%	5.0%			
CCN					10.9%	26.4%		6.8%		
MAS							5.3%	11.2%	6.2%	10.5%
MIR									2.3%	3.4%
FDP				22.0%						
Other	2.3%	3.6%	15.8%	20.5%	26.6%	31.3%	15.1%	13.6%	12.0%	15.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Consejo Supremo Electoral (1983:11, 17).

Betancourt's administration represented a transitional period. On the one hand, the political situation became increasingly uncertain. Over the course of his presidency, AD was riven with internal conflict. The party suffered a series of splits as layers of leftists deserted the party (see below). Since leftists had the strongest base of support among mass groups, this disaffection undermined AD's ability to organize workers, peasants, and the urban poor. Thus, the party's drift to the center threatened to jeopardize its very viability. The solution was for moderate AD leaders to wrest hold of leadership positions from leftists. The Betancourt government kicked leftists out of union leadership positions in 1961, leaving AD loyalists in control. Initially, this looked promising. But then in 1963 leftist trade unionists split from the CTV and formed the rival Central Unitaria de Trabajadores de Venezuela (CUTV) (Ellner 1993:20), raising the possibility that AD might lose control of the workers' movement.

On the other hand, during the Betancourt government it became increasingly clear what would need to be done for AD to rule. Three features of the political landscape began to stand out. First was the problem of the Caracas vote. AD won the election in 1958 and again in 1963 (and COPEI won in 1968) without securing majority support Caracas. Meanwhile, Caracas was rapidly coming to comprise a large plurality of the Venezuelan population. It was evident that if Caracas would deliver only such paltry electoral returns in the future, AD's (and COPEI's) viability would be short-lived. Those who aimed to be politically relevant in the future soon realized they had to orient to the urban poor. Second was the relationship between age cohorts

and political views. The youth had “a marked tendency to shy away from the established parties,” inclining instead towards the left-wing parties, the MIR or the PCV youth division, or the URD, or even the right-wing FND, rather than towards AD or COPEI (Ray 1969:106). Given the younger cohort’s political dispositions, a strategy of waiting for the current difficulties to pass did not look promising. Third was the kinds of political ideologies prevalent among the urban poor. As discussed above, the urban poor supplied the main forces in the overthrow of Pérez Jiménez, during which time they mobilized behind left-wing AD leaders, the URD, and the PCV. And thereafter, public housing estates, especially 23 de Enero, became leftist strongholds.²⁶⁶ If moderates were to prevail, the urban poor had to be politically reoriented. Taken together, these features pointed to a formidable task: those who sought political competitiveness in Caracas had to appeal to *barrio* dwellers.

Exhausting the Alternatives

Although there were some indications that Betancourt cognized the task the political elite confronted, he took a while to orient himself accordingly. BO president Luis Lander wrote a confidential report informing Betancourt that discontent possibly sufficient to upend the whole “democratic” project was simmering due to the housing problem in Caracas (Myers 1978:242, 256 n. 12). Nevertheless, Betancourt initially pursued the possibility of *return migration* from Caracas to the countryside. Antonio Cruz Fernández, director of the Federal District Municipal Planning Office (OMPU) (1959-1966), planned to return recent rural-to-urban migrants to their villages (Myers 1978:246).²⁶⁷ But forcing recent migrants who had come to Caracas to repatriate to the countryside would have been extremely unpopular and would have appeared highly repressive. And the political conjuncture militated against this option: the logic of the situation

²⁶⁶ In the early 1960s, the PCV and MIR urban guerrillas converted 23 de Enero into “a fortress which the police dared approach only in a battalion armed with machine guns” (Ray 1969:156; see also Velasco 2015).

²⁶⁷ This was part of a larger initiative to reverse the dominance of Caracas in national politics (Myers 1978:229). The effort to demote Caracas was, in turn, part of an effort to reverse the legacy of Pérez Jiménez. There was a perception that the national government had lavished Caracas; accordingly, part of the disavowal of Pérez Jiménez involved deemphasizing Caracas in political messaging and orientation (Myers 1978:234). Indeed, part of the reason Betancourt won the 1959 election was “the widespread assumption that AD would invest heavily outside of the capital city” (Myers 1978:243). And true to his word, he did promote alternative growth poles in Ciudad Guayana and Valencia.

immediately after the overthrow of Pérez Jiménez held that any continuity with the dictator was a political liability; Pérez Jiménez had repressed squatters; therefore, any new government that wanted to distinguish itself from the previous one was not in a position to repress squatters. Betancourt and his advisors knew that Pérez Jiménez's repression and relocation of *barrio* residents was extremely unpopular and that it had "seriously undermined the preceding regime" (Myers 1978:230). So eventually "Betancourt . . . abandoned as unrealistic his preference for reversing recent cityward migration to Caracas" (Myers 1978:230).

Meanwhile, Betancourt dedicated himself to restoring order in the superblocks and pacifying squatter settlements politically (Myers 1978:242). This was easier said than done, however, for it ran the risk of jeopardizing AD's base of support in precisely the geographic location where its weakness was most evident. The pivot to this approach was the party's reaction to Larrazábal's Plan de Emergencia. On the one hand, the Plan was seen as a reason rural-to-urban migrants were drawn to Caracas (Ray 1969:33), and its abolition was therefore a seeming prerequisite to any return migration initiative. On the other hand, it was also a source of strength of leftists in Caracas, which Betancourt began to try to suppress. Since the disloyal left wing of AD and the leftist parties had been well-placed in the movement to overthrow Pérez Jiménez, they were well-positioned to assume the majority of leadership positions thereafter. To make matters worse for the government, the nominally-AD head of the Plan de Emergencia displayed a lack of party loyalty: most of his appointments were URD and PCV members, not AD members (Ray 1969:112). Thus, the PCV—AD's opponent to the left—controlled many neighborhood associations and benefitted politically from access to Plan de Emergencia resources (Ray 1969:56, 102, 114; see also Grohmann 1996:66).

Having abandoned the return migration scheme, the government turned to undermining the left. The Plan de Emergencia stood in their way. Betancourt therefore discontinued the program in August 1959.²⁶⁸ But, of course, *barrio* dwellers had benefitted materially from the Plan de Emergencia. So they reacted negatively to its abolition, staging "riots and street demonstrations in Caracas" (Ray 1969:115).²⁶⁹ But something had to be put in its place. Cruz

²⁶⁸ It was also the case that ending the Plan de Emergencia "could be easily justified on purely economic and social grounds. The Plan was placing an enormous, unproductive burden on the Treasury" (Ray 1969:115).

²⁶⁹ AD seems to have calculated that it was willing to pay this political price in an effort to undermine support for leftists. According to Ray, this calculation ultimately proved accurate: "Following the termination of the Plan, the juntas associated with the opposition parties found it very difficult to get government assistance. When they went to

Fernández started an experimental self-help program, using OMPU resources, in 1961. Both Betancourt and Caracas mayor Alejandro Oropeza Castillo thought the initial results were encouraging. According to Myers (1978:252), “both believed the program, a conspicuous alternative to the superbloques of Pérez Jiménez, could be used to develop an AD clientele in the previously hostile Caracas ranchos. They also felt that the self-help concept would facilitate securing Alliance for Progress funds to replicate on a large scale what Cruz Fernández had accomplished in his pilot projects.”

President Betancourt thus decreed the formation of the Foundation for Municipal and Community Development (FUNDACOMUN), which in 1962 secured a \$30 million loan to support its promotion of self-help in Venezuela’s *barrios*. Encouraged by this loan, Oropeza Castillo and Cruz Fernández developed an ambitious plan to upgrade Caracas’s *barrios*, a scheme overseen by the Committee to Remodel the Barrios (Myers 1978:251-52). The Committee upgraded some squatter settlements and relocated some squatters to elsewhere in the metropolitan area (Myers 1978:246). But it was not only dedicated to these ends; the Committee was also a political maneuver. Cruz Fernández had “promised AD that the Committee’s activities would have a significant electoral payoff” in the 1963 contest (Myers 1978:230). With the 1963 elections approaching, campaign strategists wanted to court the *barrios*. The importance of mass suffrage had itself incentivized lenience towards squatters, many of whom were potential voters. This cut both ways: it would have been foolish to push squatters into the opposition via repression, and it was advantageous to woo them into becoming supporters. Moreover, with return migration off the table, squatter settlements continued to grow. All this made an orientation to the *barrios* politically strategic.

the state and federal agencies petitioning for communal facilities, they got nothing but tales of hard times and meager government budgets. Since the opposition junta leaders had promoted themselves, among their barrio neighbors, as agents for community improvement and such improvements depended almost entirely on government assistance no longer forthcoming, their influence over their communities steadily weakened. . . . [And] as a vacuum was created by the demise of the old leadership, the party stepped in to establish its own foothold” (Ray 1969:115-16).

Recruiting in the Barrios

Initially, the PCV, leftist members of AD, and the URD had a much firmer foothold in the *barrios* than the Betancourt wing of AD. The former two had worked with the urban poor prior to the overthrow of Pérez Jiménez and the latter was closely associated with Larrazábal and his immensely popular Plan de Emergencia; the Betancourt wing of AD, in contrast, had remained aloof from the *barrios* prior to ascending to power, and cancelled the Plan de Emergencia after taking office (Ewell 1991:758). The Betancourt wing of AD—as well as COPEI, which also lacked roots in the *barrios* and increasingly mimicked AD—therefore faced an uphill battle to gain followers among the urban poor.

A junta federation had been established in 1958 in conjunction with the Plan de Emergencia (Ray 1969:94). However, by 1959, individual *juntas* and the *junta* federation were “dominated by representatives or friends of URD and PCV” (Ray 1969:117). The *juntas* “were able to perform their coordinating and partisan functions fairly well” (Ray 1969:94), but by 1962 AD was determined to undermine the left and build its own base. Abolition of the Plan de Emergencia broke the far left’s “grip on organized community leadership” in the *barrios* and provided the opening for AD to build a base in the *barrios* (Ray 1969:134). AD politicians made regular tours of the *barrios*, as depicted in Plate 4.5. After AD discontinued the Plan de Emergencia, it let this initial generation of federated *juntas* “wither away” for two years (Ray 1969:117). These *juntas* “disintegrate[d]” largely because they were “discouraged by the lack of material support received from the government” (Ray 1969:94).



Plate 4.5. Mayor Enrique Velutini visits Barrio Brisas de Pro-Patria, Catia, Parroquia Sucre (sometime in the 1960s)

Unknown photographer. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de Venezuela/Archivo Audiovisual/Colección Fotográfica Caracas Documental (José Agustín Camaná).

Then, according to Ray,

“AD leaders launched a nationwide campaign of reorganization and recruitment in the barrios. Around the core of faithful members then available, they systematically built up a vast network of formal membership groups. Known as *comités de barrios*, these groups have become the base units of the party organization in the urban areas . . . Members meet once a week and discuss, besides matters of purely party interest such as individual duties, dues, and so forth, the affairs and problems of their respective barrios . . . [O]ne of their principal functions is to recruit new members from among friends and neighbors” (Ray 1969:112).

Parallel to this initiative, in 1962, the Betancourt government started the Movimiento Pro-Desarrollo de la Comunidad, resourced by the governor, to which junta leaders were asked to affiliate (Ray 1969:114-17). While, “Like all such organizations, the Movimiento called itself non-partisan and said it sought the support of all persons who were interested in the welfare of their communities,” in fact “very little was actually done to disguise its close affiliation with AD” (Ray 1969:117). AD’s *comités de barrios* became “indistinguishable except by name from the Juntas Pro-Desarrollo de la Comunidad or the Juntas Pro-Mejoras. In some communities, they have not even bothered to meet in separate houses. Leaders have been known to cut junta meetings short so that they could attend their comité sessions” (Ray 1969:123). In one *junta*, for example, although they did not describe themselves as politically-oriented, all but one of the leaders were members of AD (Karst et al. 1973:49).

The new junta federation’s role was twofold: to aid with community development and to build a much-needed political base (Ray 1969:118). In spite of its official nonpartisan status, the Movimiento Pro-Desarrollo de la Comunidad made recourse to “indirect methods to obtain what it was hoped would be long-term benefits for the party” in urban areas, especially in Caracas, to undermine the “leftist control of community politics” that had hitherto sustained “vehement anti-government sentiment” (Ray 1969:118). Its president—Rubén Charlita Muñoz, a well-known AD operative—was not elected from member *juntas* but rather appointed by the mayor (who, in turn, was appointed by Betancourt) (Ray 1969:165). In an interview with U.S. Embassy representatives, Charlita Muñoz told his interlocutors that the Movimiento was designed to “isolate and eliminate leftist groups” (quoted in Ray 1969:117). Charlita Muñoz was in charge of receiving *junta* petitions and “match[ing] them with the available resources of the various government agencies” (Ray 1969:93, see also 122-23).²⁷⁰ After receiving government aid, it was “the juntas’ responsibility to see the projects through” (Ray 1969:123).

The Movimiento Pro-Desarrollo de la Comunidad was clearly framed as a channel by which the urban poor could access Venezuela’s oil wealth. An advertisement it placed in one of

²⁷⁰ Most of the Movimiento Pro-Desarrollo de la Comunidad’s funding was probably from domestic sources, ultimately derived from petroleum. See, e.g., AGSCM/caja A-B-C año 1968/MOVIMIENTO Pro-Desarrollo de la Comunidad, Ayudas Concedidas. However, some of it came from the U.S. government. The Comité de Remodelación de los Barrios helped fund the Movimiento Pro-Desarrollo de la Comunidad (Ray 1969:122); FUNDACOMUN funded the Comité (Ray 1969:122); and USAID helped fund FUNDACOMUN (Ray 1969:121). In other words, USAID helped prop up the Betancourt government.

the leading newspapers, *Últimas Noticias*, featured an image of a hand grabbing a fountain spraying black liquid up and out, pictured in Plate 4.6, accompanied by a tagline saying, “with intense work in the *barrios* we will achieve all our goals.” The ad was signed by Rubén Charlita Muñoz (president) and Pedro Azuaje Montel (general secretary).²⁷¹

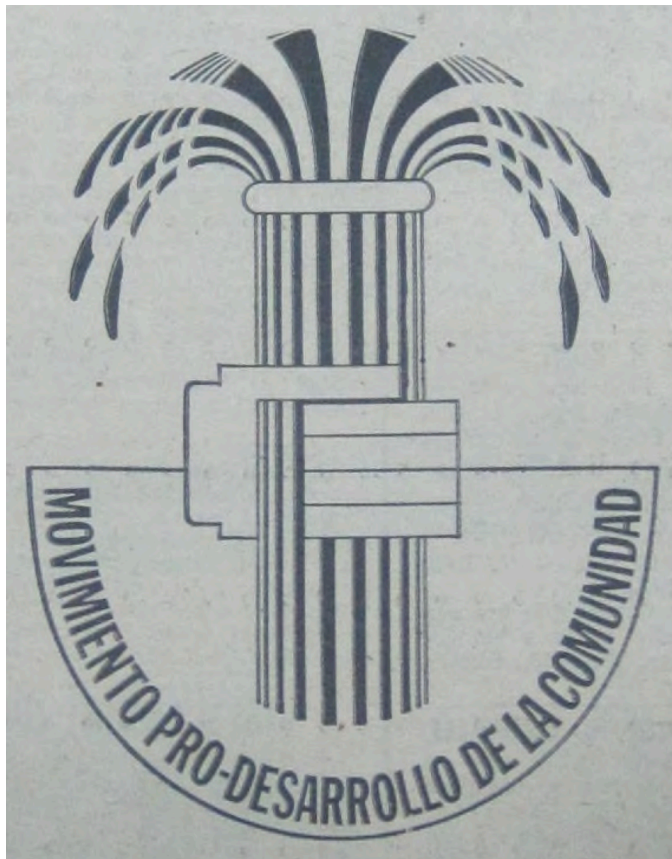


Plate 4.6. Movimiento Pro-Desarrollo de la Comunidad graphic depicting the *barrio*-oriented initiative as a means of accessing Venezuela’s petroleum wealth

Source: *Últimas Noticias*, 19 December 1973, p. 13.

Other political organizations responded to the initiative in a variety of ways. Leftists saw through the Movimiento, arguing that *desarrollo comunal* was a “trick to dupe the poor people

²⁷¹ *Últimas Noticias*, 19 December 1973, p. 13.

into doing what should have been done by the government” (Ray 1969:134-35). But the initiative put the left in a defensive position: since the “new juntas” were set up to promote *desarrollo comunal*, they derailed the PCV’s strategy of rallying support by organizing self-help projects. From the PCV’s point of view, the very existence of the Movimiento Pro-Desarrollo gave rise to a dilemma: “on the one hand, they claimed to support wholeheartedly the efforts of the barrio people to improve their conditions, and, on the other, they were vehemently and categorically opposed to government policy. What should the Communists have done, therefore, when neighbors were about to experiment with self-improvement through *desarrollo comunal*—join in and try to take over the leadership, or sabotage the project?” (Ray 1969:134). Neither option harbored good prospects for the left. And since they often “opted for the latter,” they thereby “acknowledged their capitulation” by “[shifting] to defensive action” (Ray 1969:134).

Opposition parties boycotted the 1962 elections for the *junta* leadership positions in several of Caracas’s main barrios in 1962. Consequently, these *juntas*’ leadership composition came to resemble what was left of the Punto Fijo pact: three members of AD and three members of COPEI, along with one independent (Ray 1969:117; see also Ollivier 2017:278). But then COPEI quit the federation. The Conservatives “publicly denounced” the Movimiento “as a tool of AD power and instructed its members to withdraw their support” (Ray 1969:108). COPEI’s departure made the Movimiento even more of an AD machine (Ray 1969:117; see also Ollivier 2017:278). After their withdrawal, along with “some prominent failures of staunchly AD-controlled juntas and the success of several popularly-based ones,” Charlita Muñoz “[came] to accept participation in the Movimiento by independent groups” (Ray 1969:117; see also Ollivier 2017:278). But this was little in comparison with AD’s gains: AD made impressive progress: despite suffering two splits, its membership increased from 795,061 in August 1959 to 903,282 in July 1962 (Martz 1966: figure 7).

AD was better at undermining the left than building its own base of support. The suspension of the Plan de Emergencia was a major stride towards undermining the left. The distance travelled was measured in the low rate of abstention from the 1963 election—evidence of relatively little active support for the left, since the MIR and the PCV had called for a boycott (Ray 1969:124). But nor was AD especially appealing. In the Federal District, AD netted only 91 percent more votes in 1963 than the number of members it counted in its rolls; Ray reasons that this “must have been very disappointing to AD party leaders, who had high expectations that for

every member there would be several non-member votes” (Ray 1969:125). Compounding the disappointment was that, while the absolute number of AD votes in 1963 increased slightly over 1958, AD’s percentage of the overall vote actually shrank (see Table 4.1). In part, this was because “barrio people were unimpressed by the government’s progress toward improving their conditions. They had counted on being provided with the benefits of urban life, but during the five years prior to the election, they did not see much change in their status” (Ray 1969:124-25).

Nevertheless, political elites had few alternatives besides orienting to the urban poor. Accordingly, AD was in good company as regarded its *barrio* organizing: “In Caracas, strong coterries of all the major political groupings” were present “in almost every barrio” (Ray 1969:108).²⁷² In particular, the AD-COPEI power-sharing arrangement ensured that both parties had access to government resources (Crisp, Levine, and Molina 2003:285; Ewell 1991:758). In this way, the party in the opposition tried to establish and control neighborhood associations even when not in power at the presidential and mayoral levels (Bolívar 1987:316-18; Bolívar 1988:153; Moro 1963; Ollivier 2017:278, 285, 300 n. 814, 310). AD’s seeming political use of public resources elicited COPEI’s public denunciations,²⁷³ leading AD *barrio* operative Rubén Charlita Muñoz to fire back by pleading innocence.²⁷⁴ Soon, however, other complaints arose as well, alleging Charlita Muñoz had tried to install loyalists at the neighborhood association level, making the issue difficult for AD to ignore.²⁷⁵

COPEI was not to be outdone. It sent militants into the *barrios* to enmesh themselves in *barrio* affairs and build support; Plate 4.7, which features a COPEI sign on the front of a *rancho*, illustrates this party’s penetration deep into Caracas’s *barrios*. One COPEI militant founded seven *barrios* in southwest Caracas between 1958 and 1983, played an important role as leader of each of their *juntas* (which allowed him to serve as a delegate to the Federación de Juntas Pro

²⁷² The political parties did not, however, change their respective institutional structures, as the Mexican PRI did when it established the CNOP: “None of the parties has ‘barrio wings’” (Ray 1969:141).

²⁷³ E.g., “Despilfarro administrativo con fondos destinados para mejoramiento de barrios: Denuncia la oposición en el Concejo,” *La Verdad*, 31 January 1966, cuerpo I, p. 1.

²⁷⁴ “Charlita Muñoz reta al Dr. Tamayo Gascue,” *La Verdad*, 3 February 1966, cuerpo I, p. 4.

²⁷⁵ “Investigación sobre Charlita Muñoz pide Junta Comunal de Antímano al Concejo de D.F.,” *La Verdad*, 15 March 1966, cuerpo I, p. 3.

Mejoras), and became an intermediary between the government and *barrio* inhabitants (Bolívar 1987:316-18).²⁷⁶

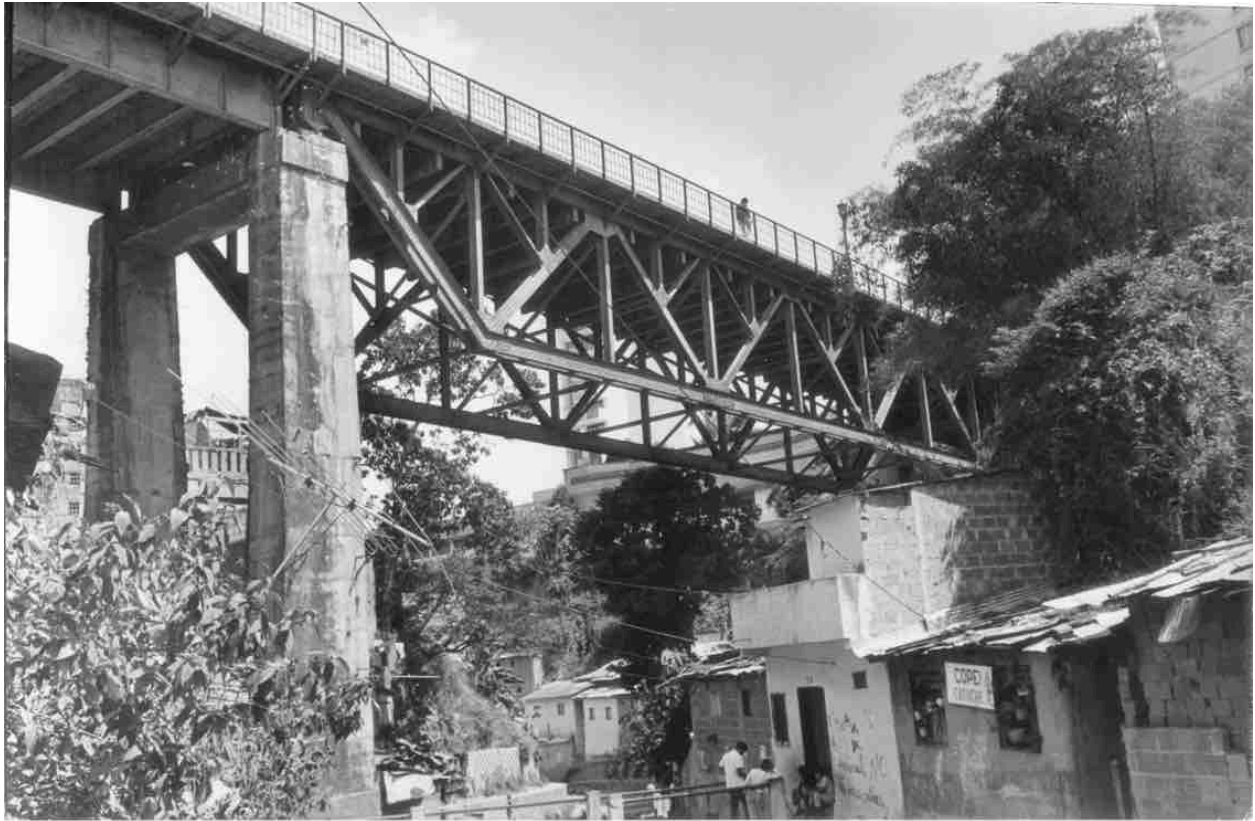


Plate 4.7. A *ranch* home beneath Puente El Cuño, Parroquia Altagracia, displays a COPEI sign

Photographer: José Agustín Camaná. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de Venezuela/Archivo Audiovisual/Colección Fotográfica Caracas Documental (José Agustín Camaná).

²⁷⁶ When COPEI came to power, the governor rewarded him with a job as a construction manager in the Federal District's Departamento de Obras Especiales (Bolívar 1987:316). He remained partisan throughout his career, making him loved by co-partisans and hated by political opponents (Bolívar 1987:318).

Acknowledging the Housing Problem

Despite the actual decline in public housing post-Pérez Jiménez, the *idea* that the government could play an important part in addressing the housing problem continued to feature prominently in politics. AD initially distanced itself from the dictator's policies, including those pertaining to public housing. Aware that Pérez Jiménez's efforts to resettle squatters in superblocks had alienated the urban poor and undermined support for his regime, the Betancourt administration commissioned a study of Pérez Jiménez's urban housing policy, headed by Luis Lander (head of BO under Betancourt), which found that existing public housing lacked urban amenities, that residents had not been oriented to urban apartment life, and that the discontinuity with their former lives was too great (Banco Obrero 1961). A preferable alternative to public housing blocks, the report concluded, would be a self-help scheme to improve squatter settlements.

But public housing policy nevertheless became a political football. COPEI, inclined to highlight political differences with AD where a case could be made for AD's shortcomings, championed public housing. In 1962, government planners estimated that Venezuela had a 555,000-unit housing deficit, and Caracas had a deficit of about 110,000 units (Myers 1978:239). So, during his 1963 presidential campaign, Rafael Caldera promised to build 100,000 homes for the lower class each year of its 5-year term (Ray 1969:89, 99). Given the housing deficit, this must have resonated widely. During the 1963 election, "leaders from seven parties expended the greatest amount of their oratorical energy on promises for social improvements that would primarily benefit that sector: the creation of hundreds of thousands of new jobs, massive federal programs for urban renewal, expanded facilities for recreation, and campaigns to eradicate misery and hunger" (Ray 1969:88-89).

AD had little choice but to step up its game. In 1964, President Raúl Leoni convened a commission, headed by Antonio Cruz Fernández and Luis Lander, to propose a solution to the housing problem (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:39). The report advocated a comprehensive approach to urban development involving government purchase of undeveloped land in preparation for future urban growth and residential developments. But Leoni disregarded the proposal (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:40).²⁷⁷ He had other ideas in mind. First, he

²⁷⁷ Meanwhile, both the Betancourt and Leoni governments continued to build some public housing, averaging

cleaned house, abolishing the Committee to Remodel the Barrios (Myers 1978:252). By the time he took office, not only had the Committee proven “highly disappointing” from an electoral standpoint. It was also the case that “self-help housing programs for the Caracas poor were seen as politically counterproductive, technically deficient, and corrupt” (Myers 1978:252).²⁷⁸ Next, Leoni announced new housing priorities, because by then “a consensus existed that Copei criticism of AD performance in this area had contributed greatly to the former’s emergence as Venezuela’s second political party.” Henceforth, “emphasis was to be on providing shelter for families with incomes that were moderate but insufficient to permit participation in the private housing market” (Myers 1978:252).

Under Leoni, AD oriented decisively to squatters. To be sure, it did so out of a lack of alternatives. AD had tried and failed to engineer a return migration scheme. It floundered as regarded resuming the construction of social housing on a massive scale. And it allowed corruption and graft to plague its Movimiento Pro-Desarrollo initiative supposedly intended to improve the *barrios*. But it had become increasingly difficult to ignore squatters for political reasons. The political elite grew to recognize that, if they failed to orient to the urban poor, they risked “being removed from office—either by an election, if the barrio vote should be captured by an opposition party, or by a coup, if the military should decide no longer to tolerate the political instability stemming from barrio discontent” (Ray 1969:163). Thus, over the course of the two decades of “exceptional democracy,” starting with Leoni, squatting became the default solution to housing the poor because political elites were intent on winning them over politically.

In this context, all manner of urban upgrades were highly politicized. New proposals, and especially criticism of poor performance, recurred, especially around electoral campaigns.²⁷⁹ During the 1968 electoral campaign, COPEI attacked AD’s efforts at building and expanding schools in Caracas “as inadequate, pointing out that 80,000 primary age school children in Caracas were without classrooms” (Myers 1978:248). As in 1963, COPEI again proposed to

32,517 new housing units each year (Myers 1978:239).

²⁷⁸ Abolition of the Committee has been interpreted as recognition on the part of AD that the party “could not afford to alienate the disproportionately influential 20 percent of the national electorate residing in Caracas” (Myers 1978:230). The governing elite, including Cruz Fernández himself, increasingly reconciled itself to Caracas’s primacy in the national-metropolitan scheme (Myers 1978:246).

²⁷⁹ E.g., “Barrios de Caracas ahora tienen agua: Otra promesa cumplida,” *La Verdad*, 10 December 1966, special section (“‘La Verdad’ en Catia”), p. 7.

build more housing than AD had been building (Myers 1978:239). This proposal must have continued to resonate in 1968. AD seems to have felt the sting, for it increased its allocation of funding for housing in the Federal District in 1968 (Myers 1978:239), prior to passing the presidency over to COPEI. The new government saw this as too little, too late. Upon assuming power, Caldera rubbed salt in AD's wounds: it "scrupulously avoided the anti-Caracas tone that sometimes marked earlier AD pronouncements on regional development" (Myers 1978:246).

AD could see the writing on the wall. It dedicated itself fully to Caracas by the 1973 election, which it won. After taking office, President Carlos Andrés Pérez appointed Diego Arria as mayor, marking "an important break with the past AD policy of moralizing about the problem caused by the capital city and of generally avoiding publicity that might identify the party with Caracas in the minds of its numerous supporters throughout the interior" (Myers 1978:246). Nor did AD's orientation to Caracas provoke COPEI to shift tack. In 1978, COPEI's Herrera Campíns campaigned "to provide 650,000 new housing units" (Ewell 1991:781). By then, both leading parties, who together finally netted the vast majority of votes, focused overwhelmingly on Caracas.²⁸⁰

But of course electoral slogans and campaign promises did not house people.²⁸¹ Given urban concentration, this left land invasions. Land invasions amidst requests for subordination, in turn, represented a political opportunity. The authorities began to smile upon land invasions, putatively because they provided a means to simultaneously extend partisan influence and address the housing deficit on the cheap: one can "gain considerable support if he convinces the settlers that the party has enabled them to secure their property" (Ray 1969:43). Squatter leaders also knew this. Land invasions were therefore carefully-planned affairs. Leaders typically had

²⁸⁰ AD and COPEI were only *able* to turn their focus disproportionately to Caracas sometime between 1966 and 1973 because, until that time, there was still a live guerrilla threat. This drew their attention to the countryside in an effort to consolidate peasant support.

²⁸¹ During the Caldera presidency, BO continued to build low-income housing. But for all his campaign trail criticism, he did not increase the rate of housing construction to the levels that had prevailed under the Pérez Jiménez government (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:41). His major initiative was, instead, a scheme to encourage private developers to build low-income housing (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:40). And Pérez, like Leoni, also convened a commission to craft housing policy proposals. The commission echoed the one convened under the previous AD president. While not completely ignored, as under Leoni, the initiative, and Pérez's otherwise ambitious plans, went underfunded (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:41-42). Nor did Herrera Campíns's promises materialize (Ewell 1991:78).

political backing from one of the parties in power,²⁸² “usually that party which controls the municipal council,”²⁸³ which protected them “against official reprisal”: if the authorities “attempt to squash an invasion led by a member of the municipal party, the latter can usually create enough embarrassing publicity to thwart the effort” (Ray 1969:34).

Field Blocage

After Raúl Leoni, Betancourt’s successor, the reconstructed Liberal AD and reconstructed Conservative COPEI alternated in power. In itself, the Leoni government was relatively unremarkable. He tried to re-establish a congressional alliance with political veteran Jóvito Villaba (URD) and right-wing Arturo Uslar Pietri (FND) rather than work closely with COPEI, as Betancourt had. Congressional cooperation was very limited, however, and both the far left and far right refused to play along.²⁸⁴ However, as part of a larger and longer-term dynamic, the Leoni administration marked the beginning of the “exceptional democracy” era. Under Leoni, AD lost the presidency to COPEI’s Rafael Caldera in 1968, COPEI then lost to AD’s Carlos Andrés Pérez in 1973, and AD again lost to COPEI’s Luis Herrera Campíns in 1978. From Leoni onward, then, Venezuela experienced a two-decade period of two-party alternation in and out of power at five-year intervals. COPEI had been AD’s “greatest enemy” (Ahumada 1967:15). More than anything else, this pattern justifies the superlative “exceptional democracy.”

“Exceptional democracy” was only possible because AD reoriented to the political center, a process which precipitated a series of splits. AD had started as a radical party. In the 1930s, Betancourt had proposed to AD leaders that the party adopt a radical program but present a mere

²⁸² Leaders are also “almost always barrio residents” (Ray 1969:35).

²⁸³ While Venezuelan presidents appointed the mayor (Gobernador) of the Federal District, the composition of the Municipal Council was determined by the Federal District popular vote. This often meant that one party controlled the city’s executive branch while one or more others controlled the legislative branch. Such divided control characterized the Betancourt, Leoni, and Caldera governments—during which time the mayor and president “collaborated to circumvent the council” (Myers 1978:236)—but not the Pérez government (Myers 1978:235). The mayor’s power was essentially complete as regarded civil and political matters, but the council had influence as regarded economic and administrative matters due to its ability to delay passage of ordinances, especially the budget (Myers 1978:236)—and, of course, the ability to advocate for squatters.

²⁸⁴ Leoni judiciously used concessions to divide foreign oil companies from the rest of FEDECAMARAS in order to secure an increase in corporate and personal income taxes (Ewell 1991:764).

moderate one to the public in order to avoid provoking powerful groups' opposition (Ellner 1982:136). By the party's official founding in 1941, this "dual strategy" was "an article of faith among party leaders" (Ellner 2008:67). Although they ran separate electoral campaigns in 1958, AD was initially allied with the URD, which was allied with the PCV. Betancourt even granted ministerial posts to URD leaders. But Betancourt governed as a moderate and worked hard to reorient the party to moderate positions. Given the prominence of leftism within the party, this "generated internal conflict" (Ellner 2008:67), leading successive layers of leftists to grow disillusioned and peel away from the party.

AD suffered three major splits. One came after left-wing members challenged Betancourt and the old guard. Many had participated actively alongside the PCV in the clandestine movement to overthrow Pérez Jiménez, had worked with the URD during the Larrazábal provisional government, and now identified politically with the Cuban Revolution and its new government, with which Betancourt had broken ties. They also objected to Betancourt's overtures to capital. Betancourt forced these leaders—on one accounting, AD's "entire youth movement" (Ray 1969:99)—out of AD in March 1960. They then organized the *Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionario* (MIR). By 1962, they had joined a budding guerrilla movement intent on overthrowing the Betancourt government (Coronil 1997:228; Ewell 1991:762). A second major split came after Raúl Ramos Giménez challenged the old guard's control of the party apparatus and tried to secure the nomination as AD's 1963 presidential candidate. Failing in this, his group left AD (albeit not on the basis of clear political differences), formed a new group (initially called AD-Oposición, then *Partido Revolucionario Nacionalista* [PRN], and finally, after a unification with members of MIR and the URD, the *Partido Revolucionario de Integración Nacionalista* [PRIN]), and competed against AD in subsequent elections (Ewell 1991:762-63). A third major split occurred prior to the 1967 electoral campaign. AD, following its internal procedures, selected Luis Beltrán Prieto Figueroa as its presidential candidate. Betancourt, however, preferred Gonzalo Barrios. After the party had made its collective decision, Betancourt returned from Europe to campaign for Barrios, pulling party support away from Prieto Figueroa. Outmaneuvered, Prieto Figueroa and AD's general secretary Jesús Ángel Paz Galarraga left the party and formed the *Movimiento Electoral del Pueblo* (MEP) (Ellner 2008:66-68; Ewell 1991:765).²⁸⁵

²⁸⁵ That these leaders remained in AD until 1967, and that once they established their own organization their

These splits made AD increasingly presentable to COPEI. There were also important disagreements within COPEI. Though since COPEI had never been populated by leftists who saw the party as their rightful home (as they had AD), and since COPEI, a right-wing party since its founding, did not move far from its initial political moorings (as did AD), there was less turmoil capable of generating splits within COPEI. Indeed, while AD suffered multiple significant splits, COPEI experienced none (Ewell 1991:765). Factions, however, did develop. COPEI's left wing was concentrated in the Juventud Revolucionaria Copeyana (JRC). By the late-1960s, the JRC had three factions: the conservative "Araguatos," the left-leaning "Avanzados," and the quasi-socialist "Astronautas."²⁸⁶ But as the Caldera leadership moved from the far right towards the center, it did not silence or expel left-wing dissidents.²⁸⁷ Nor did the party's left wing opt to split away (though a few deserted the party of their own volition). Herrera Campíns, for instance, rejected the idea of leaving COPEI when deprived of the party's 1973 presidential nomination (Ellner 2008:78). Meanwhile, the party seems to have considered positions to its right the political wilderness, which, given the disrepute of Pérez Jiménez, was probably correct.

The other parties suffered an avalanche of setbacks. The URD, the strongest party in Caracas and especially in the *barrios* in 1958, slipped further and further behind its political competitors. And when Larrazábal dissociated himself in 1963 to form his own party—the Fuerza Democrática Popular (FDP), which proposed "a more radical program than any of the other legal parties" and oriented its campaign "almost entirely to the barrios" (Ray 1969:101)—the URD's support "diminished substantially" (Ray 1969:100). The far left, meanwhile, "committed several major blunders" subsequent to the overthrow of Pérez Jiménez, going "from one political extreme to the other" (Ellner 2008:63). Both the radical wing of AD and the PCV had a sizable presence in congress subsequent to the 1958 elections. But rather than mobilize

program was explicitly socialist, shows that part of the left considered AD its political home until quite late.

²⁸⁶ The first was allied with Caldera and clashed with the second; the second and third were inspired by liberation theology and viewed the JRC as the party's vanguard (Ellner 2008:69-70). Before positioning himself to contest the presidency, Herrera Campíns, formerly a member of the Avanzados in the 1960s (Ellner 2008:77), had "argued that the party should show more concern for social justice and less for capitalism, protection of property and anti-Communist rhetoric" (Ewell 1991:766).

²⁸⁷ From Caldera's vantage point, silencing and expelling opponents were unnecessary, since it was clear he would be the party's presidential candidate in 1958, 1963, and 1968 (Ray 1969:99).

further support to press for substantive reforms, they spent the bulk of their efforts working within parliamentary channels (Ray 1969:127). They finally broke ranks with the Betancourt wing of AD and the URD in 1960, attempting to provoke a popular insurrection. By then, though, the tides of popular mobilization had turned, leaving the left isolated from the masses. Betancourt swiftly put down the revolt and took advantage of the occasion to adopt a longer-term commitment to repressing the left. Only then did the MIR definitively split from AD and, along with the PCV, throw itself into the guerrilla movement. This orientation was no more coherent, though, since it meant they now dedicated themselves to overthrowing the Betancourt government—the very man who had won the election that they had demanded (Ellner 2008:64). In Fanonian fashion, the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional (FALN) oriented to the *barrios* (Ray 1969:129). But it proved quite unpopular in them (Ray 1969:128-29, 132-33). The whole guerrilla warfare initiative fizzled out by the late-1960s, leaving some members to join the PRIN. The left had been thoroughly routed.²⁸⁸

Neither the military nor economic elites seriously disrupted the consolidating two-party system. A big part of the reason is that they saw the mainstream political parties as increasingly capable of harnessing mass support to pursue a moderate political agenda. Betancourt impressed upon the military that if they tried to reimpose a dictatorship like that of Pérez Jiménez they might provoke popular outrage sufficient to smash the country's military institutions, as had happened in Cuba (Alexander 1964:110-11). This conjectural ultimatum, only credible given the recent urban revolt and the fact that on two occasions (23 July and 7 September 1958) there had been rapid mass mobilizations in response to news of a possible military coup, certainly helped keep the military on the sidelines of the new party-based government (Ray 1969:144, 147). Nor did industrialists, oil company executives, bankers, or importers intervene to disrupt the consolidating two-party “democratic” configuration—even though their preferences were probably for limited political participation under a modernizing dictatorship like that of Medina

²⁸⁸ Simultaneous with the marginalization of the far left was the growth, albeit at a small scale, of the right. Most significant was Arturo Uslar Pietri's center-right Frente Nacional Democrática (FND), which was vehemently anti-AD. That the FND managed to gain a following in the *barrios* by the mid-1960s is testament to the fact that strong anti-establishment undercurrents persisted on the right (Ray 1969:136-37). The decline in support suffered by the FND subsequent to its decision to participate in the AD-led coalition government then in power further attested to this (Ray 1969:137). There were also far-right political sympathies. Supporters of Pérez Jiménez founded the Cruzada Cívica Nacionalista (CCN) in 1963. The deposed dictator returned from exile to participate in the 1968 election. The CCN secured an alarming 26.4 percent of the Federal District congressional vote (Table 4.1).

Angarita (Ray 1969:148)—in part because they recognized “the parties’ ability to exploit collective action by the urban poor” (Ray 1969:147). In 1963, the economic elite was relatively isolated from political and cultural elites such as publishers and university professors (Kessler 1967:233), and seems to have remained isolated for a while thereafter.

With abstention by military and economic elites on the one hand, the AD’s managed to retain its political prominence despite drifting to the center. Coming out of the 1963 election, the left was in a defensive position, standing on the sidelines and criticizing AD—and soon recognizing it as legitimate. This pattern was only reinforced with time. By the mid- to late-1960s, the leaders of the PCV and MIR recognized the legitimacy of “exceptional democracy.” They grew wary of “jeopardizing the existence of the present system by fomenting violence that might lead to military intervention” and “concluded that their best interests lie in working with, not against, the system” (Ray 1969:159). And as the left lost ground, leftist organizations increasingly framed their politics in opposition to AD and COPEI, implicitly recognizing these organizations as the legitimate players (Ray 1969:131).

Since the early-1960s, COPEI had mimicked AD by building a permanent, mass organization that challenged elections at all levels of government, and even made inroads in civil society, throughout Venezuela (Crisp, Levine, and Molina 2003:285). One of the reasons COPEI was even viable at the elite level was that squatters gently hinted that if the incumbent government did not satisfy their needs they would support the opposition. Although AD was in power from 1959 onward for several years, and thus controlled a disproportionate share of the government’s administrative apparatus, these request for subordination mattered. Thus although in the abstract, when the opposition party led a land invasion, squatters “could expect a rapid response from the police or national guard, who would evict the squatters, since their action was deemed a violent and subversive one which had to be repressed.” However, “an invasion organized by those with the appropriate contacts would be unlikely to meet the same fate” (Pérez-Perdomo and Bolívar 1998:126). Initially, squatters had to solicit subordination to the party in power. But as time went on, once settled, and to secure de facto recognition in the form of service delivery of some kind, they were in a better position if they indicated their political support required more concrete aid. This redounded to COPEI as political capital.

Besides having built a popular base, the second most important reason COPEI won in 1968 was somewhat ignominious: a divided AD vote (Betancourt had tried to reverse AD’s

candidate selection process and impose his preferred candidate for a successor to Leoni, thus precipitating two separate AD campaigns). The result was nevertheless historic: COPEI, a party that represented a reconstructed form of Latin American Conservatism, won, and AD, a party that increasingly represented a revamped form of Latin American Liberalism, passed power to this opposition party organization, all based on the mere fact of the former party's greater electoral returns.²⁸⁹ This sequence of events transfigured the primordial Liberal/Conservative conflict into the primary elite cleavage in Venezuela, making both fractions together constitute an historically-aligned power bloc.

Caldera's presidency was a watershed in a variety of ways. During his campaign, he not only promised amnesty for guerrillas (in contrast to Leoni's repressive approach) and chatted with wealthy matrons over coffee; he also pounded pavement in the *barrios* (Ewell 1991:766). In office, Caldera maintained a Conservative orientation. He had been an emanation of Conservatism, even supporting the Spanish Falange in the 1930s (Ellner 2008:68; Ewell 1991:741). Prior to his election he had grown somewhat more moderate, but he remained a Conservative. The Catholic Church, meanwhile, was being racked by the liberation theology reform movement, which manifested in Venezuela, in part, in the form of criticism of governing elites' negligence in the face of the poverty and misery that characterized Venezuela's *barrios* (Ewell 1991:769-70). True to his Conservative colors, in 1970, Caldera expelled the radical Belgian priest, Francisco Wuytack, for organizing an "unauthorized demonstration to protest against unemployment and poverty"; the Venezuelan Church applauded the Conservative president (Ewell 1991:770).²⁹⁰

Caldera's term in office saw the two-party system come into existence. One front was organized labor. AD and COPEI deepened their pact by agreeing to divide up leadership

²⁸⁹ Ewell notes that COPEI distanced itself from its doctrinaire conservatism of the 1930s and 1940s, arguing that "the desire for victory dulled ideological differences" and that "COPEI now displayed no major ideological or programmatic differences from AD" (Ewell 1991:766). COPEI did undoubtedly move towards the center, but this should not blind us to the fact that they remained Christian Democrats, that they challenged and won the presidency, and that their subsequent ascent to power meant that Liberals entered into a marriage of convenience with Conservatives.

²⁹⁰ Caldera did not, however, kowtow to other elite interests. He did not genuflect to business interests; his decision to join the Andean Common Market "disappointed them bitterly" (Ewell 1991:769). Nor did he capitulate to the military; he instead continued the trend of "consolidating civilian control over the armed forces" started by his AD predecessors (Ewell 1991:769).

positions in the CTV, AD taking the presidency and COPEI taking the general secretary position (Ellner 2008:69). This represented a partial abandonment of party-controlled unions in favor of a jointly controlled common structure, much like the Punto Fijo scheme for the political sphere (Crisp, Levine, and Molina 2003:285). Another front was the left and the guerrilla movement. Caldera legalized the defanged PCV in 1969 and the MIR also returned to legal politics in time for the 1973 election. The far left's abandonment of armed struggle and return to legal activity marked their tacit acceptance of the new "rules of the game" (Ewell 1991:768). But since they were electorally ineffective, acceptance of the rules of the game represented their recognition of the fact that AD and COPEI dominated the political field. Meanwhile, Caldera retained an orientation to the urban poor. Although his political commitments led him to take a law-and-order approach—embodied by an "energetic police offensive against urban crime" in the *barrios* in 1970 (which he soon had to abandon due to public backlash in response to police excesses)—he also improved public services and initiated a low-cost housing initiative (Ewell 1991:770).

AD's Carlos Andrés Pérez (1974-1979) won the presidency in 1973. He had been Betancourt's protégé and his personal secretary in the 1940s and had served in Betancourt's government as his minister of the interior (1962-1963), when he was accused of flagrant human rights violations (Ellner 2008:71). After AD's 1968 electoral defeat, he had dedicated himself to rebuilding the party organization (Ewell 1991:772). His campaign mixed the new with the by-now-familiar. He embraced the trappings of modern political campaigns and adopted a flashy, energetic image. He also campaigned in the *barrios* in "televised, fast-moving *caminos* [walking tours]" (Ewell 1991:773). Results were astounding in three ways: first, they revealed that AD had not only bounced back from 1968 but had also secured a significant plurality of the vote; second, they showed that minor parties were now nearly insignificant (AD and COPEI together netted 85 percent of the vote); and third, the gap between Caracas and the rest of the country had closed, with AD and COPEI winning handily not only outside of Caracas but also in the capital city (Ewell 1991:773; Myers 1975:130). The two-party system was consolidating: "voters could [now] be satisfied that they were expressing dissatisfaction with one major party when they voted for the other" (Ewell 1991:773).

Some observers see Pérez's presidency as the height of economic nationalism in 20th century Venezuela, casting it as a form of radical populism or even incipient socialism (Ellner 2008:71-73). While there is some truth to this interpretation, it masks a deeper truth about his

administration: it marked a further step in the consolidation of the Liberal/Conservative power bloc. Pérez flirted with the left wing of the Second International (Ellner 2008:73), but he retained the primordial Liberal commitments to mercantilism and a rational government. His main inroads into the economy were to nationalize the small iron industry and the oil industry (Ewell 1991:774).²⁹¹ The oil nationalization affected the country's foremost industry, but it did not harm foreign capital: while the government technically expropriated private property, it signed contracts with many of the expropriated firms (for technical assistance, exploration, and transportation of oil) that improved the expropriated companies' financial situation (Ewell 1991:775).²⁹² The remarkable feature of the Pérez government was that it represented the further consolidation of the two-party historically-aligned power bloc uniting a reconstructed fascist part of the political elite with a fraction now led by a man who flirted with the Second International.

COPEI's Luis Herrera Campíns (1979-1984) won the presidential election of 1978. Herrera Campíns hailed from the party's left wing. He had led the Juventud Revolucionaria Copeyana and been jailed for organizing student strikes (Ewell 1991:780). By the time he angled for the presidential nomination, however, Herrera Campíns had "turned to pragmatism," distancing himself from his previous positions (Ellner 2008:78). Among the few remaining traces of a radical past was his embrace of "communitarian property," which posited that capitalist enterprises had social responsibilities (Ellner 2008:78)—a modern-day version of Christian pastoralism. Probably motivated by a desire to undermine Pérez's and thus AD's credibility with regards to social spending, he "liked to quote from Social Christian theory on

²⁹¹ Pérez faced little resistance on the part of domestic capital since the foreign oil companies had betrayed them in what they had hoped would be a united opposition to tax hikes in 1966 (Ewell 1991:774).

²⁹² Pérez did propose one seemingly radical initiative: an effort to achieve full employment and establish severance pay rights (Ellner 2008:72). It was more political stunt, however, than economic substance. During this time, inflation had taken its toll on the Venezuelan currency, undermining its real value (Castells 1983:181; Collier and Collier 1991:628-29); finance capital had flooded into the real estate market, driving up the cost of housing (Sánchez Rodríguez 1980:132-63); and rent control and anti-eviction laws, passed in 1960 and 1972, respectively, had disincentivized the construction of new private rental housing, increased the demand for the existing housing stock, and therefore inflated rental prices (Cilento Sarli and Fossi Belloso 1998:37-38). The proposed legislation aimed to compel private employers to hire elevator operators, janitorial personnel, etc., to achieve full employment, and to require them to pay severance payments to wrongfully terminated employees. It did not aim to alter economic fundamentals as regarded ownership and control. Moreover, as soon as FEDECAMARAS came out against the proposal, Pérez gutted the bill of job security provisions in favor of doubling the amount of severance payments for cases of layoffs in which the worker was not at fault (Ellner 2008:73-74): the unemployed worker was to benefit from more worthless money. With his radical initiative in disarray, Pérez then shifted to the right, subsidizing exports.

themes of communitarian society and commitment to the poor” (Ewell 1991:781). But Herrera Campíns was a Conservative, not a reformer. When in office, he “failed to address the question of structural poverty and did not deliver even the palliatives promised” (Ewell 1991:781).

Simultaneous with the emergence of the historically-aligned power bloc, supported by vertical ties between political patrons and neighborhood-level intermediaries, came horizontal conflict among residents. Naturally, to the degree that the government extended aid to one settlement but not another, it created “bitter antagonism” between them (Ray 1969:46). And such unevenness was the rule and not the exception. While many *barrios* went without, some “received improvements that are in limited supply—such as water and schools—because of special bonds between their junta presidents and the officials,” their leaders being “‘rewarded’ for their ability to create a favorable image of the government among their followers” (Ray 1969:91). This undermined “the collective strength of the barrio people by dividing their allegiances among several antagonistic parties, thereby leaving them unable or, perhaps more precisely, unwilling to unite and speak with a single voice on the big issues of their barrio existence” (Ray 1969:158).

Thus, amidst benevolent mass clientelism, party competition also translated into conflict among the urban poor (Ray 1969:108). Thus, in Carapita, soon after winning the 1968 election, COPEI militants established a parallel neighborhood association, leading to conflicts between it and the older one which had prevailed during the preceding AD-government era.²⁹³ These horizontal conflicts precluded solidarity against political elites among the urban poor. Moreover, since political elites abided their requests for subordination, the urban poor developed a distinct political identity,²⁹⁴ setting them apart from workers and peasants.

²⁹³ AGSCM(T)/Sindicatura Municipal Sección de Asistencia Jurídica (AJ)/VARIOS, ROSA SUAREZ, AGRIPIN MORENO, RAFAEL TOVAR [27/5/1969].

²⁹⁴ Articles in *barrio* newspapers like *La Vega Dice* furnish excellent evidence of this identity. For instance, “COPEI: Se quitó la máscara,” *La Vega Dice*, 13 August 1981, p.15, where the authors call for cross-*barrio* coordination.

Conclusion

After the 1958 overthrow of general Marcos Pérez Jiménez, in which the urban poor played an important part, squatter settlements proliferated in Caracas as migrants flooded in from the countryside and from elsewhere. Since they sought supporters, all factions of the new political elite had little choice in this. The left championed a Fanonian vision of the urban poor. Acción Democrática, a party representing a reconstructed form of Latin American Liberalism, and COPEI, one representing a revamped form of Conservatism, secured the dominant place in Venezuelan politics by orienting the urban poor away from the Fanonian vision—granting the urban poor material aid in exchange for renouncing their sympathies with the left.

This was highly successful at undermining the left, but only partially successful at securing loyalists as opposed to tentative sympathizers. As AD and COPEI stabilized a two-party system, they succeeded at suppressing and marginalizing the left without losing mass support for the political project they together represented. And while the party system narrowed to two electorally-viable parties in 1973, it led to a perception that the parties' sole purpose was to deliver the goods—that they were mere vehicles for clientelism—not to aggregate interests or articulate a program (Molina and Pérez Baralt 1998). Yet neither AD nor COPEI per se secured squatters' loyalties. The result, instead, was a pluralistic form of clientelism. Squatters were not clients vis-a-vis a specific individual or party but instead vis-a-vis “exceptional democracy.” There was however enough of a vertical bond between squatter neighborhoods and political party patrons—parties that alternated in and out of power—to promote horizontal conflict among different squatter communities aligned differently to them.

Meanwhile, benevolent mass clientelism encouraged the leading fractions of the political elite to enter into a marriage of convenience. Unable to dominate singly, each party needed the other to ensure the perpetuation of its own niche. This contributed decisively to the rise and persistence of “exceptional democracy.” In this way, benevolent mass clientelism was central in giving rise to an historically-aligned power bloc taking the form of a two-party “democracy.” Since benevolent mass clientelism was borne of urban concentration, urban concentration furthered the concentration of power.

Chapter 5. The Advent of Historically-Aligned Power Blocs:

Summary and Implications

Following the raucous 1930s-1960s, government institutions emerged that enjoyed mass support for elitist conservative modernization projects, or nation-building, in several Latin American cases. Perhaps better understood, albeit not necessarily more ubiquitous, are revolutionary peasant and worker movements whose leaders take power (in Latin America, Cuba and Nicaragua) and elite responses to revolutionary worker and peasant movements which result in military dictatorships (in Latin America, Brazil and Chile). But there was a middle path which shaped the destiny of several Latin American cases, including Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela.

Passive Revolutions

The Gramscian concept of “passive revolution” helps conceptualize this phenomenon. The perimeters of the concept are well delineated. On one side, a revolutionary movement can proceed from a mass political upsurge amidst regime instability—a configuration of “dual power” (Trotsky [1932] 1957; Tilly 1973)—to take and hold power, making a *revolution*. On the other, episodes of “dual power” can prompt civilian technocrats and military officials to form a narrow alliance with little popular support and proceed to re-establish a favorable investment climate, making a *counterrevolution* (Collier 1979; O'Donnell 1973).

Gramsci and followers seek to mark out a third alternative, which they denote *passive revolution*. This results when an upsurge of mass politics leads to controlled incorporation of the masses into a reformed elitist regime that enjoys popular support. Such governments are

neither revolutionary (because they exert control over the masses, rather than the reverse) nor counterrevolutionary (because they strive to secure the support of, rather than repress, mass groups). In a word, passive revolutions are episodes of political transformation following upsurges of mass, non-institutionalized political mobilization but that differ from the best-recognized types of regimes that emerge following such episodes.

Passive revolutions are an outcome characterized by two main components. First, the *absorption by elites of the “dual power” menace* (Morton 2010a:317; Paret 2022:576-77; Riley and Desai 2007:816-17; Thomas 2009:152, 156-57; Tuğal 2009:32-34). Second, an *elite-level “revolution from above”* which brings new elites into positions of power who undermine or integrate with the elites of the ancien régime (Morton 2010a:317-18; Riley and Desai 2007:816-17). The absorption of dual power precludes revolution while revolution from above prevents counterrevolution, blocking the revolution-counterrevolution “dialectic” (Buci-Glucksmann 1980:315). This blockage is important. It means passive revolutions result in government institutions which enjoy mass support.

Passive revolution theory has hitherto been essentially descriptive, carving out a conceptual space—neither revolution nor counterrevolution—but not really explaining the outcome. Scholars agree that a precondition is *external dependency* of some kind (Riley and Desai 2007:817; Morton 2010b). Dependency makes the two components especially likely to combine to produce a passive revolution and, in turn, makes passive revolution theory especially relevant for political development in the post- and neo-colonial world (Morton 2010b; Paret 2022). This makes the theory especially relevant to cases such as Latin America, where external dependency shaped the prospects of governance immensely: governments often fell during economic contractions (Silva Michelena 1971:72-73; see also Gilbert 2017:58). But as this suggests, dependence is far from an explanation for passive revolutions; to the contrary, it is at best a conditioning factor. Other factors account for them. Part I of this dissertation, as encapsulated in the following summary section, offers an explanation for passive revolution in 20th-century Latin America.

Synthetic Summary

In Latin America, external dependency shaped national politics profoundly. Across the region, the expansion of markets presented agrarian elites with opportunities. They took advantage of them by putting incredible strain on the peasantry, agrarian proletariat, and miners, creating a push factor that helped to cause ongoing rural-to-urban migration. External factors also had case-specific implications. For Mexico, the Second World War was important in enabling Manuel Ávila Camacho to pursue his project of incorporating squatters into neighborhood associations which directed support toward the PRI. For Peru, the U.S. war on North Korea led to an export boom giving Manuel Odría export tax revenues with which to build urban infrastructure for the urban poor. And in Venezuela, long-term reliance on oil exports both led squatters to petition for government aid and allowed the government to often respond affirmatively.

In each of these cases, mass requests for subordination were both exceptional, on the one hand, and ubiquitous and enduring, on the other. Rural-to-urban migrants offered to furnish political elites with support on the condition that they recognized them as denizens (typically making them squatters), and, after they acquired denizen status, on the condition that they helped them with urban upgrades (making their new urban life livable). The political nature of these requests for subordination gave rise to an “exceptional” administrative response, bifurcating the emergent administrative order: one fork was legally-oriented and the other abided a state of exception.

States of exception are typically conceptualized as temporary phases during which rulers implement far-reaching power grabs. But in this case, it was a structural feature of the emergent political system borne of the immense social pressure of urban concentration and non-rational-legal government responses to it. In Mexico, the post-revolutionary government opted in 1941 to regulate Mexico City’s squatter settlements differently from all other settlements. In Peru, lawmakers recognized two types of residential subdivisions, planned and “popular,” in 1961. In Venezuela, over the course of the 1960s the government built upon a precedent (dating to at least as early as the previous decade[Martín Frechilla 1996:197-98]) to recognize the monetary value of squatters’ residences (without recognizing their legal ownership of the property beneath them) and thereby administering squatter settlements differently from other residential areas in Caracas.

This sustained exception was the legal environment in which representative government institutions, however fledgling, were established. One of the longest-ruling political parties, the PRI, only firmed up by 1946; the exquisitely non-partied “party system” in Peru was secure in its exclusion of APRA by 1962; and the region’s two-party “exceptional democracy” in Venezuela, in which AD and COPEI alternated in power, dates to 1963. Since nation-building allowed government institution-building, and since it was based on clientelism—a phenomenon parallel to and overlapping with corruption—institution-building took place in an environment permeated by corruption and its rational-legality was thus congenitally tainted long before the contingent activation of forbearance.²⁹⁵

In each case, passive revolution transpired in a state of exception, which treated squatters uniquely, compared to other groups, allowing the political elite to secure their mass support; this gave nation-building political elites a mass base. These same nation-building political elites repressed workers and peasants to circumvent revolution. Such political reaction may well have escalated into full-on counterrevolution had it not been for the exception made for the urban poor and thus their mass support, which made counterrevolution unnecessary to political elites. Thus, mass clientelism blocked the revolution-counterrevolution “dialectic” (Buci-Glucksmann 1980:315). (Although, as I will show in Part II, mass clientelism is characterized by its own dialectic.)

Mass clientelism resulted in *field blocage*. Fields are typically conceived as social spaces in which participants agree about fundamentals but disagree about particulars (Bourdieu 1993:73-74). As I argued in the Introduction, the field of mass politics is better conceived as the space in which political elites who disagree about fundamentals nevertheless agree about particulars, allowing them to orient to one another and resulting in nation-building. The particulars about which they agreed in 20th-century Latin America concerned a common orientation to the urban poor, i.e., abiding their requests for subordination. This convergence between different kinds of political elites on the same political strategy made them an historically-aligned power bloc, a power bloc that was apparent not at a single point in time, as power blocs are often conceived (Poulantzas 1978:127-29), but with hindsight: different political elites built upon rather than reversed the orientation of their opponents towards squatters. This

²⁹⁵ On the strategic use of forbearance, see Holland (2015; 2016; 2017).

convergence among political elites simultaneously allowed them to secure a mass base for nation-building, and thereby eliminate the need for full-on counterrevolution, while nevertheless suppressing workers' and peasants' movements, both of which served in "disorganizing-dividing the dominated classes" (Poulantzas 1978:140). In this way, field blocage *blocked* both left and right from power.

Mass clientelism supports passive revolution. This brings into a common explanatory framework features of the ensuing political forms that liberal institutionalists stress as fundamentally different. For liberal institutionalists, the Peruvian and Venezuelan cases contrast sharply. In the first, a party system failed to gel, leaving its politics a "living museum" in which the most hidebound political creatures mingled with the most modern (Collier 1976:16), whereas in the second such a system was so successful that it was taken to have reached the benchmark for political modernization and lauded as the region's "exceptional democracy." But liberal institutionalism fails to see how both resulted from field blocage. Field blocage, in turn, only supports moderation; it is thus a *substantive* designation (Walder 2009), in addition to being a formal one concerning the exclusion of political extremes. So while Peruvian politics may look antiquated, it is also the case that by curtailing revolution in Venezuela the apparently-modern government institutions that ultimately consolidated reflected reworked versions of the very oldest political tendencies in republican Latin America: Liberalism and Conservatism.²⁹⁶

This was possible because mass clientelism supported the overall political field. Due to its roots in Weberian ideas about the separation of social spheres, Bourdieusian field theory assumes fields are relatively autonomous. Bourdieu implicitly recognizes that the field of mass politics is not autonomous (Bourdieu 1991:181), but he fails to unpack the implications. These involve conceptualizing the political field along three dimensions. In addition to the volume and type of political capital, which comprises the terrain on which political elites cognize their

²⁹⁶ It is noteworthy that the spatio-political proximity of radical mass mobilization to the seat of national power seems to be correlated with depth of liberal "democracy": in Venezuela there was a political revolution centered on Caracas, and two-party liberal democratic institutions emerged; in Mexico there was an agrarian revolution, but it was not centered in Mexico City, and a single-party system emerged; and in Peru there was no revolution, and a non-liberal zero-party system emerged. This pattern puts a spatial twist on the post-Mooreian political sociology of democracy, which concludes that liberal-democratic forms result from contention, especially workers' contention (Eley 2002; Paige 1997; Rueschemeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992; Usmani 2018). While I do not dispute this finding directly, contention per se may be more relevant for the variation in question (cf. Kadivar and Caren 2016), and specifically contention that was not only significant enough to strike fear into political elites' hearts but also *spatially proximate* to the national seat of power such that they could not ignore it.

struggle with one another, a third dimension makes this struggle possible, though political elites are likely to view it in terms of an ideological inversion that misrecognizes it as a mere secondary implication of their struggle. That third dimension is mass clientelism, i.e., requests for subordination, with conditions attached, emanating from below. Popular will that fails to take the form of popular sovereignty impels political elites to orient to one another, comprising a field and allowing government institutions to take form—in a word, allowing for the concentration of power. The bottom of society unites the apex of power by soliciting subordination. In 20th-century Latin America, the concentration of power was borne of urban concentration.

The Importance Of Popular Subordination

That popular will was manifested in the form of requests for subordination helps cut through the theoretical thicket. Liberal-institutionalists assume that there are two fundamentally different kinds of governments: liberal-democratic and authoritarian. They characteristically view the former institutions as imperfect expressions of popular sovereignty. In 20th-century Latin America, this was far from the case. The governments whose formation passive revolutions supported were the outcome of popular will but not a form of popular will which demanded sovereignty. During the 1930s-1960s, there were numerous instances in which workers' and peasants' leaders pursued an approach to politics involving a disruption of business as usual in order to extract concessions from the political and political-economic elite in exchange for a resumption of social peace, an approach that inched towards popular sovereignty. But the governments issuing from passive revolutions rested, instead, on popular requests for subordination—on consent to coercion. In this way, passive revolutions gave form to governments who pursued conservative modernization, or nation-building.

This has implications for the adjacent field of civil society theory, whose Tocquevillian variant argues that intermediary associations incubate and facilitate substantive democratic functioning by providing venues for people to deliberate and converge on a common will so they can then take their wants and wishes to the political arena where they will hopefully translate into policy (Forment 2003; Putnam 1993; Tocqueville [1840] 1966). This ancillary theory has been unable to account for the fact that civic associations have just as well supported authoritarian governments as opposed to liberal-democratic ones (Berman 1997; Riley 2005;

2010; Satyanath, Voigtländer, and Voth 2017). The theoretical debate has floundered, I think, because there is not yet a clear alternative to liberal-institutional assumptions about popular will. While few liberal-institutionalists would transparently assert that liberal-democratic government institutions are unequivocally an expression of popular sovereignty, the position's unstated assumptions guard against questioning this.

When we instead proceed with the assumption that there are two kinds of popular will—popular sovereignty and popular subordination—we can see that civic associations oriented in the latter way can support both kinds of government institutions. This may mean mass clientelism is a more powerful framework than liberal-institutionalism. For as shown in the chapters comprising Part I, requests for subordination helped give rise to a government system bereft of political parties (Peru), an “exceptional democracy” (Venezuela), and a political order dominated by one of the longest-ruling political parties in history (Mexico). Part II is dedicated to showing what came next.

Part II. Urban Concentration and the Dilution of Power:

Mexico City, 1965-2000

Chapter 6. The Context: A City the Size of Several

During the mid-20th century, the PRI reigned supreme in Mexico. It was so firmly ensconced in the country's government institutions that, as late as the mid-1980s, one observer concluded that "there is little that can be found in the values and beliefs which imply that future leaders will significantly change the structure of the political system of governmental policies" (Camp 1984:157). But path-dependent inertia was illusory. Indeed, from about 1970 onward, political elite unity—as measured by the count and extensiveness of governing elite cliques—began to decline steadily (Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 2005:135). During the late-1970s and early-1980s, the Mexican government suffered disillusionment to its right and defection of its left (Greene 2007:1-2; see also Collier 1992:67-68; Cornelius and Craig 1991:73-78; Hellman 1983:129, 131-32; Smith 1989:398). By the late-1980s, the PRI's base of support had dissipated irreparably, and in 1988, when it faced center-leftist defector Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas's challenge, these desertions probably cost the party the presidential election, prompting fixers to employ massive electoral fraud for the PRI to retain that office. After *losing* power, it took the PRI another dozen years, until 2000, to actually *leave* government. But its fate had been sealed—and the 1997 loss of the first Mexico City mayoral race to take place in almost seven decades suggested as much in the interim.

Why did the PRI teeter and fall? Before hazarding an answer, we must first decide how to characterize the political changes that accompanied the process. One aspect concerns geographic ambit, especially whether one examines the entire country or some part thereof. Another concerns whether to focus directly on political elites and government institutions or on underlying social dynamics and how they impact elites and institutions. Like Davis (1994), I focus on Mexico City. But whereas Davis (1994:174 ff.) focuses on the institution of the PRI, I focus instead on how social changes located in Mexico City comprised political continuity. Thus

whereas liberal-institutionalists often view the PRI's late-20th century doldrums as a transition to a de jure pluralist form of democracy, I see it, in contrast, in terms of the demise of the social supports for the PRI, which a fortiori meant some other political actors would ultimately assume the reins of power: a de facto pluralization of power.

The challenge for liberal-institutionalists is to construct the actors who challenged the PRI—Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas at the national level in 1988—and those who ultimately supplanted it—the Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas government of Mexico City, which took office in 1997, and the Vicente Fox presidency and multiparty congressional configuration, which assumed power in 2000—as the victors of an epic struggle to wrest a democratic victory from the jaws of authoritarian institutions. While many Anglophone political scientists have risen to the challenge, their narrative is not very convincing. The more prescient insight to be gleaned from the political battles of 1988, 1997, and 2000 is that the PRI's base had diminished significantly and that it failed to rebound. Davis's focus on the leaders of political institutions helps illuminate the lengths to which political elites went in their effort to remove political obstacles to their initiatives, showing that President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970) was a trendsetter in this regard.²⁹⁷ But the more fundamental question concerns not *who* tried to perpetuate the party in power (Díaz Ordaz) nor *who* took advantage of the opportunity to capitalize on the PRI's losses (the opposition), much less *what* resulted (pluralization), but instead *why the opportunity presented itself*.

Scholars have pointed to three factors that contributed to that situation. I cover them briefly here and in greater depth in Appendix B, finding that they are not fully convincing, whether taken alone or in combination. The first is that the PRI lost legitimacy, especially after the government's student massacre on 2 October 1968. It must of course be true that this event undermined the party's legitimacy to some degree, though as an explanation for the PRI's decline and fall it is inadequate, for violence was a near-constant feature of 20th-century Mexican politics (Aviña 2010:113-14; Padilla 2008). Since it took place in Mexico City and involved students, the event certainly turned many *intellectuals* into firm oppositionists. (But to conclude that this fundamentally undermined support for the regime would be to embrace the scholastic

²⁹⁷ He removed the mayor of Mexico City (Ernesto P. Uruchurtu), the rector of UNAM (Ignacio Chávez), and the president of the PRI (Carlos Madrazo) (Davis 1994:188).

fallacy.) Intellectuals would of course like most people to hold their beliefs. Though in general that is not the case, and in particular it was not the case as regards the PRI's post-1968 legitimacy.

The second factor scholars argue precipitated the PRI's fall was patronage-resource shortfalls (Greene 2007; Magaloni 2006). It is true that by 1982, amidst Mexico's sovereign debt default, the PRI had relatively little influence over the allocation of resources, since its lenders forced the government to implement austerity measures to stabilize its currency and repay foreign debt, and that "people were therefore skeptical about the promises made to them by deputies and PRI militants at election times" (Davis 1994:252). But scholars who invoke resource scarcity to account for the decline and fall of the PRI make two fundamental mistakes. First, they assume that patronage resources had hitherto served to "buy" support; only by making this assumption are they able to advance the argument that, due to the 1982 economic crisis and ensuing austerity, the government was no longer able to secure support, which allowed its base to drift into the opposition. However, as we have seen in Chapter 2, this assumption is erroneous. Second, these scholars assume that government resources correlated positively with support for the PRI. But, as further discussed in Appendix B, the correlation does not hold: government resources were perhaps most abundant during the period when the PRI's support plummeted. Thus, the patronage-resource shortfall the argument is fundamentally mistaken.

The third factor by means of which Mexicanists often account for the PRI's decline and fall is the proliferation of civic associations, especially after the 1985 earthquake that ravaged Mexico City. The civic associational proliferation was real. But these new organizations were concentrated disproportionately among Mexico City's middle classes, people who had long opposed the PRI by that time. This development did contribute decisively to the electoral victory of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas in the first Mexico City mayoral election in almost seven decades, in 1997. But it did not have direct effects on the PRI's support, at least among the urban poor, nor on the cohesion of governing elites, which soon reached unprecedented heights. (To insist that the civic efflorescence did undermine the PRI would, again, be to assume the world revolves around the wishes of the middle class.) Because it included the urban poor, the rise of urban social movements per se was more significant as regards the PRI's base. But merely observing that fact is far from explaining why associationalism, long a feature of Mexican popular politics, was now autonomous.

Taken together, these factors all contribute to a fuller understanding of this process. However, the timing of these developments is not right to explain why the PRI teetered and fell. Events in 1968 were too early, and those in 1982 and 1985 were too late. The cataclysms transpiring in those years all contribute to a fuller explanation of the PRI's political doldrums. But the more fundamental factor that undermined PRI support started to develop in the 1970s, was in full effect by 1982, so that it was able to bear fruit in 1988, with the PRI's likely defeat in the presidential election; in 1997, with the party's loss of the Mexico City mayoral election; and 2000, with its loss of the presidency.

Moreover, these events leave out a fundamental part of the story: the changes that took place right under the PRI's nose, in Mexico City, where it had earlier found support sufficient to see it through difficult times to political supremacy. The PRI's base suffered as a result of the sociopolitical dynamics stemming from urban concentration—the same factor which had earlier bolstered the PRI. I therefore disagree with those who view urban dynamics as a consequence rather than a cause of political dynamics (Camp 2002:265).²⁹⁸ As another wave of urban concentration hit Mexico City, it undermined the PRI, which, in turn, took the form of a *de facto* pluralization there and, as the PRI's control unraveled, a *de facto* pluralization across the country. Just as urban concentration contributed to the rise of the PRI, so too it contributed, dialectically or “ironically” (Sewell 1987:170), to its decline and fall.

In what follows, I examine the PRI's trajectory from dominance to doldrums, focusing on the impact of Mexico City's growth on local and national politics. I outline the causes for and extent of the wave of urban concentration that took off during the mid-1960s, using *Nezahualcōyotl*, the most iconic of the era's massive squatter settlements (examined in depth in Chapter 8), as an example.²⁹⁹ Finally, I provide an outline of how this wave of urban

²⁹⁸ Camp argues that causation ran from the PRI's declining hegemony to a decline in the importance of Mexico City: “As pluralization gains a significant foothold in the Mexican political fabric and civil society, it shifts the focus of politics away from Mexico City to state and local governments” (Camp 2002:265). It is certainly true that, after the decline and fall of the PRI, state and local governments grew more important. But much of the reason for the decline and fall itself has to do with the growth of Mexico City. Oppositionist political dynamics in the provinces only took hold afterwards. Thus urban dynamics were a cause, rather than a consequence, of provincial political dynamics.

²⁹⁹ *Nezahualcōyotl*'s local politics loomed so large in the urban political history of late-20th century Mexico City that interpretations about the city in general and about *Nezahualcōyotl* in particular blend together. For me, *Nezahualcōyotl* serves as an heuristic model for the massive squatter settlements of Mexico City more generally, covered in the following chapters. (Thus, whereas in Part I the epistemic strategy is to move from the macro [three countries] to the model, in Part II the epistemic strategy is the converse, projecting a particular [albeit massive]

concentration affected political relations—leading to the eclipse of benevolent mass clientelism—gleaned from study of the cases examined in the chapters to follow and presented in this chapter as an abstract model.

The Fate Of The PRI

The PRI finished the 1950s, passed through the 1960s, and started the 1970s in a position of dominance. The polarity between *cardenistas* and *alemanistas* continued to structure the political field. Borne to an important degree of benevolent mass clientelism, as detailed in Chapter 2, this configuration was behind the fact that the PRI broke records as regards longevity in power. At its apogee, PRI rule became so effective that its iron-fisted mayor, Ernesto P. Uruchurtu (1952-1966)—appointee of conservative president Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958)³⁰⁰—was able to slow the growth of Mexico City, strangling the goose that lay the PRI’s golden eggs. This prompted political elites to try to return to the previous arrangement so they could benefit politically from urban concentration. However, while the upward trend in urban growth resumed, history did not repeat: this time urban concentration undermined PRI rule rather than bolster it.

From Dominance to Doldrums

President Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964) was a neo-*cardenista* who pursued a somewhat radical nationalist agenda, limiting foreign capital investment in petrochemicals, restructuring the auto industry, supporting the revolutionary Cuban government, and nationalizing the electricity industry (Camp 2002:221). Some likened López Mateos to Cárdenas himself, dubbing him, “the new Cárdenas,” because they felt he had been a good Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare under Ruiz Cortines and had a good relationship with organized labor (Pensado 2013:181). He himself said his government represented the “extreme left within the

instance as a model.)

³⁰⁰ He had served as the personal secretary to *carrancista* general Jacinto B. Treviño, as the treasurer for Ávila Camacho’s presidential campaign, and as Secretary of State under Alemán.

Constitution” (quoted in Pensado 2013:182) and emphasized continued agrarian reform, social justice, and solidarity with Cuba (Pensado 2013:182). But now there was nothing like the massive upsurge of popular mobilization that had accompanied the Cárdenas government and enabled and indeed propelled its radical reforms. López Mateos’s demobilized *cardenismo* was a far more staid affair. It was more than mere empty rhetoric; during his presidency “social spending escalated dramatically. Collective bargaining now brought meaningful wage hikes. The state [i.e., government] mandated profit-sharing programs. . . . [And] the state [i.e., government] nationalized electric power and began to ‘Mexicanize’ foreign-owned mines through a stock-purchasing plan” (Snodgrass 2010:167). López Mateos also freed numerous political prisoners accumulated during the previous regime, decreed a wage increase, and made some concessions to striking workers in 1958 (Pensado 2013:183).

But in the absence of a wave of insurgency propelling him towards more radical initiatives, López Mateos was *primus inter pares*. As such, his main job was to keep the *cardenista* and *alemanista* fractions of the political elite together under the same party umbrella. This was a formidable task. By the early-1960s, the two fractions seemed to be pulling apart: Lázaro Cárdenas had formed the non-aligned National Liberation Movement (MLN) and Miguel Alemán had formed the anticommunist Mexican Civic Front of Revolutionary Affirmation (FCMAR). It appeared to López Mateos that both fraction leaders “wanted to transform their [respective] organizations into opposing parties,” leading the president to take measures to “thwart their plans” (Pensado 2013:182). On the one hand, he “reprimanded” the *cardenistas* “for embracing a ‘borrowed ideology’ to attack the Mexican Revolution”; on the other, he “‘upbraided the forces of reaction’ within the FCMAR ‘for seeking to impede Revolutionary progress’” (Pensado 2013:182).

Thus, if he came out of the gate as a *cardenista*, López Mateos’s presidency developed on the basis of pitching his own fraction, the *cardenistas*, against his opponents, the *alemanistas*—not hoping one would defeat the other, but that the two would neutralize one another. This seemed insufficient to Mexican capitalists, who stepped up their organizing. His relatively pro-labor actions were probably the underlying condition of possibility for their newfound opposition, but the precipitating cause was, ironically, López Mateos’s own request for support. In response to some bad press, he asked a group of important capitalists (including Miguel Alemán) to promote Mexican companies abroad. They would have none of this. In 1962 this

group changed its name to the Mexican Council of Businessmen (CMHN) and dedicated itself to promoting foreign investment, contrary to López Mateos's political agenda (Camp 2002:220).³⁰¹ This appeared to be reprisal for López Mateos's somewhat radical nationalism: capital curtailed neo-*cardenismo* (Camp 2002:221), much as it had countered the original *cardenismo* (Hamilton 1982). López Mateos had few plays left at his disposal save making overtures to *alemanistas*. Not only did he give government posts to all seven of the former presidents who were still alive, in an effort to tie them to the government (Pensado 2013:182-83). He also broke a railroad strike, imprisoned communists, and routed and killed the radical-*agrarista* peasant leader Rubén Jaramillo (Pensado 2013:184). *Alemanistas* must have been pleased.

President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970) was a neo-*alemanista*. He had been López Mateos's Secretary of State when the government meted out savage repression against striking railroad workers and teachers—firing 9,000 and jailing over 100 leaders (Loaeza 2008:319)—and killed Rubén Jaramillo (Loaeza 2008:304). Nevertheless, in a show of between-fraction unity, Cárdenas publicly supported Díaz Ordaz's candidacy (Loaeza 2008:305). His electoral victory marked a turning point for the broader political system. For the first time in its history, the head of the PAN and that party's presidential candidate, Adolfo Christlieb Ibarrola and José González Torres, respectively, acknowledged their defeat, implicitly recognizing the PRI as hegemonic (Loaeza 2008:305; Needler 1971:88).

Díaz Ordaz's administration is remembered most for the student massacre. But this took place during the second half of his term. During his first three years, he played to a bourgeois-democratic agenda, spearheading an initiative to reduce the age of voting eligibility from 21 to 18 years of age and loosening restrictions on the political opposition, as well as changing the nature of union representation within the PRI from a sectoral to a geographic basis (Loaeza 2008:306). As regards political-economic issues, he was a developmentalist, committed to a mixed economy and national sovereignty (Loaeza 2008:306). Given the economic success of the "Mexican miracle" he had inherited, he was fixated on preserving the political-economic status quo.

³⁰¹ The CMHN, highly selective from the beginning, became a secretive organization. On the basis of regular meetings with politicians, it seems to have been highly effective at acquiring coveted information, and presumably also exercised considerable influence by impressing the interests of capitalists upon political elites (Camp 2002:221-26).

The continued reverberations from the Cuban Revolution had profound effects on Mexican political dynamics (Loaeza 2008:298). Díaz Ordaz's ascent to power coincided with the zenith of Fidel Castro's and the Cuban Revolution's popularity in the region (Loaeza 2008:315; Carr 1992:232-33). And the U.S. government's response was perhaps especially important in Mexico, since the American government thought Mexico was a Mecca for revolutionaries from Central American and beyond (Loaeza 2008:314).³⁰² Initially, the U.S. government saw nationalism in general as a risk—a potential pathway to more Cubas—and thus viewed the PRI's nationalism in particular as a possible malignancy (Loaeza 2008:293). Eventually, however, they revised their opinion and came to see nationalism as a bulwark against more Cubas, and thus viewed the PRI's hegemony as politically beneficial (Loaeza 2008:298). Díaz Ordaz did not initially think, and perhaps never thought, communism was a real threat in Mexico.³⁰³ But he did think poverty and misery were threats, and that they could inspire communism should they worsen (Loaeza 2008:303).

Contention ramped up during the late-1960s—from a medical residents' strike, to student activism, to incipient guerrilla warfare campaigns—amidst an atrophy of the existing mechanisms of conciliation and control (Loaeza 2008:319-21). In response to the resurgence of contentious politics, government repression came increasingly into play. Repression had been a normal part of Mexican politics since the 1940s (Loaeza 2008:292). But now the government responded with more frequent and more severe repression, raiding the offices of the Partido Comunista de México (PCM) (Loaeza 2008:321) and jailing Communists and Trotskyists accused of conspiracy (Loaeza 2008:322). Díaz Ordaz thought university students had become communists' main arena for recruitment subsequent to the defeat they suffered at his hands as Secretary of State in 1958 and 1959, and he was not entirely wrong (Loaeza 2008:324). The

³⁰² Since the 1947 Treaty of Rio, Latin America had been incorporated into the United States government's maniacal effort to contain communism (Loaeza 2008:308), which ramped up to unprecedented levels in the region in general and in Mexico in particular subsequent to the Cuban Revolution (Loaeza 2008:309). In this context, the government faced what Loaeza (2008:311) calls a "grave dilemma": "how to satisfy Washington's demands for proof of loyalty without losing the capacity to make decisions according to exclusively national Mexican interests?"

³⁰³ Díaz Ordaz was largely correct. While Marxist ideology was widespread by the time of Díaz Ordaz's government, Marxist parties in Mexico, as elsewhere in Latin America, were weak (Miller 1989:42). Thus even though Marxist political ideas appealed broadly, between 1960 and 1974 the PCM was at a low ebb, with fewer than 2,000 members (Carr 1992: table 1). The excitement associated with events such as the world revolutionary solidarity conference in Havana in 1967, calling for international armed revolution, was, for the most part, not channelled through party organizations (Loaeza 2008:317).

government and the PRI felt they might be losing control. They were not wrong: support declined steadily, especially in Mexico City, as discussed below.

The Political Impossibility of the Anti-Growth Agenda for Mexico City

Federal District mayor Ernesto P. Uruchurtu (1952-1966), initially a Ruiz Cortines appointee (Rodríguez Kuri 2012:445),³⁰⁴ had a staunchly anti-growth position on urban governance. Uruchurtu was an *alemanista* (Davis 1994:146, 164; Gil et al. 1993:105). He enjoyed considerable support from Mexico City's traditional middle class conservatives and "blamed the streaming masses of poor uneducated migrants—many of them of Indian heritage—for the physical and social destruction of the city" (Davis 1994:155). By the time neo-*cardenista* López Mateos came to power, the mayor was quite powerful and the president was not in a position to remove him. This left the government divided between *cardenismo* at the national level and *alemanismo* at the city level for the duration of López Mateos's term. Uruchurtu's strength endured through much of Díaz Ordaz's term as well, when the president sought to pursue a pro-growth neo-developmental agenda replete with infrastructural projects such as a subway transportation and the Olympic stadium construction (Davis 1994:164-65).

His power at the Federal District level allowed Uruchurtu to drastically slow the growth of Mexico City, since the Federal District comprised most of the city at that time. Uruchurtu had one overriding concern: fiscal solvency. The local government was legally on the hook for ensuring that all settlements were equipped with basic urban services. And since many low-income settlements initially lacked services, the local government experienced severe fiscal strain by installing them.³⁰⁵ Squatter settlements were breaking the bank. Even Echeverría spoke during his campaign about how previous industrial policy "brought with it migration of great numbers of rural inhabitants who now form belts of misery around these areas" (quoted on Davis 1994:195); his efforts to develop the agrarian sector "were intended to reduce deteriorating rural

³⁰⁴ Ruiz Cortines had a longstanding relationship with Uruchurtu. He had inherited his job as Secretary of State from Uruchurtu and then returned the post to him before Uruchurtu became mayor.

³⁰⁵ Unlike in Caracas, where the government sowed petroleum wealth (and did not try to recoup anything), and unlike in Lima, where the government did very little to improve the built environment of squatter settlements (eliminating the problem of recouping outlays), in Mexico City the government tried to get the urban poor to pay for the urban infrastructural works that it installed.

conditions and peasant unrest in the countryside, which sent streams of poor peasants to Mexico City” (Davis 1994:196).

Initially, Uruchurtu tried to slow urban growth (Davis 1994:132-33). As Cornelius (1975:203) summarizes, “Under Uruchurtu, the government sought to discourage further migration to the capital by prohibiting the subdivision of land for low-income housing, acting immediately to evict squatters from invaded land, and denying tenure rights and basic urban services to most existing colonias formed through squatter invasions.” Davis (1994:132) argues that while “Uruchurtu could do nothing to stop the hordes of rural immigrants that burst the city’s infrastructural seams during the 1950s. . . . he could, and did, create obstacles to their permanent settlement in the city, particularly in new areas where city expenditures on drainage, roads, electricity, and land regularization would be legally required.”

There were political assets and liabilities associated with Uruchurtu’s anti-growth orientation, though the latter dwarfed the former with the passage of time. On the one hand, his anti-growth policy made him the darling of the middle classes. Fiscal solvency “[freed up] scarce resources for projects demanded by the middle class and small industrialists or *comerciantes*. Such restriction on settlement also rid the city of the eyesore of underserviced and overcrowded squatter areas, which both complemented the beautification strategy Uruchurtu employed to appeal to middle-class sectors and helped him retain the character, charm, and manageability of Mexico City that they so desired” (Davis 1994:132-33). The right-wing opposition National Action Party (PAN) even asked Uruchurtu to run as their 1958 presidential candidate (Davis 1994:167). (He declined.) On the other hand, Uruchurtu paid a political price. Not only was it the case that his embargo on new settlements “threatened to alienate those within the CTM who advocated the construction of more *colonias proletarias* for the city’s still-growing class of industrial laborers” (Davis 1994:134).³⁰⁶ More important was that, by slowing urban concentration, Uruchuru effectively strangled the goose that had laid the PRI’s golden eggs. He had to be dealt with.

So the party turned against him. The occasion was a mass eviction of squatters. On 12 September 1966, Uruchurtu ordered the razing of Colonia Santa Úrsula squatter settlement in Ajusco, in southern Mexico City. Uruchurtu had already grown unpopular by then. So President

³⁰⁶ This was on top of the fact that he broke a streetcar workers’ strike in 1959 (Rodríguez Kuri 2012:452).

Díaz Ordaz, to whom it had become clear there was considerable opposition to Uruchurtu (Davis 1994:167), along with the PRI leadership, and its congressional delegation, were well poised to orchestrate a campaign to discredit the mayor and force him to resign (Davis 1994:177-83). In the ensuing political brouhaha, “what is most notable is that the main criticisms of the use of police force came not only from the political opposition (representatives of the PAN and the PPS seriously criticized it in the parliamentary tribune, in a volley that drew the attention of the national press) but from PRI deputies in congress” (Rodríguez Kuri 2012:455). Congresspeople wanted to capitalize politically on more squatter settlement growth, and Uruchurtu stood in their way. The PRI no longer enjoyed much support from the urban poor, and the weight of experience led them to tacitly attribute this to Uruchurtu’s suppression of urban growth, dramatized by the razing of Santa Úrsula, which “served as a refuge for the growing number of urban poor who could neither afford rents nor locate available housing in more central areas of the city” (Davis 1994:177). Given the functional importance of the urban poor to the political field, and since Uruchurtu shortcircuited their contribution, political elites therefore removed him.³⁰⁷

Díaz Ordaz appointed Alfonso Corona del Rosal as mayor of the Federal District (1966-1970) and Mexico City’s conservative middle classes lost their champion (Davis 1994:176) and the Alemán fraction of the political elite entered into abeyance in Mexico City (Davis 1994:181).³⁰⁸ The DDF changed its attitude towards the urban poor from hostility to tolerance, if not benevolence, in an effort to harness support. Corona del Rosal relaxed the ban on subdivisions for low-income housing, reduced repression of squatters, began to assist *colonias*, and “increasingly acted to ‘regularize’ low-income zones by expropriating the land and selling it to its occupants at a price well below market value, usually with 5-10 years to pay” (Cornelius

³⁰⁷ Davis (1994:168-72) argues that the main reason Uruchurtu was ousted was a 1965-1966 bus drivers’ strike, which Díaz Ordaz supported for the cynical reason that he wanted to throw public transportation into chaos to discredit champions of the status quo and thereby further his own objective of modernizing Mexico City’s public transportation system with the construction of a citywide subway network, and that the razing of Colonia Santa Úrsula served as mere pretext. My interpretation differs. More important than divergent visions for transportation systems, in my view, was urban growth. Since harnessing the urban poor’s support had been a blessing for the PRI, Uruchurtu came to represent something of a curse. It became increasingly urgent, “dentro de cierta racionalidad, incorporar al oficialismo el potencial político de los colonos pobres, que al final del día estaban organizados, al menos la mayoría de ellos, dentro del PRI, y al que habrían de retribuir con sus votos a cambio de un lugar donde vivir” (Rodríguez Kuri 2012:455-56). Uruchurtu had to be removed for political reasons.

³⁰⁸ Corona del Rosal started construction on the METRO system in 1967, hoping it would be ready for the Olympic Games the following year. (It was not inaugurated until 1969.)

1975:203). And yet, ironically, the new wave of urban growth which transpired after removal of Uruchurtu did not serve to bolster the PRI.

Another (Even Larger) Wave Of Urban Concentration

The number of squatters skyrocketed with Uruchurtu's removal, as Figure 6.1 shows. But history did not repeat. To the contrary; while the earlier phase of urban concentration furthered the concentration of power, this phase diluted power, undermining the PRI. Thus, "starting in 1970, the PRI's electoral support dropped dramatically in Mexico City" while abstention rates ramped up (Davis 1994:191). These were nationwide trends; with the exception of 1982, electoral abstention gradually increased everywhere from 1970 onward, and the PRI's nationwide electoral returns decreased over 20 percentage points between 1961 and 1982. But the erosion of the PRI's base was uneven. Its drop in electoral performance was concentrated "in those areas that are most urban, industrialized, and modern" (Baer 1990:43), especially in the Mexico City metropolitan area (Ward 1990:82). In the Federal District, the PRI won only 42.7 percent of the 1985 midterm vote; in Mexico State, it won 56.4 percent statewide but considerably less in the urban districts (Baer 1990:table 2, 43).

Unleashed by the removal of mayor Uruchurtu for political reasons, this wave of urban growth was driven largely by changes in the agrarian sector. The countryside's transfer of resources to the city had long undergirded social peace and subsidized capitalist industrialization. But by the 1960s, Mexico was importing grain. Foreign capital had invested heavily in grains for export, and the government had allowed the price of staples like corn to fall. As credit went to large agribusinesses, who usurped more and more land, peasants grew unable to subsist and were pushed from their land to make way for agribusiness; by 1980, there were approximately 4 million landless peasants in Mexico. Many of them and those in similar situations left the countryside to seek a life in the city, as had many of their counterparts before them, contributing to the expansion of squatter settlements in the country's major cities and helping make Mexico City in particular one of the largest cities in the world by the late-1980s (Smith 1990:89-91). Mexico City was the foremost destination for rural-to-urban migrants for most of the 20th

century.³⁰⁹ Migrants probably hailed mostly from parts of the country closest to the capital city (!!! INVALID CITATION !!!).

As Table 6.1 shows, the Mexico City metropolitan area grew by over 9 million people between 1960 and 1980. A low estimate reports that between 1960 and 1970, over 1 million people migrated to Mexico City, bringing the city’s migrant population to 2.75 million (38 percent of the total) (Muñoz, Oliveira, and Stern 1977: table 3.4). The overall portion of the city’s population attributable to urban concentration for the 1960-1970 period—summing both the number of migrants and the natural population growth for which rural-to-urban migrants were responsible—is massive: 69.4 percent (Muñoz, Oliveira, and Stern 1977: table 10.5). This meant Mexico City’s population was a massive part of the national population; whereas in 1930, only 1 of every 16 Mexicans lived in Mexico City, by 1980, 49.4 percent of the national population did (Partida Bush 2014:402).

Table 6.1. Mexico City Population (in Thousands), 1900-1990

	1900	1910	1921	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
Federal District	542	730	903	1,221	1,645	3,240	5,178	7,327	9,165	8,236
Metropolitan area	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,758	3,136	5,381	9,211	14,419	15,048

Source: Davis (1998: table 2).

The Federal District government’s reaction to squatters only shifted from “unmitigated hostility and confrontation to acquiescence and even active assistance in the improvement of illegally formed settlements” around 1966, when Uruchurtu was removed (Cornelius 1975:31). This had two implications. First, before his removal, Uruchurtu was indirectly responsible for ensuring that Mexico City expand into the State of Mexico, adjacent to the Federal District. Since some growth was a given and since Uruchurtu prevented it in the Federal District, Mexico City spilled out into the adjacent State of Mexico, initially mostly to the east of the city center.³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ By the late-1980s, however, its attraction as a destination for internal migrants had diminished considerably (Partida Bush 2014:403, 409-11).

³¹⁰ Whereas before, rural-to-urban migrants had lived for a time in the city center’s *vecindades*, under Uruchurtu “the city’s central areas did not absorb the same number of new migrants as the more peripheral areas. And because Uruchurtu’s policies tended to discourage migrants’ location downtown, they were pushed outward, which resulted

Second, when the floodgates were opened in 1966, many of those who migrated to Mexico City were poor people who moved to squatter settlements. As Figure 6.1 shows, Uruchurtu's suppression of squatter settlements depressed the growth of the squatter population between 1952 and 1966; but after his removal, the squatter population proliferated—not only in the Federal District but also in the State of Mexico, namely in the municipalities of Ecatepec, Naucalpan, Netzahualcóyotl, and Tlalnepantla (Cornelius 1975:30)—as the growth trend recovered. Hundreds of thousands of people, known in the press as “parachuters” (*paracaidistas*), arrived from elsewhere in Mexico to begin a new urban life as squatters. With reference to Nezahualcóyotl, one journalist recounted that

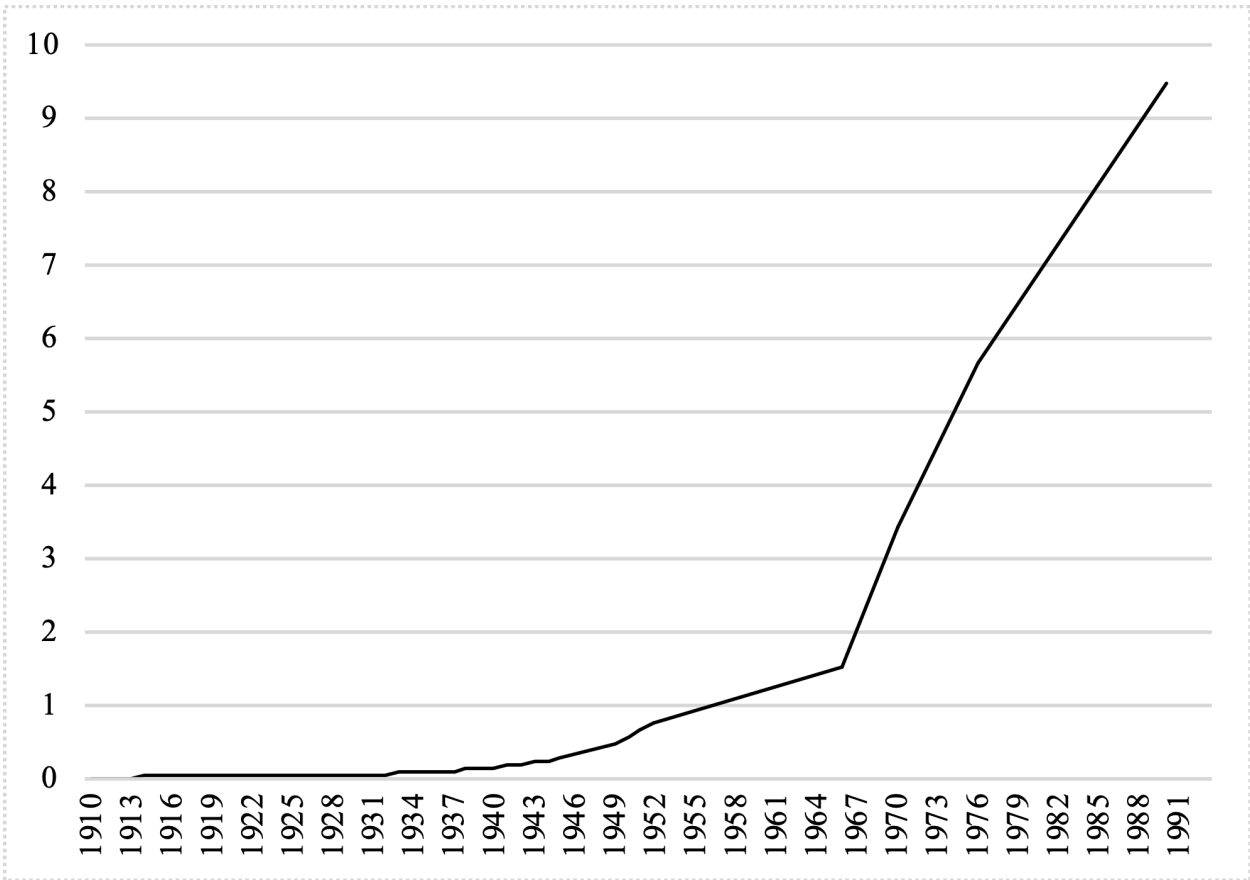
“thousands of people from different parts of the country have come here to invade properties, without there being a competent authority that can stop it. . . . [T]he leaders of grassroots organizations are promoting large-scale invasions [*paracaidismo*] . . . [E]very day entire families are seen rushing to build their houses, either with scrap materials or bricks . . . [Some people] told us that they got “their land” cheap, from 3 to 5 thousand pesos, but in no case do they give the name of the person or people selling them the land, nor the date.”³¹¹

The Mexican population increasingly converged on Mexico City.

in the spatial expansion of the [city]” (Davis 1994:134).

³¹¹ *El Día*, 7 April 1973.

Figure 6.1. Mexico City’s Squatter Population, 1910-1991 (in millions)



Sources: Cymet (1955:68-73); Gilbert (1998: table 5.1).

Note: For earlier years, the number of squatters is interpolated based on the assumption that all settlements had linear growth from the year they were established until 1952, when their respective populations were counted.

Amidst the influx of rural-to-urban migrants, factors specific to Mexico City also contributed to the proliferation of squatter settlements. Rural-to-urban migration created an outsized demand for the existing housing stock, driving up prices; this was especially the case given the longevity of restrictions on new housing developments in the Federal District. It was also the case that some of those who were born in Mexico City moved from other types of housing to squatter settlements because they were unsuccessful at attempts to retain their residences elsewhere in the city or sought to achieve home ownership through squatting.

Some analysts appeal to this multitude of factors in explaining Mexico City’s explosive growth during this time (Yee 2021:123). But some factors seem more fundamental than others. I think the foremost cause of the proliferation of Mexico City’s squatter settlements—in Nezahualcóyotl as elsewhere in the city—was surely rural-to-urban migration. As de la Rosa (1974:5) puts it, “this highly accelerated and abnormal [urban] growth is explained in the first place by significant migration from the countryside to the city. The vast majority of colonos have fled from the misery of the countryside, attracted by the city’s magnetism . . . [in search] of a job.”

Table 6.2. Origins of squatters who migrated to Mexico City (1970)

Rural-to-urban migrants From (state)	<i>Date of migration</i>					<i>Total</i>
	Through 1930	1931-1945	1946-1955	1956-1960	1961-1970	
Guanajuato	0.00%	1.27%	1.27%	3.18%	4.46%	10.19%
Hidalgo	1.91%	1.27%	1.91%	0.64%	4.46%	10.19%
Jalisco	0.64%	3.18%	7.64%	1.27%	2.55%	15.29%
Michoacán	0.64%	2.55%	0.64%	1.27%	8.28%	13.38%
Oaxaca	0.00%	0.64%	2.55%	0.64%	2.55%	6.37%
Puebla	0.00%	1.91%	2.55%	2.55%	3.18%	10.19%
Querétaro	1.91%	0.64%	1.27%	0.64%	0.00%	4.46%
Tlaxcala	0.64%	0.64%	2.55%	0.00%	0.64%	4.46%
Zacatecas	0.00%	0.00%	0.64%	0.00%	8.28%	8.92%
State of Mexico	0.00%	1.91%	1.27%	1.91%	1.91%	7.01%
Other	0.64%	0.64%	1.27%	1.91%	5.10%	9.55%
<i>Total</i>	6.37%	14.65%	23.57%	14.01%	41.40%	100.00%

Note: The survey was conducted in 1970. Of the 400 people surveyed, 157 reported origins other than Mexico City (reflected in the percentages reported above). Mexico City here includes the Federal District as well as the State of Mexico municipalities of Chimalhuacán, Ecatepec, Naucalpan, Nezahualcóyotl, and Tlalnepantla.

Source: Ferras (1977:28); data collected by Claudio Stern. Count data have been converted to percentages.

With regards to rural-to-urban migrants who became squatters in particular, as Table 6.2 shows, they seem to have hailed from many states across Mexico. No one was especially overrepresented among sender states, at least not for long. Some may have been somewhat strongly represented in certain periods (Jalisco between 1946 and 1955 and Michoacán and Zacatecas from 1961 to 1970), though the small sample size should caution us against drawing strong conclusions in this regard. Moreover, at least in Nezahualcóyotl, there does not seem to

have been any significant clustering of rural-to-urban migrants from the same place of origin in the destination urban environment (Ferras 1977:35), precluding the kind of indigenous ethnic enclaves that characterize squatter neighborhoods, for instance, in Accra (Paller 2019:79).

The Dilution Of Power

As Mexico City grew, it became beset with a conflict between older and newer generations of squatters. Mexico City's squatters were adamant in their desire to secure government recognition, for this was the pathway to residential security and the installation of urban services. Since older generations tended to have made some progress towards this goal, and since this was a long and delicate process, they tended to be concerned not to sour relations with the government. New rural-to-urban migrants sought, to the contrary, to settle open spaces and were not fussed about government perceptions in the immediate term. There was as divergence of interests between the older and newer residents, and amidst intensive urban concentration, it escalated into conflict. The between-generation conflict served, in turn, to undermine the PRI, because it divided its base and made neighborhood leaders autonomous and capable of mobilizing followers for their own ends (which were not those from which the government stood to benefit).

Between-Generation Conflict

The process of urban concentration led to an ongoing influx of inhabitants which spawned a basic conflict of interest between generations of squatters, a conflict that intensified over time. Those who settled earlier had sometimes resorted to radical measures at the outset. But with time, the initial settlers conservatized; once they had successfully settled, their goals became acquiring legal recognition of their landholdings and securing government help in equipping their neighborhoods with urban services—which, in the context of squatter settlements, as described in earlier chapters, were essentially political favors. They sought resolution to very particular problems,³¹² and did not want to appear as trouble-makers when

³¹² Such as rectification of land titles which omitted the legally-required mention of encumbrances (*gravamen*) and thus made them vulnerable to *fraccionadores*' possible default and interfered with possible future sale. See "Otra

they approached government officials looking for favors. The new residents who flooded into the area with ongoing urban concentration, in contrast, tended to favor taking action, even radical action, to acquire land as soon as possible. In this way, urban concentration created a latent conflict between generations of squatters. And as residents continued to flow into a given area, the conflict manifested in the form of between-generation conflict, and sometimes even violent confrontation between groups of squatters from each generation. The consequence was what I call “bossist mass clientelism,” which became a major factor in Mexican politics. This was particular to the Mexican case in the 1970s-1980s.

Two developments followed from between-generation conflict, both of which had important political implications. First, the very existence of conflict was enough to undermine support for the PRI; the party benefitted from unity within and cleavages between sectors (e.g., unity among workers but division between peasants and workers, or between workers and the urban poor), the former being the source of its support and the latter the source of its control. But unity amongst squatters was precisely what was impossible due to between-generation conflict. In other words, in the 1970s and 1980s, urban concentration dissolved the PRI’s support amongst the urban poor. Second, local leaders who aligned with the wave of urban concentration were able to mobilize new and aspiring residents—who were vulnerable to the opposition of existing ones—for their own ends. Since some aligned in this way and others did not, local leadership was divided on the central issue confronting the entire area and was thus not in a position to channel support behind the PRI. And as the older generation grew discontent with the direction of the process—since the influx of new and aspiring residents into their neighborhoods made their neighborhoods appear to be trouble-makers and thus undeserving of government favors—the newer generation grew vulnerable to the older one’s opposition, including violent opposition. Box 6.1 shows that such between-generation conflict was unique to the late-20th century by providing evidence it was not forthcoming in Mexico City—nor in Lima or Caracas—in the era of benevolent mass clientelism.

explotación a colonos de la Nezahualcóyotl,” *El Universal Gráfico* (13 September 1971).

Box 6.1. Comparative Counterfactual Evidence

My conclusion that urban concentration gave rise to bossist mass clientelism in late-20th century Mexico City can be further supported by making recourse to counterfactual comparative evidence showing that in the previous era and in other countries, when and where there was *less* urban concentration, between-generation conflict was not sufficient to sublate benevolent mass clientelism and give rise to neighborhood bosses.

Between-Generation Conflict in the Previous Era

There was between-generation conflict in Mexico City as early as the late-1940s, in Colonia Escuadrón 201, where urban concentration was most intensive. And it did spawn bossism. But since it never grew to the proportions it would reach from the 1960s to the 1980s, bossism did not become a major factor in Mexican politics that early. Colonia Escuadrón 201 was established in 1946;³¹³ by 1955 it had 17,500 residents (Cymet 1955:68-73)—making its growth much more rapid than colonias Moderna, Gertrudis G. Sánchez, and Emiliano Zapata, examined in Chapter 2. Between-resident conflict therefore escalated, though this was unlike most other parts of Mexico City at the time. The older generation of residents had arranged the purchase of land from private landholders, which, although not legal (since only land fully equipped with urban services was allowed to be sold for the purposes of individual residential construction), was sanctioned by the Oficina de Colonias.³¹⁴

³¹³ The neighborhood was named after Escuadrón 201 of the Mexican air force—a squadron of 300 men (Sánchez Mejorada 2001:257) which was the only part of the Mexican military to see combat in the Second World War (they fought in the Philippines on the side of the allies) (Navarro 2010:129). Some members of this squadron went on to request land in the settlement. Pedro Téllez Vargas to MAV (9 March 1948), Fernando Amilpa to MAV (11 March 1948), Rogelio Flores Zaragoza to MAV (16 March 1948), and José Luis Andrade to MAV (17 March 1948), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

³¹⁴ Petition to MAV (10 November 1948), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

As urban concentration continued, demand for land grew, and land invasions took place. This created great tension between the existing residents and the newer generation of residents. Existing residents said they “respected authority” and wanted to pay for their lots and live in peace, not create “problems for the good government that you [President Miguel Alemán] appropriately govern.” Along with his allies, neighborhood association president Arcadio Rivera Carbajal welcomed the new generation into the neighborhood. Older residents, however, protested, claiming people from public plazas, markets, streets, and so forth had been recruited—whom they described as mostly “criminals, addicts, drug dealers, thieves, robbers, killers, in sum, Mexico’s scum”—to invade the settlement, thereby creating such a ruckus that they essentially drove the older residents out.³¹⁵ Newer residents were characterized as “riffraff” who assaulted women and children.³¹⁶ A group of existing residents denounced them and claimed that 700 land invaders had descended upon the settlement and rustled the existing ones from their houses at all hours of the night.³¹⁷

The newer generation of residents rallied to Rivera Carbajal for protection, allowing him to evict residents who refused to pay inscription fees and monthly neighborhood association dues.³¹⁸ Rivera Carbajal was therefore able to exercise local control. In this he prefigured the local leaders who emerged in the 1960s and 1970s on the basis of Mexico’s explosive urban concentration. He differed from his successors, however, in that Rivera Carbajal seems to have been something of a PRI team player: what was perhaps the final police intervention against him took place in the middle of a rally for a

³¹⁵ Petition to MAV (10 November 1948), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

³¹⁶ Aurora Urzúa de Escobar to MAV (3 December 1947), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

³¹⁷ Petition to MAV (4 December 1947), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

³¹⁸ Juana Medina, Angela Onaz, and Manuela Larros to MAV (31 October 1948), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

congressional candidate running on the PRI ticket,³¹⁹ at which time he was arrested. Meanwhile, the major dispute between the older and newer residents concerned the amount to be paid for the lots. The land was expropriated. However, due to a supreme court ruling and Oficina de Colonias negotiations, the older residents came around to an agreement to purchase their plots from the landowner for the amount of 12 pesos per square meter. The leaders of the new residents pursued further negotiations, and they had the pressure of *paracaidistas* to their advantage. The Carbajal group seems to have secured the price of 3 or 4 pesos per square meter.³²⁰ (They also seem to have skimmed rent by selling this land to colonos for 5 pesos per square meter.³²¹) Rivera Carbajal and allies thus prevailed against the older generation. They formed a new neighborhood association³²² and were powerful enough to get Miguel Alemán to intervene in the Oficina de Colonias to sell Rivera Carbajal and allies lots.³²³

Between-Generation Conflict in Other Cases

There were also between-generation conflicts in mid-20th century Lima and Caracas,³²⁴ but because urban concentration was relatively limited, these

³¹⁹ Rito Nacional Mexicano Muy Respetable Gran Logia de Estado Anáhuac to MAV (2 June 1949), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155.

³²⁰ Asociación Pro Mejoramiento Colonia Escuadrón 201 (Arturo L. Velasco et al.) to MAV, (28 October [1948]), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

³²¹ Juana Medina et al. to MAV 31 October 1948), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

³²² Arturo L. Velasco Gil and Manuel M. Canul to MAV (10 December 1947), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

³²³ Asociación Pro Mejoramiento Colonia Escuadrón 201 (Arturo L. Velasco, Trinidad Riquelme de Canul, and Arcadio Rivera Carbajal) to MAV (28 October [1948]), AGN(M)/MAV/Exp. 418.2/155 [Escuadrón 201].

³²⁴ There is also some evidence that between-generation conflict characterized urban growth in Quito. As the city expanded to envelop traditional peasant communities, older *comunero* residents tended to resist urban growth and tended to try to retain their traditional lifestyles while the younger generation sought to take advantage of the opportunities it presented by, for example, subdividing and selling land (Horn 2019:83-84).

conflicts did not escalate as they did in late-20th century Mexico City, and thus did not produce bossism. An episode from Barrio de Leticia, Rímac, illustrates the effects of between-generation conflicts amidst moderate levels of urban concentration in Lima. Residents had set aside a space in which they planned to build a school after raising enough money and securing some matching government support. But after ascending to the neighborhood association presidency, Pedro Zavala Ponce allowed some new residents to settle the space. Older residents grew outraged at what a government official characterized as Zavala's treatment of the settlement as his personal "game preserve" (*vedado*). Zavala was the benefactor of the new generation of squatters. But since urban concentration was only moderate (the number of new residents against whom older residents protested were relatively few), the divergent interests between the older and the newer generation of residents did not sharpen to the point of conflict. The older residents did not meet the newer ones with aggression, the newer ones did not need to rally to Zavala for protection, and the mobilizational capacity that accrued to him was negligible.³²⁵

An episode from Barrio Cumbres de Santa Ana, Antímano, is especially telling of between-generation conflicts in Caracas. Four families invaded a piece of land there that had been set aside for a kindergarten and a water tank. The incumbent neighborhood association leader, Evangelista Ruiz Rodríguez, led the older residents in an initiative to eject the new residents and recover the space. Pación de Jesús Roa aligned with the newer residents, as their benefactor. These vying leaders competed with one another to collect signatures for opposing petitions and to rally support. But since the invasion was relatively small, they were only ever able to do so on a circumscribed scale: Ruiz secured the support of the leaders of two neighboring settlements and 374 signatories to his petition; Roa secured the support of a vying leader of one of the same neighboring settlements and the signatures of 10 people who agreed

³²⁵ AGN(P)/PL/Particulares/Legajo 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.40/Exp. 131-8-4 [Rímac].

that the plan to build works in the location in question should be suspended— which would allow the new residents to stay. Since the amount of urban concentration was only moderate (the new residents were relatively few in number), the divergence of interests between the older and the newer generation did not escalate into an open conflict, much less drive the newer generation into Roa’s arms for protection. This left Roa, despite being the benefactor of the new generation, without the ability to mobilize followers for his own ends.³²⁶

There is good reason to think that had urban concentration been as extensive in Lima and Caracas as it was in Mexico City by the 1970s that it would have spawned neighborhood bosses. Between-generation conflicts were present in both Lima (Degregori et al. [1986] 2014:99) and Caracas. (Karst et al. 1973:15, 52). But since urban concentration never exceeded moderate levels, the arrival of newer residents never posed an existential threat to older ones, and allowed the latter to eventually accept newer residents into their settlements. Had urban concentration been more extensive, though, the older generation would probably have been less abiding, triggering the between-generation conflict that sublated needs-fulfilling neighborhood association leaders and gave rise to neighborhood bosses in late-20th century Mexico City.

In late-20th century Mexico City, this conflict made new and aspiring residents especially receptive to mobilizing behind a benefactor. On this basis, local leaders who aligned with the leading edge of the wave of urban concentration gained followers. What they did with this varied. Several used followers to control turf (evicting those who disobeyed them) and extract rent (for membership initiation and monthly dues, as well as for land itself), as we will see in Chapters 7 and 9; I call these actors “urban bosses.” Others used their ability to mobilize

³²⁶ AGSCM(T)/Caja 446, Sindicatura Municipal, Asistencia Jurídica (AJ)/Exp. 1068, EVANGELISTA RUIZ, DRA. YOLANDA DEL NOGAL, 1972 [Antímano].

followers independent of relationships they held with partisan political patrons to not only peel support away from the PRI but channel it behind the leftist opposition, as we will see in Chapters 8 and 9. And still others used followers to launch into other ventures, like running a minibus syndicate and running for office elsewhere in Mexico, as we will see in Chapter 9. All of these manifestations of autonomy undermined the government.

Late-20th century Mexico City's urban bosses constituted "a sort of government within a government, controlled by a single dominant individual who is not *formally* accountable either to those residing in the community under his control or to external authorities," but who nonetheless had "the de facto authority to make decisions that are binding on the community under his control, as well as informal police powers and powers of taxation" (Cornelius 1975:141). As informal settlements grew, finite urban spaces were progressively filled. Older residents tended to oppose the arrival of newer ones, sometimes violently. Initially seeking to fulfill their needs and now also in search of protection, newer residents rallied to neighborhood association leaders who agreed to allow them to settle. This gave pro-growth leaders the ability to mobilize followers for their own ends, allowing them to strip the PRI's base of support.

How much political leverage did urban bosses have? A contrast with social movement leaders is illuminating. The citywide Unión de Colonias Populares del Valle de México (UCP-VM)—which had affiliates in dozens of *colonias* across all of Mexico City, which was affiliated with the Coordinadora Nacional del Movimiento Urbano Popular (CONAMUP) which had organizations in cities across Mexico, and which had relationships with several political parties—was not even able to meet with President López Portillo's legal advisor, Emilio Calles, in 1979, which had been one of its major goals (Ramírez Sáiz 1986:160). In contrast, the urban bosses examined below had such meetings somewhat routinely.

Political Elites Respond

Neighborhood leaders' autonomous mobilization capacity and local control had a large impact on subsequent Mexican politics. Neighborhood leaders are thought to have been crucial in propagating support for the Mexican PRI during its 71 years in power (Knight 2005:31; Middlebrook 2009:413-14; Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández 2005:244-46). By the 1980s, though, their loyalty was less in evidence they often aligned with opposition parties (Gutmann 2002:162-

63, 173). The urban poor swung into support for the new political opposition by 1988 (Barberán, Cárdenas, López Monjardin, and Zavala 1988:23-24; Haber 2006:81). And the PRI hemorrhaged support, and hemorrhaged votes. As Table 6.3 shows, the hemorrhaging was registered in 1988, when the PRI received only 27.53% of the Federal District vote.

Table 6.3. PRI and opposition party presidential candidate vote returns at the national and Federal District levels, 1958-1988

Year	<i>PRI</i>				<i>Opposition</i>			
	National		Federal District		National		Federal District	
1958	6,767,754	90.56%	874,620	79.88%	705,303	9.44%	220,316	20.12%
1964	8,368,446	89.00%	1,061,859	74.86%	1,034,337	11.00%	356,550	25.14%
1970	11,902,150	85.96%	1,567,509	69.23%	1,944,636	14.04%	696,651	30.77%
1976	16,462,938	93.50%	2,210,573	79.22%	1,143,934	6.50%	579,786	20.78%
1982	16,744,206	74.44%	1,977,179	55.75%	5,749,790	25.56%	1,569,360	44.25%
1988	9,687,926	50.60%	791,531	27.53%	9,457,828	49.40%	2,083,474	72.47%

Source: Becerra Chávez (2005: tables 4, 6).

Note: Percentages reported by Becerra Chávez appear inaccurate for all years except 1958. Percentages reported here are calculated from the absolute numbers reported by Becerra Chávez. The final digit for national PRI votes was missing for 1970; I assume it was zero (0).

As an indication of the sense among political elites that support was waning, in 1966 Díaz Ordaz undertook to reorganize the labor sector of the PRI by establishing the Congreso del Trabajo, in which he grouped government workers and CTM representatives who were tasked with setting the PRI’s social and development policy (Davis 1994:190). Workers also grew discontent, especially with increasing inequality and mounting unemployment; more and more workers began participating in the movement for independent unions in the late-1960s (Davis 1994:193). In sum, by the late-1960s, PRI leaders could clearly see that they faced a crisis of declining support.

The government’s fate was sealed in the 1970s, when the political elite did everything in its power to sustain PRI rule. President Luis Echeverría (1970-1976) was a novel hybrid who tried, but failed, to sustain the PRI in power. He “was not clearly identified with any clear political tendency in the party” (Davis 1994:193). Indeed, the PRI tapped him “precisely because

he was not fully wedded to any one team or well-articulated strategy” (Davis 1994:194).³²⁷ Echeverría metamorphosed from bureaucrat to politician upon hitting the campaign trail.³²⁸ In other words, “the Echeverría Mexicans came to know was unrecognizable from the fiend many believed responsible for Tlatelolco” (Muñoz and Kiddle 2010:9).

Echeverría, along with his successor José López Portillo (1976-1982), represented a new approach to politics which broke from the past tradition of the PRI (Loeza 2008:294, 335). Conceptualized in terms of the political field, they represented the merger of *cardenista* and *alemanista* wings of the PRI. This did away with the polarity structuring the political field, but it did not for that make everyone happy. Echeverría’s macroeconomic development strategy, called “Shared Development” (*Desarrollo Compartido*), sought growth through redistribution along with government intervention to support national industry (Davis 1994:194). This represented a hybridization of *cardenismo* (redistribution) and *alemanismo* (developmentalism).³²⁹ Several scholars argue that Echeverría used economic concessions and public spending to shore up popular support (Aviña 2010:115). This poses a challenge to rational choice-theoretic scholars’ thesis: if it were patronage resources that fortified clientelism, Echeverría’s term would have been a period of increasing support. Instead, he and José López Portillo spent desperately, seeming to believe the thesis, but support nevertheless steadily declined, proving both rational choice-theoretic social scientists and politicians wrong about the mechanics of political support.

³²⁷ As Yee (2021:140) summarizes, “Echeverría’s platform consisted of four major components, which can be summarized as a national housing institute for workers, a program to regularize lands that had been illegally occupied or informally settled by city dwellers, a policy of regional decentralization aimed at decreasing the overconcentration of industries and resources in Mexico City, and a legal framework to support reforms in territorial policy and land speculation. That legal framework was later established in the 1976 Ley de Asentamientos Humanos (Law of Human Settlements).”

³²⁸ Associated in students’ and intellectuals’ minds with the 1968 student massacre due to his role as Secretary of State under Díaz Ordaz, he pivoted hard during his campaign, putting on amiable airs: “The Echeverría that citizens came to know over the next six years did not drink or smoke. He owned a modest home, he did not involve himself in extramarital affairs (that we know of), and did not have sports cars. He talked, and talked a lot, but he also took the time to listen. He was notorious for his lengthy meetings because he allowed citizens to say all that they needed or wanted to say without interruptions. Echeverría did not delegate. He preferred youth to experience, which was evident in the mass bureaucratization process of his administration, which largely benefitted the middle class. He lowered the voting age to eighteen and promoted young army officers. Echeverría did not wear fine suits. He preferred the more casual guayabera and jacket.” (Muñoz and Kiddle 2010:8)

³²⁹ His efforts to champion peasant rights per se were attributable in large part to the fact that Lázaro Cárdenas died during his campaign, removing the peasantry’s highest-profile advocate and leaving Echeverría to champion peasant interests himself (Davis 1994:200).

Against a backdrop of declining support, Echeverría's political approach was characterized by sweeping institutional reforms. He called for a "democratic opening" (*apertura democrática*) (Davis 1994:196). The government implemented an important set of political reforms starting in 1973 which included the registration of a number of new political parties, mostly on the left. But José López Portillo nevertheless ran unopposed, so deep was the political disillusionment. In 1977, in an attempt to elicit more participation in the political system, the onerous barriers for new party registration were lowered and restrictions on existing parties were relaxed; the PCM, for example, was legalized for the first time since 1949 (Greene 2007:84-86). This was, in large measure, "a call for increased political participation of all popular and middle classes in governance" (Davis 1994:197). Meanwhile, Echeverría lowered the voting age and the age qualification for holding congressional and senatorial office, recruited younger professionals to his administration,³³⁰ and made a number of important local institutional reforms. In 1970, the government passed the Organic Law of the Federal District, which called for the formation of multiclass neighborhood representation in the form of community boards (*juntas de vecinos*). The government hoped that "citizens would be satisfied with the opportunities for local representation" (Ward 1990:86). Had this been a success, the PRI would have had a new lease of life among the middle classes. In part because the new system gave almost all classes opportunities to express their grievances, it led to increasing emphasis on housing and community development (Davis 2002:239-40). These were areas in which the government could not perform well, however, because squatter settlements grew exponentially.

Students of the politics of the urban poor under Echeverría have vastly divergent interpretations of the government's objectives as regards Echeverría's political reforms. Writing with lots of hindsight, Yee (2021:121) offers an idealistic interpretation: "Echeverría's official discourse influenced ordinary citizens to participate in the affairs of the day." Writing in real time, de la Rosa (1974:19) furnishes a cynical one: "The 'new policy' consisted in attracting the leaders through promises, economic rewards, and public positions in order to control the movement." My view is that both interpretations capture part of the picture. But because these interpretations are emic, adopting the point of view of specific participants, they fail to capture

³³⁰ Echeverría also funded hundreds of students to study abroad, in part to remove radical students from the domestic political fray (Centeno 1994:152).

the features of the social configuration as a whole—the PRI’s doldrums—which involved growing polarization amongst the urban poor and thus provided grounds for *both* of these divergent assessments. The within-sector unity and between-sector divisions from which the PRI had benefitted politically were undergoing severe strain. The government was trying to respond as best it could to preserve the party’s preeminence.

But the decline and fall of the PRI was unavoidable amidst the wave of urban concentration that hit Mexico City from the late-1960s to the early-1980s. Neighborhood leaders, who grew powerful by surfing the new wave of urban concentration, peeled support away from the PRI, undermining the prospect for continuity and provoking political elites’ desperate attempts to reverse their decline by recourse to the *junta* system and other institutional reforms. But as the next three chapters show, an entirely different set of dynamics were at play—making institutional innovations so much whistling in the wind—that undermined continuity and suggested great uncertainty for the future of the party it had sustained.

Chapter 7. History Does not Repeat: The Eclipse of Party

Control in Nezahualcóyotl

On 12 September 1973, Jesús Horta Guerrero, leader of the Unión General de Obreros y Campesinos de México (UGOCM),³³¹ led a group of people to the Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización to demand the regularization of the lots they possessed. Protesters held a banner reading: “We demand the abolition of the State of Mexico because of lack of protections in Netzahualcóyotl City.” As a group, then, they made two seemingly incompatible demands simultaneously. First, they demanded legal ownership of property. Second, they decried the organization that upholds property rights: the government.³³² This seeming contradiction serves to show how the sociopolitical dynamics issuing from large-scale urban concentration obeyed a logic all their own.

Earlier in the year, President Echeverría had decreed the creation of a land trust, FINEZA, by then slated to seize all of the lands in Nezahualcóyotl that had been sold illegally and/or invaded so that they could be legalized and provisioned with urban services (discussed below). But because FINEZA wanted to charge residents to install urban services, it brought existing tensions between older and newer generations of residents to the surface, leading them to erupt in open conflict. On the one hand, some had already paid for services when they bought lots from illegal land developers (fraccionadores), and these residents were often unhappy with the government’s plan. On the other, those who had arrived later, often having participated in

³³¹ According to the Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, Horta Guerrero was part of a communist conspiracy, his UGOCM being among the groups that were “organized, directed, and subsidized by communist elements.” SEDENA/Exp. 37/Folios 4-5 (17 October 1972).

³³² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1153A/Exp. 2/Folio 481 (12 September 1973).

land invasions, tended to be amenable to FINEZA and to paying these charges, as they had not already made (as many) outlays for this purpose. In short, the community had divergent latent interests, according to generation. And amidst the ongoing influx of people into the area, these interests became manifest, especially with reference to FINEZA.

By the time of this rally, the community in “Neza,” as Nezahualcōyotl is popularly called, was deeply divided. Almost everyone wanted legalization; Horta’s demand therefore resonated. But some opposed the government’s terms, viewing them as too onerous; the anti-government slogan therefore also resonated. Both resonated because urban concentration had given rise to a cleavage. And amidst the government’s promise to intervene albeit with strings attached, it was logical to react in two opposing ways; the existence of this cleavage, which had now been brought to a head, made it logical for the same rally to call for legal ownership of property and abolition of the organization that protects property: both demands were expressions of Mexico City’s popular will.

Introduction

Neza seceded from Chimalhuacán between April 1963 and January 1964 at the instigation of pro-independence local notables (Aréchiga Torres 2012:19-20, 32-36). It gained municipal autonomy in January 1967 (Ferras 1977:12). Both before and after secession, Nezahualcōyotl and Chimalhuacán shared a great deal in urbanistic terms; indeed, as late as 1979, their respective municipal leaders were unsure of precisely where the border between the two municipalities lay.³³³ But their separation in the 1960s gave rise to distinct local governments with which neighborhood leaders interfaced and interacted, making them sufficiently different to focus on Nezahualcōyotl in this chapter—even though the same wave of urban concentration swept across both.

Nezahualcōyotl’s *colonias* grew in number from three in the 1950s, to 13 by around 1953, to 33 by 1960 (Aréchiga Torres 2012:24, 25), when, together with Chimalhuacán (of which it was then still a part), it had a mere 76,740 inhabitants (Schteingart 1989: cuadro 31). Between 1970 and 1980, Neza’s population exploded, growing from 651,000 to 1,341,230

³³³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 10/Folios 2-3 (25 May 1979).

people (Schteingart 1989: table 31); some estimate more, putting the 1981 population figure at 3 million (Hellman 1988:120). In any respect, it is probably no exaggeration to say that it was “infamous as the largest slum in the Western Hemisphere” (Hellman 1988:119). Indeed, growing at a rate of 10,000 to 15,000 people per month in the mid-1970s, it nearly equaled or perhaps even surpassed the size of Mexico’s second and third largest cities (Guadalajara and Monterrey, respectively) (de la Rosa 1974:5; Ferras 1977:12). It was unprecedented in Mexican history (Aréchiga Torres 2012:25)—and, perhaps, in world history.

Background

The initial urbanization of Vaso de Texcoco, in the late-1940s and early-1950s, took the form of provisional land invasions. They were carried out in a context marked by two important features. First, President Manuel Ávila Camacho had indicated in 1946 that he would not consider the formation of *colonias proletarias* a crime, insofar as *colonos* took charge of subsequent urbanization. Second, Ávila Camacho had also frozen rents, which disincentivized the private sector from repairing the inner-city multifamily boarding houses (*casas de vecindad*) and from building new rental housing, making the rental market particularly inhospitable to the urban poor (Aréchiga Torres 2012:23; de la Rosa 1974:8). In the mid-20th century, the government had also prohibited new subdivisions in DF, causing the price of parcels and building materials to skyrocket. People who needed a place to live reconciled themselves to invading land outside of DF, in Mexico State. Governor Alfredo del Mazo Vélez (1945-1951) was receptive to colonization. During the 1950s, the area began to urbanize through two processes. First, groups of *pobladores* formed organizations and led invasions. Not all the invasions were bottom-up affairs; some were orchestrated by landowners interested in subdividing and selling land (*fraccionadores*) who sought to take advantage of demand. Thus, second, Neza also urbanized because *fraccionadores* “promoted the invasion of a piece of land they owned among people in great need, then made the case to the authorities that the invaders did not want to leave the place, so [supposedly] in order to avoid total loss, they reached a deceptive agreement to sell them the lots without any [public] services installed” (Aréchiga Torres 2012:24).

Whether or not they participated in a fake invasion, those who purchased land from *fraccionadores* often suffered scams or terrible deals. In some cases, *fraccionadores* promised to install services but never did so (Ferras 1977:13). In other cases, *fraccionadores* revised contracts to excuse themselves from the (legal) obligation to provision residential lots with service infrastructure, like potable water and sewage. Unlike bona fide invaders, these colonos paid

“payments that ranged from 10 to 15 pesos per month; whoever had 650 pesos laying around would get a 250-square-meter lot. In any case, the subdivider won . . . [T]he contracts were always drawn up to give the seller an advantage, as clauses such as the following were included: ‘we are forced to sell this land as-is, without services of any kind, such that all expenses that may arise will be covered by the buyer’. It was an abuse of poor people.” (Aréchiga Torres 2012:24-25)

The land-developer capitalists, *fraccionadores*, profited handsomely from the urban growth.³³⁴ They did not, however, urbanize these habitats. *Fraccionadores* made huge sums of money. The local government also got in on the action. Since *fraccionadores* had failed to provide services, it led to a situation in which “corrupt officials (or alleged officials) charged fees of 100 to 300 pesos for services that ‘were going to be installed soon’” (de la Rosa 1974:9). The opportunisms of *fraccionadores*, on the one hand, and of local politicians, on the other, overlapped. Since *fraccionadores* had failed to install urban services etc. (Ferras 1977:15), squatters were sitting ducks politically as well. They had to approach political elites for remedial aid. Starting in the 1950s, the local government sought to capitalize politically on Neza’s squatters. First, Governor Salvador Sánchez Colín (1951-1957) sometimes went to the *colonias* of Neza to proselytize. Neza residents thought the local government abused its power. But what they resented most was “the complicity that the city council had with the developers” (de la Rosa 1974:18).

Residents’ organizations date to the 1950s. By 1952, *colonos* organized the Federación de Colonos del Vaso de Texcoco, one of the first real attempts to secure urbanization works from the state government and from the municipality of Chimalhuacán of which it was still a part (Aréchiga Torres 2012:29). The Federación did not last long. But its members formed other organizations, which “undertook various initiatives by approaching the authorities to promote community development” (Aréchiga Torres 2012:30). In the 1960s, new organizations formed,

³³⁴ For example, the *fraccionadores* of the Auroras and Colonia La Esperanza had purchased the land for one centavo per square meter and resold it for more than 20 pesos (Aréchiga Torres 2012:32).

but they were mostly related to secession. Alberto Gayou Braun was especially influential, organizing both a Federación de Colonos and an Asociación General de Colonos, and then disbanding the Federación and establishing an organization that came to be known as the Unión de Fuerzas Pro Municipio de las Colonias del Vaso de Texcoco, which served as a political trampoline and was eventually absorbed into the municipal branch of the PRI (Aréchiga Torres 2012:33-36).

The Movimiento Restaurador De Colonos

The Movimiento Restaurador de Colonos (MRC) organized a campaign for *colonos* to boycott paying the *fraccionadores* in order to cause a disruption significant enough to lead the Mexican government to expropriate and give residents the land and to equip it with the legally-required urban services then still lacking for many residents (Yee 2021:119). It rallied support by decrying the *fraccionadores* as thieves.³³⁵ Jesuit student Martín de la Rosa recounts its origins as follows:

“The motivation was very varied: some settlers saw a comfortable solution to their problems, others sought revenge against land developers; while some fought for greater justice for the people, the opportunists pursued their own interests. . . . The legal basis for their argument was that the developers were not the rightful landowners, but the community members of Chimalhuacán were, or they were national lands held by the Secretariat of National Heritage [Secretaría del Patrimonio Nacional] . . . They demanded the expropriation and jailing of the illegal land developers for the fraudulent sale of the nation’s land. The expropriation would make it possible for the colonos to buy lots from the government at a fairer price.” (de la Rosa 1974:19)

Since its formation under Artemio Mora Lozada in July 1969, the MRC’s central demand was “for the federal government to expropriate Ciudad Neza’s land from private land developers” (Yee 2021:126). As they explained in their complaint to the attorney general, their reasoning was as follows. The *fraccionador*, Aurora S.A., did not have legal ownership rights over the land. But it nevertheless sold parcels to “settlers from all the *colonias* that make up Netzahualcóyotl” for between 14,000 and 28,000 pesos, with downpayments of 554 and 560 pesos and monthly payments of 124 and 160 pesos, respectively. After they bought the land, *colonos* realized that the contracts did not say that Aurora S.A. is the “owner of the plots of land

³³⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1174A/Exp. 2/Folio 534 (2 December 1970).

that the company sold us”; *colonos* claimed that the lands were, instead, publicly-owned. And, they reasoned, since it was illegal for third parties to sell publicly-owned lands, Aurora S.A. had no right to sell them. Thus, the *colonos* stopped making payments to the *fraccionadores*.³³⁶

As reprisal for initiating legal action against Aurora S.A., *colonos* were thrown out onto the street. *Colonos* therefore asked the attorney general to return the land to the national authorities, and then to propose to the Mexican President that the land be given to “the settlers . . . living in the municipality of Netzahualcoyotl . . . to partially resolve the housing problem that is so dire among poor people.” They did not restrict this request to Aurora S.A. lands; they demanded the same for the Alejandro Romero, Raul Romero, Evolución, La Perla, and Ampliación La Perla subdivisions, noting that, in the latter three, *fraccionadores* also “currently they are threatening to kick out the *colonos*.”³³⁷

Yee argues that when they opted to organize a payment boycott, the MRC “captured the imagination of several young men on the fringes of local politics,” and proceeded to form a 23-person executive committee which included Odón Madariaga Cruz, Rogelio Vargas Soriano, and Ángel García Bravo” (Yee 2021:126). Yee summarizes the MRC’s initial growth:

“The MRC began small, organizing through the quotidian activities of residents, in marketplaces, bus stops, churches, and bars. Soon its organizers were a regular and visible force in Ciudad Neza’s neighborhoods, rolling slowly down unpaved streets in pickup trucks with megaphones and flyers, holding rallies, knocking on doors, and organizing neighborhood meetings at night” (Yee 2021:130).

The MRC’s “daily activities consisted of holding neighborhood meetings, collecting lot payments, writing press releases, and building alliances with shopkeepers, bus companies, and lawyers. They remained in close contact with Juan Ugarte, a director at the Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización (DAAC) and the main person in charge of the land investigation” (Yee 2021:136). Meanwhile, “In private correspondences with Carlos Hank, Ugarte assured the governor that he had obtained verification, using four records on file in the public registry and five presidential decrees published in the Diario Oficial, that most of the land

³³⁶ For descriptions of the Nezahualcáyotl boycott campaign, which started in July 1969, see Vélez-Ibañez (1983:102-22, 131) and Montaña (1979:149-50).

³³⁷ Denuncia from MRC against *fraccionador* “Aurora S.A.” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1144/Exp. 1/Folios 162-69 (20 December 1970).

in Ciudad Neza (8,819 hectares or 21,792 acres) was communal or federal property” (Yee 2021:136).

Due to the collusion between local government officials and *fraccionadores*, the payment boycott represented not only opposition to *fraccionadores*, but also a political rupture with the local government and the PRI. As de la Rosa summarizes:

“The immediate consequence of this situation has been the lack of popular support for the government and the official party at election time. One manifestation of this is the notorious weakness of the traditional organizations for popular recruitment: the municipal league of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the National Confederation of Popular Organizations (CNOP), and the National Peasant Confederation (CNC). Local political life has escaped these constraints.” (De la Rosa 1974:18)

The rupture brought repression.

The Police

The police reaction to the MRC’s boycott brought the struggle to a crossroads. When a single mother was evicted from her home by the police, Odón Madariaga and Ángel García Bravo led a crowd of 500 people to reclaim the land. Madariaga later recounted:

“They left two cops guarding the door . . . 500 people came and we ran toward the police with rocks and clubs. We said to the woman: “Don’t go. You are going to keep living in your house. We will defend you.” We put her furniture and things back into the house and stood guard out front. The police disappeared. That was like a miracle. In 15 days we got thousands of members.” (Quoted in Benítez 1975:89)

Having survived this important trial, the MRC continued to organize. They were jailed, but leaders did not stop; they mobilized thousands to protest in front of the presidential palace, yelling, “if you don’t remove our [local government] leaders, we’ll come in there to remove them ourselves” (Benítez 1975:90). In November 1970, MRC leaders called upon residents to prevent government authorities from imprisoning its members and to defend land—which they claimed was public—that they occupied without paying *fraccionadores*.³³⁸

Yee continues:

“By the end of 1970, moral certitude based on legal rights was being translated into collective political action. In December 1970, the MRC held a rally attended by 900 people in front of its offices in Colonia Metropolitana. People in the crowd carried signs that read, “The problems of Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl can be resolved in only one way—

³³⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1174A/Exp. 2/Folio 646 (30 November 1970).

EXPROPRIATION!” and “The fraccionadores are the Enemy of the People.” Speakers appealed to the crowd to stop making payments to the fraccionadores and praised president Echeverría for his courage to stand with the people.” (Yee 2021:132, note omitted)

In August 1971, the Concejo of the MRC, led by Odón Madariaga, went to the press to report the municipal police’s abuses, among which were that they took *colonos* who would not pay them into custody, tortured them, and extracted statements about who was to blame for their failure to comply with the racket. They said that because they routinely reported the local government’s abuses to President Echeverría’s office, mayor Barquín Díaz (1970-1972) accused them of being agitators and promoting disorder when, they said, all they wanted was for their constitutional rights to be upheld.³³⁹ *Fraccionadores* kept up their defensive game; they dropped anti-MRC flyers from airplanes and bulldozed numerous houses, including that of Vargas Soriano (Yee 2021:128). In November, the CE-MRC “led hundreds of angry residents to burn down the land developers’ collection booths”—booths that had been set up at various places in Neza to collect land payments—using “Molotov cocktails and crowbars” (Yee 2021:138, 139).³⁴⁰

But repression continued. At an MRC rally of about 600 people, organized to pay homage to Benito Juárez, a fight broke out between *colonos* and two members of the Policía Judicial. According to Odón Madariaga, Rogelio Vargas Soriano, and Eulalio Barragán, the two cops on the scene began to provoke *colonos* and threaten them with their guns, leading the *colonos* to disarm the cops, which led the latter to request backup from the municipal police, who sent 20 cops that clashed with the *colonos*, resulting in injuries on both the police’s and *colonos*’ sides. According to a Policía Judicial spokesperson, one of the rally’s speakers encouraged the *colonos* to attack the police, *colonos* attacked them and threw rocks at a nearby patrol car, the car retreated and called for backup, the fight then broke out, and the municipal police proceeded to rescue the two Policía Judicial agents and retreat. He said that while the two Policía Judicial and five municipal police were badly injured, the *colonos* were not.³⁴¹

The local government’s hostility stemmed from the fact that they, and those who collaborated with them, were heavily involved in land racketeering and extortion (Montaño

³³⁹ Hugo Sánchez O., “Denuncian atropellos de la policía de Nezahualcóyotl,” *El Día* (30 August 1971).

³⁴⁰ Levenson (2022:107) recounts similar hostility to electoral officials in Cape Town, South Africa.

³⁴¹ “Zafarrancho entre colonos y policías en Nezahualcóyotl,” *El Día* (22 March 1972).

1976:149). In February 1971, *colonos* accused mayor Gonzalo Barquín Díaz and his collaborators—Eugenio Rosales Gutiérrez, a tortilla factory owner at the shadowy margins of the local government, who was later a federal congressperson (1979-1982 and 1985-1988) (Camp 2011:1130, 1145), and Arturo Sánchez Sánchez, their non-government partner—of charging them various illicit fees. Sánchez Sánchez extorted them so that he could organize parties for Rosales Gutiérrez, who aspired to the mayorship. Mayor Barquín Díaz, who was working together with Rosales Gutiérrez, also charged *colonos*, alleging that payments went to fund the sewage and water services that the state government (not the municipality) had been installing. *Colonos* typically made these extortion payments, for if they tried not to, they would be pressured to do so. The mayor also increased the amount of these extortion payments from 500 to 750 pesos, and required from those who had already completed payment that they also pay the difference between the original amount and the new rate (i.e., 250 pesos).³⁴²

Municipal authorities threatened to embargo lots if residents did not pay for sewage and potable water services, even though residents typically did not have these services. One neighborhood group pointed out the irony of the situation: “In many neighborhoods, complaints about lack of drinking water and drainage have been occurring for years and nobody pays attention; however, now that it is about charging, they do remember all the neighborhoods.” For his part, tortilla factory owner Rosales Gutiérrez had a “group of gunmen called ‘the forty’ who have a credential as assistants to the deputy and are in charge of intimidating their opponents.”³⁴³ *Colonos* also alleged that municipal authorities jailed them illegally.³⁴⁴

Colonos had to pay these racketeers rent. In July 1971, a group of *colonos* led by Fortunio Méndez went to the press to report that Rosales Gutiérrez and a lawyer, Óscar Loya Ramírez, charged the approximately 3,500 *colonos* in Ciudad del Lago 200 pesos per month, alleging that he was making these collections on behalf of the municipal government. They said that they had never been given receipts for their payments, nor been told how the municipal authorities used the money. The municipality repressed and intimidated those who refused to comply, including

³⁴² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1144/Exp. 1/Folio 80 (15 February 1971).

³⁴³ Hugo Sánchez, “¡El colmo! Quieren cobrar por servicios que no existen a colonos de Nezahualcóyotl,” *El Día* (20 September 1971).

³⁴⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1174A/Exp. 2/Folio 594 (26 December 1970).

by using “physical aggression, the destruction of the houses they build, even the imprisonment of the most rebellious people through the formulation of false charges,” and “almost daily there are violent acts provoked by the municipal police, who have the ‘green light’ to commit outrages against residents,” as a reporter put it. *Colonos* said that the extortion and repression was in response to residents’ formation of a neighborhood organization, and that the municipal police obstructed them from participating in voluntary labor drives to complete projects for the collective good, like filling potholes.³⁴⁵

The Political Significance of the MRC

What was the political significance of the MRC for Mexican politics? Several students of Mexico have offered interpretations. The first is idealistic. Montaña argues that, to orchestrate its boycott of payments, the MRC organized block-level committees, comprising an organization that was “beyond the PRI’s control” (Montaña 1976:149). Yee builds from this view by arguing that the MRC represented a formidable non-government political authority that put part of Mexico City on the verge of a dual-power situation. He notes that it grew

“common to see armed guards in front of their offices and at the home of Artemio Mora Lozada. Neighborhood disputes were settled by the MRC’s ad hoc tribunals, and monthly payments were collected by subcommittee leaders. . . . More than a social movement, [by the early 1970s] the MRC was beginning to establish an alternative authority and parallel bodies of informal governance.” (Yee 2021:132)

While Yee does not sugar-coat the MRC, noting its “caciquismo” (Yee 2021:125), his balance sheet is positive: he views it as the principal impetus behind the massive regularization initiative in Neza, which he views as a net gain.

The second interpretation, in contrast, is cynical. De la Rosa makes a damning indictment of the MRC, viewing it as internally incoherent and hopelessly coopted by the PRI. By its height in 1974, he argues,

“Politically speaking, the MRC is totally divided and has lost its independence. Ideologically, it never had that independence, since it always sought a solution from the President or from the state government. They complied with the axiom of Mexican politics: ‘beyond the PRI is the political wilderness’. . . . The leaders . . . came to like the business and are [in 1974] already as corrupt as their former enemies.” (de la Rosa 1977:20)

³⁴⁵ “Extorsionan a colonos en Netzahualcóyotl,” *Últimas Noticias* (6 July 1971).

For De la Rosa, the MRC's trajectory was towards cooptation and absorption into the corrupt system of government. This perspective diverges sharply from Montaña and Lee's.

Whose interpretation is best? I think they are both somewhat off the mark; the first is too etic and the second is too emic. The first captures a perspective that would be reasonable to anyone with a basic understanding of revolutionary theory. The second would have been natural for a *chilango* with knowledge of contemporary Mexican politics. But neither of them captures the dialectical sublation underway. My interpretation therefore focuses not on whether the MRC's gains were so significant as to merit awe or so small as to elicit disapproval but instead on the source of its autonomy and power—urban concentration—and how this jeopardized continuity and thus contributed to the decline and fall of the PRI. For, rather than the rise of a novel situation of dual power or yet another PRI cooptation, the chief implication of the growing autonomy and power of the MRC was that neighborhood leaders would no longer sustain the historically-aligned power bloc. They would not be coopted per se, but nor would they form the nucleus of a different political order. Simply put, because they were not absorbed into the existing government system, they undermined but did not upend it.

The Rise Of FINEZA

The power struggle between the MRC, *fraccionadores*, and the local government caught the attention of the governor of the State of Mexico, Carlos Hank González (1969-1975). Hank González was steadily moving up the PRI hierarchy³⁴⁶ and therefore must have wanted to avoid embarrassment and to preserve his reputation of competence among peers; he also felt it necessary to emphasize the indispensability of urban services and the pressing (*inaplazable*) need for regularization (Montaña 1976:149-50). The year after he became governor Hank González promised MRC leaders that his government would do everything in its power to push for a resolution of the land ownership problem in Neza and that he would ask municipal authorities to cease illegal apprehensions (though little seems to have come of the latter promise).³⁴⁷ His public

³⁴⁶ He had already served as the Director of Government of the State of Mexico (1957-1958) and as a Federal Deputy for the State of Mexico (1958-1961), and after his term as Governor he would become the Head of the Department of the Federal District (1976-1982).

³⁴⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1174A/Exp. 2/Folio 594 (26 December 1970).

statements about the issue were highly ambiguous; in one of his first, he proclaimed, with reference to the payments residents still owed *fraccionadores* for land the latter failed to equip with services, “I do not agree with people continuing to pay, nor with stopping paying” (quoted in Ferras 1977:16).³⁴⁸

Meanwhile, President Echeverría also became increasingly concerned about Nezahualcóyotl. At the end of July 1971, Yee says, “a private meeting was held between Echeverría, Carlos Hank, and representatives of the DAAC at Los Pinos . . . to discuss possible solutions to the land tenure problem in Ciudad Neza. Those present came to an unofficial agreement that it was in the best interests of the parties involved to move in favor of land expropriation” (Yee 2021:136-37). In November 1971 he told the MRC that he would resolve the tenancy problem immanently.³⁴⁹ Late that year, Hank González announced that the government would soon undertake water, sewage, and electrification works to benefit the 700,000 families living in Neza.³⁵⁰ Early the next year, the MRC organized a rally, led by Odón Madariaga and Ángel Ávila Jácome, to thank Echeverría for promising to resolve their legal problems.³⁵¹ The federal government intervened in the aftermath of these developments and amidst the tit-for-tat dynamic at the local level (involving *fraccionadores*’ bulldozing of residents houses and MRC leading residents to burn down *fraccionadores*’ collection boxes). On 17 March 1972, the DAAC announced that “the land where Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl was founded is communal land”³⁵²

At a May 1972 rally of about 150 *colonos* in Colonia El Palmar, MRC leader Artemio Mora delivered a speech during which he recounted various steps that the MRC leadership had taken to secure regularization of all the lands that Neza *colonos* possessed, noting that they were in the process of gathering all the documentation that the municipal, state, and national

³⁴⁸ MRC leaders nevertheless continued to meet with him during the early-1970s. See AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 1/Folio 28 (10 April 1972); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 8/Folio 38 (10 April 1972).

³⁴⁹ Sadot Fabila Ávila, “Se dará rápida solución al problema de la tenencia de la Tierra en Nezahualcoyotl,” *El Día* (3 August 1971).

³⁵⁰ Porfirio Ramos, “Obras de Nezahualcóyotl, para beneficio de 700 mil familias: Una nueva fisonomía de la Ciudad con servicios de agua potable, de drenaje y electrificación,” *El Diario de México* (8 November 1971).

³⁵¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1702B/Exp. 7/Folio 87 (18 January 1972).

³⁵² (quoted in Yee 2021:139).

government officials had requested.³⁵³ Vargas Soriano met with government officials, like Alfredo Polanco—the personal secretary of the head of DAAC, Augusto Gómez Villanueva—to whom he recounted the outrages that the *colonos* had suffered at the hands of the police of Neza and to whom he said that if a solution was not furnished the problem could get worse, as “people were desperate because of the constant threat of the *fraccionadores*.” And they observed that irregular land tenancy was the root cause of their travails.³⁵⁴

Within two weeks of the meeting with the DAAC official, Vargas Soriano, Odón Madariaga, and Ángel García Bravo led a demonstration of about 1,000 people at the atrium of the Cathedral. The governor of the State of Mexico accepted the value of the land reported by *fraccionadores* in their property taxes; *colonos* want the government to set a single price for all the lots. Ángel García said if the President did not meet them at the Palacio Nacional, they would march to his residence, Los Pinos. Once the rally at the Palacio Nacional had grown to about 4,000 *colonos*, a small contingent³⁵⁵ met with a government representative. After this meeting, the official, Sergio Villasana, Secretario de Acuerdos, addressed the crowd, saying that Echeverría had been informed about their problem and that he would call them in 3 or 4 days to set up a meeting. In response, a man shouted at the top of his lungs: “Comrades, this is not the solution to our problem, we should not believe it.” According to a government spy observing the event, “immediately, on the instructions of ROGELIO VARGAS SORIANO, said individual was ordered to remain silent.”³⁵⁶ If the government was going to make concessions, and in the absence of countervailing considerations, it made sense to limit disruption.

The delicate political balance was on display. There were two ways of viewing it. One was that to accomplish anything at all they had to apply more pressure; on this logic, they had to at least *appear* to be trouble-makers. The man who shouted to his comrades, urging them not to give up, evidently took this view. The other was that to accomplish anything at all they had to tread very carefully; on this logic, the last thing they wanted was to appear to be trouble-makers.

³⁵³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 1/Folio 235 (28 May 1972).

³⁵⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1149/Exp. 3/Folios 80-81 (30 June 1972).

³⁵⁵ Rogelio Vargas Soriano, Odón Madariaga Cruz, Angel Davila Jacome, Raymundo Cordero Piña, Salomon Alemán García, Aristeo Pérez López, Silvino Morales Pérez, and Eulalio Barragan García.

³⁵⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1702B/Exp. 7/Folios 203-10 (quote from folios 208-09) (10 July 1972).

By the time of this rally, Vargas Soriano held this view. Initially, Vargas Soriano had, in collaboration with Odón Madariaga and Ángel García Bravo, opted for the former point of view. But at the rally he felt he had a concession in reach. Villasana promised the raucous crowd that they would have a response within a week, and that if they did not they could return whenever they wanted. After wrapping up at the Palacio Nacional, rather than march to Los Pinos, the protestors marched to the Benito Juárez semicircle to bestow a floral wreath, connecting their demands with this iconic national hero, before returning to Neza.³⁵⁷

In December, as political elites continued to inch towards a solution to the land dispute, the leaders of MRC (Odón Madariaga, Rogelio Vargas Soriano, Ángel Ávila Jacome, Ángel García Bravo, Aristeo Pérez, Salomón Alemán, Silvino Morales, and others) led another protest against the formation of a land trust (*fideicomiso*) as a means of definitively solving the problem of tenancy in the area, saying “that it is a crude maneuver, prepared by the head of the Legal Department of the DAAC, Luis Felipe Canudas, to fool the people.” They were sure to place all blame at the feet of Canudas and note that they had “great trust” in President Echeverría as well as in Augusto Gómez Villanueva, one of the leaders of the party on agrarian matters. They complained that the DAAC had not told them which federal government department would give the purchasers of land their titles and that the price the government wanted to charge *colonos* for land, which was the same as the price for which the *fraccionadores* had sold it, was too high—since that price was supposed to include the cost of urban services whereas the government now wanted to charge the original amount plus an additional amount for services. They said this would increase the overall amount to almost 200 percent. They said that if they were going to be charged separately for services that they would only be willing to pay the government 50 percent of the value for which *fraccionadores* had sold the land. They also decried Canudas’s announcement that the *fraccionadores* would participate in the trust and would receive 40 percent of the total monthly payments made to it; they thought this amounted to rewarding the *fraccionadores* for having defrauded so many people. Finally, they disagreed with the paucity of benefits the *comuneros* of Chimalhuacán were slated to receive, saying that, rather than *fraccionadores*, they are the ones who deserved cash indemnification. They said that if they were unable to meet with Echeverría on during his visit to Neza on the 20th of that month, that they

³⁵⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1702B/Exp. 7/Folios 203-10 (10 July 1972).

would organize a permanent protest in the Zócalo, “until we achieve the resolution of our problems.”³⁵⁸ Thus, initially, most of the main leaders (other than Artemio Mora Lozada) were *opposed* to the proposal that would come to be known as FINEZA.

The new municipal mayor, Loya Ramírez, could see the writing on the wall. Since the enveloping political establishment was clearly moving in that direction, the municipal government signaled its good will by announcing its own parallel measures. Loya Ramírez issued instructions to the local police to begin an exhaustive investigation to identify the municipal employees who had dedicated themselves to the extortion of *colonos* and vendors (*comerciantes*)—a brilliant decoy, considering that he had been central to this for years.³⁵⁹ (It was a time to appear proactive, though in practice the municipality continued applying the same old repressive tactics.³⁶⁰)

At the end of March 1973, Echeverría decreed the formation of the Fideicomiso Irrevocable Traslato de Dominio de Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl (FINEZA), a land trust (*fideicomiso*) tasked with resolving the myriad problems between *colonos*, *fraccionadores*, and government officials.³⁶¹ FINEZA was an unprecedented initiative. By rolling it out, the government took an important step into the fray of urban development, from which it had been relatively absent in the State of Mexico. Before, under different circumstances, this would have been a major signal for neighborhood leaders to solicit subordination. But in the midst of growing tension between existing residents and new and aspiring ones—who would only grow in number with the announcement of the formation of FINEZA—this dynamic never really took hold. In other words, Vargas Soriano’s moderation was gradually eclipsed.

FINEZA was intended to harmonize three sets of interests. First, it was intended to transfer legal ownership of the land *colonos* occupied to its respective occupants. Since some of the land belonged to the *ejidatarios* of Santa María Chimalhuacán, this involved compensating

³⁵⁸ Hugo Sánchez, “NEZAHUALCOYOTL: Rechaza el Movimiento Restaurado de colonos el Fideicomiso del DAAyC. Considera que sólo favorece a los fraccionadores,” *El Día* (15 December 1972).

³⁵⁹ “Acusan de extorsión a ex empleados del Municipio de Nezahualcóyotl,” *Sol de Medio Día* (13 March 1973).

³⁶⁰ For example, Oliverio Aguilar Aguilar went missing after the municipal police had detained him for questioning. AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1317/Exp. 1/Folio 456 (25 September 1973).

³⁶¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1702B/Exp. 8/Folios 93-95 (31 March 1973); Lee (2021:143). Ferras (1977:21) incorrectly states the decree was published on 15 May 1973).

them with 50 million pesos (Ferras 1977:16, 22). Second, it was intended to ensure that *fraccionadores* were paid 60 percent of the price of the land they sold and that *colonos* were given a 15 percent discount, leaving them to pay 85 percent of the remaining principal they had agreed to pay (Ferras 1977:17; Gilbert and Ward 1985:94); thereafter, they would receive land titles which would be recognized by courts and government agencies, eliminating the threat of eviction (Yee 2021:144). Third, it was intended to use the promise of legal ownership as an incentive to get *colonos* to help pay for government investments in urban infrastructure, works that *fraccionadores* had failed to install but that were required of all legally-recognized settlements (Montaño 1976:148). FINEZA charged *fraccionadores* 623 million pesos and required that they donate almost 1 million square meters, and agreed not to persecute them (Ferras 1977:16-17). But most of the cost of urban services installation was shifted to *colonos*. The government required that the urban poor pay this burden within ten years so that they could recoup outlays for urbanization works (Bolos 2003:100).

As in DF, requiring that *colonos* defray at least part of the cost of urban works was a longstanding practice in Neza; different levels of the Mexican government had tried to recoup urbanization expenditures by similar means for 30 years. Like the DDF starting in the 1940s, the State of Mexico had tried to get *colonos* to pay for urbanization works in Neza as early as the late-1950s and 1960s (Aréchiga Torres 2012:33-34). They did so now, however, on an unprecedented scale. In less than a year, FINEZA regularized 26,916 lots, an area of 230,000 square meters, benefitting 192,000 people. They continued to work on 45,849 cases in 43 *colonias*.³⁶² Yee says that “most of the organized neighborhood associations supported the land trust, but three of them (*colonias* Villada, Evolución, and Perla) refused to cede any legitimacy to the land developers” (Yee 2021:144, note omitted). Despite resistance, FINEZA became a feature of local politics. As late as 1981, *colonos* continued to approach the trust in order to resolve problems stemming from *fraccionadores* reselling the property they had bought.³⁶³ In the meantime, neighborhood-level disagreements stemming from between-generation conflicts were rendered in the terms set forth by FINEZA.

³⁶² “Un Fideicomiso ha dado tranquilidad a habitantes de Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl,” *Novedades* (9 March 1974).

³⁶³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1709A/Exp. 6/Folio 163 (14 April 1981).

There are at least two interpretations of FINEZA. De la Rosa observes that what was really at stake with FINEZA was the ability of the government to carry forward the principal of land redistribution central to the Mexican Revolution, and draws a negative balance sheet: “The case of Netzahualcōyotl, with justice clearly, and probably also the law, on the people’s side, reveals the inability of the government to carry out the social revolution whose legacy it claims to represent” (de la Rosa 1974:22).

Along these lines, since it failed to require that *fraccionadores* pay for the installation of public services, as they promised residents and as the law required, Ferras characterizes FINEZA as “fraud elevated to the level of an institution” (Ferras 1977:17). Yee says “most residents thought they [the *fraccionadores*] should be imprisoned for land fraud” (Yee 2021:142). In contrast, Gilbert and Ward note that, under continuing pressure, the government ultimately decided not to compensate *fraccionadores* in 1977, representing a major victory for *colonos* (Gilbert and Ward 1985:94). In a sense, then, FINEZA represented a capitulation in the face of the residents’ boycott but on terms highly favorable to *fraccionadores*. In contrast to both of these interpretations, I view FINEZA as an accelerant on urban concentration and on the between-generation conflict to which it gave rise.

Urban Concentration Ramps Up

Considerable time elapsed between the decision to resolve the land dispute in the manner outlined above and the actual implementation of this decision. Since a resolution to the land dispute was now in view, interest in settling the area—already high due to ongoing urban concentration—spiked (see below).

The promise of legal ownership triggered an influx of aspiring squatters and thousands of Mexicans from all over the country, known in the press as “parachuters” (*paracaidistas*), descended upon Netzahualcōyotl in the hopes of acquiring land and being included in the regularization initiative. One estimate is that, by the end of 1974, the core leaders of the CE-MRC had led the invasion and sale of about 60,000 plots (Yee 2021:146).

Government security forces tried to keep land invasions at bay. Thus, one day, land-invasion leaders drove through Neza broadcasting a message over loudspeaker: “*Colono*, if you don’t have a house, occupy a lot, don’t wait any longer and join us to measure any vacant area!”

The message was in preparation for a land invasion in *colonias* México, Virgencitas, La Palma, El Sol, Maravillas, Agua Azul, Colonia Nezahualcóyotl, Juárez Pantitlán, Metropolitana, and Pirules. Local leaders measured and chalked out plots during the night. But the municipal mayor, Óscar Loya Ramírez, identified the leaders and had the police arrest most of them, preventing the invasion.³⁶⁴ Amidst urban concentration, though, land invasions were difficult to halt. Several weeks later the State of Mexico's attorney general, Galindo Camacho, was compelled to announce that although the state government would not prosecute those who had squatted on lands years prior (due to the urgent need for housing), with respect to "*paracaidistas* of the last few months, they will be considered criminals and we will apply the full force of the law."³⁶⁵

By the late-1970s and early-1980s, some of Neza's main neighborhood leaders were subjected to increased government repression. Odón Madariaga seems to have maintained amiable relations with the government. His faction of the MRC approached federal security forces in an effort to prevent all hell from breaking loose on 26 September 1976, as there was a rally planned calling for the abolition of the municipal government (from which he had stepped down in 1975).³⁶⁶ His longtime collaborator was not as fortunate. In July 1977, the government went after Mora Lozada. He was taken into custody on charges of fraud and plunder and singled out as the main land-invasion leader in the State of Mexico. This triggered some outrage. The press reported that "security forces guard the prison to prevent the '*paracaidistas*' from attempting to rescue their leader." The following day the prison authorities took him to the Penitenciaría de Toluca, further from his supporters, for greater security.³⁶⁷ None of these measures, however, was sufficient to stop urban concentration.

³⁶⁴ "Frustró la policía una invasión de '*paracaidistas*' en 10 colonias," *El Sol de México* (5 May 1973).

³⁶⁵ "En Nezahualcóyotl: Benignidad con '*paracaidistas*' antiguos," *El Día* (30 June 1973).

³⁶⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1703A/Exp. 3/Folios 48-51, (24 September 1976).

³⁶⁷ "'Fijen fianza aunque sea un millón': 11 abogados intentan sacar al cabecilla '*paracaidista*,'" *Sol de Medio Día* (29 July 1977).

Intergenerational Conflict

The unprecedented wave of land invasions sharpened the conflict of interest between the older generation of settlers, who felt they had already paid all they owed and that either the *fraccionadores* or the government should take responsibility for urbanizing their habitats—which gave rise to a conservative preference to bide time and not rock the boat—and newer residents, at the forefront of which were the land invaders who flocked to Neza, especially starting in 1973, who thought that now was the time to finally secure a rustic plot from which to eke out a new (urban) life—which gave rise to a radical preference to take action immediately and invade the land irrespective of the deals, tacit or otherwise, that had been made. They needed only to settle in the area. They needed lots. And they increasingly targeted Neza. One implication was that demand skyrocketed: the sale price of land in Neza increased 500 percent the day after the projected formation of FINEZA was announced in the press (Ferras 1977:17). More importantly, the influx of aspiring residents exacerbated between-generation conflict. As one member of the newer generation living in Colonia San Agustín put it, with reference to the hostility of residents in neighboring Colonia Reforma, “since the earlier generations were already more coupled [with their inhabited places] and you [an outsider] arrive . . . , well there’s [naturally] rejection” (quoted in Duhau and Giglia 2008:356).

Older residents’ intransigence was controversial. During an MRC rally to commemorate Benito Juárez, during which a speaker said that in Neza land invasions would no longer be allowed, he received the response of gunshots. The press concluded that the attack was premeditated, “because there is a group of the aforementioned organization [the MRC] that is fighting the trafficking of land and another that, to the contrary, furthers it,” and that the latter “took advantage of the meeting to provoke an attack to intimidate those who oppose the sale of plots.”³⁶⁸ On the eve of elections for leadership of Comité 32 (the night of 28 and morning of 29 March 1973), there was a shootout in Colonia Las Flores (also known as La Palma) “between those who established the neighborhood,” who possessed lots and houses, and others, who “try to take them away from them by force, because they say they have rights to that area because they have paid for the lots and paid taxes [on them as well].” The press said that the municipal police

³⁶⁸ “Balacean a colonos en Ciudad Netzahualcóyotl,” *El Universal* (22 March 1973).

were not able to get to those taking refuge from the battle: “many *colonos*, armed with pistols and rifles, prevented the police from approaching as the ‘battle’ against those who intend to evict them from the houses and lots of the aforementioned *colonia* battle continued.” Ambulances were prevented from attending to injured people in one part of the settlement; they were able to access another part to rescue someone shot in the head, someone shot twice in the leg, and someone who had been hit by a vehicle in the chaos.³⁶⁹ Between the two events they also seem to have attacked a meeting of a subcommittee in Colonia Vicente Guerrero due to its refusal to agree with the FINEZA proposal (Yee 2021:142).

The violence stemmed from between-generation conflict. According to MRC member María de Jesús Chávez, the leaders of the Concejo, Rogelio Vargas Soriano and Ángel Ávila Jácome, were responsible for the conflict.³⁷⁰ Lee says “In the days leading up to the shoot-out, Rogelio’s group (CDR-MRC) had distributed flyers that demanded the arrest of Odón Madariaga, Aristeo Pérez López, and Ángel Ávila Jácome for ‘stealing and selling land plots, charging monthly payments for the land, and extorting local businesses for paid protection’” (Lee 2021:142). Madariaga and Mora Lozada were city councilmen by that time, so they may have felt some need for support. The city council’s general secretary, Eleazar García Rodríguez, said that the dispute erupted because Rogelio Vargas Soriano had lost support of 30 of the 40 committees comprising the MRC, leaving him with the backing of only 10. Comité 32 had been among those who abandoned him; considering it leaderless, they held leadership elections on 29 March, endorsed by the presence of a municipal authority, during which the confrontation between Vargas Soriano loyalists and his enemies ensued. There were several shots fired inside the premises in which the assembly was held. This dispute was brief; within half an hour shooting had ceased.³⁷¹ But the conflict endured, with important political implications.

³⁶⁹ Esteban Ponce Adame, “A balazos disputan colonos a paracaidistas: En Nezahualcóyotl hay ‘estado de guerra’: Más de 30 heridas en la tremenda zacapela,” *El Universal Gráfico* (29 March 1973). Lee (2021:142) appears to mistakenly report the date as 22 March.

³⁷⁰ Esteban Ponce Adame, “A balazos disputan colonos a paracaidistas: En Nezahualcóyotl hay ‘estado de guerra’: Más de 30 heridas en la tremenda zacapela,” *El Universal Gráfico* (29 March 1973).

³⁷¹ “Intereses y asuntos políticos en el tiroteo de Netzahualcóyotl,” *El Universal* (30 March 1973).

Autonomy

The MRC's mobilizations were initially *defensive* and obeyed the logic of the political system in which the PRI reigned supreme. But under the weight of urban concentration and the demand for protection, they gradually evolved an *offensive* and increasingly *autonomous* orientation. Let me detail this evolution.

In November 1970, the MRC sent a group of 25 people to the city hall to ask that Esther López León (who had been detained by the State of Mexico's Policía Judicial) be released. They threatened the Secretario of the Ministerio Público with a public protest to put pressure on the authorities. It was not an empty threat: a red cargo truck collected about 700 of Neza's *colonos* for a rally. While these people were away, three armed men stood guard at the MRC headquarters in Colonia Metropolitana, at Artemio Mora's command.³⁷² The following month, they held another rally, this time in Colonia Metropolitana, at which 900 people attended. Orators denounced *fraccionadores*, the mayor, and Mexico's attorney general.³⁷³

In January 1971, the local PRI leadership became embroiled in the issue. Leading a crowd of 140,000 residents, Juan Ortiz Montoya (the president of the PRI's local branch and an alternate congressperson for the State of Mexico [Camp 2011:1116]) and Eugenio Rosales Gutiérrez (a representative from the State of Mexico), along with a number of representatives of organizations affiliated with the CNOP, approached the government of the State of Mexico, asking if the local government could ask the federal government to clarify the legal status of their land.³⁷⁴ Due to the large number of people implicated and to their continued mobilization, it was becoming impossible for political operatives of all kinds to ignore the issue.

In this context, and due both to political intransigence in the face of the urban poor's needs and to police repression, the MRC's mobilizations gradually became *offensive*, for which reason they ultimately harbored profound implications for the PRI. The first of its major rallies took place in March 1971, in front of the Nezahualcóyotl municipal palace. Police attacked

³⁷² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1174A/Exp. 2/Folio 531 (25 November 1970).

³⁷³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1702B/Exp. 6/Folios 111-19 (27 December 1970).

³⁷⁴ "Piden que se defina de una buena vez por todas el problema legal de los lotes en Nezahualcóyotl," *Novedades* (15 January 1971).

protestors. Protestors responded spontaneously with a combination of disarming the police and pelting them with rocks until they retreated. Three days later, the MRC organized another demonstration to protest the repression at which, according to Madariaga, 7,000 people assembled in Mexico City's main square, the Zócalo, occupied the Cathedral, and marched on the Presidential Palace (each of these locations being adjacent to the other) (Benítez 1975:92-93). Yee (2021:136) argues that this marked a turning point for the MRC.³⁷⁵ Several weeks later, on 22 June 1971, a demonstration of 500 people blocked Bucareli, a prominent street in the center of Mexico City, during a judicial assembly convened to discuss land tenure in the parts of the city that spilled over the Federal District boundary and into the State of Mexico, like Neza. In early-1972, the CE-MRC leadership organized a demonstration of 3,000 residents who marched down Avenida Adolfo López Mateos to Nezahualcóyotl's municipal palace. The municipal police turned them away, guns drawn (Yee 2021:140). This was the beginning of a cycle of increasingly-assertive protests which progressively disputed government authority, both local and national. No longer was the government calling the shots. According to Madariaga, several MRC leaders even snuck into the congressional building to disrupt a hearing by yelling "what are congress people doing for Nezahualcóyotl?" and saying their salaries should be cut (Benítez 1975:93).

Political autonomy also found expression in local-level disputes. One episode concerned the PRI's attempt to promote a local political operative, an attempt which residents bucked. Josefina Miranda de Torres was a city council member in Neza from 1970 to 1972, when the highly-corrupt municipal mayor, Gonzalo Barquín Díaz, was in office.³⁷⁶ Many of the city government's officials were in bed with *fraccionadores*. But Miranda de Torres was sufficiently loyal to the PRI for the party to tap her as precandidate for the local seat in the federal congressional election (along with José Lucio Órnelas, who had been a municipal secretary during the same period, as an alternate). Against a background of local government involvement

³⁷⁵ Yee (2021:136) also says that in addition to protesting in front of the Presidential Palace, the MRC demonstrated in front of the Departamento Agrario y colonización (DAAC). Since the DAAC was in charge of settling rural land disputes it was a natural target for them to pressure, especially given that MRC leaders had been in touch with one of the DAAC's directors, Juan Ugarte, who after looking into the issue concluded that most of Nezahualcóyotl's land was communal or federally owned, not private.

³⁷⁶ Barquín Díaz was a local notable and businessman who in 1962 had been involved in the effort to get Neza to secede from Chimalhuacán (Aréchiga Torres 2012:35).

in racketeering, this struck a nerve. On the evening of 21 May 1972, after the local leaders of the Neza branch of the PRI met with high-level PRI operatives—the Secretario de Organización, Rafael Rodríguez Barrera, and federal congressperson Eugenio Rosales—to try to come to an agreement about nomination of the PRI's congressional candidate in that electoral district, they decided to organize a protest.³⁷⁷ They were evidently not satisfied that anything would come of their complaints otherwise.

The way they framed their grievance was somewhat convoluted, but the grievance itself stemmed from discontent with the prospect that a racketeer would gain greater authority, as the PRI moved its loyalists up the government hierarchy, rather than lose clout. During their protest the next day, *colonos* stated that they were protesting because Miranda de Torres (and Ramírez Órnelas) had refused to resign from her current position, as federal electoral law stipulates. But to recruit participants, organizers had distributed leaflets³⁷⁸ saying that mayor Barquín Díaz had installed city councilperson Miranda de Torres, and calling for opposition to his impositions.³⁷⁹ So the reason people turned out to protest was not mere failure to follow a specific regulation; it stemmed, instead, from discontent with the local government, which was riddled with racketeers, and from dissent in the face of an unappealing scenario in which these local operatives would graduate to represent them federally. This split the local PRI organization itself. Juan Ortiz Montoya, the president of the Neza branch of the PRI, along with Juan Alvarado Jacco³⁸⁰ and several others,³⁸¹ organized to protest Miranda de Torres's nomination at the PRI headquarters. There was plenty of discontent to ensure that it was well-attended. (One source says Jacco rented 50 busses to transport protestors,³⁸² another says approximately 700 people were present.³⁸³)

³⁷⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1149/Exp. 1/Folios 144-45 (22 May 1972).

³⁷⁸ Signed by the Comisión Orientadora de Tus Derechos.

³⁷⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1149/Exp. 1/Folios 137-38 (22 May 1972).

³⁸⁰ Jacco appears seldom in the historical record until he became a federal congressman from 1979 to 1982 (Camp 2011:1131) and 1985 to 1988 (Camp 2011:1145).

³⁸¹ Federico Rincón, Bernardino Ibáñez, Elba Delgado Vda. de González, Jorge Cruz Solano, Cupertino Juárez Gutiérrez.

³⁸² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1149/Exp. 1/Folios 137-38 (22 May 1972).

³⁸³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1149/Exp. 1/Folios 141-45 (22 May 1972).

This mobilization—both organized by the PRI and protesting against the PRI—was significant enough to enable a delegation of *colonos*' representatives to enter the building in an effort to meet with the president of the PRI, Jesús Reyes Heróles. In his absence, they instead met with Rodolfo Echeverría, President Luis Echeverría's brother and a member of the PRI's Advisory Council for Ideology and Program, along with the party's organizational secretary, congressman Rafael Rodríguez Barrera (Camp 2011:283), with whom some of them had met the previous evening.

It was clear to any observer that the community stood against the PRI's preferred candidate, or at best that the community was divided on the issue. In an effort to mollify their discontent, after his closed-door meeting with their representatives, Rodolfo Echeverría addressed the crowd of *colonos*. In reference to Reyes Heróles's absence, he said "I want to tell you that it would have been a great satisfaction for him to see a democratic demonstration that you are holding this morning in his house."³⁸⁴ As regards the issue at hand, he told the crowd that the party had assigned Rodríguez Barrera to look into the matter, and that the party's National Executive Committee (CEN) would take his report into consideration and make a decision soon. He mixed this assurance with appeals to discipline:

"we have already collected enough information and a thorough study of all those problems has been done, and that is why our party, taking into account said investigation, when we spoke with your representatives, we did not promise you anything but to investigate, . . . for which he will have a talk with you in Netzahualcóyotl and will inform the [National] Executive Committee [CEN] and it will be the latter who determines what needs to be done.

"But I also want to tell you that there should be no cases of debauchery that distort an upstanding life; the democratic demonstration that you have demonstrated has been respected and the CEN has responded to you, that is why I want you to accept when the CE[N] decides. . . . Once the decision is made, I tell you again, the party will decide and you must accept."³⁸⁵

Few could have faulted Rodolfo Echeverría for assuming that that, after the party investigated and made its decision, *colonos* would listen and obey; this way of thinking about the problem was cut from the cloth of the benevolent mass clientelism of the 1940s and 1950s, when the urban poor solicited subordination.

³⁸⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1149/Exp. 1/Folio 142 (22 May 1972).

³⁸⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1149/Exp. 1/Folios 142-43 (22 May 1972).

But in the 1970s, as the urban poor mobilized offensively, it was becoming evident that the situation was not different. Something had to give. The PRI withdrew its backing of Josefina Miranda de Torres; she did *not* become a congressperson for the State of Mexico for the 1973-1976 period (Camp 2011:1120-21).

The urban poor's political independence was now a feature of the political situation. In June 1972, about 1,500 Neza residents rallied at the Palacio Nacional to put pressure on the national government, carrying banners supporting Echeverría and, demanding things like the expropriation of Neza's land (a first step towards legalization), but also calling out Carlos Hank González and the municipal government for collusion with *fraccionadores* who robbed families. Odón Madariaga Cruz and 14 other leaders went into the Palacio hoping to meet with Echeverría's personal secretary, Ignacio Ovalle Fernández. They met instead with Sergio Villasana, Ovalle Fernández's aide. They told him about their problems, emphasizing the lack of legal ownership, and explaining that without such documents they could not get building permits. They mentioned the Neza municipal authorities' repression of vendors, especially street-hawkers. Villasana then spoke to those assembled in front of the Palacio Nacional, promising them that this week Echeverría would receive them so that they could explain their problems to him. This did not convince the protestors, who demanded that they be given a memorandum promising them the meeting. Villasana and seven of the MRC leaders returned to his offices where he gave them a promise in writing, after which the protestors left in an orderly march.³⁸⁶

This mobilization capacity allowed Madariaga to play an inside-outside game, pressuring government officials to legalize Neza squatters' lands while introducing new squatters to the existing settlements and trying to form new ones. It was still over nine months before Echeverría would decree the formation of FINEZA. In the interim, the MRC threatened more mobilization. In June 1972, the MRC's Concejo Ejecutivo announced that it would meet with Augusto Gómez Villanueva, head of the Departamento de Asuntos Agrarios y Colonización, which was responsible for legalization matters prior to the formation of the land trust. They threatened that if the problem was not resolved in five days, they would occupy DAAC's building with 30,000 to 40,000 people.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁶ "Síntesis de la información política-social," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 990, policía 0990/Exp. 001/Folios 7-11 (10 June 1972).

³⁸⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 1/Folio 347 (23 June 1972). See also AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1702B/Exp.

The PRI yielded to pressure from below by incorporating (or coopting) neighborhood leaders: the PRI tapped the MRC's Artemio Mora Lozada and Odón Madariaga to be local government council members (1973-1975), taking the very seat Miranda de Torres vacated. (Óscar Loya Ramírez, the lawyer who got his start in racketeering under mayor Gonzalo Barquín Díaz, became the next municipal mayor.) The MRC had become sufficiently capable of mobilizing followers for Artemio Mora Lozada and Odón Madariaga Cruz to secure PRI backing to stand in the local election. This was an indicator that the MRC had acquired weight in the balance of political forces. It had started by protesting against *fraccionadores*, resisting the local government's racket, and dodging government repression; now its leaders were important enough to force the PRI to recognize their local influence by nominating them, and then winning the seats in the local election. They took positions heretofore populated by PRI team players. But these new neighborhood leaders were propelled by different dynamics, and thus behaved differently. Before officially taking office, Mora Lozada led additional protests against the municipal president precandidacy of Óscar Loya Ramírez³⁸⁸ (who nevertheless received the nomination, won the election, and served in that capacity until resigning to assume a different position, when he was replaced by Juan Ortíz Montoya, one of the leaders of the protest against Miranda de Torres). And by 1973, soon after Mora Lozada and Madariaga had been seated as council members, their MRC comrade Aristeo Pérez López led a large demonstration against the PRI's preferred precandidates for federal deputy for Neza's two electoral districts (Sixto Noguez Estrada and Cuauhtémoc Sánchez B.), alleging that they were unfamiliar with the districts. He proposed Ismael Villa Noriega and Ángel García Bravo instead.³⁸⁹ While they were not successful at blocking either candidate (both took office as federal congresspeople for the State of Mexico later that year [Camp 2011:1121]), they were successful at securing a seat for García Bravo both as Sánchez's alternate³⁹⁰ and, later, as council person from 1976 to 1978 (Jiménez Pérez 2017:69).

6/Folio 230 (23 June 1972).

³⁸⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 2/Folio 104 (27 September 1972).

³⁸⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 4/Folio 56 (19 March 1973). It is only after this that we could say Vargas Soriano "refrained from the illegal land grab . . . and languished as a low-level PRI functionary" (Lee 2021:145-46).

³⁹⁰ (Camp 2011:1121).

Splintering Leadership

Together, the conflict borne of urban concentration and the autonomization of the MRC had two additional effects. The first had to do with neighborhood leaders. Between-generation conflict ensured that the MRC leadership grew increasingly divided, and amidst their autonomization, this meant divisions had less and less to do with the PRI *per se*. The second had to do with squatters. Amidst conflict, they needed protection. This drove them into the arms of pro-growth neighborhood leaders. Together, these two effects meant neighborhood leaders diverged and pro-growth leaders grew powerful in their own right.

There was ongoing tension and episodic conflict between Neza's neighborhood-level leaders, leading to numerous splits and occasional episodes of between-faction violence. There are two interpretations of these splits. Yee argues that they rose to the fore in July 1971 and divided the MRC into two factions, with Madariaga and allies developing a stronghold in the Comité Ejecutivo-MRC (CE-MRC), which proceeded to join the PRI's peasant division, the CNC, while Mora Lozada and comrades aligned with the urban division of the party, the CNOP (Yee 2021:137). Vargas Soriano later split from Madariaga to form the Coalición Depuradora de Comités del MRC (Yee 2021:142), Vélez-Ibañez attributes these divisions to a combination of political officials' cooptive machinations, which served to coopt some local leaders, and to the local leaders' loss of much of their base of support after cooptation (Vélez-Ibañez 1983:191, 235-36). I disagree with an assumption common to both interpretations: that the driver of discord emanated from the political system.

I do not deny that political officials were as cynical as these accounts maintain, but I do dispute that they were so effective, since even where local leaders had a much more adversarial relationship with political officials between-generation cleavages still arose. Thus, I attribute the discord among neighborhood leaders to the social phenomenon common to these different cases, *i.e.*, to conflicts arising from urban concentration. I think the tension emanated from below and that it was enduring, such that it generated an increasingly manifold set of divisions over time. The disputants referenced a variety of issues, from FINEZA to elections and beyond, but the most important issue of contention was between-generation conflict. Variation in how leaders were positioned vis-a-vis the influx of new and aspiring inhabitants corresponded to varied positions on the disputes.

While Odón Madariaga, Rogelio Vargas Soriano, and Eliazer López Nava channeled land invaders, others opted to represent residents who had lived in Neza's settlements longer and who opposed land invasions out of fear that it would compromise their relationships with local officials and jeopardize the prospects for legalization of their land. The conflicts between neighborhood leaders—between those who capitalized on the needs of the land-hungry and those who represented established residents—produced a struggle through which the MRC eventually splintered. The MRC was a coalition since its inception, never a tight-knit organization.³⁹¹ Its first leader, Artemio Mora Lozada (Bolos 2003:99; Yee 2021:126), collaborated with several other leaders until Odón Madariaga led a split in 1971.

On 5 June 1972, when a group of Mora Lozada's followers was distributing flyers (*volantes*) stating “Year of Juárez, the Movimiento Restaurador de Colonos, chaired by its initiator, Artemio Mora Lozada, triumphs!” and relating the main objectives for which they were struggling, a group of members of the faction led by Vargas Soriano and Odón Madariaga (who were working together at the time), then known as the Concejo, tried to attack them.³⁹² By June 1972, the MRC's Concejo Ejecutivo was comprised of Rogelio Vargas Soriano, Odón Madariaga Cruz, Aristeo Pérez López, and Ángel García Bravo.³⁹³ Initially, Rogelio Vargas Soriano and Odón Madariaga worked together to lead invasions in the area, against the wishes of the Mora leadership.³⁹⁴ They also worked together to repress members of Rafael Peralta Tzompantzi's Comité Ejecutivo, destroying one of their houses, preventing one of them from building her home, evicting one and giving her lot to one of their own, requiring that one pay 500 pesos to avoid eviction, extorting fees of 500 pesos from a shopkeeper member, beating one member up, and also physically attacking Peralta Tzompantzi himself. The Comité Ejecutivo, which had about 800 members, attributed the repression to the fact that they were the smallest of what were, at the time, three rival organizations.³⁹⁵

³⁹¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1703A/Exp. 2/Folios 328-30 (27 May 1976).

³⁹² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 1/Folio 259 (5 June 1972).

³⁹³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 1/Folio 320 (17 June 1972).

³⁹⁴ Guillermo A. Ledesma, “Continúa la invasión de tierras en Nezahualcóyotl,” *El Universal-Gráfico* (11 July 1972).

³⁹⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 2/Folios 12-15 (6 September 1972).

Collaboration in the repression of their rivals did not keep Vargas Soriano and Odón united. One day, after Vargas Soriano's people distributed flyers and then returned to their headquarters in his house in Colonia Aurora Sur, Madariaga grouped his followers and attacked them; several people were injured.³⁹⁶ Thus, whereas at one point Mora Lozada led all factions against Peralta Tzompantzi, soon Vargas Soriano and Madariaga split from Mora Lozada. Next, Madariaga and Vargas Soriano split from one another. Vargas Soriano disagreed with Madariaga (and his collaborator, Ángel García Bravo), coming out in favor of FINEZA and opposing Madariaga's continued introduction of more residents into the area.³⁹⁷

On the eve of the formation of FINEZA, there were no fewer than four warring neighborhood leaders: Artemio Mora Lozada, Rafael Peralta Tzompantzi, Rogelio Vargas Soriano, and Odón Madariaga Cruz. By then Madariaga's CE-MRC also faced mounting opposition from Jesús Horta Guerrero (who led the 1973 protest with seemingly contradictory demands described in this chapter's opening vignette) and Juan Herrera Servín (another leader of the UGOCM³⁹⁸), in the first case because he favored the introduction of more residents into Neza but refused to play second fiddle to Madariaga and in the second case because he opposed the introduction of new residents into Chimalhuacán along with the violent means that Madariaga and García Bravo's men used to enforce their decisions. (They advocated continuing the payment boycott until the government both clarified the legal situation and addressed the problem posed by Madariaga and García Bravo, and called for the elimination of FINEZA.)

By July 1976, the MRC splinters were recognizable as different groups, each with their own name.³⁹⁹ Artemio Mora Lozada led the *Movimiento Restaurador de Colonos*, Odón Madariaga Cruz led the *Concejo Restaurador de Colonos*, Rogelio Vargas Soriano led the *Coalición Depuradora del Movimiento Restaurador de Colonos* (and later led the Frente Unido de Colonos del Valle de Mexico, which joined the CNOP in 1977⁴⁰⁰), and Federico Pedroza,

³⁹⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 4/Folio 65 (21 March 1973).

³⁹⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1703A/Exp. 2/Folios 118-19 (28 September 1974).

³⁹⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1592A/Exp. 3/Folio 157 (6 December 1979).

³⁹⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1703A/Exp. 3/Folio 21 (26 July 1976).

⁴⁰⁰ At the time of joining the CNOP, Vargas Soriano said the organization would not be involved in land invasions since they have organized to help the people rather than cause them problems. See AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja

newer to the scene (who continued to oppose the terms of FINEZA in 1980⁴⁰¹), led the *Auténtico Movimiento Restaurador de Colonos* (Bolos 2003:99). This splintering was itself important, for it meant within-sector unity would not be forthcoming from Neza's urban poor; Neza could not support the government insofar as it was itself divided. It also allowed even more groups to arise; these included Jesuits influenced by liberation theology and a Maoist organization called the Frente Popular Independiente (FPI), led by a group of high school students, which called for a continuation of the payment boycott (see Plate 7.1) (Yee 2021:146). This splintering was a reflection of between-generation cleavages that resulted from urban concentration.



Plate 7.1. Graffiti by the FPI calling for a continuation of the payment boycott

Source: de la Rosa (1974:25).

1774A/Exp. 1/Folios 68-69 (25 July 1977).

⁴⁰¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folios 78-79 (8 October 1980).

Factional Power

Since they were autonomous, those neighborhood leaders who aligned with the newer and aspiring generation of residents were able to capitalize on between-generation conflict. The new and aspiring residents needed benefactors, leading them to mobilize behind neighborhood leader who agreed to protect them. This reinforced the conflict and violence already present, plus it made pro-growth neighborhood leaders like Odón Madariaga powerful, giving them the ability to control turf and extract rent. Thus while it would be inaccurate to qualify Madariaga as the chief leader of a pole of political authority in a framework of dual power, it is accurate to qualify him as the head of a “government within a government” (Cornelius 1975:141).

The two neighborhood leaders who aligned with the newer generation, Odón Madariaga Cruz and Rogelio Vargas Soriano, competed with one another to channel these new land invaders to their respective benefit. A government spy summarized the situation with Madariaga as follows: “MADARIAGA CRUZ (Third City Council member), through ANGEL AVILA JACOME and ARISTEO PEREZ LOPEZ, manipulates a group of people who have dedicated themselves to invading vacant lots and looting settlers of their land.” Those who already lived in the area did not sit idly by. They held a rally to protest the invasion of their lots and to request protection from the authorities. They also asked the mayor, Óscar Loya Ramírez, to stop preventing the prosecution of Madariaga. In his response, Loya told the protestors that he would ask for a larger contingent of police to provide them with sufficient protection and said that he would not protect Madariaga. But Madariaga was not alone; the group that Rogelio Vargas Soriano led also headed invasions and looted older *colonos* land (though Vargas Soriano was not himself involved in the looting and invasions). The government spy described the climate by saying that older residents feared “dire results.”⁴⁰² A member and leader of the MRC’s Comité 33, Eleazar López Nava, also sold lands to new *colonos* (see below), as probably did a variety of others as well.

Intergenerational conflict produced a stream of violence. In September 1973, leaders of the Concejo and of Comité 73 clashed in the latter’s headquarters. There are several versions of

⁴⁰² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1702B/Exp. 8/Folios 158-60 (3 May 1973).

what happened.⁴⁰³ The most prescient interpretation was produced by government spies. In their report, they concluded that at bottom this outburst was the result of a power struggle between the *Comité del Movimiento Restaurador de Colonos*, led by Oliverio Aguilar Aguilar and Jesús Horta Guerrero (of the UGOCEM), and the CE-MRC, now led by Odón Madariaga and Ángel García Bravo. The problem, the spies concluded, was as follows:

“Both groups are in an ongoing dispute about political positions and economic interests, since each leader does business by dispossessing poor people of their lots, which they later sell to the highest bidder.

“The agitation comes from the organizations, which at all costs try to be noticed, doing proselytizing work to gain followers; such is the case of OLIVERIO AGUILAR AGUILAR[,] . . . ODON MADARIAGA CRUZ, current 3rd. city council member[,] and alternate congressperson ANGEL GARCIA BRAVO[:] the latter two are the main [people] responsible for these riots, because far from refraining from directing or participating in this type of activity, . . . they constantly manipulate *colonos* to cause disorder, since they are the first to lead groups to attack those who do not follow their whims or interests.”⁴⁰⁴

(The spy also identified additional groups of lesser importance, and the rising star, Juan Herrera Servín, who was a leader of the UGOCEM⁴⁰⁵ and later became a city council member [1979-1982].)

⁴⁰³ Leaders of the *Concejo Restaurador de colonos* (Vargas Soriano’s organization), which by then supported FINEZA, told the press that *Comité 73* was to blame. That night, some of their members—among whom was Ángel García Bravo—were passing by the offices of *Comité 73* and saw that its people were shaking down a colono because he refused to give them money, and they tried to come to his rescue. But since the people of *Comité 73* were more numerous than those of the *Concejo*, the latter were severely beaten, they said. *Comité 73*, which opposed FINEZA, said that they had been in the midst of a meeting in their offices when the *Concejo* people shot down the door and barged in. They added that the police cordoned off the area around the building and prevented anyone from getting to it; that they destroyed the building almost completely; and that they assaulted Oliverio Aguilar and another unnamed person (a claim that, at least in the case of Aguilar, turned out not to be true). (The city council’s general secretary, Eleazar García Rodríguez, said that 17 were detained.) Amado Espitia, “17 detenidos durante un enfrentamiento de colonos en Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl: Falta precisar los verdaderos móviles; versiones contradictorias,” *El Heraldo de México* (20 September 1973). Espitia makes the claim that the *Concejo* people killed Aguilar. Jesús Horta’s version from several weeks later was that they merely assaulted him. See AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1155A/Exp. 1/Folio 180 (5 December 1973). Finally, government spies attributed the cause to a dispute stemming from public school teachers who tried to charge families to register their children, which led residents to physically abuse the teachers and the principal (*director*), to which teachers threatened a municipality-wide strike. Although Madariaga and García Bravo were able to defuse the situation, according to the spies, tensions resurged afterwards, and they were attacked in the municipal Secretaría de Educación Pública offices. AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1702B/Exp. 9/Folios 41-43 (25 September 1973).

⁴⁰⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1702B/Exp. 9/Folio 41 (25 September 1973).

⁴⁰⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1592A/Exp. 3/Folio 157 (6 December 1979).

Multiple neighborhood leaders, who did not coordinate with one another, allocated lands to accommodate the new and aspiring residents. This gave rise to various incidences in which there were multiple claims on the same piece of property; this, in turn, generated conflict which sometimes escalated into violence. One day, some new Neza residents found Eleazar López Nava selling lands that Madariaga had already allocated to them. They could not tolerate the affront, and a 300-strong mob of “rabble” (*chusma*) “stoned, kicked, and punched” him to death. When speaking with the press, Madariaga remarked wryly that “Eleazar fell at the beginning of the battle.” He noted that there was a band of people that opposed the MRC, and said that *colonos* were probably scared by the band into carrying out the attack.⁴⁰⁶ The residents he had introduced were short on luck. But the invasions continued and residents opted for stronger benefactors. In October 1973, a group of 300 *paracaidistas* who said they were followers of Madariaga and García Bravo, members of the CE-MRC “armed with sticks and stones,” invaded Colonia Loma Bonita and took possession of 475 lots.⁴⁰⁷

In April 1975, the CE-MRC had a brawl and shootout with the Grupo de Colonos 16 de Septiembre. It started when riot police (*granaderos*) and municipal cops arrived to demolish Pedro Torres Nava’s house in Colonia Maravillas because he was one of four people who had purchased the same lot, over which there was, therefore, considerable dispute. The members of Grupo de Colonos 16 de Septiembre showed up and obstructed the demolition. People from the MRC, who were in favor of destroying it, also arrived. Members of each respective group started shouting insults at one another, accusing one another of being intruders, *paracaidistas*, slouches, and lowlives. They jerked at one another’s clothes, which enraged each group even more, and each side took hold of sticks and rocks and started to attack. They then produced pistols, shotguns, and rifles, and started a shootout. “The groups took cover in ditches and [behind] fences and they were shooting for a long time,” recounted a journalist. The riot cops and municipal police were perplexed, not knowing which side to support. At last, some of them decided to reinforce the MRC, which was, like them, in favor of the house’s destruction. After

⁴⁰⁶ “Lincharon a un Regidor en Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl,” *El Universal* (28 August 1973). This report is inaccurate in that López Nava was never a city council member (*regidor*) (Jiménez Pérez 2017:68), pace Lee (2021:142 n. 83).

⁴⁰⁷ This time, security forces dislodged them before dawn and jailed their seven leaders—transporting them to Toluca, rather than detaining them in Neza, so that the *paracaidistas* would not “storm the jail . . . and rescue them.” Ángel López Rivera, “Por tercera vez 300 ‘paracaidistas’ invaden 475 lotes en Nezahualcóyotl,” *Sol de Medio Día* (2 October 1973).

two hours, the shootout ended, having taken one life, leaving six critically injured, and causing wounds to at least nine others.⁴⁰⁸

The Need for Protection

As Neza's population grew, the key task for those who wanted to secure a plot was to stay put. Since 1970, faced with *fraccionadores*' fraud on one side and local government officials' extortion on the other, *colonos* rallied to the MRC. By 1971, MRC leaders claimed to represent 70,000 people in 48 subcommittees (de la Rosa 1974:19). Spies were more circumspect, but still gave large estimates. By June 1972, they reckoned the MRC had between 40,000 and 50,000 members.⁴⁰⁹

Amidst between-generation conflict, new residents required protection. In August 1974, there was a land invasion in Colonia Villada. After evicting Antioco Gutiérrez, Ángel García Bravo led dozens of people to ensure that the lot's new occupant, Juan Morales, was allowed to stay put. The assistant attorney general of the State of Mexico, Salvador Bravo Gómez, was compelled to issue a statement, saying, "we will never make decisions out of fear or pressure, because [if we did] we would lose our position of authority." There was no shady deal (*componenda*) between the government and the MRC, he said, for they had invaded many lands, but in all cases they were taken into custody and punished. He noted that the government acted as mediator between the land possessors and the landowners and always tried to come to mutual agreement, but conceded that when a person already had possession of a lot, "we do not remove him immediately, because we [must] wait for a judge to decide, [for judges are] the authority in charge of that, and, for this reason, the owners get upset [about delays] and accuse us of failing to comply with the law."⁴¹⁰

In the context of hundreds of thousands of new settlers, the relatively-limited capacity of the courts to process cases meant that if they could retain possession of the land, squatters could probably stay. This, however, required protection. Providing protection, in turn, was only

⁴⁰⁸ Rigoberto Cervantes, "Tiroteo entre colonos de Netzahualcóyotl," *Diario de la Tarde* (12 April 1975).

⁴⁰⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 1/Folio 320 (17 June 1972).

⁴¹⁰ Hugo Sánchez, "Nezahualcóyotl: Batalla al paracaidismo, anuncia el subprocurador," *El Día* (23 August 1974).

possible by mobilizing the very people who aspired to attain land—in this sense, urban concentration spawned powerful urban bosses. This also gave benefactors control of turf and the capacity to extract rent.

Rent

Neighborhood leaders' ability to mobilize followers allowed them to extract rent from *colonos*. With urban concentration at their backs, MRC leaders, who once opposed land trafficking, became traffickers themselves. They “protect the invaders for a fee, deceiving them, telling them that they have orders from the government to settle Netzahualcóyotl. They do not give them any receipt for the amounts they receive, nor do they grant them any legal or political assurance. There are already more than 20,000 invaders that they have exploited, and hundreds of thousands of pesos have gone into the pockets of these misleaders” (de la Rosa 1974:20). It charged members an initiation fee and monthly dues, as well as a fee for membership documents.⁴¹¹ With the influx of hundreds of thousands of *colonos* into Neza between 1970 and 1980, the revenue that neighborhood leaders collected from these means was probably incredible. When Artemio Mora Lozada was charged with fraud and plunder (*despojo*) in 1977 (see below), the press reported estimates claiming he had earned 50 million pesos during his eight years leading invasions and selling lands.⁴¹²

Regardless of the size of the fortune, amassing it had only been possible on the basis of preventing imposters from collecting that rent. In 1971, Mora Lozada found that Peralta Tzompantzi was posing as MRC president. He had copies of MRC documentation and credentials, tried to control *colonos*, and kept an MRC sign in front of his house to these ends. Mora Lozada had to expel him, make newly-designed membership documents to distinguish them from Peralta Tzompantzi's forgeries, and go to the latter's house to try to recover the MRC paraphernalia.⁴¹³

⁴¹¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1174A/Exp. 2/Folio 534 (2 December 1970).

⁴¹² “‘Fijen fianza aunque sea un millón’: 11 abogados intentan sacar al cabecilla ‘paracaidista’,” *Sol de Medio Día* (29 July 1977).

⁴¹³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1144/Exp. 1/Folios 160-61 (17 February 1971). Rafael Peralta Tzompantzi also seems to have been involved in shady land-trading schemes. See AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1174A/Exp. 2/Folio 722 (30 January

Conclusion

The Movimiento Restaurador de Colonos acquired considerable influence at the local level in Neza. First, the MRC got *colonos* to break their agreements with illegal land subdividers. Second, they escaped the clutches of local government officials' extortion racket. The two developments were closely related, in that *fraccionadores* and government officials had mutually-beneficial arrangements dating to before Nezahualcóyotl was established as an independent municipality (Aréchiga Torres 2012:34-36). In response to the MRC's campaign, the *fraccionadores*' reaction to it, the government's efforts to appease both sides, and a massive uptick of rural-to-urban migration to the area, Neza's neighborhood leaders rode the wave of urban concentration and grew powerful enough on this basis to displace the *fraccionadores* as partners with the local government. And then a subset of them grew powerful enough to control turf and extract rent from residents.

Its various leaders split into four camps. Odón Madariaga Cruz was most effective at channeling new squatters into Neza and balancing their interests against those of established residents, so he ended up on top. He had a very varied and active political career. As with many neighborhood leaders, Madariaga had a complex relationship with the PRI. More than once he held office as a member of the party; he was a city council member in the Neza local government from 1973 to 1975 and a federal congressperson from 1979 to 1982. But his political career was not reducible to an ascent through the ranks of the party as a loyal partisan; he caused more trouble for the PRI than he did channel support behind the party. To make matters worse, from the PRI's point of view, after serving as a city council member and as a federal deputy, he became a PRD militant (Selee 2011:143), as discussed in Chapter 10. Since he did not owe his mobilization capacity to the PRI, he was *autonomous*. This autonomy allowed him to peel support away from the PRI and to amass considerable power. He converted the ability to mobilize followers into control over local turf and the ability to extract rent.

During this process, Madariaga's politics metamorphosed twice. Initially hostile towards the administrative apparatus and friendly towards the PRI, his first metamorphosis left him

1971).

friendly towards the bureaucracy and hostile towards the party; his second metamorphosis made him hostile towards both the administration and the PRI. The *first* one stemmed from the MRC's struggle against *fraccionadores*, local government racketeers, and police repression, which was so popular that it led the PRI to *induct* Odón Madariaga, along with Mora Lozada, as local politicians. That they were politically viable in the PRI-dominated system is noteworthy; this was an indicator of the importance of control of turf, extraction of rent, and capacity to mobilize followers. That is, bossism affected both the everyday lives of very many people and the course of political events.

Collaboration with the government allowed FINEZA to function. On the one hand, this enhanced the government's bureaucratic capacity: it increased its reach into Neza, curtailing rampant corruption and even cramping neighborhood leaders' room to maneuver. On the other hand, the advent of the land trust also accelerated the rural-to-urban migratory wave which neighborhood leaders harnessed to increase their *autonomy* from the PRI. This compromised the PRI's hegemony, precipitating the *second* metamorphosis. No longer politically expedient to work exclusively with the PRI, neighborhood leaders withdrew from and periodically turned against the party. (And within a matter of years, Neza fell to the PRI's rival, the PRD.)

Chapter 8. Of Tragedy: The Political Double-Bind in Naucalpan

On 25 February 1981, América Abaroa, a federal congressperson for the Socialist Workers' Party (Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, PST), led a group of 50 people to the Secretary of State to see the General Director of Political and Social Investigations (Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales, IPS)—whose spies' reports I draw upon heavily in this chapter—to demand that the government stop repressing the squatters affiliated with her organization, the Naucalpan Popular Settlements Union (NAUCOPAC). After rallying in front of the building, Abaroa and her collaborator María Juárez led a group of 10 people to speak with a low-level official (Manlio Favio Beltrones, sub-secretary Fernando Gutiérrez's personal secretary), to whom they related the repression to which they had been subjected and conveyed their demand that their squatted lands be legalized. They failed to meet with anyone of importance, much less extract any promises from such a person. Nevertheless, when they returned to the rally outside, they said that the functionary who had received them promised that the matter would be resolved swiftly “in order to avoid the continuation of repression of NAUCOPAC squatters.” She concluded by proclaiming that as long as “gorillas and monkeys” call the shots, NAUCOPAC will remain on a war footing.⁴¹⁴

Why did Abaroa, who had merely met with a low-level functionary who told her nothing of substance, declare to her followers that repression would cease? At first blush, there seems to be a contradiction between the government essentially ignoring squatters' demands and their leader's confident assurance that their demands would be taken heed of. But Abaroa was not

⁴¹⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 5/Folios 135-36 (25 February 1981).

belying the truth. Instead, she put into words the urban political process that was currently unfolding; she could see what will become clear to us in this chapter. The massive wave of rural-to-urban migration that hit late-20th century Mexico City put the government in a double-bind which worked in the opposition's favor. On the one hand, the government was tasked with upholding the rule of law; this meant that only opposition political operatives were politically free to lead land invasions. On the other hand, if the government responded to land invasions with repression, its popularity took a hit; and yet when it opted not to repress them, the government only demonstrated that the political opposition could deliver the goods—which also undermined the government's popularity.

Abaroa was not belying the truth. Instead, she was expressing concisely the truth that the government would either concede squatters' demands, collapse in the face of them, or both. Abaroa had witnessed the government make enough concessions under pressure to predict this; in October 1979, she and another PST congressperson, Jesús Ortega Martínez, negotiated an agreement to remove riot police that had been standing guard on lands that had been invaded by PST activists, a concession that the State Department "granted them on the occasion of the rally they held in front of this federal agency," according to an IPS spy.⁴¹⁵ Indeed, she understood the situation so well she was even to discern what went on behind closed doors; in a private meeting, the assistant director of operations of the Dirección de Seguridad Pública y Transito of the State of Mexico (DSPyT), coronel Roberto Rubio Cordero, told representatives from other parts of the security apparatus⁴¹⁶ that in combatting land invasions they should persuade squatters to leave lands they had recently occupied, rather use force to accomplish these ends, in order to avoid agitating the inhabitants.⁴¹⁷ Abaroa knew that they knew that using force would be politically unpopular and that it was therefore politic to avoid.

⁴¹⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 10/Folio 128 (25 October 1979).

⁴¹⁶ The State Department, Grupo Contra la Posesión Ilegal de la Tierra, and BARAPEM.

⁴¹⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 10/Folio 193 (23 January 1980).

Introduction

American sociologists often view eviction as a negative life event that befalls the urban poor due to their dire *economic* circumstances (cf. Desmond 2016). But in much of the world, evictions are better understood as a *political* problem (Weinstein 2021). Urban concentration raises the question of eviction. And as we saw in Part I, the urban poor can circumvent that fate by soliciting subordination. So too can they fight eviction through contentious politics. Indeed, this may be compatible with even more urban concentration than soliciting subordination; there may be an elective affinity between high amounts of urban concentration and contentious politics.

The population of Naucalpan, casually referred to as Mexico's most industrialized municipality,⁴¹⁸ grew from an unknown size in 1950, to 85,828 people in 1960, to 407,825 in 1970, and to 730,170 in 1980 (Schteingart 1989: table 31). As regards the proportion of those people who were squatters, estimates vary. A low estimate, provided by the top-level functionaries at the State Department and Obras Públicas, was that by 1976 there were about 200,000 *people* living in 20 *colonias irregulares* in Naucalpan⁴¹⁹—about a fourth of the municipality's population. A high estimate, provided by the head of the Desarrollo Social department of the State of Mexico's Instituto de Acción Urbana e Integración Social (AURIS), was that by 1973 there were about 200,000 *families* living in Naucalpan's squatter settlements⁴²⁰—which would have been the vast majority of its population.

The growth of such *colonias* was especially intense during the late-1970s and early-1980s. A journalist described urban concentration in the northern Mexico City metropolitan area, saying that in Naucalpan, “hundreds of heads of families from the interior” purchased lots from peasants (*campesinos*) and the leaders of commonly-held lands (*comisariados ejidales*). Paraphrasing the AURIS official, he summarized:

“Of the 200,000 heads of families who own irregular lots in this important area of the Valley of Mexico, a high percentage acquired them from the *comisariados*. . . . [M]any others seized land in their capacity as ‘*paracaidistas*’. . . . [O]thers took possession of lots

⁴¹⁸ Alfredo Ramos R., “Imposible la regularización de 100,000 predios en Naucalpan,” *Excélsior* (6 June 1978).

⁴¹⁹ “La cuarta parte de la población de Naucalpan, en colonias irregulares,” *Excélsior* (18 May 1976).

⁴²⁰ Cuauhtémoc Meléndez, “Escandalosa venta ilegal de Terrenos en Atizapán,” *El Día* (23 March 1973).

that are located within [public] federal land[,] . . . riverbanks, areas adjacent to railway tracks. . . [and] areas where the electricity towers are located.” He added that the leaders of the Unión de Colonias Populares del Valle de México—Erasmus Osorio, Vicente Huicochea, Feliz Juárez, Manuel Meza, and Enrique Carreño—said that the *comisariados ejidales* had sold land to those from Santiago Occipaco and San Mateo Nopala, in particular, and that in Atizapán, Reyes Roa was in charge of the sales. Conflict resulted. For instance, Pedro García reported that the residents from Colonia Isidro Fabela were regularly assaulted.⁴²¹ However, unlike Duhau and Giglia (2008:364-93), I do not think conflict was the result of a collision of two incompatible worlds; I think it instead stemmed from the process of urban concentration itself, and that the conflict was between newer and older generations of residents.

The Rise Of Naucopac

The Popular Settlements Union of Naucalpan (NAUCOPAC) rose to prominence by organizing numerous rallies and marches, attending countless meetings with political officials, and, of course, leading a series of land invasions. They were not the only organization in Naucalpan; but they were the main organization which combined political independence with a mass base. NAUCOPAC contrasted with organizations like the Settlers’ Alliance of South Naucalpan, which sought to affiliate with the PRI’s peasant division,⁴²² in that NAUCOPAC was closely allied with the Socialist Workers’ Party (PST). After changing its name,⁴²³ the PST would support the candidacy of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas—who led the biggest leftward split from the PRI in its history—for president in 1988.

NAUCOPAC’s leadership, meanwhile, not only led the urban poor in militant, disruptive protests, but, in several cases, also held political office. Some argue that working within government institutions conservatizes social movement leaders (Piven and Cloward 1979). But Abaroa was a congressperson for the PST from 1979 to 1982, and this office does not appear to

⁴²¹ Cuauhtémoc Meléndez, “Escandalosa venta ilegal de Terrenos en Atizapán,” *El Día* (23 March 1973).

⁴²² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7/Folio 192 (3 September 1979).

⁴²³ Becoming the Partido del Frente Cardenista de Reconstrucción Nacional.

have conservatized her—perhaps because she was at the helm of a powerful grassroots movement and flanked by leftists. NAUCOPAC specialized in land invasions to establish new squatter settlements but also branched out into service fee protests.

Hoping to have a major impact on access to housing, NAUCOPAC started invading rural land as early as 1975, soon after its formation.⁴²⁴ Its orientation to land invasions gave it a mass base, and a mass base inevitably raised questions about whether the organization would champion newer or older squatter residents as more and more people continued to settle in Naucalpan. Two of NAUCOPAC's leaders—América Abaroa and Alfonso Rubio Márquez—would take different sides on the debate about whether to continue this channeling more residents into the area or pivot to representing residents who had already settled the area. Abaroa eclipsed Rubio Márquez, taking the helm at NAUCOPAC and leading it to the first alternative, continuing to orchestrate land invasions.

The use of militant tactics dates to the organization's early days. Thus, for instance, in 1975, the year the PST was established (Gómez Tagle 2001:148), two PST leaders⁴²⁵ led some 300 people—"all of whom were poor," according to a journalist—to invade part of the San Bartolo Ameyalco *ejido*, in Atizapán de Zaragoza. Of their group, 44 were apprehended and detained in the Villa Obregón jail on charges of looting, though they said they had documents proving they had purchased the lands from Atizapán de Zaragoza's *comisariado ejidal*. The judge⁴²⁶ decided to see five representatives who would speak on behalf of those rallying outside the judge's quarters. The first representative started to interrogate the judge rudely, then insulted him and told him that he knew that the State Department had ordered him to harm the 44 detained people. He then gave a mini-speech, saying that the PST would triumph and "I would hang the judge by the tips of his fingers, along with so many corrupt officials."

The journalist covering the event jibed that the orator made his speech as if he were addressing the crowd outside, when in fact he was just in a hearing with the judge. Beyond his bluster, though, the orator did seem to understand a fundamental feature of the situation: urban

⁴²⁴ About 200 PST militants invaded lands in Colonia Federal Burocrática, Huixquilucan (southwest of Naucalpan), land that allegedly belonged to Claudio Ibarrola and Francisco Rivera (the latter being the owner of a real estate company). DGIPS, caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 19-20 (24 June 1981).

⁴²⁵ Ricardo Antonio Goveia Autre and Leonor Leal de Gallardo.

⁴²⁶ José de Jesús Ixta Silva.

concentration was undermining the government. The government could either allow oppositionists to lead land invasions successfully, in which case the PRI's opponents would be the new urban poor's proximate source of needs-fulfillment, or they could repress such events, in which case their popular appeal would suffer. In any case, the young man who had spoken truth to power tried to flee the hearing, prevented only by the bailiffs. One of the women who had been detained yelled to the crowd outside, which approached threateningly and beat loudly on the doors of the judge's chambers. The representatives then returned to the crowd outside and announced that in an hour an assembly would be held in the offices of the PST to determine the subsequent course of action.⁴²⁷ For NAUCOPAC, such militance was routine.

América Abaroa Zamora was NAUCOPAC's foremost leader, appearing in the archival record as early as October 1976 in a NAUCOPAC-led protest against bus fare hikes.⁴²⁸ She made a name for herself by leading NAUCOPAC members in numerous land invasions as well as protests against police abuse, the lack of urban services, and of course exorbitant bus fares,⁴²⁹ which were staple issues for the organization (see Plate 8.1).⁴³⁰ Her residential background was probably important in Abaroa's political-ideological formation. The neighborhood leader in her *colonia*, Las Américas, had been accused of embezzling the money *colonos* had contributed to the association along with a grant from the State of Mexico (1 million pesos for neighborhood improvements), of corrupt dealings with *fraccionadores* (among other things, he committed a lot that had been set aside for public space committed to a shopping mall instead), and of use of unscrupulous tactics to win reelection.⁴³¹ Abaroa was more selfless and more ambitious. She continued to work with NAUCOPAC during her time serving as a federal congressperson for the Socialist Workers' Party (PST) (1979-1982). But her orientation in this work was probably influenced by earlier events in her environment, among them that a series of surrounding

⁴²⁷ David García Salinas, "Calabozo a 44 'paracaidistas,'" *La Prensa* (23 July 1975).

⁴²⁸ "Golpiza a un líder de colonos de Naucalpan que organizó protesta," *Sol de Medio Día* (20 October 1976).

⁴²⁹ "Naucalpan: Denuncia ante el Alcalde los constantes abusos policíacos" *El Día* (19 November 1976); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 1/Folios 189-202 (23 February 1979).

⁴³⁰ See *NAUCOPAC* (n.d.), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7/Folio 23.

⁴³¹ Ramón Jiménez, "Acusan de abuso de confianza al dirigente de los colonos de Las Américas, Salvador Arias Cabrera," *El Día* (21 December 1970).

neighborhoods⁴³² protested the abuses of the local government's Obras Públicas director⁴³³ who threatened to jail them if they did not contribute to public works that had not even been initiated⁴³⁴ (and who was also involved in illegal land invasions⁴³⁵).

Making Evictions Political

With popular urbanization as wind in its sails and with Abaroa at the helm, NAUCOPAC developed a sophisticated land-invasion strategy that the issue of evictions and non-evictions a political problem for the government. First, the organization retreated when tactical. For example, five families affiliated with NAUCOPAC carried out an invasion in Colonia Benito Juárez (west of the Campo Militar) and were ejected by Radio Patrol Battalion of the State of Mexico (BARAPEM) riot police. Abaroa advised the *paracaidistas* not to resist, and invited them to stay in NAUCOPAC's office for the time being;⁴³⁶ additional, and more powerful, land invasions would soon take place, and there was no sense in risking life and limb for this one. Second, NAUCOPAC worked legal channels, approaching judges to request court injunctions by disputing the ownership of invaded land.⁴³⁷ NAUCOPAC seems to have routinely sought to get such writs immediately after invasions.⁴³⁸ This was apposite; when invaders were protected by an injunction, the police were legally barred from carrying out an eviction.⁴³⁹ Such disputes had

⁴³² colonias El Molinito, La Cañada, Río Hondo, San Esteban, Loma Linda, and Zomeyucan.

⁴³³ The architect J. Jesús Sánchez Allende.

⁴³⁴ "Suspenden los pagos por cooperación en seis colonias, como protesta contra un funcionario: Dicen que pretenden cobrar cuotas por trabajos ni siquiera iniciados," *Sol de Medio Día* (13 May 1972).

⁴³⁵ "Evitaron una invasión ejidal y un choque entre campesinos," *Sol de Medio Día* (13 May 1972).

⁴³⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folio 261 (20 August 1980).

⁴³⁷ Since court orders can prevent evictions, Mexico differs from cases such as South Africa, where evictions are only possible with a judge's permission (Levenson 2022:xiii, 48-49, 81).

⁴³⁸ See, for example, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 290 (6 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 297 (7 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folios 301-302 (7 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 311 (24 October 1980).

⁴³⁹ As the Deputy Public Prosecutor noted, when someone already had possession of a lot, "we do not remove him immediately . . . and, therefore, the owners are inconvenienced and accuse us of not complying with the law." Hugo Sánchez, "Nezahualcóyotl: Batalla al paracaidismo, anuncia el subprecurador," *El Día* (23 August 1974).

to instead be processed by the judicial system, which gave *colonos* time and shielded them from immediate police repression.

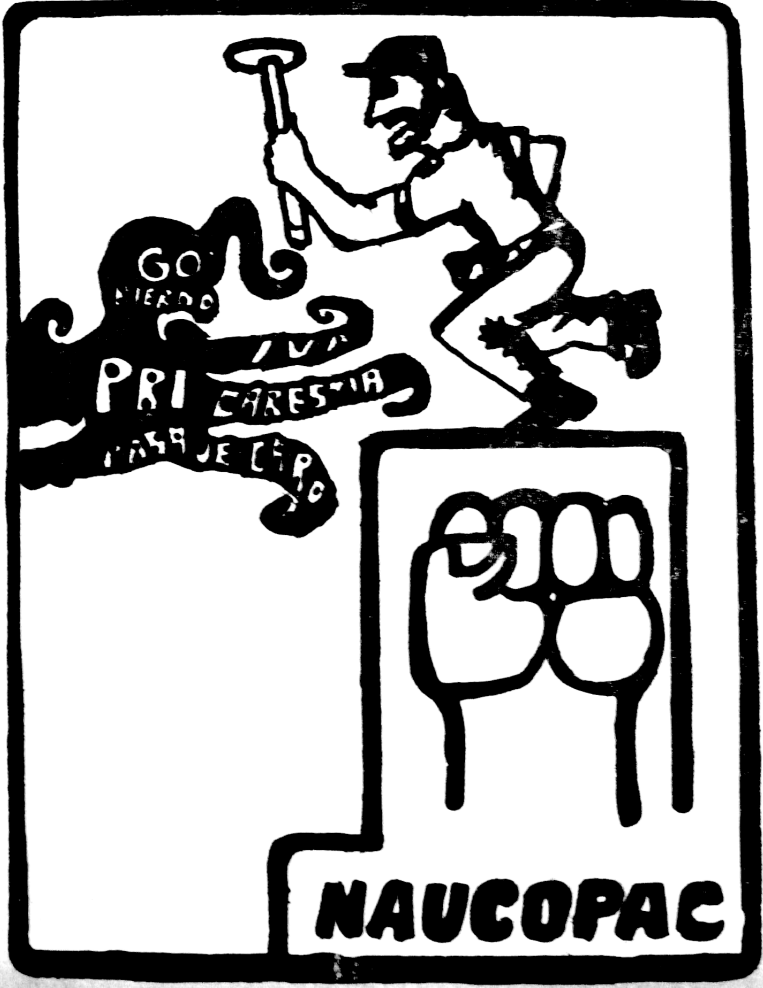


Plate 8.1. Cover graphic of NAUCOPAC promotional pamphlet, ca. 1978. The words printed on the octopus are “government,” “PRI,” “taxes,” “scarcity,” and “high transit fares”

Source: AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7/Folio 23.

This strategy made both land invasions and government attempts to prevent land invasions a *political* problem. Since security forces often could not evict squatters straight away, politicians had to reckon with them. In this context, two approaches were rational for neighborhood leaders. First, they could solicit subordination, as their counterparts had done in the 1940s and 1950s. This would have involved trying to appear collaborative and to furnish support for the government with the hope that patrons would reward them for their loyalty. Second, they could issue demands and use disruption to pressure political elites to make concessions. Local leaders varied on such questions; some wanted to ingratiate themselves with the powers that be while others tried to expose them as traitors to the Mexican people. NAUCOPAC was mostly of the latter mind, and none more than Abaroa. By and large, the organization sought to apply pressure on government officials and expose their promises as hollow, as reflected, for example, in their propaganda (see Plate 8.2). In November 1980, during Abaroa's term in congress, NAUCOPAC circulated leaflets demanding that "corrupt municipal officials" be removed from office (singling out for special ridicule the trustees, Eduardo Franco Martínez and Esteban González Sánchez, and the mayor, Roberto Soto Prieto⁴⁴⁰), whom they accused of caprice and malice.⁴⁴¹

⁴⁴⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 4, folio 20 (3 November 1980).

⁴⁴¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 4, folio 15 (3 November 1980).



Plate 8.2. Illustration from NAUCOPAC propaganda depicting how corrupt neighborhood leaders portrayed Naucalpan’s *colonias* as better off than they really were

The complicit leader is saying “Ah yes, government official, here everything is nice!” The text on the back of the scenery prop reads “Scenography for official visits, property of the Bossist Council, Colonia Benito Juárez.”

Source: *Boletín NAUCOPAC* (28 November 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7/Folio 15.

Leading Land Invasions

NAUCOPAC led numerous land invasions, especially in and around the San Antonio Zomeyucán *ejido* (west and north of the Campo Militar). *Ejido* leader José Carmen “El Chino”

Torres González was (like his predecessor⁴⁴²) heavily involved in illegal land sales.⁴⁴³ But El Chino eventually came to oppose urban growth. This change of heart was probably due to pressure from below, because by April 1980, San Antonio Zomeyucán's *ejidatarios*, led by Raúl Mejía Cárdenas, Guillermo León, and José González, confronted him and reported to the Department of Agrarian Reform (SRA) that he had been selling land illegally.⁴⁴⁴ That July, Raúl Mejía again accused him of illegally selling lands (for millions of pesos) that later became squatter settlements.⁴⁴⁵ So El Chino was already under pressure to clearly adopt an anti-growth position when 700 NAUCOPAC affiliates invaded La Magüeyera and another 200 invaded La Tolva—both in San Antonio Zomeyucán—on 21 May 1980. Whereas before he had favored urban growth (and benefitted from it), now the *comisariado ejidal*, under El Chino's leadership, decried NAUCOPAC's deeds. The police did not repress the invaders because they had an injunction, however, leading El Chino to protest by threatening that community residents would carry out the eviction themselves.⁴⁴⁶

In late October 1980, Abaroa's comrades Rosalia Reyes and Gerardo Osorio Rivas led a small group of people to invade a plot of land in San Lorenzo Totolinga (northwest of Campo Militar). They alleged to have purchased the land from a person with the surname Arzate, who, they said, sold them the land without providing any documentation.⁴⁴⁷ In response to El Chino's threat to take things into his own hands, the Group Against the Illegal Possession of Land

⁴⁴² "Acusan a funcionarios del Estado de México de solapar la venta de terrenos ejidales," *Excélsior* (18 February 1969).

⁴⁴³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 10, folio 145 (14 November 1979). There seems to have initially been some tension between Abaroa and El Chino. AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 132-33 (11 May 1979). But they soon came to some kind of agreement, and in November 1979 he collaborated with Abaroa on extralegal land sales. AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 10, folio 147 (16 November 1979). He was also accused the following January of selling land without providing documents, in order to be able to extract as much money from residents as possible. AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folio 27 (12 January 1980).

⁴⁴⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 10, folios 277-78 (26 April 1980).

⁴⁴⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 10, folio 350 (17 July 1980).

⁴⁴⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 22 (21 May 1980).

⁴⁴⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folio 338 (25 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 4, folio 2 (29 October 1980).

(GRUCOPIT)⁴⁴⁸ let El Chino lead a group of 20 GRUCOPIT officials to evict Abaroa's followers, who had by then expanded to 95.⁴⁴⁹ El Chino was by now steadfastly anti-growth. Nevertheless, San Lorenzo Totolinga residents who had a legal claim to the land as private property (*pequeños propietarios*) had been selling parcels to AURIS so that this agency could, in turn, give land to members of NAUCOPAC (which would, of course, later be "invaded" to justify the concession before the public⁴⁵⁰). This implied more urban growth, however, and thus provoked a negative reaction on the part of residents with a traditional claim to the land (*comuneros*). Amidst the ensuing conflict, the *propietarios*, the *comuneros*, and NAUCOPAC all agreed to let SRA determine whether the land was private or communally-owned.⁴⁵¹

Only days later, NAUCOPAC prepared to invade the land again. Its strategy was sophisticated: the organization tried to ensure that regardless of whether they were able to triumph or forced to retreat, the outcome would work in its favor. It incorporated a large number of people into the land invasion plan in order to raise the stakes such that they would either avoid eviction⁴⁵² or, in the event of eviction, have so many people's wellbeing on the line that AURIS would have little practical alternative but to relocate the squatters to other lands.⁴⁵³ The *comuneros* therefore made an alliance with the *propietarios*, both agreeing to respect current landholdings, in an attempt to prevent their lands from being invaded. This was not the end of the story for Abaroa and allies, however—for popular urbanization was not about to stop. Abaroa regrouped for a new invasion and signed an agreement with *comunero* representatives to allow the SRA to determine whether the parcels were communal or private.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁴⁸ GRUCOPIT was a State of Mexico branch of law enforcement dedicated to addressing land invasions.

⁴⁴⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 4, folio 2 (29 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 318 (29 October 1980).

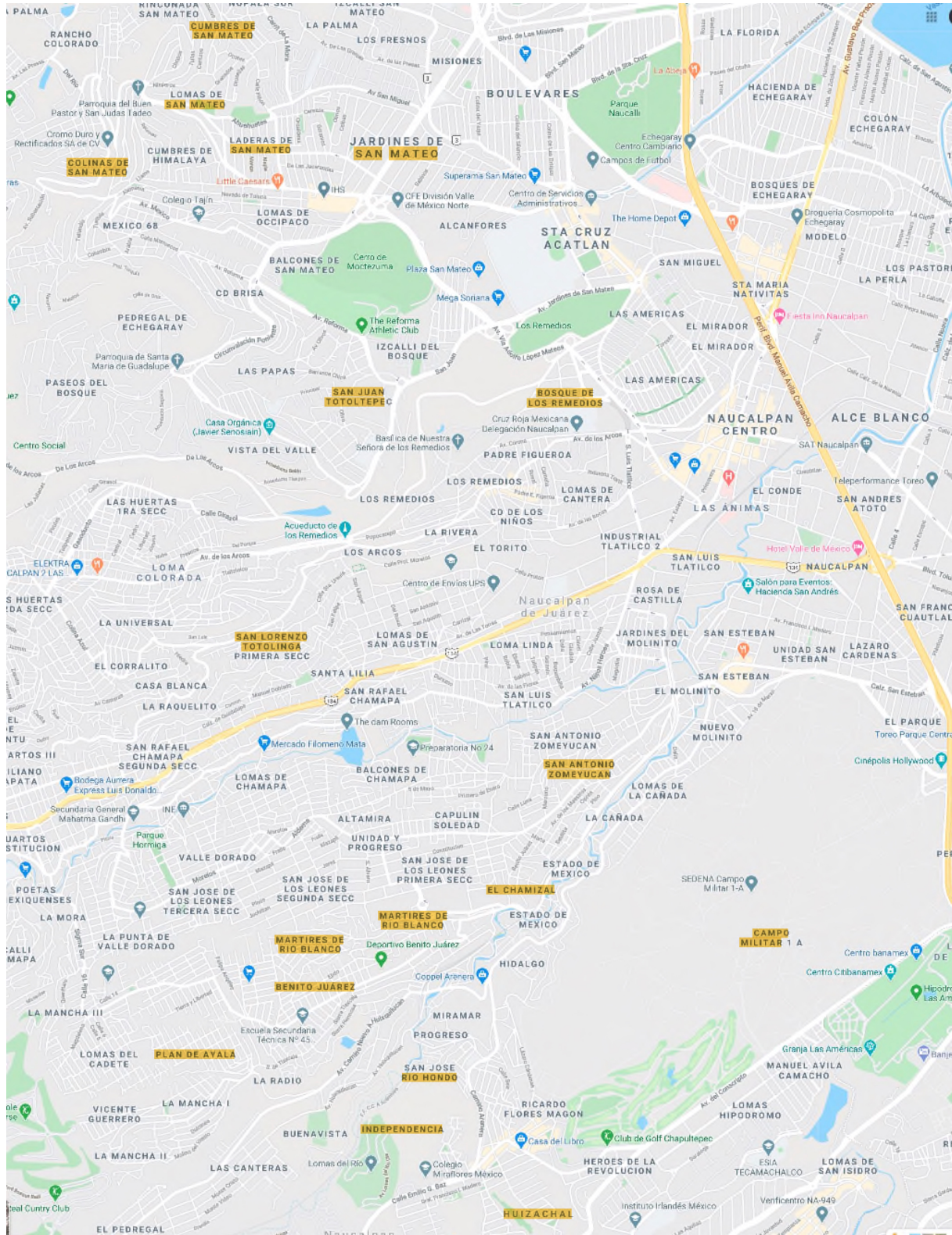
⁴⁵⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 5, folios 238-239 (21 March 1981).

⁴⁵¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 12, folios 146-47 (18 March 1981).

⁴⁵² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 5, folios 238-239 (21 March 1981).

⁴⁵³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 12, folio 159 (24 March 1981).

⁴⁵⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 5, folios 238-39 (21 March 1981).



Map 8.1. San Antonio Zomeyucán and vicinity, Naucalpan

Source: Google.

Meanwhile, NAUCOPAC invasions had continued. Lidia Chávez de Mitre and Esther Vásquez de Rubio had led 400 people to invade 3 hectares of private property in Colonia Independencia (on the southwestern edge of Campo Militar) in February 1980.⁴⁵⁵ Then, in early-October 1980, about 30 people, led by Chávez but supported and advised by Abaroa, invaded more of Colonia Independencia: land upon which the existing residents had hoped to enlarge their high school⁴⁵⁶ as well as land that Ángel Martínez González, a priest, claimed belonged to his company. The invaders secured an injunction, so the GRUCOPIT could not eject them in the immediate term.⁴⁵⁷ Resident Rafael Hernández led 20 of his neighbors to the governor's palace to demand that the land invaders be evicted. The governor's secretary said that they were expediting the paperwork to be able to evict them,⁴⁵⁸ but that the process was slow.⁴⁵⁹ The priest met with the *colonos*, offering to pay the squatters to leave the plots they occupied.⁴⁶⁰ Some may have taken the offer, though I have no record either way.

Nearly one year later, several PST leaders—PST congressmen Pedro René Etienne Llano and Jesús Ortega Martínez and PST leaders Rafael Padilla Samaniego, Israel María Flores, and Juana Reyes Hernández—again led their followers to settle in Colonia Independencia. They submitted a memorandum to the Secretary of State saying that the lands belonged to some of the *colonos* living in the area and that the developers who claimed ownership over them were usurpers.⁴⁶¹ The government mobilized 2,000 security forces to dislocate the approximately 500 families. The *colonos* greeted this attempt at mass eviction with resistance: “they threw molotov cocktails and eight firearm (pistol) shots were heard,” according to a spy. But, using teargas, security forces were able to beat *colonos* into a retreat in “five minutes,” after which they

⁴⁵⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 10, folio 210 (29 February 1980).

⁴⁵⁶ Open letter, *Excelsior* (6 November 1980).

⁴⁵⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 290 (6 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folios 301-02 (7 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 311 (24 October 1980).

⁴⁵⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 4, folios 35-36 (7 November 1980).

⁴⁵⁹ The first hearing, at which the plaintiff was not present, was not until 23 March 1981. AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 12, folio 158 (23 March 1981).

⁴⁶⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 280 (18 November 1980).

⁴⁶¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 8, folios 82-83 (13 October 1981).

detained several people and destroyed the 26 squatter camps that had been set up. While the eviction was successful, it was deeply unpopular. Those who had scattered even said they planned to lynch the priest, Martínez González, who had claimed to own the land.⁴⁶²

The government knew that the eviction was unpopular. A spy reflected this understanding when referencing the “latent threat that the national PST leadership will carry out a series of massive rallies trying to accomplish their goal of taking possession of those plots and for the immediate release of the people detained.”⁴⁶³ And, indeed, the rallies demanding the release of the five people arrested during the mass eviction started just two days after the eviction itself, with a rally of 40 people in front of the municipal palace in Tlalnepantla (where the detained were held) and with PST congressman Pedro Etienne leading a contingent of about 100 people to the state capital, Toluca, to meet with both the State of Mexico Secretary of State⁴⁶⁴ and the judge assigned to the case, who told them that he awaited evidence and that they would either be charged or released within 72 hours.⁴⁶⁵ Etienne announced to the crowd that even though only two of the five were PST members, the PST would give them all legal support.⁴⁶⁶ Thus, not only did the government’s popularity decline with the eviction, as evidenced by the rallies protesting the government’s action; the PST’s popularity increased with the eviction, not only because it led the protests against repression but also because it stepped in to defend prosecuted land invaders.

Evictions like that carried out in San Lorenzo Totolinga represented victorious battles for the government, but they were not the end of the war. To the contrary, popular urbanization continued, almost unaffected by government action. This context provided Abaroa with opportunities to challenge the government’s legitimacy. She had led 50 people to the Department of State to demand the cessation of government repression of NAUCOPAC members, as recounted in the opening vignette. This showed that repressing squatter-settlement formation was bad for the PRI’s approval among the urban poor.

⁴⁶² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 201-02 (14 October 1981).

⁴⁶³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 204-05 (15 October 1981).

⁴⁶⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folio 207 (16 October 1981).

⁴⁶⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folio 209 (16 October 1981).

⁴⁶⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folio 210 (16 October 1981).

Meanwhile, land invasions angered existing residents. On 6 November 1980, residents of Colonia Independencia, along with the president of the municipal Consejo de Colaboración,⁴⁶⁷ published an open letter in *Excélsior*, addressed to government and religious leaders,⁴⁶⁸ in which they decried the repeated invasion of land they had set aside to expand the Ángel Matute Catholic secondary and preparatory school to benefit “poor classes,” and demanded that invasion leaders, including Abaroa collaborators such as Lidia Chávez,⁴⁶⁹ be punished. They said the municipal government supported land invaders by preventing police interference: they had informed the municipal mayor, Roberto Soto Prieto, that the invasion was creating a slum where petty thieves, prostitutes, drug addicts, unemployed people, and criminals would wonder; that many people who traverse the settlement had suffered assault and lost personal belongings; and that the new residents smoked marijuana and sold and used narcotics. They said that these people, headed by Lidia Chávez de Mitre, had publicly libeled the priest, Ángel Martínez González, for having sold lands (which seems to have been accurate⁴⁷⁰), and that they had kidnapped one of his helpers, who had to be rescued. Thus, they reasoned, “given these events and where the criminal behavior of those accused is heading,” there will be “a physical confrontation where a bloody act results in the detriment of the community.” They begged for government intervention to stop these “disgraceful” events, threatening that, at a certain point, “the time comes in the lives of men when an injustice not stopped by the authorities requires taking it into their own hands.”⁴⁷¹ A spy agreed, surmising that there was a possibility the

⁴⁶⁷ Fernando Vargas Vegal.

⁴⁶⁸ Governor Jiménez Cantú, general secretary of the Department of State Juan Monroy Pérez, State of Mexico attorney general Carlos Kuri Assad, and State of Mexico coordinator of public works Jorge Ocampo, as well as addressed to the Congregación Cristiana del Estado de México and the Juventud Cristiana del Estado de México, and to the bishop of Tlalnepantla Adolfo Suárez.

⁴⁶⁹ In addition to Lidia Chavez de Mitre, the leaders of the invasion also included Teresa García de Reves, Esther Vázquez de Rubio, Antonia Robles de González, Enrique López Castro, Honorina Manduiano de Cáceres, Rafaela López, Galdina Cruz, Amada Valázquez de Domínguez, Amparo Martínez, Juan Manuel Ramírez Martínez, Andrea Martínez, Alejandro Tapia, Daniel Mandujano, María González, Celsa Díaz, Franciso Balderas, María Cepeda Rodríguez, and Carmen Mandujano.

⁴⁷⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7/Folio 280 (18 November 1980).

⁴⁷¹ “Denunciamos,” *Excélsior* (6 November 1980).

“legitimate owners” would oppose the “professional *paracaidistas*” through “physical confrontation.”⁴⁷²

Duhau and Giglia (2008:364-93) argue that this sort of conflict stemmed from two worlds—traditional communities and modern squatter settlements—colliding. They view the expanding metropolis as obeying norms that are fundamentally at odds with those of traditional communities, and opine that conflict issues when the former bumps up against the latter. However, the conflict just recounted resembles that which arose in Nezahualcóyotl between earlier and later generations of squatters, described in Chapter 7, where *comuneros* were not part of the picture. Thus, I surmise that the conflict stemmed not from a clash of two distinct worlds but was rather internal to the process of urban concentration itself, between earlier and later generations of residents. This was important because it put the government in a double-bind. If it evicted new squatters, it alienated them. And if it failed to evict land invaders, it alienated existing residents.

The Strength Of The Opposition

The PST had deep roots among the urban poor, as the discussion above of Abaroa’s career demonstrates. Other leftist organizations, like the Popular Socialist Party, which had often collaborated amicably with the PRI (Gómez Tagle 2001:141), also formed grassroots mobilization committees and organized assemblies in several metropolitan areas in the State of Mexico⁴⁷³ to decide how to organize the population to boycott a tax for public lighting and pressure the government to reverse the law requiring them to pay for this service, and threatened to hold a rally to increase pressure on the government to these ends.⁴⁷⁴ Organizing the urban poor in this way meant community organizing among working class Mexicans; so organizing naturally transgressed the boundary between community and workplace. And the socialist left had traditionally argued that the capitalist class had no solution to the housing question besides displacing the poor (Engels [1872] 2021); so these transgressions were naturally fodder for

⁴⁷² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7/Folio 271 (6 November 1980).

⁴⁷³ Naucalpan, Tlalnepantla de Baz, Atizpán de Zaragoza, Ecatepec, and Nezahualcóyotl.

⁴⁷⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 219 (5 October 1979).

Marxists. These factors shaped tactics and strategy. On the heels of NAUCOPAC's anti-eviction work, the leftist grassroots opposition effervesced. Leftists tried to capitalize on opportunities by collaborating with Abaroa. Abaroa reciprocated, for example, agreeing with Independent Socialist Workers Party (POIS) leaders to proselytize in factories in Naucalpan and Tlalnepantla.⁴⁷⁵

Service Payment Boycotts

Protests against paying for urban services dated to at least as early as 1972, when Ignacio Hernández Salgado led a group of residents from Colonia Loma Linda to request the intervention of the governor of the State of Mexico into municipal charges for urbanization works. Fees had increased considerably—possibly due embezzlement by corrupt officials—and residents were not eager to pay.⁴⁷⁶ (For example, a member of the Concejo de Colaboración⁴⁷⁷ asked for contributions towards the introduction of telephone lines, of which nothing seems to have come, provoking discontent in 1979.⁴⁷⁸) There were multiple reasons the local government tried to extract payments from residents. Municipal governments had revenue shortfalls. This led them to try to curtail the non-payment of municipal taxes (in part, this was an effort to address fiscal problems stemming from inability to levy property taxes on extralegally-occupied land).⁴⁷⁹ But municipal officials, like the mayor of Naucalpan, also seem to have embezzled lots of money.⁴⁸⁰

Government officials' attempts to extract money from residents raised the question of how the urban poor ought to respond. While Alfonso Rubio Márquez wanted to play nice with

⁴⁷⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 284 (19 November 1980).

⁴⁷⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 1, folio 20 (7 April 1972).

⁴⁷⁷ Pedro Torres Roa.

⁴⁷⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7/Folio 137 (25 May 1979).

⁴⁷⁹ Alfredo Ramos Ramos, "Naucalpan pierde impuestos por falta de regularización de tierras: El Regidor 4º," *Excélsior* (10 March 1976).

⁴⁸⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 142 (29 May 1979). This led his successor, Soto Prieto, an accountant, to open the municipal account books for a public audit. "Soto Prieto reveló las finanzas de la alcaldía de Naucalpan, Méx.: Es el Primero Presidente Municipal que recurre a una auditoría externa para informar a sus gobernados," *Ovaciones* (27 September 1979).

the government, opposing the idea of boycotting the tax for street lighting, presumably in the hope of eliciting government favors,⁴⁸¹ Abaroa organized a boycott of the Light and Power Company's charges for street lighting, presumably hoping to extract concessions through disruption. This was of a piece with NAUCOPAC's protests (undertaken since at least October 1978) over price-gouging for water services.⁴⁸² Abaroa tried to pressure the local mayor, Roberto Soto Prieto, by threatening to hold numerous rallies in front of the municipal palace if the government did not reverse the law requiring that residents pay for public lighting,⁴⁸³ and raised funds to file an injunction against the Power Company.⁴⁸⁴

Abaroa made good on her threat several days later by leading a march culminating in a rally in front of the municipal palace. In an act of disruption, protestors took over the central plaza, ignoring a request by the mayor's personal secretary that a different space be used instead. A series of speakers decried recent events. The second orator said this would not be the only protest against the authorities demanding that the public lighting tax be reversed, and that in the future they would bring even more people from elsewhere in the state to protest against the PRI government.⁴⁸⁵ Abaroa said that despite internal divisions within NAUCOPAC and even though she was a congressperson she would continue struggling against the street lighting tax, and that the urban social movement leaders would organize a gigantic protest to this effect by joining forces with *colonos* from elsewhere in the city.⁴⁸⁶

To do so, she said, they would secure the endorsement of the Mexican Communist Party (PCM), the Workers' Revolutionary Party, Left Communist Unity, and, of course, the PST.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 173 (10 August 1979).

⁴⁸² Petition from the Union de Colonias Populares del Municipio de Naucalpan, A.C., AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 39-52 (3 October 1978).

⁴⁸³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 189 (25 August 1979).

⁴⁸⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 158 (13 July 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 218 (5 October 1979).

⁴⁸⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 195 (5 September 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 196-98 (5 September 1979).

⁴⁸⁶ According to the spy, she mentioned Tlalnepantla, Atizapán, Nicolás Romero, Cuautitlán Izcalli, and Ecatepec, Nezahualcóyotl and Huixquilucan.

⁴⁸⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 199-200 (5 September 1979). The PST had already joined forces

Soon, NAUCOPAC's Abaroa and Cuauhtémoc Ruiz would also collaborate with POIS leaders.⁴⁸⁸ Participation was not massive at this particular rally. (One spy estimated the size of the rally to be 350 participants;⁴⁸⁹ another estimated 600.⁴⁹⁰) But the prospect of significant discontent was on the table, as was the prospect of a united left-wing political opposition.

Oppositional Doxa

In November 1980, alternate federal congressperson Manuel Terrazas, member of the Left Coalition, presided over an assembly in San Antonio Zomeyucan to form the Settlers' Union of Naucalpan (UCONAC). The leadership body was appointed and the program was outlined. UCONAC immediately got to work recruiting, soon counting 500 members.⁴⁹¹ A spy viewed this as an effort to out-organize Abaroa, and thus as a threat.⁴⁹² This zero-sum interpretation seems mistaken. Terrazas was an alternate congressperson precisely for Abaroa's seat;⁴⁹³ they were collaborators as much as they were competitors. Within a few days, UCONAC and NAUCOPAC co-sponsored a National Front Against Repression demonstration at which both PCM and PST leaders spoke and members from both parties (along with those of the Mexican Party of the Proletariat) rallied and marched together against government repression.⁴⁹⁴ There was, that is, a considerable amount of convergence and practical solidarity between these left organizations. It was on these grounds that Abaroa soon called for a united left electoral coalition.⁴⁹⁵ Meanwhile,

with the PPS on the matter. AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 182 (16 August 1979).

⁴⁸⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folio 87 (5 March 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 284 (19 November 1980).

⁴⁸⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 199-200 (5 September 1979).

⁴⁹⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 195 (5 September 1979).

⁴⁹¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 301-02 (25 November 1980).

⁴⁹² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 313-14 (2 December 1980).

⁴⁹³ Camp 2011:1134.

⁴⁹⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 323-24 (6 December 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 325-27 (6 December 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 328 (6 December 1980).

⁴⁹⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 8, folio 185 (18 November 1981).

PST and PCM lawyers also collaborated on legal defense,⁴⁹⁶ as did NAUCOPAC leader Abaroa and UCONAC leader David Barrios Martínez collaborate in opposition to the government's Land Tenure Regularization Commission (CORETT)⁴⁹⁷—all of which preceded the 1987 formation of the Mexican Socialist Party (PMS), which included both the PST and the PCM (Gómez Tagle 2001:146). For the most part, though, the leftist organizations dedicated themselves to contentious politics.

Indeed, the contentious approach to politics was so appealing that even the right-wing National Action Party called for a boycott of services payments.⁴⁹⁸ That the PAN competed with NAUCOPAC and the rest of the left over who could better stick it to the government through boycotting service charges suggests just how far the doxa of the political field had gone in the direction of an anti-government “consensus.” Even middle class residents in Ciudad Satélite began organizing a public lighting fee boycott.⁴⁹⁹ Meanwhile, on the left, the Popular Action Movement (MAP)—led by Octavio Acosta (who later joined NAUCOPAC⁵⁰⁰) and Augusto Loeza, along with priest Jesús Barraeta—also agitated for a payment boycott and, in so doing, criticized the municipal government, especially municipal mayor Roberto Soto Prieto.⁵⁰¹ The leftist groups even competed with one another in their respective anti-taxes initiatives. NAUCOPAC had protested water, sewage, and public lighting charges for a long time;⁵⁰² it set a high bar. So after coming out in opposition to the tax for public lighting, MAP stepped up its

⁴⁹⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 12, folio 158 (23 March 1981).

⁴⁹⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 4, folio 233 (17 August 1981); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 4, folio 286 (31 August 1981).

⁴⁹⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 155 (6 July 1979).

⁴⁹⁹ “Amparos en Ciudad Satélite para no pagar el alumbrado público,” *Excélsior* (11 December 1980).

⁵⁰⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1718C/Exp. 11, folio 118 (16 November 1982).

⁵⁰¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 203 (10 September 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 204 (11 September 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 253 (16 November 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 256 (21 November 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 260 (28 November 1979).

⁵⁰² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 251 (15 November 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 255 (19 November 1979).

game by agitating for a boycott of the taxes levied to pay for a sewage system and the installation of potable water infrastructure as well.⁵⁰³

Mexico City news outlets acceded to *colono* pressure and reported on the government's extractive aims in early December 1979. The municipal mayor, Alfredo Moreno Ruiz, had stated publicly in June 1978 that there was no way the local government could furnish urban services without levying additional taxes, denouncing Abaroa's anti-tax agitation. He said the municipal budget of 500 million pesos would have to be increased to 3 billion to cover all services, a shortfall, he opined, that ratepayers ought to cover. Abaroa responded by saying that Moreno Ruiz had turned against the popular masses and reneged on its previous commitments, in addition to his efforts to evict them.⁵⁰⁴ Anti-tax agitation was sufficiently effective that Governor Jorge Jiménez Cantú felt compelled to clarify publicly that the idea was not to *raise* taxes but to prevent tax *evasion*.⁵⁰⁵ But the distinction was immaterial to squatters. And for politicians to slap residents with additional taxes was to invite unpopularity.

As all the PRI authorities lined up in favor of extracting taxes to pay for services such as public lighting, *colonos* increasingly mobilized against the initiative. *Colonos* were poor: for instance, of the approximately 13 households evicted from lands they invaded in Colinas de San Mateo, in San Mateo Nopala, almost all earned the minimum wage. Amidst scarce employment opportunities and paltry wages, one of NAUCOPAC's perennial points in its agitation was to decry the high cost of living. The MAP framed the government's public lighting tax as another blow to *colonos'* already abysmal salaries.⁵⁰⁶ The PAN's opposition was an expression of the popularity of opposition to fees in general as well as the fact that one of their main constituents in Mexico City, small businesspeople, were under considerable burden to pay for electricity in particular.⁵⁰⁷ In the face of popular opinion, even well before the 1980s economic crisis, the PRI authorities' attempt to get *colonos* to pay additional taxes was deeply unpopular.

⁵⁰³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folios 56-57 (13 February 1980).

⁵⁰⁴ Alfredo Ramos R., "Imposible la regularización de 100,000 predios en Naucalpan" *Excélsior* (6 June 1978).

⁵⁰⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 267 (5 December 1979).

⁵⁰⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 260 (28 November 1979).

⁵⁰⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 156 (9 July 1979).

Overcoming Between-Generation Conflicts

Abaroa was a formidable leader, but she was not unopposed. Disagreements within NAUCOPAC were public knowledge; Abaroa referenced them openly since September 1979.⁵⁰⁸ The main conflict within NAUCOPAC was probably that between Abaroa and Alfonso Rubio Márquez, who took the helm as the organization's new president in mid-1979.⁵⁰⁹ The dispute arose over Abaroa's activities promoting the public lighting boycott.⁵¹⁰ In contrast to Abaroa's disruptive strategy, Rubio Márquez opted for moderation. This presented special opportunities; it allowed him and his allies to try to discredit Abaroa's status as *colonos'* legitimate representative in the eyes of the public⁵¹¹ and before government officials.⁵¹² Tensions grew to the point that he even organized an assembly to discuss taking legal measures against Abaroa for usurping the name "NAUCOPAC" and for committing the crimes of invading *ejidal* and private lands;⁵¹³ Abaroa responded by calling for a "congress" to reorganize NAUCOPAC and expose Rubio Márquez's efforts to divide the group.⁵¹⁴ Rubio Márquez then reacted by mobilizing a group of 100 people to submit a statement to the Public Prosecutor indicating that Abaroa would be responsible for any physical aggression against *colonos*, alleging that she had injured and threatened them for refusing to collaborate with her.⁵¹⁵ (Nothing seems to have come of this, however.)

⁵⁰⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folios 199-200 (5 September 1979).

⁵⁰⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 167 (31 July 1979).

⁵¹⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 173 (10 August 1979).

⁵¹¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 166 (30 July 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 167 (31 July 1979).

⁵¹² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 167 (31 July 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 7, folio 188 (22 August 1979).

⁵¹³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folio 19 (3 January 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folio 21 (8 January 1980).

⁵¹⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folio 23-24 (10 January 1980).

⁵¹⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folio 38 (22 January 1980).

Rubio Márquez built his base among the older generation of *colonos*, petitioning the government not to evict the residents of Colonia Río Hondo, who claimed to have lived there since 1952.⁵¹⁶ He led followers to protest at the presidential palace against the Secretary of Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources' eviction of residents from a plot of land near Río Hondo (west of Campo Militar). This was enough to secure a promise that the government would look into the matter.⁵¹⁷ Rubio Márquez's approach seemed to work in this case, but it was not ultimately politically viable. Since it was politically advantageous to align with new and aspiring residents—since this group was growing amidst popular urbanization—those who failed to do so tended to be eclipsed by those who succeeded in doing so; their eclipse, in turn, meant the older generation of residents also sometimes became politically available to leaders who had championed the newer generation. Due to the mechanics of this situation, Rubio Márquez had a short career. This gave Abaroa space to retake the leadership of those who had supported him. She did so through a sit-in occupation (*plantón*) of the SRA building to protest the charges the CORETT planned to levy on residents for legalization of their plots.

Abaroa had long agitated against charges for public services. The only difference now was that she mobilized discontented people for this particular issue as well. She met with the leaders of other leftist groups, like the Socialist Labor Party and the Marxist Labor League, to build ancillary support.⁵¹⁸ However, just because Rubio Márquez was out of the picture, members of NAUCOPAC from Colonia Río Hondo did not suddenly become docile followers; instead, they pressured her to step-up her game, calling on her to demand regularization of their plots at the rally.⁵¹⁹ Nevertheless, if the spy reports are accurate, the message was garbled, for the immediate goal was to prevent CORETT from carrying out the costly regularization it had in mind, which was based on new appraisals of the value of the land and would thus mean increased charges levied on residents.⁵²⁰ The number of participants was somewhat limited. One

⁵¹⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 8, folio 32 (10 September 1981).

⁵¹⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 6, folio 31 (17 January 1980).

⁵¹⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 8, folio 11 (9 September 1981); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 168-169 (9 September 1981).

⁵¹⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folio 170 (10 September 1981).

⁵²⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 8, folio 27 (10 September 1981); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 8, folios

spy estimated 100 people were initially present at the sit-in⁵²¹—equal to the estimated number of people who had pressured Abaroa to step-up her game⁵²²—though the crowd grew to about 350.⁵²³

Abaroa told the SRA functionaries that the only way the people would leave was if they agreed to send a message to the head of CORETT, the governor, the Secretary of Human Settlements (Secretario de Asentamientos Humanos), and the president of Mexico saying that CORETT will only serve as the intermediary for the expropriation decree and that the State of Mexico government—implying its agency, Sagittarius Plan⁵²⁴—will carry it out at the previously-appraised value.⁵²⁵ In place of soliciting subordination, Abaroa's strategy employed a key aspect of many effective workplace strikes: disrupt business as usual and propose that a resumption will be possible on the condition that specific concessions are granted. A cynic might call it a form blackmailing the government, though it is unclear that the protest was a complete success, as we might expect in the case of blackmail. The point is that this represented a fundamentally different approach from soliciting subordination.

A Colonia of Communists

NAUCOPAC and Abaroa were also deeply involved in Colonia Federal Burocrática. The initial settlers arrived in the early 1970s.⁵²⁶ During the late-1970s and early-1980s, the number grew,⁵²⁷ especially with América Abaroa and Jesús Ortega Martínez leading 200 people to settle

28-33 (10 September 1981). The initial appraisals were done in 1978.

⁵²¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 8, folio 27 (10 September 1981).

⁵²² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folio 170 (10 September 1981).

⁵²³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 8, folio 30 (10 September 1981).

⁵²⁴ See AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 168-69 (9 September 1981).

⁵²⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720B/Exp. 8, folio 33 (10 September 1981).

⁵²⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 28-29 (30 June 1981). The initial residents were very few, probably numbering only 36. See AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folio 33 (24 June 1981).

⁵²⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 28-29 (30 June 1981).

in the area in the first half of 1980⁵²⁸ and then PST leaders Manuel Pérez Cobos and Juana Servín leading another 190 PST militants to invade private land in the first half of 1981 (seemingly in close collaboration with PST leader Rafael Padilla Samaniegos).⁵²⁹ The reason for the timing, according to a spy, was that the PST was trying to take advantage of the State of Mexico Secretary of State's initiative to regularize the lots of the original 960 *colonos* who had lived there for 10 years.⁵³⁰ The BARAPEM and the GRUCOPIT were deployed to prevent further invasions.⁵³¹ In response, by June 1981, PST militants had "armed people" who "prevented the zone's outsiders from approaching," and began to call the settlement "Colonia Socialista."⁵³²

At the end of that month, security forces met to develop an "eviction operation." When they arrived, Sergio Mercado Iniestra, an official from the State of Mexico Secretary of State, announced the eviction order, saying that as regarded those who had lived there more than 10 years, their current residences would be respected; that as regarded those who had lived there between 1 and 3 years (about 140 people), they would be given lots in the area's periphery; and that as regarded those who had lived there between 2 and 4 months (the majority), the State of Mexico would give them plots in Colonia Lomas de Atizapán, in the Atizapán de Zaragoza municipality, through the Sagittarius Plan. To get a better idea of the nature of the lands on offer, PST leaders Pérez Cobos and Servín, along with four others, left in the company of the authorities to inspect the Lomas de Atizapán lands.

While they were gone, PST congressperson Pedro Etienne and several others arrived with a group of about 50 people, followed by the press. Etienne and the PST militants immediately started a rally protesting all evictions. When Pérez Cobos and Servín returned, they reported that the Lomas de Atizapán lands were satisfactory. Etienne met with Mercado, the State Department official, telling him they tentatively accepted the deal, pending approval of the heads of

⁵²⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 2 (15 May 1980).

⁵²⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folio 30 (30 June 1981).

⁵³⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 2 (15 May 1980).

⁵³¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 11, folio 96 (26 May 1980).

⁵³² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 19-20 (24 June 1981).

household who were currently away at their workplaces. Mercado was unimpressed; he said he would give Etienne 15 minutes to consult with the families and decide either to take the deal or to let the courts rule on the matter. But by this time sections of the urban poor were politically audacious. These *colonos* in particular would have none of Mercado's bullying; as soon as he left, they armed themselves with rocks, metal rods, and sticks and retrieved three tanks of gas. When he returned, they opened the gas tank valves and told him they would defend their rights. With little choice, Mercado told them he would suspend the eviction, and that they should come to his office the following day to resolve the issue. He ordered the security forces to withdraw. As the repressive arm of the government made its exit, the *colonos* began to sing the Mexican national anthem, ridiculing the government.⁵³³

The case continued to ware on. Etienne promised to give the State Department a census listing "those who lived longer in the area" among "his followers who currently occupy plots in Colonia Federal Burocrática"—excluding those who recently acquired lots from PST leader Rafael Padilla Samaniego—"so that this may serve as a basis for the state government to immediately proceed to relocate those people."⁵³⁴ Since NAUCOPAC and the PST were in a position of strength, Etienne delayed.⁵³⁵

Meanwhile, there were other standoffs with the government beyond Colonia Federal Burocrática as well. NAUCOPAC leaders Rito López Guzmán y Hermenegildo García Villa led *colonos* in La Presa to attack PRI candidates for the local legislature when they visited the settlement during their campaign. This was because Abaroa wanted to give her leftist allies a leg up—"she tries to support her PCM-registered candidates," as a government spy put it—by trying to prevent the proselytization of "candidates from the Institutional Revolutionary [Party]."⁵³⁶ In

⁵³³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 32-35 (30 June 1981).

⁵³⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727C/Exp. 16, folios 98-99 (30 July 1981).

⁵³⁵ The mobilization and the government concession had caused a rift between moderates from NAUCOPAC and diehard PST militants. The former tried to push for relocation of these people in particular. See AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 12/Folios 298-99 (19 August 1981). The latter joined with the cause of Colonia Independencia, pushed for regularization. See AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1727B/Exp. 12/Folios 318-19 (28 October 1981). The sort of within-sector unity from which the PRI could benefit was long gone.

⁵³⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1720A/Exp. 4, folios 76-77 (8 June 1981).

other words, Abaroa aligned with the newer generation of residents, giving her mass support, with which she undermined the PRI.

Conclusion

Ongoing urban concentration put the government in a double-bind: whether it opted to evict squatters or allowed them to settle new spaces, the PRI lost support. First, it lost support because urban concentration generated within-sector conflict which undermined the incumbent government. Abaroa and other neighborhood leaders disagreed. The specific issues varied: her beef with Rubio Márquez referenced taxes to defray public lighting; that with “El Chino” Torres referenced continued invasions of San Antonio Zomeyucán. But in each case, significant disagreements precluded unity behind the PRI. Second, the PRI lost support amidst urban concentration because the conflict it generated enhanced oppositionists’ capacity to mobilize followers for anti-PRI political ends. The underlying issue for Abaroa was her alignment with the newer generation of residents; it was the consistency with which she held this position which led her to break with Rubio Márquez and El Chino Torres in succession. Moreover, insofar as NAUCOPAC in general and Abaroa in particular succeeded at securing *colonos* a plot of urban land from which to eke out a new urban life, this proved that the political opposition could deliver the goods. And insofar as the government succeeded at evicting residents, this proved that those currently in power did not want to. In the context of urban concentration, each available option was as poor alternative for the government.

Chapter 9. Of Farce: The Urban Boomerang, from Iztacalco to Oaxaca

Francisco “Pancho” de la Cruz Velasco migrated from the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca to Mexico City and settled in part of Iztacalco that would later be called “Campamento 2 de Octubre.” As peasants flooded into Mexico City, the area grew from a semi-rural community to an integral part of the booming metropolis. The influx itself created conflict between those who had settled the area earlier, who wanted to conclude a deal with the government that would give them legal ownership of their land and access to public services, and the new and aspiring residents, whose urban existence was less certain. Pancho channeled these rural-to-urban migrants into the area. Amidst the older generation’s hostility, new and aspiring residents rallied to Pancho for protection—giving him the ability to mobilize followers.

Not only did Pancho use this capacity to control turf and extract rent within Campamento 2 de Octubre, making him an urban boss. He also led land invasions elsewhere in the city, both nearby and far afield. He formed the Frente Nacional Campamento “2 de Octubre,” which provided protection to minibus operators in the Valley of Mexico and beyond, including in the cities of Cuernavaca, Morelos, and Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas. And he combined his capacity to mobilize followers with the ability to transport people and threw himself into electoral politics in 1980, running for governor on the Socialist Workers’ Party (PST) ticket back in his home state of Oaxaca.

In the middle of the campaign, Pancho told Ignacio Ramírez, congressperson for the PST, that he thought he had a good chance of winning the election. The PRI had failed to visit the “remotest” places, as a spy paraphrased, in which the highly-mobile Frente Nacional campaigned. In little more than a fortnight—between 1 June (when he initiated his campaign)

and 19 June (when he met with Ramírez)—Pancho had visited the municipality of Azochitlán, Santo Domingo, Teotitlán del Camino, San Blas, and Boca del Río, he said.⁵³⁷ Despite his best efforts—and in spite of the fact that colonos from Campamento 2 de Octubre served as election monitors⁵³⁸—Pancho would lose the election. In the meantime, though, Pancho used the power he had gleaned from urban concentration, transporting hundreds of followers in dozens of collective taxis and busses from Campamento 2 de Octubre to Oaxaca to participate in his campaign rallies. While he did not ascend to the governorship in his home state, he did undermine PRI support in the provinces on the basis of the influence he had amassed in Mexico City. Urban concentration—which involved the influx of rural inhabitants to the capital city, helping constitute the historically-aligned the power bloc in the mid-20th century—boomeranged back on the provinces, undermining the PRI in sending communities in the late-20th century.

Introduction⁵³⁹

Researchers often emphasize developments in the provinces to explain the decline and fall of the PRI, when “provincial outsiders” became a new and increasingly important part of the political scheme (Camp 2002:258-60). The emphasis in these accounts is normally on the right-wing PAN, which was always strongest in and around the highly-industrialized northern city of Monterrey. Rarely, however, does the scholarship appreciate the influence of developments in Mexico City that later redounded on the agrarian interior from whence rural-to-urban migrants had come. This represents a significant omission. And illumination on this point helps complete

⁵³⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 19-20 (19 June 1980).

⁵³⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 118 (1 August 1980).

⁵³⁹ Many of the important dates are unclear in the sources on Campamento 2 de Octubre. One of the chief problems is that several DGIPS syntheses misreport the date of important events (probably because later syntheses reproduced the errors of earlier ones). These reports include: D[G]IPyS, “Panorama actualizado denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658B/Exp. 12/Folios 120-39 (25 April 1980); D[G]IPyS, “Campamento 2 de Octubre,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09 (May 1980); and D[G]IPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980). To make matters worse, journalists seem to have sometimes misreported dates when referring to earlier events (whether due to negligence or because of misinformation imparted their informants). In the narrative to follow, I have attempted to identify and rectify these mistakes; the result is that the aforementioned syntheses and several newspaper articles referencing earlier events list dates other than those I supply.

the story recounted so far: in the 1940s and 1950s, peasants brought the ideals of the Mexican Revolution into the capital city; in the 1970s and 1980s, urban bosses like Francisco “Pancho” de la Cruz Velasco brought *chilangos* to the periphery, like Oaxaca, to support opposition political parties’ electoral campaigns.

I call this the *urban boomerang*. The “boomerang” metaphor is commonly employed to call to mind the way the race-based system of colonial rule that modern European powers imposed on their overseas colonies blew back on Europe, inspiring racist political movements in the metropole (Arendt 1948:205-06, 223-24; Césaire 2000:35-36). The phenomenon in question in this chapter is, of course, very different from that just referenced. But the metaphor is nevertheless useful for me, for in that context as in this one, an important part of the story concerns the return-migration of a sociopolitical phenomenon, albeit in changed form. This is precisely what Pancho represents in Mexican history: an urban boomerang. Pancho migrated from Oaxaca to Mexico City, became an urban boss in Campamento 2 de Octubre, and then used his power to intervene in politics back in Oaxaca.

This process ramped up on 4 September 1961, when 35 people (led by Estela Huerta Soto, Donato Martínez Baeza, Eleazar Ruíz Cruz, Adela Cisneros Cruz, and Juan Sánchez Espinosa) invaded a piece of land at Calzada La Viga, Canal Apatlaco, naming it “Iztacalco en Lucho.” On 2 October 1962, President López Mateos expropriated the land and committed it to the construction of low-income housing.⁵⁴⁰ Henceforth there were two conflicting visions for the space. Pancho viewed the expropriation decree as a response to urban concentration stemming from rural-to-urban migration. As he retrospectively recounted to an interviewer:

“President López Mateos expropriated the land . . . because in those years there were serious housing problems in the city due to the rapid growth of the population that emigrated from the countryside to the city. Then the decree was issued and some of us settlers who lived in the area . . . began to organize to defend ourselves against landlords and landowners in the area who forced us to pay rent.” (Ibarra Chávez 2012:35)

⁵⁴⁰ *Diario Oficial* (3 October 1962), pp. 5-8. There is some ambiguity about the dates of these events. Given the frequency with which the *Diario Oficial* was published, everyone assumed López Mateos made the decree on 2 October, which I think is a valid assumption. Nevertheless, D[G]IPyS, “Panorama actualizado,” p. 1 states incorrectly that the expropriation was carried out on 2 October in 1961 (rather than 1962, the year it appears in the *Diario Oficial*), and that only weeks earlier, in September 1961, Estela Soto and others had invaded the land. Since the report is inaccurate about the decree date, it is also possible it is inaccurate about the invasion date, and that the invasion actually took place in September 1962, just weeks before the real date of the expropriation decree, rather than September 1961, over a year before.

The government had a different view. The city planned to build a 2,000-person “popular” subdivision called “Benito Juárez”⁵⁴¹ on one part of the land while another part was sold to the federal housing agency INFONAVIT in 1972 to build housing for formal-sector workers. Nevertheless, as a synthesis of spy reports put it, “with the [expropriation] decree and the participation of the DDF authorities, the invasion led by Estela Huerta Soto and others was recognized.”⁵⁴²

On 14 March 1967, Pancho and his comrades changed the name of the settlement from Iztacalco en Lucha to Campamento “2 de Octubre” to mark the date of the expropriation decree.⁵⁴³ This name would become highly symbolic due to the implicit references it made to Mexican politics. The salience of the term “campamento” extends back to Mexico City teachers’ weeks-long encampment (*campamento*) in the offices of the Secretaría de Educación Pública in 1958 (Rodríguez Kuri 2012:451)—when Pancho migrated to Mexico City (Ibarra Chávez 2012:36)—which the government put down brutally. Because it implicitly referenced this event, one part of the settlement’s name intentionally implied a degree of criticism of the government. The rest of the settlement’s name became even more salient and critical, albeit unintentionally. For it was on 2 October 1968 that the Diaz Ordaz government carried out its massacre of student organizers; henceforth, the name “2 de Octubre” was a tacitly anti-government lightning rod. Although the conspiratorially-minded might wonder whether the Diaz Ordaz government chose that day to carry out the massacre to send a message to the urban poor about the implications of their inclinations towards disloyalty, since the invasion and naming of the settlement represented

⁵⁴¹ IPS Estudios Especiales, “Unión de colonos de Iztacalco e Iztapalapa Zona Expropiada, A.C.,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 149-51 (5 September 1979).

⁵⁴² DIPyS, “Panorama actualizado denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658B/Exp. 12/Folios 120-39 (25 April 1980), p. 1.

⁵⁴³ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 1-2; DGIPyS, “Campamento 2 de Octubre,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09 (May 1980), pp. 1-2. Earlier sources seem to erroneously report the date when Pancho led his initial invasion; one source says he led a group of more than 350 people to invade the area in March 1973. See IPS Estudios Especiales, “Unión de colonos de Iztacalco e Iztapalapa Zona Expropiada, A.C.,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 149-51 (5 September 1979), p. 1. However, that source also claims the name “2 de Octubre” was selected to commemorate the events in 1968. Since the latter claim is probably untrue (as noted above, the date 2 October seems to have been selected to reference the date of the expropriation in 1962, and only gained additional salience due to the massacre six years hence), it is more likely that the former claim (that Pancho led the initial invasion in 1973) is also mistaken. In which case the irony of post-hoc politicization would seem to have failed to penetrate government spies’ eagerness to identify potential sources of political contention.

just that, the leaders of Campamento 2 de Octubre could never have known how salient their reference to the date would become. For better or worse, they were stuck with the name.⁵⁴⁴ And they made the most of it; the UCSCII became a major player in the political opposition and Iztacalco became something of a cause célèbre, even reverberating in the protest music genre (see Plate 9.1).

The Rise Of The UCSCII

Francisco “Pancho” de la Cruz Velasco was the foremost leader of the Unión de Colonos de Santa Cruz de Iztacalco y Iztapalapa (UCSCII). Pancho claimed the land had been controlled by an illicit landlord who had connections with corrupt government officials. He recounted that he got his start in leading the local community by opposing this man’s abuses:

“there was a landowner here named Macedonio Gutiérrez who had appropriated land illegally with the help of some government officials. He was an influential man who also used door-knockers [*golpeadores*] and police to force people to pay rent. So, one time when he was coming home from work, this man was hitting a neighbor and I confronted him: [‘]why are you hitting him?’ And he told me: ‘He doesn’t want to pay me rent!’ Yeah, but that’s no reason to hit him! ‘Look Pancho! If you want, I’ll give you six hundred more [square] meters, but don’t get involved in this’. ‘Yes, but I don’t have any more money to pay you besides the 200 you charge me for rent and I can’t pay you more,’ I told him. ‘No: I’ll give them to you for the same price, but don’t oppose me charging rent to other people!’ ‘No, I don’t want more land, what I want is for you to stop bothering people!’, and I gave him the 40 pesos that the boy [he was beating] owed him. And from then on people began to look for me to help them solve their problems with these [landlord] gentlemen and with the authorities. . . . It was in those years that we began to oppose these payments and the first confrontations with these landlords began.” (Ibarra Chávez 2012:35)

Pancho continued to describe himself as unmotivated by personal gain even when other local leaders lined up against him claiming he abused his power. In a 1978 interview he said that “I am here to defend these people . . . And I’m their leader because I don’t sell out. Because I don’t

⁵⁴⁴ Thus, for instance, when 170 rural normal school students from Morelos came to Mexico City for the demonstration to commemorate the 12th anniversary of the government’s 1968 student massacre, and who ended up staying for a series of protests, they requested lodging in Campamento 2 de Octubre. AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folio 44 (2 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folio 99 (17 October 1980). They had commandeered busses for the voyage, and soon other students joined them, bringing the number of commandeered busses parked in Campamento 2 de Octubre to 18. AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folio 70 (6 October 1980).

want power. Or money. Nor fame. I just want them to let us live in peace. For them to not kill us, nor persecute us.”⁵⁴⁵

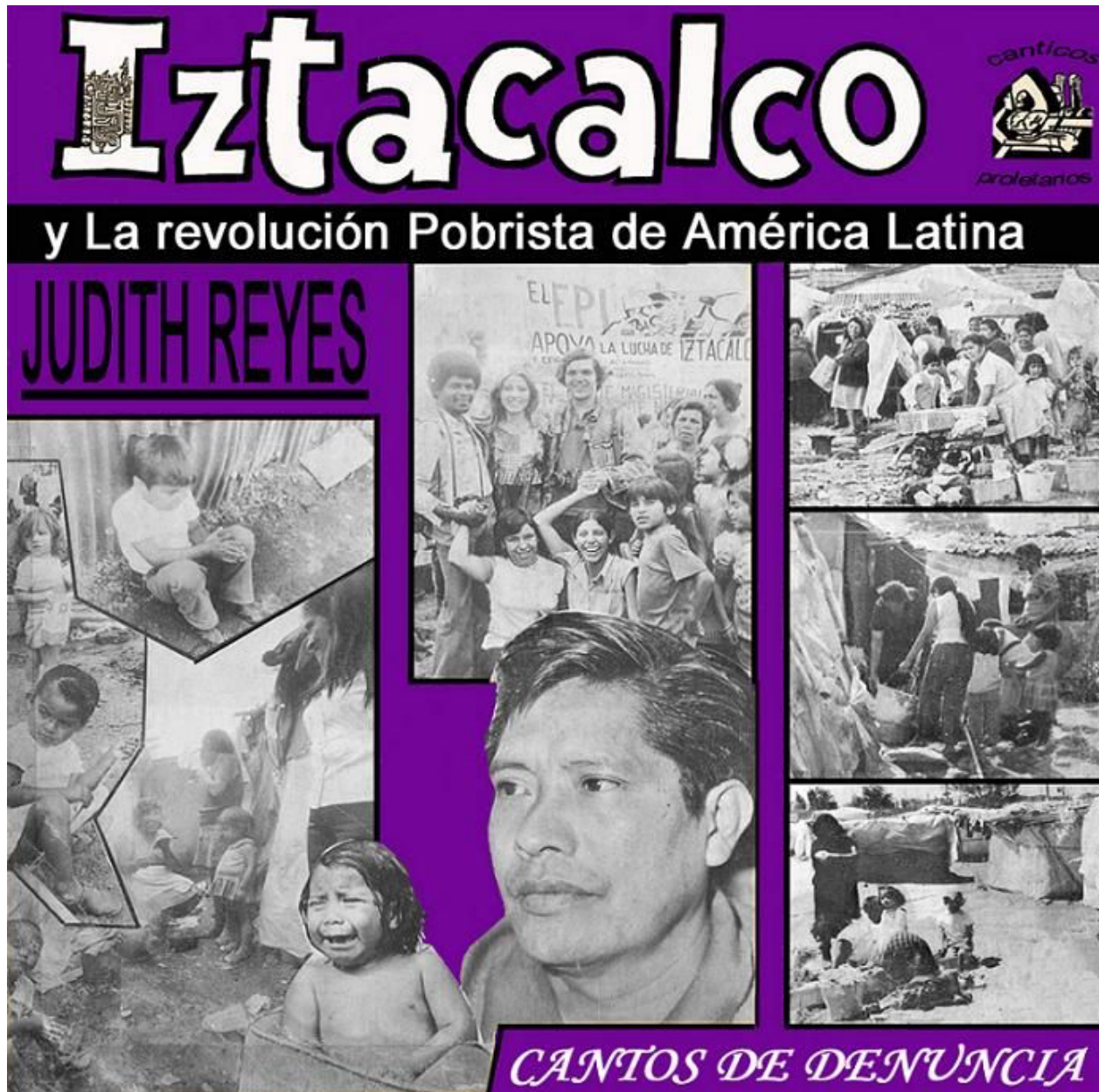


Plate 9.1. Cover of protest musician Judith Reyes’s album, *Iztacalco* (1976)

Francisco “Pancho” de la Cruz Velasco is pictured in the center.

⁵⁴⁵ Miguel Reyes Razo, “De la Cruz: Primero me matan que sacarme de aquí,” *El Universal* (31 July 1978).

Pancho may have gained inspiration for some of his activities from a trip to Monterrey, where he visited the vibrant social, political, and economic organizing efforts led by the Frente Popular Tierra y Libertad.⁵⁴⁶ But it is unclear when the visit took place and therefore who might have learned from whom. And there were important differences the respective organizations; in contrast to the bottom-up control characteristic of the Frente Popular Tierra y Libertad, and in spite of his pledges of altruism, Pancho became an urban boss, surfing the wave of urban concentration to amass despotic power.

Campamento 2 de Octubre's growth stemmed from urban concentration and paralleled that of Mexico City in general. Pancho and his comrades had little trouble eliciting interest among the urban poor in settling the area. After the initial invasion, Pancho introduced more and more squatters into the settlement. Over 3,000 families lived there by 25 January 1976.⁵⁴⁷ By June 1978, a journalist said over 6,000 people had settled in the area.⁵⁴⁸ By 21 May 1980, Pancho claimed there were 7,000 families living in 2 de Octubre.⁵⁴⁹ Pancho and his coterie positioned themselves to capitalize on these people's needs by controlling access to that land. A spy claimed that Pancho's group settled people from elsewhere in the Federal District and from the states of Morelos, Oaxaca, and Puebla—and that he defended these people against the government's attempt to evict them.⁵⁵⁰ And as more and more people flooded into the settlement, they spilled out beyond the area that had initially been expropriated and set aside for social housing, leading to both between-generation conflict and legal disputes.

⁵⁴⁶ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 62-63.

⁵⁴⁷ IPS Estudios Especiales, "Unión de colonos de Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa Zona Expropiada, A.C.," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 149-51 (5 September 1979).

⁵⁴⁸ Ángel Pérez Isaak, "Acusan de soborno al Delegado de Iztacalco: Me ofreció 10 millones, dice el líder del Campamento '2 de Octubre'," *Últimas Noticias* (24 June 1978).

⁵⁴⁹ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 30.

⁵⁵⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 156-58 (5 January 1979).

Dueling Anti-Government Positions

As we have seen in Chapters 7 and 8, there was a divergence of interests that arose as squatter settlements were established and entered into the protracted process of integration into the urban fabric. Since squatter settlements were themselves illegal, getting the government to agree to recognize a settlement, regularize it, and introduce urban services was difficult, and as the process was underway the agreements squatters made with the government were delicate. What was different in Campamento 2 de Octubre was that neither the newer nor even the older generation was pro-government.

The Local Leadership Splits

Political disagreements and discontent with how Pancho ran Campamento 2 de Octubre—channeling more and more residents into the area, with all the conflictual implications this had—drove some people who had initially been his allies to oppose him. One of Campamento 2 de Octubre’s original founders, Alberto Carbajal Valdéz, formed an anti-Pancho faction within the Unión de Colonos. On 9 January 1975, Carbajal Valdéz, Estela Huerta Soto, Eleazar Ruíz Cruz, Donato Martínez Baeza, Juan Pablo Sánchez Espinoza, and Adela Cisneros Cruz renounced their membership in the UCSCII citing disagreement with the allegedly abusive leadership of Francisco “Pancho” de la Cruz Velasco, who, they said, charged existing *colonos* 20 pesos for dues and required them to stand guard at his house, and charged newly-arrived *colonos* between 5,000 and 100,000 pesos for lots. They also said he surrounded himself with door-knockers, headed by Macario Rodríguez Martínez, José Luis “El Najayo” Robles Hernández,⁵⁵¹ and others whom he used to evict disobedient *colonos* so he could introduce others in their place.⁵⁵²

⁵⁵¹ Robles Hernández’s nickname is rendered in spy reports as both “El Najayo” and “El Najallo” (which are phonetic equivalents in Mexican Spanish). I use the former consistently.

⁵⁵² DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 4, 8.

At root in their conflict was that these leaders represented the older generation whereas Pancho and the UCSCII aligned with newer and aspiring residents. This was evident in the way they talked about Campamento 2 de Octubre. While Pancho mentioned larger and larger numbers of residents over time, the CDI's estimates were considerably smaller and grew more slowly. Thus, whereas in June 1978 Pancho told a journalist that over 6,000 people lived in the area,⁵⁵³ in a petition to Secretary of State Jesús Reyes Heróles later that month the CDI only mentioned 1,000 people.⁵⁵⁴ And whereas Pancho told the press that 40,000 families lived in Campamento 2 de Octubre in July 1978,⁵⁵⁵ the previous month Alberto Carbajal had told the press that only 5,000 people lived there.⁵⁵⁶ In leaflets they circulated on 15 April 1980, members of the CDI decried Pancho as a "dictator" (and called him "Hitler de la Cruz"). Not only was he a dictator because he was willing to use violence, they explained, but because he had declined a 1976 DDF offer to regularize the settlement's land, "misleading *colonos* with sermons that the struggle would end." Their interests were opposed to continuing to struggle, and in favor of agreeing with the city government so as to resolve the regularization and service installation issues. They said the real reason he objected was

"so that his lucrative business wouldn't end. Enough of these maneuvers. It's time to live in peace with the certainty that the lot we inhabit is ours and no one can take it away from us. . . . It is time to regularize our lots, at the DDF, which has offered to regularize them for us upon payment of 10,200.00 pesos. Let's take the city government at its word and seize this [opportunity], not let FRANCISCO DE LA CRUZ manipulate us again."⁵⁵⁷

In contrast to Pancho's attempts to channel more people into the area, the older generation tended to want to settle with the government.

⁵⁵³ Ángel Pérez Isaak, "Acusan de soborno al Delegado de Iztacalco: Me ofreció 10 millones, dice el líder del Campamento '2 de Octubre'," *Últimas Noticias* (24 June 1978).

⁵⁵⁴ Petition, Comité Democrático Independiente to Jesús Reyes Heróles (27 June 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 117.

⁵⁵⁵ Miguel Reyes Razo, "De la Cruz: Primero me matan que sacarme de aquí," *Universal* (31 July 1978).

⁵⁵⁶ "Los del '2 de Octubre' culparán a las autoridades de cualquier choque," *Últimas Noticias* (5 July 1978); "Se agrava el problema en el campamento 'Dos de Octubre'," *Avance* (6 July 1978).

⁵⁵⁷ See a transcription of the flyer in AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 105-08 (15 April 1980). The quotes are from folio 106.

On 13 August 1975, Eleazar Ruiz Cruz, Donato Martínez Baeza, Estela Huerta Soto, Guillermo Méndez Cueto, and Gustavo Torres Anzures—but *not* Pancho de la Cruz Velasco⁵⁵⁸ or Carbajal Valdéz—had negotiated an accord with government officials⁵⁵⁹ allowing those in the settlement to benefit from relocation to make way for public housing. There were several points on which these UCSCII leaders and DDF officials came to an agreement.⁵⁶⁰ Since Pancho declined to participate in the accord, he was free to continue to channel people into the area. This, in turn, alienated those who had signed.

In light of their ongoing disagreements, in April 1977, Carbajal and comrades formed a new association—the Comité Democrático Independiente (CDI)—which began to vie for leadership of the settlement.⁵⁶¹ The advent of the new organization was itself a contentious event. Teresa Ojada de Rodríguez, Pancho’s lieutenant’s wife, immediately threatened to beat up and expel the *colonos* and leaders of the CDI for treason against the UCSCII.⁵⁶² After alleged death

⁵⁵⁸ The press reported that his absence was on account of illness. See “Acuerdo del DDF con los colonos: Solucionado el problema de Iztacalco,” *El Diario de México* (14 August 1975).

⁵⁵⁹ José P. Castro Brito, DDF’s Procurador de las Colonias Populares; Ernesto Valles Favela, DDF’s Sub-Procurador de las Colonias Populares; and Enrique Pacheco Martínez, a representative from DDF’s Dirección General de Habitación Popular.

⁵⁶⁰ First, the DDF agreed to immediately relocate any Unión de Colonos members residing in the expropriated area who were legally dislocated or adversely affected as well as everyone in extreme poverty. Second, the Unión de Colonos and the DDF agreed to mutual respect and non-aggression and that no more families would settle the area in the interim. Third, the DDF agreed that, assuming there were no more invasions, after the relocation started, it would slowly remove the police who had been deployed to the area. Fourth, both parties agreed on the boundaries of the settlement. Fifth, both parties agreed that the new lots would be 120 square meters in size, that the price would be set by the Secretaría del Patrimonio Nacional or other competent authorities, and that the price residents would have to pay would be based on the spirit of the expropriation decree. Sixth, both parties agreed that this accord resolved disagreements between them, leaving them without civil or criminal recourse in this matter, and that the agreement had been made in good faith and without error, before a public notary. Convenio, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 255-61 (13 August 1975). See also D[G]IPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 4-7; AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1668A/Exp. 3/Folios 20-21 (13 August 1975); “Acuerdo del DDF con los colonos: Solucionado el problema de Iztacalco,” *El Diario de México*, (14 August 1975).

⁵⁶¹ DGIPyS, “Campamento 2 de Octubre,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09 (May 1980), pp. 1-2; DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 9. A journalist reports the date as January 1977. See “Pancho de la Cruz maneja el ‘2 de Octubre’ como cacique,” *Últimas Noticias* (11 July 1978).

⁵⁶² DGIPyS, “Campamento 2 de Octubre,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09 (May 1980), p. 2; DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p.

threats from him, members of the CDI⁵⁶³ proceeded to accuse Pancho of burning down several shacks (the allegation reported in the press was 20; a government spy said 5).⁵⁶⁴ One of them alleged that Pancho told her “that today their shacks were going to be burned if they did not vacate the land to settle people from their [Pancho’s] group,” as a journalist paraphrased.⁵⁶⁵ On 27 April 1978, two of Pancho’s men kidnapped Guadalupe Orea de García, the daughter to defector Estela Huerta Soto, and dumped her on the outskirts of Mexico City.⁵⁶⁶ By way of explanation, CDI leaders cited the fact that Huerta “has vigorously opposed the betrayal of poor families in exchange for opportunistic people that Francisco de la Cruz has introduced.” They viewed the kidnapping as an act of revenge because Huerta, a core member of the CDI, “has participated in a muster of all the comrades in struggle to protect the land won with such sacrifice and prevent the introduction of unscrupulous people.” They said this was not the first time Pancho had done something like this, and that he was becoming an “urban *cacique*.” Thus, in an assembly the previous day they agreed to increase the intensity of their measures, for if they did not De la Cruz would continue to take over the area set aside for commercial establishments and recreational facilities, where he had already installed 40 families.⁵⁶⁷

These divergent interests hailed political disagreements. One result was that residents grew increasingly discontent. Carbajal told multiple journalists that people had begun to rebel because the government failed to address the festering problems in Campamento 2 de Octubre.⁵⁶⁸

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⁵⁶³ Juana Martínez Melendez, Yolanda Antonio [sic] Valencia, Alicia Lopez, and Maricela Maldonado.

⁵⁶⁴ “Francisco de la Cruz, acusado de incendiario” *Universal* (25 July 1977); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 3/Folio 127 (25 June 1977).

⁵⁶⁵ “Francisco de la Cruz, acusado de incendiario,” *Universal* (25 June 1977).

⁵⁶⁶ Press release, Comité Democrático Independiente (28 April 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 165-66; DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 8. The latter document seems to misreport the child’s name and the date, saying the event took place on 26 July 1977. The press release, however, is dated 28 April 1978 and says the kidnapping occurred at around 10pm, presumably the night before, which leads me to deduce it took place on 27 April 1978.

⁵⁶⁷ Press release, Comité Democrático Independiente (28 April 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 165-66.

⁵⁶⁸ “Los del ‘2 de Octubre’ culparán a las autoridades de cualquier choque,” *Últimas Noticias* (5 July 1978); “Se agrava el problema en el campamento ‘Dos de Octubre’,” *Avance* (6 July 1978).

But since he was aligned with the older generation of residents against Pancho and the newer generation, he was unable to articulate the more profound implication: the very arrival of new residents to squat in the area represented a failure of the government to resolve the problems squatters faced. What he was really referring to when referencing rebelliousness was that the conflict between generations of residents was beginning to take on a life of its own, and that for this reason no one—not even the older generation—was happy with the government. And the situation was even more dire for the aspiring and newer residents, who lived in even more precarious conditions. As Pancho told an interviewer, “Look around you. Observe. . . . With just a little investigation and knowledge, you will radicalize. Even if you don’t want to.”⁵⁶⁹ Urban concentration was dissolving the social base supporting the government.

Multiple Oppositions

Neither of these leaderships supported the government. The nature of the split and the factionalism from which it was borne existed in spite of the government, not because of it. Pancho had never hesitated to put pressure on the government. In the early-1970s, the government sought to remove squatters to make way for the public housing projects. But the UCSCII filed for and won a federal appeal⁵⁷⁰ which made them eligible for relocation⁵⁷¹ and politically difficult to evict. As incentive to get them to leave, the government put forward a proposal to relocate some squatters in rustic dwellings on small plots. Both the number of people and the size of the plots became objects of contention. An official from Iztacalco’s Obras y Servicios department⁵⁷² said that the DDF had done a census of the area and the number of residents had ballooned. The DDF was of the opinion that only 802 families had a right to be relocated (due to having lived there for over 5 years).⁵⁷³ The UCSCII disagreed, saying that

⁵⁶⁹ Miguel Reyes Razo, “De la Cruz: Primero me matan que sacarme de aquí,” *El Universal* (31 July 1978).

⁵⁷⁰ Primer Tribunal Colegiado en Materia Administrativa del Primer Circuito, amparo DA-270/73.

⁵⁷¹ Convenio, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 255-6 (13 August 1975), p. 2, declaración 4; DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 5.

⁵⁷² Máximo Baca López.

⁵⁷³ And the government was only willing to relocate those who could prove they had lived there for a sufficiently

32,000 people should be relocated—which, assuming a family of four, was 10 times the DDF’s figure. As for the dwellings, the government offered small, 90-square-meter plots with a single concrete room, with a bathroom and kitchen already installed, which residents could then expand upon themselves.⁵⁷⁴

Iztacalco’s congressperson, Mario Álvarez, tried to persuade Pancho to sign the deal.⁵⁷⁵ Given the circumstances, however, it was relatively easy for Pancho to position himself on the moral high-ground. On 8 April 1973, he led a group of UCSCII members in a protest in which they decried how several *colonos* had been displaced to make way for the construction of INFONAVIT housing;⁵⁷⁶ the government was in the positively ticklish position of trying to evict poor people to provide workers with housing! In a meeting with Mario Álvarez and INFONAVIT representatives the following day, Pancho and Eleazer Ruiz Cruz explained that residents wanted plots of 120 square meters, rather than 90 square meters as the government had proposed.⁵⁷⁷

Mario Álvarez held to his position on lot sizes, saying that authorizing 120 square meter plots would set a bad precedent.⁵⁷⁸ In late-April 1973, Álvarez and other government functionaries went to Campamento 2 de Octubre to try to pressure *colonos* into signing onto the 90-square-meter relocation scheme; Pancho deemed this a major breach of trust.⁵⁷⁹ With negotiations having gotten nowhere and Pancho remaining steadfast, on 23 May 1973, out came the carrot and the stick. The carrot: the government agreed that families would receive lots ranging from 90 to 180 square meters depending on the number of family members. The stick was that 46 *colonos* were arrested while protesting in the Zócalo against government

long time.

⁵⁷⁴ “Reacomodación de colonos de Iztacalco, promete el delegado Mario Álvarez,” *Excélsior* (19 April 1973).

⁵⁷⁵ “En la Zona Expropiada: Quisieron obligar a los colonos a aceptar lotes de 90 metros cuadrados,” *El Día* (28 April 1973).

⁵⁷⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1152B/Exp. 3/Folio 328 (8 April 1973).

⁵⁷⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1152B/Exp. 3/Folio 349 (9 April 1973); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1152B/Exp. 3/Folio 366 (9 April 1973).

⁵⁷⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656B/Exp. 5/Folio 72 (16 April 1973).

⁵⁷⁹ “En la Zona Expropiada: Quisieron obligar a los colonos a aceptar lotes de 90 metros cuadrados,” *El Día* (28 April 1973).

repression.⁵⁸⁰ Pancho was outraged at the government's repression and henceforth vocalized his views accordingly. (It was eventually decided to sell the 4,500 families plots of 120 square meters at 85 pesos per meter.⁵⁸¹)

The older generation had tried not to rock the boat. The illegal appropriation of land was perhaps the foremost offense that government security forces attempted to prevent; police chief Arturo "El Negro" Durazo Moreno made this abundantly clear.⁵⁸² Older residents knew this and crafted their strategy accordingly; in a rally, hundreds decried how Pancho had promoted ongoing conflict between the older and newer residents, making it necessary for the police to intervene on several occasions to keep the peace.⁵⁸³ Alberto Carbajal said that in Campamento 2 de Octubre "[people] live according to the law of the jungle, in which only the strongest survive," as a journalist paraphrased, and that the older residents "tolerate the police presence in the streets surrounding the *campamento*."⁵⁸⁴ The conflict stemmed from the fact that people continued to flow into the area.⁵⁸⁵ (The number of families was a moving target; by 1975, it would grow to 2,500,⁵⁸⁶ and to 3,944 in 1977.⁵⁸⁷) Meanwhile, the police grew increasingly aggressive, evicting people who had lived there for a long time.⁵⁸⁸ And the accord that the

⁵⁸⁰ D[G]IPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 3.

⁵⁸¹ "Pancho de la Cruz maneja el '2 de Octubre' como cacique," *Últimas Noticias* (11 July 1978).

⁵⁸² "Ordenes precisas: Arturo Durazo. La policía evitará disturbios en el Campamento '2 de Octubre'," *El Diario de México* (27 June 1978).

⁵⁸³ "Muchos engaños: Desconocen al líder de la cruz," *Diario de la Tarde* (28 June 1978).

⁵⁸⁴ "Los del '2 de Octubre' culparán a las autoridades de cualquier choque," *Últimas Noticias* (5 July 1978). See also Alfredo Cortina, "El Campamento '2 de Octubre', polvorín" *El Diario de México* (5 July 1978); "Se agrava el problema en el campamento 'Dos de Octubre'," *Avance* (6 July 1978); "En el Campamento 2 de Octubre impera la ley de la selva," *Sol de México* (6 July 1978).

⁵⁸⁵ Manuel Magana, "Continúa la invasión de terrenos baldíos en colonias de Iztacalco," *Sol de Medio Día* (3 August 1974); "Regulación piden en el '2 de Octubre'," *El Proceso* (31 December 1977).

⁵⁸⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656B/Exp. 5/Folio 278 (7 April 1975).

⁵⁸⁷ "Regulación piden en el '2 de Octubre'," *El Proceso* (31 December 1977).

⁵⁸⁸ "Desalojó la fuerza pública a colonos de Iztacalco-Ixtapalapa," *El Universal* (11 July 1975).

leaders of the older generation had signed with the DDF on 13 August 1975, concerning how to move forward with relocation, had barred the introduction of new residents into the area.⁵⁸⁹

Pancho had refused to sign the accord, and his faction aligned with the newer and aspiring residents who flooded into the area.⁵⁹⁰ In this context, residents questioned whether they would be able to stay put in the settlement, and even approached the State Department expressing fear of dislocation.⁵⁹¹ The Department could offer them little consolation. Consequently, amidst the between-generation conflict stemming from urban concentration, even the leaders of the older generation could not simply toe the line. In the previous era, existing residents had been careful not to jeopardize the prospect that political elites would treat them favorably. But the extent of urban concentration now meant that waiting patiently was also unappealing—and even uncertain.

So the leaders of the older generation also vocalized oppositional political views. Thus, in the midst of the January 1978 negotiations between Pancho and the city government's remedial urban services agency, CODEUR,⁵⁹² a group of residents from Campamento 2 de Octubre⁵⁹³ complained to DF's attorney general that Pancho was evicting numerous families from the settlement in order to sell their lots (for 50,000 pesos each). What was new in this situation was that these residents did not solicit subordination. Instead, they made incendiary accusations that Pancho was friends with the PRI—painting the PRI as part of the problem, not part of a hypothetical solution. As the journalist covering their complaint paraphrased, “they said that Francisco de la Cruz is taking advantage of his friendship with . . . PRI [leader] Gustavo Carvajal Moreno, and of the support he has given him in search of a solution to the Campamento [2 de Octubre] problem, to set himself up as master of the area [to be able to] remove and install families at his whims.” It was due to his political connections that he was able to employ his

⁵⁸⁹ Convenio, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 255-61 (13 August 1975), p. 3, clause 3.

⁵⁹⁰ “Regulación piden en el ‘2 de Octubre’,” *El Proceso* (31 December 1977).

⁵⁹¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1703A/Exp. 3/Folios 250-52 (10 December 1977).

⁵⁹² President López Portillo decreed the formation of CODEUR on 28 June 1977, under the Dirección de Habitación Popular, which thereupon assumed responsibility for the problems in Campamento 2 de Octubre. See “Pancho de la Cruz maneja el ‘2 de Octubre’ como cacique,” *Últimas Noticias* (11 July 1978).

⁵⁹³ Dolores Cruz, Gonzalo García, and Luis Enrique Moreno.

gun-slingers, provoke violence (resulting in the injury of the 12-year-old child Joaquín Flores Gómez), and threaten to burn down the houses of those he opposed, they claimed.⁵⁹⁴

By January 1977 the DDF had still not honored the 13 August 1975 accord. Alberto Carbajal Valdéz addressed an assembly of about 200 residents to discuss the matter, noting that there had been additional invasions (including in *colonias* Nueva Rosita, Magdalena Atlazolpa, San José Aculco, La Purísima, Fracción Bramadero, and Zapara Vela) and stressing that they were trying to get the DDF to census the outsiders who had settled on some plots, and that they were still waiting for a reply to a request that they had made of the mayor, Carlos Hank González, for the accord to be honored. He said that they would wait a reasonable amount of time, and if there was still no response, they would mobilize, as a spy put it, “to apply pressure.”⁵⁹⁵ And they persisted in their contentious approach. On 18 August 1978, Carbajal and Huerta threatened that the CDI would mobilize 5,000 people in protest against the government if it failed to relocate 450 invaders (and, as had long been their demand, to regularize their land).⁵⁹⁶ Again on 8 May 1980, CDI leaders planned to protest to demand relocation, regularization in the Bachilleres neighborhood (see below), land titles, and the introduction of public services.⁵⁹⁷ On 30 May 1980 they marched to Los Pinos to protest to the president about how DDF authorities had not regularized their lands nor introduced services.⁵⁹⁸

In Chapter 8 we saw how, amidst urban concentration, when oppositionists led land invasions it put the government in a double-bind: its prestige suffered if it allowed land invasions to take place, and yet if it gave free reign to those who led invasions—who were automatically tacitly anti-government, since the government was responsible for upholding the rule of law—then it would be clear that oppositionists were the source of one of the main things the urban poor needed: a place to live. In Campamento 2 de Octubre this configuration reached a more

⁵⁹⁴ Emilio Viale, “Acusación ante la Procuraduría: De la Cruz y Humberto Serrano se dedican a expulsar colonos,” *El Diario de México* (12 January 1978).

⁵⁹⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1733A/Exp. 6 folios 70-72 (13 January 1977).

⁵⁹⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 121-22 (18 August 1978).

⁵⁹⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 181 (8 May 1980).

⁵⁹⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4, f folios 237, 240-50 (30 May 1980); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 35.

acute level of development: both those who favored and those who opposed additional land invasions were anti-government. This community-level polarization undermined continuity of the historically-aligned power bloc.

Leaders' Responses To Government Schemes

Nevertheless, Pancho was in a very different position from that of the CDI, namely, his autonomy was backed by a growing following. CODEUR assembled a special commission, chaired by the head of CODEUR's personal secretary, Fructuoso López Cárdenas, in order to determine, according to the minutes, how many of those to whom the appeal applied "were really living in the Campamento, and which ones have more rights."⁵⁹⁹ One of the government's worries, López Cárdenas intimated during the second weekly meeting of the special commission, was that if some are relocated then others—"people from outside or prompted by anyone," as the minutes put it—could invade, making it "a never-ending problem."⁶⁰⁰ Also prolonging the problem, in the eyes of government officials, was that Pancho skipped the 24 January 1978 special commission meeting (at which he was supposed to report on progress towards updating his census). According to the minutes, his alternate, Juan Pablo Sánchez Espinoza, said Pancho had started "to threaten that he would leave the commission, and that, in the assembly [in Campamento 2 de Octubre] on Sunday, he said that he was going to bring a report to the authorities saying that if the Comité Democrático Independiente [CDI] continued [to participate] in the commission, he would withdraw."⁶⁰¹

Pancho's recalcitrance provoked government officials. He attended the following session, on 26 January 1978, saying his prior absence was due to police interference in Campamento 2 de Octubre. CODEUR's Jorge Eduardo Pascual, the special commission's general coordinator, said that the authorities did not want to intimidate but rather to "resolve the problem peacefully, in a finite amount of time." He added, threateningly, that "in the event of not resolving the problem in the way they wanted, things would be done differently and everyone would take the relevant

⁵⁹⁹ Comisión técnica, actas de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 289-92 (11 January 1978), p. 2.

⁶⁰⁰ Comisión técnica, actas de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 303-23 (17 January 1978), p. 9.

⁶⁰¹ Comisión técnica, actas de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 326-33 (24 January 1978), p. 6.

measures, since the [Federal District] Department has enough police to uphold order in the city, and everyone is familiar with events in which worries have been calmed and the necessary order has been achieved,” according to the minutes.⁶⁰² He continued his ultimatum, saying that he was confident that the problem would be resolved in short order, and that if, to the contrary, there was not the good faith to do so, “[the DDF] lets them know that it has intelligent, strong, and clever means to guarantee social stability,” just in case his first threat had fallen on deaf ears.⁶⁰³

After the threats came questions for Pancho de la Cruz about whether he had indeed been considering resigning from the special commission, as his alternate had alleged. Naturally, Pancho denied the allegations. José Rojo Coronado, a lawyer for the *colonos*, added that he thought a leader who withdrew in that way would be looked upon badly and that the participation of each of the members in the commission was proof of their good faith—adding a soft threat of his own: “it would be possible at the appropriate time to discover, explore, and unmask the authorities and representatives who were involved in land trafficking, and thus know who is a sellout and who is a rogue.”⁶⁰⁴ According to the minutes, De la Cruz explained that he and his entourage were absent from the last session because “patrol cars blocked the way and did not let them out, and besides, the Campamento was surrounded by the police, and to avoid provocations they did not come, and that he thought that they did this to him in order to be able to then say that he did not want to come [to the special commission meeting].”⁶⁰⁵ (He even requested that the minutes be corrected to reflect this, to which Fructuoso López Cárdenas objected.⁶⁰⁶) He explained that he wanted to remain a member of the special commission until the problem was resolved and investigations into all the crooked things that had been done were completed.⁶⁰⁷ CODEUR’s Jorge Eduardo Pascual had said that “the police presence in the Campamento was logical because they have to prudently keep order and deliver their reports to the corresponding

⁶⁰² Comisión Técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 334-44 (26 January 1978), p. 3.

⁶⁰³ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 334-44 (26 January 1978), p. 4.

⁶⁰⁴ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 334-44 (26 January 1978), p. 5.

⁶⁰⁵ Comisión Técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 334-44 (26 January 1978), pp. 5-6.

⁶⁰⁶ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 345-49 (30 January 1978), p. 2.

⁶⁰⁷ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 334-44 (26 January 1978), p. 8.

authorities,” according to the minutes,⁶⁰⁸ and warned Pancho that “one cannot intimidate the authorities, because at a given moment they could use force which is strong enough to maintain order, and I feel that when Mr. de la Cruz comes to these offices accompanied by a maximum of ten people, we will be one step away from solving the problem and that will [also] be when he feels the confidence he should already have.”⁶⁰⁹ Having made their threats, the government officials wanted to proceed with the meeting. De la Cruz, however, felt the need to respond: “I feel that interests are being protected, I see it, I understand it, because when I returned to the Campamento after eleven months, I saw all this. I want the rubbish there to be cleaned first and then to continue with the work. I do not command the Campameno, the people send me and use me and I am happy with it, because they know me and they know that I serve them honestly, and they are the ones who do not let me come alone, that is why I come with them.”⁶¹⁰

It came naturally to Pancho not to store faith in soliciting subordination. He showed signs of this even during the special committee meetings when he insisted that the sessions be dedicated to resolving the issues pertaining to all the *colonias* in the expropriated area (by 1978 it was common to describe the expropriated area as comprised of 13 or 14 *colonias*⁶¹¹), not just Campamento 2 de Octubre narrowly defined,⁶¹² which López Cárdenas tried to nip in the bud by saying that the special commission was only convened to resolve the issues in Campamento 2 de Octubre.⁶¹³ But above all else, the standout quality Pancho enjoyed was autonomy. On the one hand, he tried to discredit the government, telling the press that government officials had offered him bribes in an effort persuade him to sell out.⁶¹⁴ On the other, he and his comrade Gustavo

⁶⁰⁸ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 334-44 (26 January 1978), p. 6.

⁶⁰⁹ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 334-44 (26 January 1978), p. 7.

⁶¹⁰ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 334-44 (26 January 1978), p. 8.

⁶¹¹ Alfredo Cortina, “El Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’, polvorín,” *El Diario de México*, (5 July 1978); “Se agrava el problema en el campamento ‘Dos de Octubre’,” *Avance* (6 July 1978); open letter, *Excélsior* (6 September 1978).

⁶¹² Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 350-55 (2 February 1978), p. 3.

⁶¹³ Comisión Técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 350-55 (2 February 1978), pp. 3-4.

⁶¹⁴ Ángel Pérez Isaak, “Acusan de soborno al Delegado de Iztacalco: Me ofreció 10 millones, dice el líder del Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’,” *Últimas Noticias* (24 June 1978); Fidel Samaniego Reyes, “Jesús Robles Martínez intentó sobornar al líder del ‘2 de Octubre’: Francisco de la Cruz asegura que le ofreció 10 millones de pesos para

Torres Anzures published an open letter in a high-circulation national newspaper after the PRI had nominated Gustavo Carvajal Moreno as its general secretary, congratulating him in ebullience.⁶¹⁵ The ebullience paid off. Several months later, in December 1978, Carvajal Moreno intervened to broker a deal between Pancho and CORETT.

During the preceding era, PRI politicians had capitalized politically on the government's improvement of squatter settlements. Not only did they hold frequent press conferences when legalizing residences or inaugurating public works. They also engaged squatter settlements and their residents more directly, trying to harness their support. One of the most important forms of government-aided urbanization was legalization of squatter residences—which, legally speaking, also required that basic urban services be installed. On 18 December 1978, at Gustavo Carvajal Moreno's instigation, the director of CORETT (Federico Amaya) and DDF authorities (represented by Manuel Gurria Ordoñez, Secretario de Gobierno B.) made a deal with Francisco de la Cruz Velasco to begin to regularize the land in Campamento 2 de Octubre, in one of whose clauses the Bachilleres area was excluded due to a dispute as to its legal owner.⁶¹⁶ The plan was for most residents to stay in Campamento 2 de Octubre, where their landholding would be legalized and public services would be installed; the families who exceeded available space were slated to receive lots in the Gustavo A. Madero district, in northern Mexico City.⁶¹⁷ But Alberto Carbajal Valdéz, Estela Huerta Soto Carbajal, Eleazor Ruiz, and others from the CDI deemed the exclusion of Colonia Bachilleres unacceptable, even petitioning President López Portillo for it to be included among the regularized areas.⁶¹⁸ Tensions were high; the CDI's Eleazar Ruiz Cruz and Juan Pablo de Antonio proceeded to tell Ignacio Mancilla, the coordinator of the regularization scheme, as a spy paraphrased, that "in the Bachilleres area, *colonos* are arming

que 'abandonara la lucha'," *Universal Gráfico* (30 June 1978).

⁶¹⁵ Open letter, *Excélsior* (6 September 1978). Several days later the same newspaper carried an article characterizing the open letter as duplicitous. See Margarita Michelena, "Una bandera peligrosa: Campamento 2 de Octubre," *Excélsior* (9 September 1978).

⁶¹⁶ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 13; "El Campamento '2 de Octubre', regularizado," *El Diario de México* (18 December 1978).

⁶¹⁷ "Los llevará a La Villa: Reacomodan colonos de 2 de Octubre," *Diario de la Tarde* (19 December 1978).

⁶¹⁸ Petition, Alberto Carbajal Valdéz et. al to José López Portillo (4 September 1979), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 146-146.5.

themselves with rods, sticks, and stones to defend themselves” from possible attacks by people at Pancho’s command, “who are crowded *colonos* who have invaded lots owned by the Federal Electricity Commission and now they are trying to invade lots in the Bachilleres area which already have houses and are inhabited by *colonos* who are members of the Comité Democrático Independiente.”⁶¹⁹

Thus, the PRI tried to capitalize politically from urban concentration. But since between-generation conflict had begun to structure local political dynamics in Campamento 2 de Octubre, Carvajal Moreno’s beneficence did not express itself through Pancho in the form of hegemony. Carvajal Moreno’s subsequent visit to Campamento 2 de Octubre to recruit a group of *colonos* to help with the logistics of the regularization effort allowed the CDI’s Eleazar Ruiz Cruz to mount an effort to meet with the mayor to relate to him that De la Cruz Velasco and a group of door-knockers had dedicated themselves to beating up families living in the area and selling their properties to others, and to complain to him that De la Cruz was not following an agreement signed with the DDF representative Gurría Ordoñez.⁶²⁰ On 1 October 1979, CDI leaders Marisela Maldonado and Yolanda Antonio de Valencia held a press conference demanding that the DDF install services, regularize the Bachilleres lands (where they said Pancho had evicted 1,000 residents⁶²¹), expel Pancho from the area “for being corrupt and betraying the needs of *colonos*,” as a spy put it.⁶²² A CDI flyer was circulated purporting that by agreeing to the deal instigated by the PRI Pancho had sold out, opting to “reach an agreement with the PRI and its representative GUSTAVO CARBAJAL MORENO . . . promising the PRI to massively affiliate *colonos* to the party and to vote for the candidates that it will run.”⁶²³

The CDI decried Pancho’s alleged friendship with police chief Arturo “El Negro” Durazo Moreno,⁶²⁴ a notoriously corrupt official. And they characterized Pancho’s ability to compel

⁶¹⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 176 (21 September 1979).

⁶²⁰ D[G]IPyS, “Campamento 2 de Octubre,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09 (May 1980)/Folio 207.

⁶²¹ “colonos del Campamento 2 de Octubre anuncian que continuarán la campaña,” *Excelsior* (2 October 1979).

⁶²² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 196-97 (1 October 1979).

⁶²³ Volante (ca. 1 October 1979), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 194.

⁶²⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 241-45 (13 November 1979).

government and party officials to negotiate with him as a decision on his part to work with PRI officials. Their organization broadcast megaphone announcements against Pancho, accusing him of collaborating with the PRI and selling out the *colonia*.⁶²⁵ Although they were sharp with their criticisms of the government,⁶²⁶ they too met with political elites, including the president.⁶²⁷ Having exhausted other channels, on 3 May 1978 they wrote Secretary of State Jesús Reyes Heróles, saying that other government officials had failed to resolve their problem, whose resolution was consistent with the expropriation decree: the 1975 accord had not been followed.

By 12 June 1978 they had sustained talks with DDF authorities, the president, and CODEUR, but the issue had still not been resolved.⁶²⁸ They followed up with another letter to Jesús Reyes Heróles in which they demanded regularization, citing their participation in the special commission convened for that purpose, and decried the influx of outsiders into the settlement.⁶²⁹ They then worked closely with the city government, holding a series of meetings with DDF officials starting in August 1979 in which they demanded various urban services for Campamento 2 de Octubre.⁶³⁰ While they had little success with legalization,⁶³¹ they were successful at hastening the introduction of potable water, drainage, sewage, and paving works.⁶³² All the while, they took issue with De la Cruz's "usurpation of plots of land set aside for censused families" and "areas for services necessary for any community," asking Reyes Heróles

⁶²⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 275-76 (24 November 1979).

⁶²⁶ Alberto Carbajal Valdéz et al. to José López Portillo (4 September 1979), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 146-146.5.

⁶²⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 147-48 (4 September 1979); IPS Estudios Especiales, "Unión de colonos de Iztacalco e Iztapalapa Zona Expropiada, A.C.," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 149-51 (5 September 1979).

⁶²⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 1 (12 June 1978).

⁶²⁹ Petition to Jesús Reyes Heróles (14 June 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 112-13.

⁶³⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 127-28 (10 August 1979).

⁶³¹ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Iztapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 28.

⁶³² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 257 (21 November 1979).

to intercede with the relevant authorities to resolve the issue.⁶³³ That is, to confront Pancho's despotism.

Bossism

Pancho's despotism made him a boss. Bossism was borne of factional conflict—itsself a product of the between-generation divergence of interests stemming from urban concentration. It came as a direct response to violence and government repression.

Violence

One result of the divergence of interests between older and newer generations of residents was that Campamento 2 de Octubre was plagued by violence. Some violence was seemingly random. On 19 July 1969, a former landholder killed Modesto Cornelio Roman, who had taken his land, by shooting him 19 times.⁶³⁴ And at 10pm on 21 May 1979 there was a shootout in Campamento 2 de Octubre in which one young man died, another suffered serious injuries, and 20 others were wounded.⁶³⁵ Between the first and the second seemingly-random killing, the settlement entered into a period of between-faction conflict, including between-leader conflict, since the CDI had support among older residents to oppose Pancho.⁶³⁶ Three months subsequent to the CDI's formation was when Pancho's followers kidnapped Estela Huerta Soto's daughter for two days, beat her up, and dumped her on the outskirts of Mexico City.⁶³⁷

⁶³³ Estela Huerta Soto et al. to Jesús Reyes Heróles (3 May 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 168-69.

⁶³⁴ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 8.

⁶³⁵ Saúl López Robles, "Otra balacera en el 2 de Octubre: Un muerto y un herido, el saldo," *El Universal Gráfico* (21 May 1979).

⁶³⁶ IPS Estudios Especiales, "Unión de colonos de Iztacalco e Iztapalapa Zona Expropiada, A.C.," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 149-51 (5 September 1979).

⁶³⁷ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 8.

Pancho and Carbajal Valdéz agreed to a truce on 15 December 1978, according to which they would both be legitimate representatives of the settlement.⁶³⁸ During that time resident Josefina Jaramillo explained that there were two clear factions, one led by Pancho de la Cruz and the other led by Carbajal, but that (perhaps due to the truce) rather than clash, De la Cruz “mainly persecutes those who are not with either group,” as a journalist paraphrased.⁶³⁹ In spite of the truce, it only took until February 1979 for conflict to reemerge between the UCSCII and the CDI. Naturally, it stemmed from a disagreement about which residents should receive legal titles to their residences. While Pancho had signed the deal excluding Bachilleres from legalization, the CDI insisted that its residents be included. On 12 May 1979, while this disagreement ratcheted up, Macario Rodríguez Martínez, Pancho’s lieutenant and door-knocker (who, along with El Najayo, had kidnapped Estela Huerta’s daughter⁶⁴⁰), was found dead, peppered with bullet holes, stab wounds, and cigarette burns on different parts of his body—possibly from torture. Only days earlier (between 9 and 10 May), when he and his wife Teresa Ojeda de Rodríguez were returning to their home, they had been ambushed in an unsuccessful drive-by shooting.⁶⁴¹ The subsequent attempt on his life succeeded.

No one knows who killed Rodríguez. Ojeda initially accused police precinct head for ordering the killing and a CDI leader⁶⁴² for having previously shot at her husband and possibly being his executioner, although she later recanted.⁶⁴³ The precinct head, Pedro Luna Castro, said that Pancho might have killed him in a crime of passion, since Ojeda, his wife, had taken up as

⁶³⁸ IPS Estudios Especiales, “Unión de colonos de Iztacalco e Iztapalapa Zona Expropiada, A.C.,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 149-51 (5 September 1979).

⁶³⁹ “El Campamento 2 de Octubre, Feudo de De la Cruz, denuncian colonos,” *Excélsior* (4 December 1978).

⁶⁴⁰ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 8.

⁶⁴¹ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 12.

⁶⁴² Juan Pablo Sánchez Espinoza.

⁶⁴³ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 12.

Pancho's lover.⁶⁴⁴ The fact that it could have been any of them serves to illustrate how the situation incubated violence. That it was an inside job was also the favored explanation among some residents of Campamento 2 de Octubre, to which they added that it gave Pancho a pretext to exact revenge on the CDI.⁶⁴⁵ They were right about the pretext.

After the killing, Pancho put Campamento 2 de Octubre on red alert and tried to capitalize politically. He deployed 10 men to block the street to his house and five to guard Ojeda's house; the police also secured the area.⁶⁴⁶ Into this tense environment, Pancho broadcast megaphone messages and sent his people door-to-door urging residents to vote for him in the upcoming settlement leadership elections on 1 July 1979.⁶⁴⁷ His deputies sequestered a city truck during an attempt to dump waste in an area that Pancho had set aside as a parking lot for the minibuses affiliated with his organization (see below).⁶⁴⁸ The following day, he increased the number of deputies guarding his house to 40, and continued to beam his megaphone election messages and deploy his canvassers.⁶⁴⁹ (Pancho's political rivals tried not to be outdone. At a rally, a speaker denounced Pancho's candidacy for the leadership of the settlement, saying he "domesticated the settlement movement and sold it out to the bourgeoisie."⁶⁵⁰ Others continued to work with the city government, meeting with the mayor to tell him that Pancho now had 2,400 retainers and to ask that he be prevented from continuing his abuses. The mayor ordered his subordinate to resolve the problems as soon as possible.⁶⁵¹)

The violence did not end there. The next major surge came on 18 October 1980, when a group of people invaded parts of Campamento 2 de Octubre called La Posta and Pepsi-Cola,

⁶⁴⁴ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 12-13.

⁶⁴⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 167 (17 September 1979).

⁶⁴⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 35 (8 June 1979).

⁶⁴⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 36 (9 June 1979).

⁶⁴⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 37-38 (11 June 1979).

⁶⁴⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 53 (12 June 79).

⁶⁵⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 66-68 (18 June 1979).

⁶⁵¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 76 (25 June 1979).

where CDI members lived. It is unclear who led the invasion; CDI people assumed Pancho did, and Pancho claimed they had led it. Regardless, the invasion took place in such a charged atmosphere that it triggered a major violent upsurge. CDI member Ismael Girela shot Agustín Villegas Zarate; in response, 3,000 Pancho supporters surrounded the neighborhood and, amidst a hail of .22 calibre gunshots from Ismael Girela, Haydee González Corzo, and her husband Ramón Camacho Martínez, burned down the latter couple's house, Pancho later saying he thought it belonged to one of the invaders. At some point Camacho also hurled molotov cocktails and Pancho's followers broke the windows of CDI members' houses.⁶⁵²

Government Repression

Discontent flourished in this charged atmosphere. Residents like Roberto Montes and Josefina Jaramillo alleged that Pancho benefitted from cozy relations with the PRI's general secretary.⁶⁵³ Jaramillo and her friends also said they were convinced De la Cruz "has strong support in the Departamento [DDF] due to the payment of millions of pesos."⁶⁵⁴ But in truth the Mexican government was far from kind to Campamento 2 de Octubre. *Colonos* suffered episodic government repression. On 27 October 1972, the lawyer Carlos A. Cruz Morales requested a restraining order from the Tribunal de lo Contencioso Administrativo del Distrito Federal against the DDF for aggressions on the part of DF security forces that he alleged the Asociación de Colonos had suffered; he did so again on 25 January 1973 meeting with success this time. This gave them some legal protection, though the repression hardly stopped. The mayor ordered the arrest of Alberto Carbajal Valdéz for his involvement in leading 200 people to invade the land.⁶⁵⁵ At one point, Pancho even wrote police chief "El Negro" Durazo complaining about the many

⁶⁵² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folio 102-03 (18 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folios 131-32 (18 October 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folios 104-06 (19 October 1980); "Zafarrancho entre residentes del Campamento 2 de Octubre; 25 heridos," *Unomasuno* (20 October 1980); "Zafarrancho en el Campamento 2 de Octubre; tres lesionados," *El Universal* (20 October 1980).

⁶⁵³ Josefina Jaramillo to José López Portillo (5 December 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 154; Roberto Montes to José López Portillo (5 December 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 155.

⁶⁵⁴ "El Campamento 2 de Octubre, Feudo de De la Cruz, denuncian colonos," *Excelsior* (4 December 1978).

⁶⁵⁵ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 3.

police abuses to which they had been subjected.⁶⁵⁶ They endured a series of violent clashes with the police and organized many marches and rallies to defend the settlement.⁶⁵⁷

On 25 January 1976 Campamento 2 de Octubre was set ablaze, killing two children and their mother,⁶⁵⁸ injuring multiple people, and destroying 3,000 shacks, according to Pancho.⁶⁵⁹ Pancho blamed the blaze on prominent politicians and government officials, including President Luis Echeverría, mayor Octavio Senties, and Iztacalco congressperson Mario Álvarez.⁶⁶⁰ Five days later, on 30 January 1976, DDF police descended upon the *campamento*, claiming that its residents had stolen bricks and cardboard sheets from the DDF's Fábrica de Tabique; they battered its residents, killing one, and detained 32.⁶⁶¹ The riot police then apparently helped a group of people invade the settlement in an effort to eject existing residents from their land, leaving multiple people injured.⁶⁶² Two of Pancho's deputies, along with 50 *colonos*, attacked the six cops that were stationed in Campamento 2 de Octubre and threatened to kill their

⁶⁵⁶ Francisco de la Cruz Velasco to Gral. Arturo Durazo Moreno, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 132-37 (ca. 12 August 1979), sec. 3.

⁶⁵⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folios 1-6 (25 September 1980); IPS Estudios Especiales, "Unión de colonos de Iztacalco e Iztapalapa Zona Expropiada, A.C.," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 149-51 (5 September 1979); DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 3.

⁶⁵⁸ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 7.

⁶⁵⁹ Francisco de la Cruz Velasco to Gral. Arturo Durazo Moreno, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 132-37 (ca. 12 August 1979), sec. 1. Whereas Pancho claimed 3,000 families had lost their homes, a journalist later claimed it was 3,000 people (and thus far fewer families) that had lost their homes in the blaze. See "Pancho de la Cruz maneja el '2 de Octubre' como cacique," *Últimas Noticias* (11 July 1978).

⁶⁶⁰ He also blamed José Parcero López (the head of Vivienda Popular) and Lilia Berthely (congressperson for Iztapalapa), among others. DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 7-8.

⁶⁶¹ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 7-8; AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99.

⁶⁶² Francisco de la Cruz Velasco to Gral. Arturo Durazo Moreno, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 132-37 (ca. 12 August 1979), sec. 5.

superiors.⁶⁶³ The riot police then attacked a Campamento 2 de Octubre rally, resulting in 135 injuries.⁶⁶⁴

Pancho went into hiding after the blaze, only returning in November 1976.⁶⁶⁵ He held firm. In a 1978 interview he insisted that “by law, this land belongs to us. Adolfo López Mateos expropriated it for ‘public use’. Law and reason made us possessors.” But he was perhaps clearest about one thing: “They must kill me to remove me from here.”⁶⁶⁶ He thus grew quite strident. On 31 July 1978, he complained that Iztacalco’s delegado político had given his subordinates the order to destroy dwellings and essentially challenged him to a duel, telling Secretary of State Jesús Reyes Heróles that “we ask that he do it [himself], not hide his cowardice and use police.”⁶⁶⁷

By 1980, Pancho’s followers faced off against the police. According to CDI leaders, he had dislocated two people from the settlement.⁶⁶⁸ The riot police were deployed temporarily inside and outside of Campamento 2 de Octubre to prevent further dislocations and repression on the part of Pancho’s coterie.⁶⁶⁹ They waited a few weeks and resumed dislocations, Teresa Ojeda heading a group of 200 residents to eject two families living in Colonia Bachilleres on 10 April.⁶⁷⁰ According to a spy, “those evicted were behind in the payment of their weekly dues.”⁶⁷¹ A group of 250 or 300 residents complained to government security officials.⁶⁷² Then on 12 April

⁶⁶³ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 9.

⁶⁶⁴ Francisco de la Cruz Velasco to Gral. Arturo Durazo Moreno, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 132-37 (ca. 12 August 1979), sec. 6.

⁶⁶⁵ “Pancho de la Cruz maneja el ‘2 de Octubre’ como cacique,” *Últimas Noticias* (11 July 1978).

⁶⁶⁶ Miguel Reyes Razo, “De la Cruz: Primero me matan que sacarme de aquí,” *El Universal* (31 July 1978).

⁶⁶⁷ Francisco de la Cruz to Jesús Reyes Heróles (31 July 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 101.

⁶⁶⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 298-99 (25 January 1980).

⁶⁶⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 301 (26 January 1980).

⁶⁷⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 82 (10 April 1980); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 17-18.

⁶⁷¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 82 (10 April 1980).

⁶⁷² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 83-84 (10 April 1980).

1980 about 40 of Pancho's followers tried to evict José Guadalupe Carrillo from his house, "since this person refused to continue paying the weekly fees that are 40.00 pesos and [contributing voluntary labor to stand] guard," a spy reported. Several riot cops prevented the eviction in this case and neighbors "chose to put a sentry at the entrance of the aforementioned address so that no one can enter."⁶⁷³ More residents approached city government officials⁶⁷⁴ asking for protection.⁶⁷⁵

On 18 April 1980, a police commander⁶⁷⁶ intervened, returning one of the families to their land,⁶⁷⁷ in front of Pancho, his comrades,⁶⁷⁸ and about 150 *colonos*. Teresa Ojeda Ortega de Rodríguez's sister, Margarita Ojeda Ortega,⁶⁷⁹ broke away from the crowd, struck one of the relocated settlers, and screamed something like: "go back where you came from, you're going to die here!"⁶⁸⁰ The police intervened; given the circumstances, it took a curious form: the police tried to *prevent* squatters' eviction. On 13 April 1980, there was an assembly of about 500 people. De la Cruz informed those in attendance that he had come to an agreement with police chief Durazo that the plots belonging to the people his followers had dislocated on the 10 April (i.e., Teresa Becerril del Castillo and her son and Francisco González Salazar, his wife, and their three kids) would be returned. Durazo surely did not anticipate Pancho's next move. He reported to the people in attendance that since they had refused to sign the agreement as he demanded, those previously evicted would *not* be resettled.⁶⁸¹ Pancho discussed the matter with Becerril two

⁶⁷³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 88 (12 April 1980).

⁶⁷⁴ Manuel Gurría Ordóñez, the mayor's Secretario A.

⁶⁷⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1670A/Exp. 5/Folios 201-02 (15 April 1980).

⁶⁷⁶ Comandante del 9º Batallón of the Policía del Area de Iztacalco, Mayor Agustín Covarrubias Camacho.

⁶⁷⁷ That of Teresa Becerril de Carrillo.

⁶⁷⁸ Including Francisco Mancera Cardenas.

⁶⁷⁹ Whom Becerril claimed was Pancho's lover.

⁶⁸⁰ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 19. The quote may be apocryphal because the spy report from the time does not quote Ojeda as saying Becerril will "die," describing the exchange in much more benign language by saying Ojeda told Becerril she would regret (*arrepentir*) her return. See AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 117 (18 April 1980).

⁶⁸¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 91-92 (13 April 1980); DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,"

days later, but they did not come to an agreement and she was not resettled.⁶⁸² Becerril and her allies approached city government officials.⁶⁸³ But the government's attempt to restrict Pancho's power was ill-fated. He continued to evict residents at will for the next few months.⁶⁸⁴

Local Control

Pancho's local control had three components: knowledge of a granularity far surpassing that of government officials, control of turf much to their chagrin, and the ability to extract rent made possible mostly because he was able to mobilize followers for his own ends. Let us examine each in turn.

Granular knowledge

Since he was the neighborhood boss, which allowed him to sign the Carvajal Moreno-instigated agreement with CORETT and the DDF, Pancho was able to determine which residents would benefit from legalization.⁶⁸⁵ The government relied on him for information about who met the requirements to be included among regularization beneficiaries,⁶⁸⁶ allowing him to carry out—and doctor—the census.

AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 17.

⁶⁸² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 100-01 (15 April 1980).

⁶⁸³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 102-03 (15 April 1980).

⁶⁸⁴ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 45.

⁶⁸⁵ DGIPyS, "Campamento 2 de Octubre," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09 (May 1980), pp. 3-4; DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 13-14.

⁶⁸⁶ Convenio, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 255-61 (13 August 1975), p. 3, clause 5; comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 297-302 (13 January 1978); comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 324-25 (18 January 1978); comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 334-44 (26 January 1978), p. 9; comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 345-49 (30 January 1978), p. 4; comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 350-55 (2 February 1978), p. 6.

Pancho and other leaders (like Carbajal Valdéz) knew the settlement well, whereas government officials did not. This was made apparent to all when, in one of the early-1978 special commission meetings, commission president López Cárdenas read off a list of names of those the government thought lived in the settlement and De la Cruz Velasco and Alberto Carbajal Valdéz “clarified the names and surnames without using any list and using only their memory for said clarifications, interrupting as the names were read out,” according to the minutes. López Cárdenas asked Pancho and Carbajal Valdéz to provide the special commission with a list of people who no longer lived in the settlement but who were not on the official lists (people who had already been resettled).⁶⁸⁷ But the issue was not so simple; in the very next meeting, Carbajal requested that the family members of the deceased be recognized as having inheritance rights; on behalf of the government, López Cárdenas conceded that such rights would be respected, insofar as these people were in the Campamento and could provide legal identification.⁶⁸⁸ There were also issues in the meantime. On the one hand, López Cárdenas asked Pancho and Carbajal Valdéz, “as a special favor,” in the phrasing of the minutes, “that they prevent the arrival of new people to Campamento 2 de Octubre;”⁶⁸⁹ on the other, he asked that the commission be informed and provided with proof of rights of those who “are returning to the Campamento.”⁶⁹⁰ There was a major opportunity here: in the absence of unimpeachable proof of residence, the “arrival of new people” could be passed off as prior residents “returning to the Campamento.” And Pancho was just the person to take advantage of it. Given urban concentration, people continued to flood into the area. This allowed him to channel legalization resources to extract rent from residents. He charged residents a fee of 500 pesos to be included on the list of legalization beneficiaries. Some paid the fee.⁶⁹¹ The dozens of families who would or could not pay him suffered eviction.⁶⁹²

⁶⁸⁷ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 345-49 (30 January 1978), p. 4.

⁶⁸⁸ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 350-55 (2 February 1978), p. 5.

⁶⁸⁹ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 345-49 (30 January 1978), p. 4.

⁶⁹⁰ Comisión técnica, acta de sesión, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 345-49 (30 January 1978), p. 5.

⁶⁹¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 84 (12 July 1979).

⁶⁹² IPS Estudios Especiales, “Unión de colonos de Iztacalco e Iztapalapa Zona Expropiada, A.C.,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 149-51 (5 September 1979).

Control of turf

On the internal front, Pancho and his boys tried to maintain strict control over settlement turf. He imposed restricted access.⁶⁹³ And his men patrolled the settlement, preventing outsiders from invading the land and ejecting them when they did.⁶⁹⁴ Pancho's forces were organized according to a gendered division of labor. Men served him as door-knockers who evicted squatters that failed to pay their neighborhood association dues.⁶⁹⁵ Women, meanwhile, defended the settlement from police harassment, as resident and CDI leader Josefina Jaramillo explained, "because the police will not beat them but will [beat] the men."⁶⁹⁶ This comprehensive level of control did not arise only after the murder of his right-hand man, Macario Rodríguez in May 1979, discussed above; it predated it. And it was sustained the entire time by the conflict resulting from the influx of new residents into the area. Pancho continuously settled new residents in the neighborhood, sometimes provoking anger and discontent.⁶⁹⁷ Already in June 1977, five residents went to the press to complain about Pancho's assassinations, threats, evictions, and bodyguards (*guardaespaldas*) who pressured residents.⁶⁹⁸

In December 1978, Josefina Jaramillo led a group of residents to complained to the press that Pancho and his lieutenant, El Najayo, ran the settlement as a fief. A newspaper paraphrased their complaint, saying that "they have unleashed a campaign of terror against the settlers who do not pay dues (40 pesos a week), who do not attend their meetings, or whose wives do not join the brigades of women who stand guard at night so that the police do not enter the *campamento*." Pancho's men had evicted at least 20 families who had received land from the DDF, Jaramillo

⁶⁹³ Alfredo Cortina, "El Campamento '2 de Octubre', polvorín," *El Diario de México* (5 July 1978).

⁶⁹⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 86-87 (23 July 1979).

⁶⁹⁵ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 3-4.

⁶⁹⁶ "El Campamento 2 de Octubre, Feudo de De la Cruz, denuncian colonos," *Excélsior* (4 December 1978).

⁶⁹⁷ Chona Vázquez González et al. to José López Portillo (28 August 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 127; "En el 'Campamento 2 de Octubre' acusan a Francisco de la Cruz, líder de colonos de mandar asesinar gente," *Ovaciones* (17 June 1977).

⁶⁹⁸ "En el 'Campamento 2 de Octubre' acusan a Francisco de la Cruz, líder de colonos de mandar asesinar gente," *Ovaciones* (17 June 1977).

said. She explained that “Pancho’s men arrive, led by El Najayo, beat us out of our houses and put our furniture on the street.” Their control over settlement turf was systematic, she said: “the shock groups that throw out a family bring trucks with construction materials and masons. As they proceed, they demolish what has been built, they lay new foundations, and in two or three days there is a new house.” The land from which certain residents were evicted was then sold to new settlers for 30,000 or 40,000 pesos per lot. Of course, residents did not just stand idly by. Josefina Jaramillo and her friends said that on 3 December 1978 they stood guard to prevent “Pancho’s armed followers from taking more land.” And they added that if the situation continues there could be bloody conflict, “because we are not willing to put up with this for our whole life.”⁶⁹⁹ But Pancho’s troops were far more powerful than they.

Rent extraction

Pancho used his power to extract resources from Campamento 2 de Octubre’s residents. In addition to monthly dues, they had to pay anywhere from 5,000 to 15,000 pesos for a piece of land.⁷⁰⁰ He even levied a special fee of 500 pesos on residents for his daughter’s wedding.⁷⁰¹ In August 1979, a flyer circulated ridiculing Pancho and his comrades’ accumulation of wealth and power, making themselves untouchable, and selling residents out to the PRI in the process.⁷⁰² Government spies found that members of Pancho’s coterie hoarded up to five plots each.⁷⁰³ They reported that De la Cruz had property in the Federal District and in the states of Oaxaca and

⁶⁹⁹ “El Campamento 2 de Octubre, Feudo de De la Cruz, denuncian colonos,” *Excélsior* (4 December 1978).

⁷⁰⁰ Several reports give the figure of 5,000 to 10,000 pesos. See: IPS Estudios Especiales, “Unión de colonos de Iztacalco e Iztapalapa Zona Expropiada, A.C.,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 149-51 (5 September 1979); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Iztapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 3-4. Others say CDI leaders alleged Pancho charged 10,000 to 15,000 pesos. See: AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 41-42 (11 June 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 121-22 (18 August 1978).

⁷⁰¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 167 (17 September 1979).

⁷⁰² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 177-78 (24 September 1979); volante, AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 179 (August 1979).

⁷⁰³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 82-83 (12 July 1979).

Morelos, and a bank account in his children's name, so that his wealth could not be expropriated.⁷⁰⁴

Pancho was also able to raise dues at will; at the April 1980 meeting when he told attendees that the Becerril del Castillo and González Salazar families would not be resettled, as he had promised police chief Durazo, Pancho also announced that dues would increase by 30 pesos because, as a spy summarized, “many expenses had been incurred and they are short of funds.”⁷⁰⁵ His rent extraction was especially abominable to CDI members in Bachilleres.⁷⁰⁶ Pancho denied to journalists that he charged dues and said if contributions were requested it was to maintain the organization of the *colonia*, the workplaces, and medical services that they had created.⁷⁰⁷

Expansion

Pancho tried to expand into other turf, sometimes unsuccessfully⁷⁰⁸ and sometimes successfully.⁷⁰⁹ He led 2,000 people in a land-invasion attempt on 13 June 1976 in San Nicolás Totolapan, Tlalpan—which put him in control of an additional plot of land more than 230 hectares in size.⁷¹⁰ However, in July 1978, security forces evicted 1,500 people from Cerro de Cuilotepec, the hill above San Nicolás Totolapan.⁷¹¹ Undeterred, they settled land nearer to Campamento 2 de Octubre. Thus, in December 1977, the UCSCII led an invasion of land

⁷⁰⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 156-58 (5 January 1979).

⁷⁰⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 91-92 (13 April 1980).

⁷⁰⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 105-08 (15 April 1980).

⁷⁰⁷ “No hay buenas relaciones: De la Cruz. El DDF ha Propiciado invasiones en el Campamento 2 de Octubre,” *Unomasuno* (21 May 1980).

⁷⁰⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1705A/Exp. 4/Folio 59 (13 June 1978).

⁷⁰⁹ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 8-9.

⁷¹⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1705A/Exp. 4/Folio 59 (13 June 1978). The source says 20,000 invaded, but I suspect this is a typo and the intended estimate was 2,000 people.

⁷¹¹ “En el Campamento 2 de Octubre impera la ley de la selva,” *Sol de México* (6 July 1978).

adjacent to Campamento 2 de Octubre through which high-tension electrical power lines passed. There is some disagreement about who led the invasion; a journalist said Pancho led it,⁷¹² while a spy said it was led by Macario Rodríguez Martínez and his wife, Teresa Ojeda de Rodríguez.⁷¹³ Regardless, the 600 square meter plot of land belonged to the Comisión Federal de Electricidad and its occupation was deemed a risk. So out came the riot police, who evicted the squatters, destroyed their shacks, and stood by to prevent further invasions.⁷¹⁴ Squatters retreated but did not give up.

On 17 June 1978, Pancho's lieutenant, Macario Rodríguez Martínez, and his wife, Teresa Ojeda de Rodríguez, led 40 families from the Unión de Colonos to again take possession of the property beneath the high-tension electricity lines. The families immediately started building their houses. The police tried to evict them, bulldozing and otherwise destroying their 60 shacks.⁷¹⁵ Clashes with the police followed. Several riot cops went to De la Cruz's house, fired teargas, and detained the people who exited the dwelling. This provoked a reaction, and between 5:25 and 6:10pm some 700 people were "throwing stones and various objects at the security forces." Sustaining injuries themselves, they even slightly injured some of the police.⁷¹⁶ (The press reported that ten people were injured, including three cops,⁷¹⁷ though a flyer circulated at a protest later said two people were killed, two disappeared, 33 detained, and dozens wounded.⁷¹⁸) Since government officials destroyed their dwellings and removed their building materials, the

⁷¹² "Rebeldía de paracaidistas: Invaden predios de propiedad federal," *Diario de la Tarde* (2 December 1977).

⁷¹³ D[G]IPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 8-9.

⁷¹⁴ D[G]IPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 9.

⁷¹⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 58-59 (26 June 1978); DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 8-9.

⁷¹⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 5 (17 June 1978). See also Alfredo Jiménez, "Interrogan a los de la trifulca del Campamento 2 de Octubre," *Últimas Noticias* (19 June 1978).

⁷¹⁷ "Consignan a nueve colonos del Campamento 'Dos de Octubre'," *Excélsior* (21 June 1978).

⁷¹⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 37 (ca. 21 June 1978); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 19-32 (21 June 1978), p. 4.

colonos said they viewed the eviction as a “looting of materials,” estimating the value of those the government made off with at several thousand pesos. Police repression seems to have continued, and on 19 June 1978 Pancho sent a telegram to Jesús Reyes Heróles decrying the repression.⁷¹⁹

Pancho’s people did not surrender. Macario Rodríguez and El Najayo, along with 50 *colonos*, attacked the six cops stationed in Campamento 2 de Octubre and threatened to kill coronel Pedro Luna Castro and major Fernando Medina Morales, who had been in charge of the eviction.⁷²⁰ In the immediate term, Pancho’s resistance was enough to force Pedro Luna Castro to remove the six cops posted to the settlement.⁷²¹ Then, on 21 June 1978, the UCSCII joined forces with the Bloque Urbano de Colonias Populares for a joint rally in which they demanded that mayor Carlos Hank González resign, that the building materials appropriated during the eviction be returned to them, and that those recently sentenced for the invasion and conflict with the police be released unconditionally.⁷²² Back in Campamento 2 de Octubre, they set up an alarm system by means of which to notify residents of any abnormal activities.⁷²³ Beyond it, they continued to press for the release of those who had been jailed for participating in the invasion.⁷²⁴

On 28 July 1978, Francisco de la Cruz and Teresa Rodríguez led 40 *colonos* to invade again, after which they immediately started to build structures and began to organize a defense force to prevent eviction.⁷²⁵ They re-occupied the area and held it for several years despite government eviction efforts. And on 12 October 1978, Teresa Rodríguez led about 100 people in

⁷¹⁹ Francisco de la Cruz Velazco [sic] and Gustavo Torres Anzures to Jesús Reyes Heróles (19 June 1978), AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 48.

⁷²⁰ “2 de Octubre: Amenazan ‘paracaidistas’ matar a jefes policíacos,” *La Prensa* (20 June 1978); “Amenazan a jefes de la DGPT los colonos del ‘2 de Octubre’,” *El Heraldo de México* (20 June 1978); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 9.

⁷²¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 15 (20 June 1978).

⁷²² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 29 (21 June 1978).

⁷²³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 34-35 (23 June 1978).

⁷²⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 60 (26 June 1978).

⁷²⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 95 (28 July 1978).

an invasion of a piece of land in front of an INFONAVIT complex just beyond the eastern perimeter of Campamento 2 de Octubre.⁷²⁶

The next year, they returned to Tlalpan to lead an invasion in Ampliación Miguel Hidalgo, in the valley below Cerro de Cuilotepec, just east of Héroes de Padierna.⁷²⁷ Then, with the help of Mexican folk music singer Judith Reyes, Pancho's deputies organized 400 people to invade Colonia Nueva Rosita, just beyond the eastern perimeter of Campamento 2 de Octubre, which had recently been expropriated to build a major highway.⁷²⁸ The Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) was holding a campaign rally for their congressional candidates, Bernardo García Matías and Cecilia Madero. When the candidates learned of the invasion, they moved the rally in order to support the invasion (against the request of the government official in charge).⁷²⁹ When the riot police came to remove the occupation, land invaders tried to defend themselves by throwing rocks. Several invaders and their leaders were detained.⁷³⁰

Those who made it back to Campamento 2 de Octubre held a satirical performance lampooning police chief Durazo, who had ordered the eviction, blaming him and other authorities for the repression to which they were subjected.⁷³¹ (Dramaturgic ridicule was repeated again a few days later.⁷³²) After breaking off talks with CODEUR, Pancho then invaded land in Campamento 2 de Octubre that had been set aside for public spaces, streets, and resettlement areas.⁷³³ He stood at the leading edge of urban concentration, aligned with the new and aspiring

⁷²⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656D/Exp. 23/Folio 16 (12 December 1978).

⁷²⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 76 (4 July 1978).

⁷²⁸ The Eje Vial Francisco del Paso y Troncoso.

⁷²⁹ DGIPyS, "Campamento 2 de Octubre," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09 (May 1980), pp. 2-3; DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 10.

⁷³⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656D/Exp. 23/Folios 172-73 (5 May 1979); DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 11.

⁷³¹ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 11-12.

⁷³² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1772B/Exp. 9/Folio 20-21 (8 May 1979).

⁷³³ Lorenzo Yáñez, "Los colonos de la 2 de Octubre invadieron otros 12 mil metros," *Últimas Noticias* (10 July

generation of residents, which enabled him to mobilize followers and made him an urban boss. What he did with his power and autonomy was to branch out into other activities.

The Frente Nacional “Campamento 2 De Octubre”

Pancho had great success branching out to become the leader of an independent minibuss and collective taxi syndicate, challenging PRI-aligned organizations in the labor sector (CTM). His lawyer Mancera Cárdenas said that on 18 November 1976 they had signed an agreement with the head of Autotransportes y Servicios Públicos, Armando López Santibáñez, to license their taxis, but that it had not been honored.⁷³⁴ Thus initially they were not able to provide their subscribers with licenses. But they *were* able to provide protection. And given the nature of the business, this was very important. Thus, starting in early-1978, a steady stream of small, private bus lines flocked to Pancho and subscribed to his Unión Nacional de Minitaxis Tolerados and the Unión de Taxis Tolerados de Ruta Fija for protection. On 4 March 1978, the members of the Ruta Transportes de Servicios Colectivos Especiales de Oriente, whose leader was Salvador Nieto Padilla, joined his organization, and on 6 February 1978, the Panteras Rosas route, whose leader was Román Pérez Pacheco, joined.⁷³⁵ Together with Raúl León de la Selva, his lawyer, he formed two minibuss/collective taxi cartels in September 1978.⁷³⁶

Pancho sought to extract taxi permits from the city government. While their acquisition was a protracted process, the prospects of the concession was attractive both to those seeking employment opportunities and those the police harassed for lack of permits. Pancho's efforts led the CDI to claim that he was friends with police chief Durazo, with whom he had met to

1978).

⁷³⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 231 (28 May 1980).

⁷³⁵ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 14-15.

⁷³⁶ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 14-15. See also: DGIPyS, “Campamento 2 de Octubre,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09 (May 1980), p. 4.

negotiate the permits.⁷³⁷ There may have been some truth to this claim. But Pancho himself periodically claimed to be protected by PRI general secretary Gustavo Carbajal Moreno and a high official in the president's office, and that he had "enough money to buy any authority that wanted to make a move against him," according to a spy.⁷³⁸ Pancho certainly had a penchant for bold claims. Though his *power* reflected not corruption per se, much less the illocutionary force of bombastic claims, but instead his ability to mobilize followers to palpably affect the balance of forces. Not only did the authorities recognize this, other community leaders recognized it as well. On 24 November 1979, for example, he chaired an assembly of 350 representatives from various *colonias* in Mexico City and beyond, along with minibuses and taxi union representatives,⁷³⁹ and all the CDI could do in an effort to counter his initiatives was broadcast via loudspeaker messages about his alleged collaboration with the PRI and purported sellout of the *colonia*.⁷⁴⁰ The CDI had only words—though, it is important to note, they were anti-government words.

Pancho, in contrast, had pull in the Mexican political scheme, or at least appeared to be on the cusp of a deal. Two days after the assembly, Pancho's comrade Teresa Ojeda Rodríguez announced that police chief Durazo would give De la Cruz "documents of the informal minibuses and taxis of Campamento '2 de Octubre'" on 28 November 1979,⁷⁴¹ which would then be distributed among followers. In fact the concession took much longer to extract, and required more mobilization.

But the announcement must have served to help keep hope alive. Led by Jesús Salvador Nieto Padilla, taxi drivers planned to depart Campamento 2 de Octubre in a caravan to Toluca, the capital of the State of Mexico, to demand that government security forces allow them to ply their trade.⁷⁴² Naturally, the plan got government security officials' attention, and they knew

⁷³⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 241-45 (13 November 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 248 (15 November 1979).

⁷³⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folio 156-58 (5 January 1979).

⁷³⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 271-74 (24 November 1979).

⁷⁴⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 275-76 (24 November 1979).

⁷⁴¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 277 (26 November 1979).

⁷⁴² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 4 (5 March 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 5 (6

Pancho was behind it. The State of Mexico's Director de Seguridad y Transito, Felix Hernández Jaimes, met with DF police chief Durazo, who said that mayor Carlos Hank Gonzalez wanted order to be restored among the approximately 35,000 unlicensed taxis who plied their trade across the Valley of Mexico, but that instead the illegal routes were proliferating "due to the intervention of some agitators as in the case of Francisco de la Cruz."⁷⁴³

Pancho, meanwhile, got to work putting together a list of affiliates who requested taxi permits. A State of Mexico security official⁷⁴⁴ said that Pancho and his lawyer Francisco Mancera Cárdenas had agreed to compile the list "so that somehow they can be secretly granted some of these permits to avoid the increase in this movement of informal taxi drivers who demand that they be permitted."⁷⁴⁵ Members from Cuernavaca, Morelos had meanwhile suffered police repression and progress on permits there was slow as well, so on 25 March 1980 they threatened the State Department with a sit-in if their leaders were not freed and they were not given 200 taxi permits.⁷⁴⁶ In the interim, the caravan idea had been simmering. It gradually evolved into a plan for drivers to travel as a caravan from Campamento 2 de Octubre to Cuernavaca.⁷⁴⁷ Pancho seized this momentum to form the Frente Nacional "Campamento 2 de Octubre" in March 1980.⁷⁴⁸

The formation of the Frente Nacional and Pancho's efforts to apply pressure during the taxi permit campaign took place amidst, and thus intersected with, other developments. In particular, it coincided in time with police chief Durazo Moreno's efforts to reverse Pancho's eviction of Teresa Becerril del Castillo and Francisco González Salazar and their respective families. This coincidence in time allowed Pancho to, in effect, blackmail the government: if the

March 1980).

⁷⁴³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 6 (6 March 1980), emphasis removed.

⁷⁴⁴ Héctor Millán Osuna, the State of Mexico's assistant director of administration for Seguridad Pública y Tránsito.

⁷⁴⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 7 (6 March 1980).

⁷⁴⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 30 (25 March 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 33-34 (25 March 1980).

⁷⁴⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 39-42 (26 March 1980).

⁷⁴⁸ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 25.

government delayed conceding the taxi permits, Pancho would obstruct its initiative. Thus, although he had agreed with Durazo to resettle the Becerril and González families (as Durazo had agreed to grant the taxi licenses), he had seen little progress on the permits. He therefore told the assembly that Becerril and González would not be resettled due to failure to sign a document (see above). This was probably a message to the government that if it wanted to be able to carry out its objectives, it should grant the taxi permits. Since he had aligned with the newer generation and gained the capacity to mobilize others for his own ends, Pancho had a degree of weight in the balance of political forces. So naturally, the influx continued: on 14 March 1980, the Garay unlicensed taxis drivers joined.

But it was hardly smooth sailing. De la Selva broke with Pancho in May 1979 over a disagreement about his arbitrary fees of between 15,000 and 40,000 pesos per minibus license.⁷⁴⁹ Pancho undertook a public defamation campaign against him,⁷⁵⁰ after which de la Selva went to the authorities to complain.⁷⁵¹ The substantive disagreement concerned whose minibus and taxi syndicate would operate on which routes; Pancho accused de la Selva of invading routes and de la Selva accused Pancho of much the same.⁷⁵² In May 1980 Pancho's Frente Nacional Campamento "2 de Octubre" met with the leaders of the Confederación Nacional Revolucionaria del Transporte A.C., agreeing to publish a joint open letter denouncing Raúl León de la Selva and to merge the two organizations.⁷⁵³ Others, similar to de la Selva, disagreed with Pancho, and sought working arrangements with different local leaders.⁷⁵⁴

Nevertheless, Pancho enjoyed a solid base of subscribers. He claimed that minibus lines from a number of geographic units in Mexico—from nearby Nezahualcóyotl to Colonia Otilio Montaña, in Morelos, to Tierra y Libertad in Monterrey, and lines in Chiapas, Hidalgo,

⁷⁴⁹ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 14.

⁷⁵⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 144 (25 April 1980).

⁷⁵¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 32 (20 June 1980).

⁷⁵² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 38-40 (24 June 1980).

⁷⁵³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 197-99 (14 May 1980).

⁷⁵⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 233 (6 November 1979).

Michoacán, Oaxaca, Puebla, and Tamaulipas—wanted to be included.⁷⁵⁵ By September 1980, a summary of spy inquiries concluded that 3,000 unlicensed collective taxi drivers (*taxis tolerados*) paid him a weekly fee of 250 pesos each.⁷⁵⁶

This, of course, generated problems between Pancho's organization and legally-permitted taxis. An ongoing bone of contention concerned routes 17 and 32 (Reyes Barco and Cuauhtémoc); Pancho's drivers working those routes had received death threats.⁷⁵⁷ A flashpoint was the Villa de Cortés METRO station, the point of departure for permitted taxis working route 25. According to Pancho's lawyer Francisco Mancera Cárdenas, they would not let the unpermitted taxis organized by Pancho's syndicate work the area.⁷⁵⁸ To apply pressure, on 19 June 1980, *colonos* from Frente Nacional Campamento 2 de Octubre commandeered 22 of the taxis which worked routes 25 and 3, saying they would not be returned unless the drivers met with De la Cruz so that they could be instructed to allow the unpermitted taxis to work the area.⁷⁵⁹ A cop⁷⁶⁰ went to 2 de Octubre to meet with De la Cruz to ask him to return the commandeered taxis to their owners.⁷⁶¹ Some seem to have been returned, but at 6pm five of the commandeered taxis from route 25 were still in Campamento 2 de Octubre.⁷⁶² And they seem to have kept them for several days, since on 24 June 1980, the militants of Frente Nacional

⁷⁵⁵ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 15, 37.

⁷⁵⁶ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 15.

⁷⁵⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 213-14 (21 May 1980).

⁷⁵⁸ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 40.

⁷⁵⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 16 (19 June 1980).

⁷⁶⁰ Corl. Arturo Marbán Kucticil, Jefe Operativo, DGPyT.

⁷⁶¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 17-18 (19 June 1980).

⁷⁶² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 21 (19 June 1980); DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 41-42.

Campamento 2 de Octubre started to gather all of their taxis to build a barricade in anticipation of clashes with groups who sympathized with Raúl León de la Selva.⁷⁶³

His taxi business also put Pancho into contact with government transportation officials. On the one hand there was the usual repression. On 22 May 1980, several men with machine guns saying they were DF detectives⁷⁶⁴ went to 2 de Octubre and kidnapped Pablo Cruz Maldonado (general secretary of Minitaxis del Campamento 2 de Octubre) and several others. The agents seem to have mistaken Cruz Maldonado (or one of the others) for Pancho; after asking which of them was Francisco de la Cruz, Pablo Cruz Maldonado answered affirmatively, and the detectives apprehended the group. Pancho said that if he did not receive news of them, he would take drastic measures. He then organized a caravan to the Dirección General de Policía y Tránsito (DGPYT), where he demanded their immediate release; he was told there had been no order issued to detain them. Upon his return to Campamento 2 de Octubre, Pancho found Cruz Maldonado, along with the others who had been detained, waiting. They told him that they had been beaten and then released.⁷⁶⁵ Later that day, Pancho's forces beat up two agents of the DGPYT who were patrolling by motorcycle near the Frente Nacional headquarters.⁷⁶⁶

In the immediate term, Pancho and comrades pressed the DGPYT as to why these people had been detained.⁷⁶⁷ In the longer term, though, contact with government officials gave Pancho the ability to channel government resources to his benefit. In late-1979, Pancho finally extracted the concession of 150 minibus licenses, to be raffled among members, from police chief Durazo.⁷⁶⁸ In a context with few jobs, such concessions were a powerful reason for the local

⁷⁶³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 35 (24 June 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 41 (24 June 1980); DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 43.

⁷⁶⁴ Agents of the División de Investigación para la Prevención de la Delincuencia.

⁷⁶⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 216-17 (22 May 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 218 (22 May 1980); DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 31-32.

⁷⁶⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 222 (22 May 1980).

⁷⁶⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 219 (22 May 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 220 (22 May 1980).

⁷⁶⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folios 237-38 (8 November 1979); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp.

urban poor to throw in their lot with Pancho. But with conflict emanating from Campamento 2 de Octubre to far beyond, Pancho represented a thorn in security officials' side. On 2 September 1980, the DGPyT's director of operations, coronel Arturo Marbán, conveyed disappointment to Pancho de la Cruz's lawyer, Mancera Cárdenas, saying that Durazo was very angry at Mancera and De la Cruz because whenever there are problems Campamento 2 de Octubre seemed to be part of them.⁷⁶⁹

Boomeranging Into Politics

Besides expanding into additional turf and into minibuses and taxi protection, the problem Pancho represented expanded into politics. In 1978 he had claimed that the PRI had offered him the governorship of Oaxaca, in addition to a variety of other bribes.⁷⁷⁰ Rather than lead him to join forces with the government, however, this seems to have planted disloyal ideas in his mind. In March 1980, he had formed the Frente Nacional Campamento 2 de Octubre.⁷⁷¹ The next month, he decided that he would be the PST gubernatorial candidate for Oaxaca, his state of origin, and declared as much at an assembly in Campamento 2 de Octubre on 20 April 1980.⁷⁷² Taking the podium, Pancho said that the time had come to throw himself into the Oaxaca gubernatorial race, that it was better to run on the ticket of a registered party, and that he was debating between running as the candidate of the PST or of the Partido Demócrata Mexicano. As a spy summarized, Pancho pronounced that "the voice of Campamento 2 de Octubre will reach

13/Folio 277 (26 November 1979).

⁷⁶⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 208 (2 September 1980); DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 57.

⁷⁷⁰ Ángel Pérez Isaak, "Acusan de soborno al Delegado de Iztacalco: Me ofreció 10 millones, dice el líder del Campamento '2 de Octubre'," *Últimas Noticias* (24 June 1978); see also Miguel Reyes Razo, "De la Cruz: Primero me matan que sacarme de aquí," *El Universal* (31 July 1978).

⁷⁷¹ DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 25.

⁷⁷² DGIPyS, "Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento '2 de Octubre' localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa," AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 16.

every corner of Oaxaca,” though he noted that campaign financing was still needed. The final speaker, “El Najayo” Robles Hernández, told attendees that “we are no longer willing to tolerate the quitters and if possible we will evict them from the Campamento.”⁷⁷³

The aforementioned folk singer, Judith Reyes, endorsed De la Cruz, citing their friendship, his experience, and his desire to help people.⁷⁷⁴ The PST dragged its feet at first, its leader Rafael Aguilar Talamantes saying the party would look into the possibility of running De la Cruz as their candidate,⁷⁷⁵ and talks ensued between Pancho and the PST’s secretary of electoral affairs, Graco Ramírez Abreau (who was an alternate congressperson and founding member of the PST).⁷⁷⁶ Not one to hesitate, Pancho organized about 900 people into a caravan that left Mexico City on 25 May bound for Oaxaca to attend the inauguration of his campaign.⁷⁷⁷ In the ensuing 2,000-person campaign-kickoff rally,⁷⁷⁸ the PST⁷⁷⁹ announced its candidates for local, mayoral, and gubernatorial office, nominating Pancho.⁷⁸⁰ After returning to the offices of the Frente Nacional Campamento 2 de Octubre in Mexico City, Pancho gave a press conference

⁷⁷³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 123-25 (20 April 1980).

⁷⁷⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 148-49 (27 April 80); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 33.

⁷⁷⁵ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 24.

⁷⁷⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 151-52 (28 April 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 160 (30 April 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 161-62 (30 April 1980). Ramírez Abreu helped found the PST in 1973 (Camp 2011:778) and served as Pedro René Etienne Llano’s alternate from 1979 to 1982 (Camp 2011:1134).

⁷⁷⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 226 (25 May 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 227 (25 May 1980); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 33; DGIPyS, “Campamento 2 de Octubre,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09 (May 1980), pp. 5-6.

⁷⁷⁸ Chaired by Graco Ramírez Abreu, Juan Manuel Rodríguez Solimbar, Ricardo Govea, Alejandro López, and Rafael Jiménez.

⁷⁷⁹ They rally was chaired by Graco Ramírez Abreu, Juan Manuel Rodríguez Solimbar, Ricardo Govea, Alejandro López, and Rafael Jiménez.

⁷⁸⁰ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), pp. 33-34.

on 28 May 1980 in which he discussed the politics of Oaxaca.⁷⁸¹ Meanwhile, on 6 May 1980, De la Cruz informed members of the Frente Nacional Campamento 2 de Octubre that he had arranged for Graco Ramírez Abreu to ask the State Department and the Defensa Nacional for permission for his “security guards” to carry arms during the gubernatorial campaign in Oaxaca, as they did in Campamento 2 de Octubre, and that if they did not authorize this, Ramírez Abreu would ask the Cámara de Diputados for permission.⁷⁸²

In early-July 1980 his collaborator Francisco Mancera Cárdenas began asking unpermitted taxis how many busses they could contribute to a caravan to Pancho’s final rally in Oaxaca on Saturday 26 July, securing 45.⁷⁸³ Pancho later revised the estimate to 25 busses carrying 40 people each,⁷⁸⁴ but Mancera’s higher estimate must have been right, because on 26 July 1980, 1,700 people from Campamento 2 de Octubre again caravanned to Oaxaca for the closing of De la Cruz’s election campaign.⁷⁸⁵ The rally totaled about 2,000 people⁷⁸⁶—only 300 more than he himself brought. (In the meantime, drivers also helped fundraise for the campaign.⁷⁸⁷)

Pancho lost the election, but the Frente Nacional continued to work on taxi issues outside of Mexico City, which were themselves political. They received a request from drivers in Tuxtla Guitérrez, Chiapas to join the Frente Nacional in July.⁷⁸⁸ Mancera met with the state’s top

⁷⁸¹ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 34.

⁷⁸² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folio 177 (6 May 1980); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 26.

⁷⁸³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 55 (5 July 1980).

⁷⁸⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 90 (21 July 1980).

⁷⁸⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 105 (26 July 1980); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 48.

⁷⁸⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 107-10 (27 July 1980); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 49.

⁷⁸⁷ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 92 (22 July 1980).

⁷⁸⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 91 (22 July 1980); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,”

transportation official, Óscar Alegría Montero, in August, demanding that his affiliates there be given permits. The functionary rejected the request, saying that the problem was political: the members of the taxi drivers' union affiliated with the CTM through the Sindicato Fernando Amilpa and the powerful Alianza del Autotransporte opposed the taxi drivers affiliated with the Frente Nacional, so permits could not be granted. Mancera accused Alegría, as a spy paraphrased,

“of being a concessionaire and being in the pocket of the Alianza del Autotransporte, indicating that this was the real reason why he refused to provide a positive solution for his constituents[,] to which Oscar Alegría replied that he did not care about that, that he knew in advance that he would be accused by the Governor but that he was his personal friend and that since he had balls he would stay in the position as long as he wanted.”

Stonewalled in this meeting and unsuccessful in his attempt to meet with the Secretary of State, Mancera said he would file for an injunction to prevent repression of the taxi drivers affiliated with the Frente Nacional, and that the Frente Nacional would stand by them through thick and thin. The taxi drivers responded that permit fees were exorbitant and that they were inclined to ply their trade with the support of the Frente Nacional Campamento 2 de Octubre with or without government permission. Mancera congratulated their decision and told them that he would send a field organizer⁷⁸⁹ from Mexico City to work with them.⁷⁹⁰

Two days hence 14 of their taxis were confiscated.⁷⁹¹ A petition drive started up.⁷⁹² In a matter of days the state government agreed to concede 15 taxi permits and returned the 14 taxis that had been confiscated, in exchange for which the Frente Nacional supposedly promised to call off all political protests, including one planned for Mexico City.⁷⁹³ Nevertheless, on 7 September 1980, 25 people from Campamento 2 de Octubre went to Tuxtla Gutiérrez to drive four trucks sporting loudspeakers throughout the city in order to collect signatures in favor of the

AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 47.

⁷⁸⁹ Raúl Juárez Silva.

⁷⁹⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 140-44 (13 August 1980).

⁷⁹¹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 149-50 (15 August 1980).

⁷⁹² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 157 (18 August 1980).

⁷⁹³ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 178-99 (ca. 25 August 1980); AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 180 (ca. 25 August 1980).

concession of more permits.⁷⁹⁴ By the following day, the contingent from Mexico City was 180-strong; they aimed to apply pressure by occupying the state's Dirección de Transito building.⁷⁹⁵

This was sufficient to secure a meeting of all the parties to the dispute: drivers affiliated with the CTM, the CNOP, the Sindicato Belisario Domínguez, and the Frente Nacional Campamento 2 de Octubre, along with the state governor and two PST leaders (V́ctor Hugo Herńandez Śnchez and Alejandro Ĺpez Bravo). The CTM and CNOP brought out about 600 people;⁷⁹⁶ the Frente Nacional 2 de Octubre brought no more than 120.⁷⁹⁷ Mancera opened the meeting, saying it was necessary to increase the number of taxi permits, since the taxi service was currently insufficient. He produced documents decrying the illicit sale of taxi licenses for between 600,000 and 800,000 pesos and documents concerning those that people rent for between 20,000 and 23,000 pesos per month, and “he finished by saying that reporting and confirming the situation to the public would be avoided since that could be interpreted as gossip, but that he could do so if those present wanted it”—an implicit threat of political blackmail to those who had benefitted from and been involved in restricting taxi permits. The CTM and CNOP speakers complained about outsiders coming in to solve Chiapas's problems, stated that they agreed with the concession of 14 licenses⁷⁹⁸ on 21 February, reaffirmed their support for the governor, and concluded by saying it was up to the consultative commission to decide whether to increase the number of permits. The spy in attendance reported that the meeting “took place in a climate of stress and annoyance on both sides,” concluding with the governor stating he would indeed form a consultative commission, to which all solicitations for permit concessions and reports of “misuse of commercial license plates” should be directed.⁷⁹⁹

⁷⁹⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 212 (7 September 1980); DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los ĺmites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 58.

⁷⁹⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 213 (8 September 1980).

⁷⁹⁶ Headed by Julio Ćsar Chanona Gutírrez, Gustavo Herrera Flores, Joś Maŕa Ramos Ruiz, Ćsar Penagos Cruz, and Daniel Humberto Herńandez.

⁷⁹⁷ Headed by Óscar Crist́bal Mancilla Ch́vez, Francisco Mancera Cardenas, and Francisco de la Cruz Velasco.

⁷⁹⁸ The source says 41 licenses, but since the earlier source mentions 14 sequestered taxis and 14 licenses granted, I think this is a typo and that the real number was 14.

⁷⁹⁹ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 221-23 (9 September 1980).

On the basis of his minibus and taxi syndicate, which broke the monopoly of PRI-affiliated competitors, Pancho thus gained a degree of weight in the play of political forces not only in Mexico City but also in the provinces. The author of the summary of spy reports concluded that, by 11 September 1980,

“It is noted that the activities carried out in recent days by leaders of the Frente Nacional Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ are intended to encompass socio-economic control at the national level, since the Frente Nacional Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ has more presence in places where poor people are located and whose human settlements are irregular [i.e., in squatter settlements].”⁸⁰⁰

Conclusion

Francisco “Pancho” de la Cruz Velasco was able to mobilize the urban poor for matters pertaining to the Campamento 2 de Octubre settlement and beyond. In the settlement, he used them to control turf and extract rent. Beyond, he expanded into adjacent turf, launched a powerful minibus and taxi syndicate, and entered electoral politics. Pancho had a talent for bringing two issues together simultaneously, an approach that gave him a bargaining chip and ensured that he progress on at least one of the fronts. When negotiating with the police for taxi permits, he held the relocation of Becerril and González in suspense such that he would either extract taxi permits as a concession, and thus improve his offense, or secure uncontested control over turf, and thus improve his defense. And during his gubernatorial campaign, Pancho harnessed the conflict generated between his and others’ minibus and taxi syndicates; his drivers needed protection, which he provided, and he needed drivers to transport his followers to campaign events, which they provided—again, a win-win for Pancho borne of combining issues as he expanded his influence.

In this way, Pancho used the power he amassed in the urban sphere—seeming from his ability to balance one generation of squatters against another—to affect peripheral politics. His abilities were a function of urban growth itself, and were forthcoming in Mexico City in the late-20th century because of the especially-extensive urban growth that occurred there due to the massive wave of urban concentration. Pancho’s power undermined the PRI’s electoral

⁸⁰⁰ DGIPyS, “Panorama actualizado del denominado Campamento ‘2 de Octubre’ localizado en los límites de las delegaciones Iztacalco e Ixtapalapa,” AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 229-99 (19 September 1980), p. 60.

preeminence. Because his mobilization of followers did not depend on the PRI, he did not depend on relations with political elites to secure his base of support and thus did not have to channel support behind the party. To the contrary, he undermined the government. And he directed his PRI-undermining efforts outward, traversing over the course of his life from the periphery to the capital city and, when he had the capacity to mobilize followers borne of urban concentration, boomeranging back again. In this way, the ironic political effects of urban concentration redounded on the periphery.

Chapter 10. A Power Bloc No More: On Losing Power and Leaving Government

The second moment of mass clientelism accompanied the twilight of an era. The events that took place during this time did not, therefore, represent so much the heroic triumph of oppositionists who wrested pluralist victory from the jaws of the authoritarian PRI as it did the division of elements hitherto arranged in a particular way and with that a change in both their relationship to one another and their internal state. The new phase was plagued not by birth-pangs of something new so much as by the fading pulse of something old. If the rise of mass clientelism was nothing to celebrate—it represented the triumph of a new political elite over the redistributive process of the Mexican Revolution, a passive revolution—then its decline left still less to congratulate.

The Failure Of Unity

The Luis Echeverría (1970-1976) represented the unification of *alemanista* and *cardenista camarillas* in a last-ditch effort to keep the teetering PRI together. This effort failed, and it is not clear it could have worked—for that would have required that political elites be in control of their bases of support. The Echeverría and José López Portillo (1976-1982) governments' casting about politically is intelligible if one comprehends how the massive wave of urban concentration from the late-1960s to mid-1980s diluted power. Scholars have offered a variety of accounts of these presidents' ambitious programs and erratic actions, but they are not fully convincing. The key to understanding them is that underlying social dynamics borne of urban concentration had changed the rules of the political game. Declining support had suggested

to political elites that they had to beef-up their base. Both the weight of experience and their subject-position inclined them to open the floodgates to urban concentration in an effort to reinforce mass clientelism. But it turned out the weight of experience was a poor basis for predicting the future; and nor did their subject-position enlighten them as to the dialectical workings of history to which their political careers were subjected.

Political elites' efforts to shore up support should be understood along two axes: first, between constituents and the leaders of the CNOP branch of the party, and, second, between constituents and the executive branch of government. The evolution of the *junta de vecinos* system lay along the first. But it never worked as intended. Why was the *junta de vecinos* a failure? Most answers assume it would have represented the institutionalization of mechanisms of popular sovereignty and provide explanations for why this outcome never materialized. Assuming this was an actual possibility, some argue that the *junta de vecinos* got off to a rocky start. One reason was mayoral opposition.⁸⁰¹ Others observe that, even once the mayor was fully behind the initiative, old-guard bureaucrats unleashed a backlash.⁸⁰²

In the wake of the failure of the *junta de vecinos* system, the government was at an impasse. Echeverría and agencies responsible to the executive branch then tried to cultivate patron-client relations beyond the framework of the CNOP and thus outside the PRI (Davis

⁸⁰¹ Mexico City's mayor, Alfonso Martínez Domínguez, a Díaz Ordaz holdover, opposed the *junta de vecinos* system, not to mention that he ordered the paramilitary group Los Halcones to repress student mobilization. So Echeverría removed him (Davis 1994:201-02), installing Octavio Senties in his place. But not even when Senties was firmly at the helm of the Federal District government did the system function as intended. Senties said his orientation was to work "tirelessly for the benefit of the most needy classes by channeling the largest quantity of the Distrito Federal's resources to public works in the *colonias proletarias* and in the 'belts of misery'" surrounding Mexico City (quoted in Davis 1994:208). But the distribution of resources between different constituencies, and between different kinds of constituencies, was a fraught question. Regardless, "Hopes were high . . . that these changes would bring political benefits to the PRI as a whole" (Davis 1994:209). So "Senties worked hard to link the interests of the middle classes with those of the urban poor and thus overcome the schisms within the CNOP" (Davis 1994:208-09), in part by trying to make the *junta* system "the primary vehicle through which urban popular and middle classes could present their demands to Senties and, through him, to Echeverría" (Davis 1994:209).

⁸⁰² Davis argues that "as early as mid-1971, tensions between Echeverría, old-guard bureaucrats in the CNOP, and progrowth forces" combined into a crisis that was unprecedented in postrevolutionary Mexico (Davis 1994:200). Bureaucrats had a lot to lose if the government was going to be held accountable to popular will, as presidential rhetoric had it. Gilbert and Ward argue that bureaucratic obstructionism precluded the success of the *junta de vecinos* system, and that Echeverría designed the system to fail by refusing the *juntas* anything beyond consultative powers (Gilbert and Ward 1985:190). Davis argues that Echeverría wanted the system to succeed but there was too little consensus among political elites to ensure that the system acquire decision-making power, and forcing this outcome would have exacerbated existing conflicts within the governing coalition, potentially splitting the party wide open (Davis 1994:212-13).

1994:213; Ward 1981; 1990:171). Those who assume government institutions are a reflection of popular sovereignty have difficulty explaining this. Davis argues that urban reforms challenged the rationale for the three class-based structures of political participation that comprised the party, by threatening to make one of these institutions, the CNOP, almost obsolete (Davis 1994:216).

Whereas before the Echeverría era, “most [community] leaders had sought patrons within the party; now they aimed to ally themselves with the heads of government agencies” (Gilbert and Ward 1985:191).⁸⁰³ Davis (1994:214) asserts that Echeverría established a variety of government agencies for this purpose: the Procuraduría de Colonias Populares (PCP), Fondo Nacional de la Vivienda, Fondo Nacional de Habitación Popular (FONAHPO), Fideicomiso de Desarrollo Urbano del Distrito Federal (FIDEURBE), and Instituto del Fondo Nacional de la Vivienda para los Trabajadores (INFONAVIT). She argues that while there were numerous differences between them, “their objectives were almost identical: to offer institutional mechanisms primarily for urban populations to wield demands about critical local services, especially housing” (Davis 1994:214).

Missing from Davis’s account is an explanation as to why Echeverría *wanted* such a relationship with the urban poor. I wager that the reason was not that he was committed in principal to some version of popular sovereignty but rather that support was flagging. And López Portillo cast about over the course of his government, unable to hit upon a policy orientation that paid political dividends, for the same reason Echeverría did. The difference was that by the end of López Portillo’s term, government spending had reached such high levels that there was a major inflationary crisis. López Portillo—whose father had been involved in nationalizations under Cárdenas in the 1930s, when the nationalization of the oil industry had helped unify the

⁸⁰³ This set off a conflict between the old guard and a crop of young bureaucrats Echeverría sent into the CNOP to wrest control of this part of the PRI, and led Echeverría to replace the CNOP’s president, C. Julio Bobadilla Peña, with the youthful Oscar Flores Tapia (Davis 1994:217). As a result, urban planning, hitherto anemic and embattled in Mexico City, ascended in importance through the presidency of Echeverría, reaching its zenith just after he left office with the passage of the Human Settlements Law in 1976—“probably the most important single piece of legislation in the field of urban planning in Mexico” (Ward 1990:118)—before plateauing in the late 1970s and ebbing again in the 1980s (Ward 1990:114-15, 124). For Mexico City, the first, independent Planning Directorate was created, under the DDF’s Secretariat of Public Works, and charged with the task of writing a Master Plan, a responsibility which had previously fallen to the Oficina del Plano Regulador of the Department of Public Works (Ward 1990:124). In the State of Mexico, planning functions fell to AURIS (Urban Action and Social Integration) between 1969 and 1982 (Ward 1990:124). These government agencies deepened the drive to modernize Mexico City that Corona del Rosal had resumed.

country—opted to nationalize the banks. Banks had been under considerable government control, but investors nevertheless used this as pretext to protest government action, accelerating the removal of their investments from the country and thereby deepening the crisis.

Meanwhile, unity among elites—as measured by the number and centrality of cliques among governing elites—suffered from the 1970s onward (Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 2005:135; Gaspar and Valdés 1987:519-24). Different sets of political elites started pulling in opposite directions. President Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988) opened the door to technocratic economists—some of whom were Mexicans trained abroad (mostly at Yale University)⁸⁰⁴ who worked in the government's economics agencies, others of whom were foreigners mostly hailing from international lending agencies. Their prominence provoked discontent within the PRI. Along with his ally Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, Lázaro Cárdenas's son, Cuauhtémoc, responded by organizing the *Corriente Democrática*, which decried the neoliberal reforms, advocated a return to the policies characteristic of the glory days of *cardenismo*, and agitated in favor of a system of primary elections rather than party control of the selection of the next presidential precandidate.⁸⁰⁵ De la Madrid nevertheless tapped Carlos Salinas de Gortari as the party's next presidential precandidate.

Salinas was a neo-*alemanista* and Cárdenas Jr. a neo-*cardenista* (Gil et al. 1993:105). Competition between those *camarillas* was completely normal. However, after the PRI announced that Salinas would be its candidate, all but guaranteeing the *alemanista* the presidency, much of the other *camarilla*, led by the *Corriente Democrática*, announced that it would put Cárdenas Jr. forward as its own presidential candidate. A variety of left and center-left parties—the Partido Auténtico de la Revolución Mexicana (PARM), the Partido del Frente Cardenista de Reconstrucción Nacional (PFCRN), the Partido Social Demócrata (PSD), and the Partido Popular Socialista (PPS)—endorsed his candidacy. The party's right wing found this indiscipline unacceptable and expelled the *Corriente Democrática*, which proceeded to run in the election as the Frente Democrático Nacional (FDN). Then, in 1988, Cárdenas and comrades

⁸⁰⁴ Ironically, some of the students to whom Echeverría had given fellowships, in part to remove them from the political scene, had not only returned to Mexico but also entered government agencies where they became an ambitious technocratic elite (Camp 2002:155).

⁸⁰⁵ Hitherto, the incumbent president had tapped his preferred candidate, and the party then adopted that person as its candidate.

formed a pact with a number of left organizations⁸⁰⁶ and a variety of popular-sector organizations unaffiliated with the PRI⁸⁰⁷ on the basis of which they formed the Party of the Democratic Revolution (Partido de la Revolución Democrática, PRD), which became one of the main opposition parties.

Cárdenas Jr.'s support was concentrated in Mexico City (Marván Laborde 2012:521-22). He performed especially well in “low-income irregular settlement areas,” where the PRI had previously “managed to cultivate strong electoral support through clientelism” (Ward 1990:82), as discussed in Chapter 2. Cárdenas probably caused the PRI to lose the presidential contest, although through electoral fraud the PRI stayed in power for the interim.

Cárdenas Jr. broke ranks in part because the dynamics of mass clientelism made this both possible and logical. It was *possible* because the PRI had already been losing its base of support due to benevolent mass clientelism's metamorphosis into bossist mass clientelism. The urban poor had heretofore drawn both fractions of the political elite into overtime alignment with one another. But with the advent of bossist mass clientelism, the urban poor served less and less as a bulwark for the PRI. This left *camarillas* relatively free to pursue antagonistic political agendas. Specifically, it left the *cardenistas*—who had ideological disagreements with the top party leaders' neoliberal policy agenda—free to split away. And it was *logical* for them to do so in light of the possibility that they could actually recover support the PRI had lost by returning to a purer form of *cardenismo*. This, however, required that they set off on their own, separating from the PRI.

The dynamics of support were largely beyond political elites' control, and deep divisions in the PRI's base were already having their effects by 1988. It is therefore inaccurate to suggest that the election campaign and outcome “provoked deep divisions” in Mexico's “political leadership, and within society” (Camp 2002:6). Causation ran in the other direction: from society to political leaders, from a lack of support to a lack of unity among political elites.

⁸⁰⁶ The Partido Mexicano Socialista, the Coalición de Izquierda, and the Movimiento de Acción Popular.

⁸⁰⁷ The Coalición Obrera, Campesina, Estudiantil del Istmo (COCEI), the Central Independiente de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos (CIOAC), the Asamblea de Barrios de la Ciudad de México, the Unión de colonias Populares, the Unión Popular Revolucionaria Emiliano Zapata, and the Central Campesina Cardenista.

The Lack Of Support

In Mexico City's squatter settlements, generational factionalism borne of urban concentration deprived incumbents of support, jeopardizing continuity of PRI rule. First, the advent of factionalism itself boded poorly for the government, which was unified on the basis of solicitations of subordination not assertiveness and division; the PRI inevitably represented a single vision and was thus incapable of appealing effectively to both sides of a factional conflict, and sometimes failed to appeal to either side. Second, the new generation's willingness to mobilize behind benefactors gave such leaders a following independent of the relations they did or did not have with political elites, including all those in the PRI orbit. While bosses did have to protect the new generation, they no longer had to channel support behind the PRI. Before, intermediaries' position stemmed from their role as go-betweens; but now, neighborhood association leaders' role as benefactors did not require satisfying political patrons, making them politically autonomous. Due to their autonomy, on the one hand, and the large absolute number of new and aspiring squatter residents, on the other, Mexico City's neighborhood leaders gained considerable ability to undermine the government.

They exercised their autonomy in a variety of ways that proved detrimental to the PRI. Nezahualcóyotl's Odón Madariaga Cruz capitalized on between-generation conflict, aligning with new and aspiring residents. On the one hand, he had to protect them from the hostility of older residents who recoiled and reacted—sometimes violently—in the face of continued urban growth. On the other, they had to support him, giving him followers from which he benefitted mostly regardless of the relationships he did or did not have with political patrons. On this basis, Madariaga Cruz moved in and out of alignment with the PRI. He and his close collaborator (Artemio Mora Lozada) grew so influential at the local level that the PRI put them forth as candidates for city council (they won). During his 1973-1975 term, Madariaga Cruz pressured government officials to legalize current squatter residents' lands (while also introducing new residents into the area). Whereas under benevolent mass clientelism such a concession would have led the intermediary to genuflect to political elites, when President Luis Echeverría was slated to visit the settlement to announce the government's regularization initiative, Madariaga

Cruz and his closest allies came out in opposition to the plan.⁸⁰⁸ Madariaga Cruz's inside-outside game vis-a-vis the PRI led him to adopt a wide variety of political positions in succession.⁸⁰⁹ At one point he called upon *federal* authorities for protection at a rally he organized to demand that *municipal* authorities step down from their positions.⁸¹⁰ Urban concentration made Madariaga autonomous, and autonomy made him disloyal. His crowning achievement by way of disloyalty to the PRI was that he organized the presidential campaign of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas in Nezahualcóyotl (Selee 2011:143). Madariaga was perhaps the foremost reason the western hemisphere's largest slum broke ranks and opposed the PRI.⁸¹¹

Socialist Workers' Party (PST) militant América Abaroa also aligned with the new and aspiring denizens who flooded into Mexico City with urban concentration. On the basis of this alignment and by leading the Naucalpan Popular Settlements Union (NAUCOPAC), which orchestrated numerous land invasions in northern Mexico City, she helped put the power bloc in a double-bind. If the government evicted land invaders, it would reveal itself as hostile to the urban poor and lose prestige; and if it opted not to evict land invaders, it would only show that an opposition organization was the source of one of the things the urban poor needed (housing), and thereby lose prestige to the opposition. Neither choice was a good one precisely because urban concentration made many new and aspiring residents available to mobilize behind Abaroa. The PST was renamed the Cardenista Front for National Reconstruction Party (Partido del Frente Cardenista de Reconstrucción Nacional, PFCRN) in 1987. During the 1988 elections, it participated with the National Democratic Front, supporting the presidential candidacy of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, and thereafter joined the PRD.

Francisco "Pancho" de la Cruz Velasco also aligned with the new and aspiring denizens in Campamento 2 de Octubre. This made him autonomous. In the settlement itself, he short-circuited a major PRI attempt to use the incentive of land legalization to secure support. Since he

⁸⁰⁸ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1175A/Exp. 4/Folio 108.

⁸⁰⁹ *El Heraldo de México* (11 May 1974); *El Sol de México* (31 August 1974).

⁸¹⁰ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1703A/Exp. 3/Folios 48-51.

⁸¹¹ It was because the breakdown of PRI control was accompanied by the rise of bossism, and because urban bosses were affiliated with the PRD, that elites from the latter party retained control of channels of participation in subsequent years—not, as Montambeault (2011:113) argues, because a hypothetical possibility of participatory democracy was never implanted.

enjoyed local-level authority, he (rather than the PRI) was able to control who would and who would not be included among the beneficiaries.⁸¹² This made it more important for residents to be in his good graces and follow his political directives than the PRI's. De la Cruz Velasco became widely known as an independent.⁸¹³ His factional opponents nevertheless accused him of affiliating with the PRI,⁸¹⁴ forcing him to publicly distance himself from PRI policies. This manifested in two ways. First, he helped other oppositionists. For example, when opposition-aligned teachers-in-training travelled from the provinces to Mexico City to coordinate their struggle, he lodged them in Campamento 2 de Octubre in spite of having no direct relationship with them.⁸¹⁵ Second, he joined the political opposition, putting himself forward as the gubernatorial candidate for the PST in the state of Oaxaca (his place of origin). He bussed hundreds of people from the settlement to that state multiple times to help him campaign.⁸¹⁶ He lost the election, but he succeeded at drawing support away from the PRI.

In sum, urban concentration diluted power in late-20th century Mexico City. Borne of the generational factionalism that stemmed from urban concentration, more and more residents now mobilized behind pro-growth neighborhood association leaders, not principally to interface with the government but instead for protection. This sometimes made these leaders despotic vis-a-vis existing residents. But it always allowed them to mobilize followers autonomously and to decline to pledge the urban poor's support to the PRI in exchange for denizen status. Now, unlike during the first moment of mass clientelism, many of them peeled support away from the PRI. Some ordinary residents certainly continued to support the party. But abandoning it increasingly became the path of least resistance.

⁸¹² AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1656A/Exp. 4/Folios 317-33; AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 206-07; AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folios 243-44.

⁸¹³ *Sol de México* (13 February 1981).

⁸¹⁴ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1524D/Exp. 13/Folio 194; AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folio 184.

⁸¹⁵ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 6/Folio 99.

⁸¹⁶ AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 4/Folios 204-09, 226-27; AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 263.

Losing Power (1988)

The dynamics of mass clientelism made Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas's departure possible and logical. The split, in turn, represented the end of the historically-aligned power bloc. That the PRI resorted to wholesale electoral fraud, probably far in excess of the fraud to which it had hitherto frequently made recourse, represented a desperate attempt to cling to power in spite of continuing loss of support. Salinas's administration, comprised of the broadest coalition imaginable, also represented a recognition on the part of ruling elites unprecedented measures had to be taken to shore up the party's support—even though this ultimately turned out to be futile.

The Structure of the Political Crisis

Cárdenas Jr.'s departure from the PRI marked a rupture in the field relations that had structured elite politics for the past five decades (Gil et al. 1993:105-06). Not only did he and his comrades' departure change the ratio between distinct ideological commitments within the party. But also, by removing the *cardenista* counterpoint, which had helped keep the *alemanistas* locked into an orientation to developmentalism, those who remained in the PRI were thereafter vastly freer to opt for decisively new political agendas. An indirect effect of the *cardenistas'* split was therefore that it enabled the *alemanistas* to adopt policy that radically liberalized the economy. A group of technocrats had commenced neoliberal reforms in earnest during the presidency of de la Madrid (1982-1988).⁸¹⁷ Now, this younger generation of *alemanistas*, and those associated with that *camarilla*, had carte blanche. This cohort of technocratic economists committed to neoliberalism “perhaps more than any other power elite group in Mexico

⁸¹⁷ While technocrats were important, some make too much of them, saying “*how the tecnócratas thought was more decisive than what they thought*” (Centeno 1994:212). But thoughts, no matter how they are formulated, are relatively unimportant unless and until they find expression in actual social relations. Others exaggerate technocrats' sinister intentions and ways, saying they had a “special air of arrogance” according to which they thought “they actually had the right to rule, and that they alone could determine the course of social change” (Camp 2002:215). But it is common for rulers of all kinds to think they have a right to rule; technocrats should not be ridiculed for this reason, and we should not proceed as if this were their standout quality. What was different in the case of the technocrats was that they had a novel habitus compared to others in the field of power. And yet they only found conditions receptive to their intervention and were only able to wrest hold of the levers of power because of the crisis in the political field.

influenced the major trends in public policy” (Camp 2002:176). They slashed and burned the social supports that had been deemed essential to many *cardenistas*, and even by the *alemanistas* of yore. De la Madrid was “the first Mexican president to be heckled and jeered by opposition congressmen during his annual state-of-the-union address—a practice that . . . continued in the Salinas presidency” (Cornelius and Craig 1991:34).

In the meantime, however, it was clear to everyone that President Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994) needed to do his utmost to shore up support. Salinas never developed a powerful *camarilla* of his own; he rode de la Madrid’s coattails to prominence and power (Camp 1990:93-94). Naturally, then, he tried to populate his cabinet with “individuals with sizable personal political camarillas larger than his own,” among whom were Manuel Bartlett, Carlos Hank González (“who has one of the largest camarillas in Mexico”), and Jorge de la Vega Domínguez (Camp 1990:102; on the breadth of Salinas’s cabinet, see also Gil Mendieta and Schmidt 1999: chapter 4).

Politically, his government comprised a mixture of two influences. First, Salinas’s cabinet represented continuity with de la Madrid’s as regards appointees’ economic orientation to neoliberalism. Camp notes that “most of his strongest camarilla members are trained economists with experience in cabinet-level agencies responsible for economic policy making”⁸¹⁸ and holdovers from de la Madrid’s government.⁸¹⁹

Second, however, in contrast to de la Madrid and indeed breaking with his neo-*alemanista* background, Salinas’s cabinet incorporated a variety of political persuasions. Camp says “the major political posts in his administration are, for the most part, not held by members of his camarilla, but are products of other camarillas extending back to Echeverría’s administration” (Camp 1990:103).⁸²⁰ These political appointments represented the attenuation of

⁸¹⁸ They included Jaime Serra Puche (Secretary of Commerce), Ernesto Zedillo de León (Secretary of Planning and Budgeting), Pedro Aspe (Secretary of Treasury), and María Elena Vázquez Nava (controller general) (Camp 1990:102).

⁸¹⁹ Namely, Miguel Mancera (director of the Bank of Mexico during both administrations) and Gustavo Petricioli Iturbide (de la Madrid’s Secretary of the Treasury and Salinas’s ambassador to the United States) (Camp 1990:102).

⁸²⁰ These included Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios, a former mentee of Luis Echeverría (Secretary of Governance); Manuel Bartlett, initially affiliated with Jorge Rojo Gómez, a major agrarian leader, and then with Mario Moya Palencia, Secretary of Governance under Echeverría (Secretary of Public Education); Arsenio Farrell, a close affiliate of Luis Echeverría’s brother (Secretary of Labor); Jorge de la Vega Domínguez, who as a student followed Gilberto Loyo, who also mentored Salinas’s father, and was later affiliated with Alfonso Martínez Domínguez, who served Echeverría as regent of Mexico City and helped orchestrate the post-1968 repression of students (Secretary of

the de la Madrid-era rise of technocrats (Camp 1990:103). Taken together, then, Salinas's was a "hybrid cabinet" (Camp 1990:104). Like Echeverría, he tried to unify the various fractions of the PRI.

The Direction of the Political Crisis

Perhaps the standout feature of Salinas's government is that it was completely backwards-looking. Not only were the previous three presidents' appointees "strongly represented" in Salinas's cabinet (Camp 1990:102), but his cabinet had "more electoral political experience than any presidential administration since 1970" (Camp 1990:104). Perhaps it was "the diversity of their camarilla affiliations" that was "the most notable feature of Salinas's collaborators" (Camp 1990:101). This diversity was borne of the fact that Salinas sought to revive all of the PRI's traditions simultaneously. As Camp (1990:96) characterizes it, Salinas represented a *camarilla* which "leads chronologically backward . . . to both Alemán and Cárdenas."

But rather than satisfy everyone, this satisfied no one; everyone knew significant institutional changes had to be undertaken. Ominously, by the 1989-1991 period, military officers at the Escuela Superior de Guerra (ESG), the main military academy, openly expressed their "belief that they could do a better job than their civilian counterparts in managing the country's political affairs" (Camp 2002:143). And hauntingly, longtime labor leader and general secretary of the Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CMT), who had pledged to prevent the opposition from gaining control of the government "as long as I head the CTM," died in 1997 (Snodgrass 2010:173). Meanwhile, the PRI disbanded the CNOP in 1989 (Davis 1994:305), replacing it with Ciudades en Movimiento, known as UNE, in February 1990, and then replaced UNE with the Frente Nacional de Organizaciones y Ciudadanos (FNOC) in 1993 (Davis 1994:293). That is, "the sector chosen for elimination was the one originally built to appease the urban demands of Mexico City's popular and middle classes" (Davis 1994:309).

Agriculture); Victor Cervera Pacheco, a political problem-solver who served as interim governor of Yucatán immediately before his appointment (Secretary of Agrarian Reform); and Luis Donaldo Colossio, a novice who belonged to Salinas's *camarilla* (president of the National Executive Committee of PRI) (Camp 1990:103).

Importantly, the technocrats who gained power under de la Madrid and continued in power through the following two presidencies did *not* seek to liberalize the polity; instead, they sought to entrench *themselves* in power (Camp 2002:188, 204, 251-52). But by running the party until its ultimate collapse—which was a de facto political liberalization, since the opposition thereupon gained power—it was associated chronologically with pluralization. Pluralism was a creature of political decay, not of heroic triumph. And it had its illiberal supporters. Whereas on the eve of the 1988 election there was a perception that young officers sympathized with Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (Camp 2002:143), by the 1997-1998 period, ESG instructors told officers they should vote for the PAN. Meanwhile, in 1994, “the military made it clear to the public that it would recognize the victory of any of the three leading candidates for the presidency as long as they won the electorate’s support in a clean election” (Camp 2002:169). In other words, the military elite supported a transition to right-wing rule, the de facto pluralization, in part to avoid left-wing rule.

Leaving Government (1997, 2000)

Whereas the PRI lost support by 1988, it took somewhat longer for it to leave government. The process was drawn-out and had both geographic and social components. Let us examine each in turn.

The Geographic Dispersion of Political Elite Origins

The rise of the historically-aligned power bloc resulted in part from urban concentration, which saw peasants from all over Mexico migrate to Mexico City. Political elites who comprised the PRI followed the same periphery-center migratory pattern. This process started immediately after the Mexican Revolution. As Davis summarizes,

“Had Mexico’s political leaders been unable to consolidate popular support in the capital city in the late 1930s, for example, regional opposition might have triumphed. Thus developments within Mexico City itself were central to the ruling party’s successes in centralizing power and institutional decision making, as well as in triumphing over regional forces” (Davis 1994:310).

This was because

“when the core, meaning Mexico City, does not hold politically, and state [i.e., government] or class conflicts there challenge the power of the revolutionary leadership, the ruling party’s claims to national power are in serious jeopardy. The same could not be said for any other single region in the country” (Davis 1994:310).

After the 1940 challenge by general Juan Andreu Almazán, “the PRI then altered urban policies and national political structures” by orienting to Mexico City, especially through the CNOP, such that both “local and national support for the PRI was assured and one-party rule was effectively consolidated” (Davis 1994:311).

But with the second moment of mass clientelism jeopardizing the historically-aligned power bloc in the center, the PRI’s “hold in the outlying regions” also came into question,” forcing the PRI to focus “on rural and regional policy changes—like the elimination of the *ejido* system of communal property” (Davis 1994:309). The beginning of this cycle started in the aftermath of the revolution, when the *cardenistas* became prominent. Among political elites of the revolutionary generation of 1917-1940, only 15.7 percent hailed from metropolises with at least 50,000 inhabitants (Smith 1979: table 3.1). Subsequently, political elites came more and more frequently from cities, and Mexico City loomed larger and larger. After 1940, as Mexico City alone “became the home to slightly fewer than one out of five ordinary Mexicans, [it] served as the primary residence to four out of five leaders” (Camp 2002:236). In particular, as the *alemanistas* grew increasingly prominent, a sea change took place, with urban origins growing more prevalent (Camp 1990:93). For the post-revolutionary generation of 1946-1971, 23.4 percent of political elites hailed from metropolises (Smith 1979: table 3.1). This trend deepened during the 1970-2000 period, when 91 percent of political elites lived in Mexico City (Camp 2002: table 9). During that time, “to make contact with an elite mentor” and advance their careers, aspiring political elites had to move to Mexico City (Camp 2002:32).

With the election of President Vicente Fox (2000-2006) of the right-wing National Action Party, the geographic origins of political elites came full-circle. “Provincial outsiders”—people who had never lived in the Federal District (Camp 2002:258)—become important for the first time since the revolutionary generation. This took place amidst the “revival of political influence among Mexican states” and opposition control of municipal governments, which increased from 3 to 50 percent during the 1988-1998 period (Camp 2002:259). Whereas the PRI had a tradition of selecting precandidates who served long careers in Mexico City, by 1999, the presidential candidates put forth by each of the three major parties were state governors (Camp 2002:69).

Since clerical and military elites were concentrated outside Mexico City, hybrid politicians came into increasing contact with possible allies in part as a function of *not* being in Mexico City (Camp 2002:93).

From Political Field to Power Elite

The foremost change as regarded the social backgrounds of political elites was the influx of capitalists. The Mexican Revolution drove capital out of the government. This was the precondition for the semi-autonomy of the political field, which was perpetuated on the basis of the polarization of the political field between *cardenistas* and *alemanistas*. Miguel Alemán's government was the last in which capitalists were represented in the cabinet (Camp 2002:273). From then through the 1990s, capitalists and politicians remained separate. There was virtually no formal interpenetration of political elite (politicians) and economic elite (capitalists) networks (Camp 2002:62, 90); thus, for the entire 1970-2000 period, Camp finds that "only three out of a hundred leading capitalists have held governmental posts, and two of these worked in professional [government] careers before assuming positions as CEOs" (Camp 2002:90). In other words, the government only accepted one—Carlos Hank González—who held both elite politician and important capitalist positions simultaneously (Camp 2002:13 n.27).⁸²¹ (Mexican corporate elites overlapped with few elites of other kinds on the basis of interlocking directorates of corporate boards, leaving them relatively isolated [Camp 2002:89].)

Capitalists did, of course, exercise veto power over the political field. And there were, of course, connections between government officials and capitalists during this period. One type of connection was between mid-level bureaucrats and the private sector; about 60 percent of such bureaucrats had potential connections in 1983 (Centeno 1994:130). And elite politicians, including Miguel Alemán himself, also took plentiful advantage of political connections for personal enrichment, albeit without meeting so much success that they became leading capitalists (Camp 2002:102-03 n. 19). Informal relationships were, of course, plentiful between political and economic elites as well.⁸²² But the polarization of the political field between *cardenistas* and

⁸²¹ Camp's sample includes 100 politicians and 100 capitalists.

⁸²² Camp (2002:63 *et passim*) argues that different categories of Mexican elites (political elites, important capitalists, leading intellectuals, military elites, and prominent clergy) were related to one another less on the basis of formal

alemanistas kept leading capitalists from control of the government, making the political field semi-autonomous from this class.

This was no longer the case by 2000, with the Fox government. By then the political field was no longer structured by the polarity between *cardenistas* and *alemanistas*, and what was left of the PRI's support had steadily declined, despite PRI leaders' best efforts. Thus not only was the PAN's presidential candidate a Coca-Cola executive (Camp 2002:269), but he was free to form a cabinet resembling an executive committee of the bourgeoisie. Fox thus selected leading capitalists and top executives,⁸²³ like himself, in addition to a PAN stalwart, a PRI technocrat, and a Harvard University professor.⁸²⁴

ties than on the basis of informal networking, especially given that they attended university together, often interacted during their subsequent careers, and/or already had kinship ties through their families. As regards politicians, 51 percent of his sample had such cross-category friendships on the basis of their education, 22 percent on the basis of their career, and 27 percent on the basis of their family (Camp 2002: table 8).

⁸²³ Pedro Cerisola y Weber, Mario M. Laborín Gómez, and Ernesto Martens Rebolledo (Camp 2002:273 n. 38, 278 n. 46).

⁸²⁴ Ernesto Ruffo Appel, Francisco Gil Díaz, and Jorge G. Castañeda, respectively (Camp 2002:278 n. 46).

Conclusion

Latin American nation-building succeeded only in the 20th century, later than the Western countries upon which the most prominent theories are based and earlier than “non-Western” countries about which the social sciences still have much to learn. The reason for the delay stems from the colonial legacy of Spanish America and from the political dynamics flowing from its independence from Spain. Colonization of Spanish America was an uneven process, generating political relations that varied in two key ways. First, racial hierarchies varied in terms of their bipolarity (they were relatively flexible in Mexico due to native collaboration in both conquest and colonial governance, but relatively bipolar in Peru where natives were less relevant to the conquest and lived far from the seat of government in Lima). Second, elites’ economic orientations varied from export to subsistence agriculture (export-oriented agrarian elites were clustered around and near the coastal regions, whereas subsistence agrarians’ *haciendas* were often inland or distant from ports). Both factors interacted, especially with the indigenous demographic implosion brought on by European diseases and overwork and the ensuing replacement of indigenous unfree labor with enslaved Africans, mostly in the export sector. As a result, the Latin American political elite was fractured in a variety of ways into myriad competing interests.

For numerous decades subsequent to independence from Spain, each fraction of the political elite pursued its respective self-serving agenda. Latin America was racked by episodic intra-elite war between regional strongmen (*caudillos*) who often ruled with an iron fist.⁸²⁵ Initially, and in an ongoing way in countries like Venezuela, the main dispute was between Liberals (pro-market modernizers) and Conservatives (Catholic traditionalists); this dispute was

⁸²⁵ *Caudillos* were the region’s equivalent of Moore’s (1966) agrarians. But being located in 19th-century Latin America, they were often also primary-commodity exporters.

related to but not identical with that between primary-commodity exporters and subsistence agrarians, which prevailed in countries like Peru. Post-independence social revolutions like that in Mexico also deeply informed relations between political elite fractions, thereby structuring the political field. And in all cases, to a greater or lesser extent, elite conflict continued over the course of the 20th century with the rise of an incipient industrial bourgeoisie who favored a strong currency that would allow them to import productive machinery relatively cheaply. This harmed the interests of the agrarian elite, who took their losses out on peasants and agrarian workers by pushing them off their land and squeezing them harder. In some countries, industrialization created an industrial working class that, while it did not absorb nearly all of the available labor power, led to powerful labor movements capable of political strikes.

These social forces were combined—and were able to be combined—in a variety of ways. One pathway taken, though only in Cuba, was for the leaders of a nationwide worker-peasant alliance to use mass support to take power and push for a “permanent revolution” by removing all of the political elites from the political sphere and establishing a new kind of order, i.e., “state socialism.” Another pathway was for old military allies of the new industrial elite to grab power, abandon hopes of popular support, brutally repress the workers’ movement, and establish a “bureaucratic authoritarian” regime, which happened in Brazil and Chile. A third pathway saw a divided elite converge as a power bloc through what I call “mass clientelism,” which provided elites with mass support and which resulted from rural-to-urban migration and the formation of massive squatter settlements in many of the region’s major cities, especially its capital cities—as happened in Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela. Distinct fractions of the elite could agree to an embrace of mass clientelism because squatter settlements involved relatively few major financial commitments and the approach divided the urban popular classes internally. Due to the differences between the respective countries of Latin America in terms of their colonial and republican political histories, the political elite was divided in somewhat different ways depending on country.

Summary Of The Empirical Contributions Of This Dissertation

Over the course of Part I, I identified the two leading fractions comprising the political field in each of the three countries I examined and then recounted how mass clientelism

transfigured their antagonism into agonism and led these opposed fractions to orient to one another in the political field, thus taking the form of an historically-aligned power bloc. In Venezuela, a relative backwater of the colonial system, the Liberal-Conservative dispute continued well into the 20th century, leading the political field to polarize between these fractions. In Peru, once the second-most important of Spain's colonies, episodic conflict gave rise to a political field polarized between remnants of the old *caudillos* and the new export oligarchy. And in Mexico, which had been Spain's crown jewel, but which also experienced a social revolution during the republican era that vanquished Conservatives and relegated *caudillos* to the barracks, the political field was polarized between reformers (*cardenistas*) and developmentalists (*alemanistas*).

For each of these three cases, I showed that a wave of rural-to-urban migration and associated urban concentration in the respective capital cities prompted these discrepant kinds of political elites to converge as an historically-aligned power bloc by orienting to the urban poor as a mass base. This effect was forthcoming because neighborhood leaders solicited subordination, promising political loyalty if the urban poor was granted denizen status and furnished with urban services. The promise of a base of political support appealed to mutually-antagonistic political elites, leading them to compete for the same followers and thus orient to one another agonistically, thereby comprising a political field. Whereas most fields are characterized by agreement about fundamentals that allow for disagreement about particulars, the political field in question brought political elites who disagreed about fundamentals together because they de facto agreed about particulars—namely, they oriented to the urban poor as a mass base. This mass base allowed political elites to build from one another's political initiatives, rather than antagonize one another, making them comprise what I call an historically-aligned power bloc. This was expressed in the form of different government institutions in each case: single-party rule in Mexico, a zero-party system in Peru, and two-party "democracy" in Venezuela. But beneath the superficial differences between these cases as regards institutions, all were creatures of mass clientelism, reliant on vertical bonds of loyalty which drew elites together and thus supported continuity of government institutions.

In Part II, I showed how additional urban concentration led to a withdrawal of requests for subordination, which undermined continuity in the historically-aligned power bloc and helped torpedo the PRI after several decades in power. After a certain point, urban concentration

generated conflicts between earlier and later generations of squatters. Two implications followed. First, the very existence of between-generation conflicts compromised the within-sector unity from which the PRI benefited hitherto. Second, the conflicts drove newer residents, who were more vulnerable, into the arms of neighborhood leaders for protection and gave neighborhood leaders followers they could mobilize autonomously. This allowed neighborhood leaders—who had in the previous era channeled support behind the PRI—to peel support away from the party. They were now disloyal to the PRI. Some supported the left-wing political opposition. And they even returned to the national periphery to enter electoral politics as oppositionists themselves. In all of these ways, neighborhood leaders’ autonomy undermined the prospects of the continuity of the historically-aligned power bloc, compromising the viability, and even furthering the decline and fall, of the PRI.

Part II thus shows that the relationship between urban concentration and benevolent mass clientelism is dialectical. Nor however is mass clientelism arising from moderate levels of urban concentration sustainable in the long term. A large part of the reason the urban poor manifest the political behaviors they do is to secure urban upgrades (Álvarez-Rivadulla 2017:156-60; Gay 1994:55-56; Shefner 2008:69). After establishing new squatter settlements, clients will forego political independence to mobilize behind association leaders who bargain with political officials over “collective consumption” needs (Castells 2002: chapter 4; Connolly, Núñez, and Ortíz 1977). But as the urban environment consolidates, it becomes correspondingly unnecessary for them to do so (cf. Cornelius 1975:161, 163; Eckstein 1977:84 n.; Perlman 1976:166, 185). Having no more reason to rally behind intermediaries, *clients* will withdraw dependent support from intermediaries and express themselves politically in independent ways. Thus if initially the urban poor’s political allegiances are a foregone conclusion, over time this is less and less the case (cf. Gutmann 2002:90). Thus, whether because urban concentration leads to mobilization which leads intermediaries to grow independent, or because bargaining leads to urban consolidation which leads clients to grow independent, the tendency to transition from dependency to independence is inherent to the clientelist mode of political intermediation. Put more forcefully, whereas mass clientelism starts by eliciting homogeneity of political expression, it eventually promotes heterogeneity.⁸²⁶

⁸²⁶ This is an alternative to (though not mutually exclusive with) another argument for the same conclusion. Neoliberal restructuring during the 1980s and 1990s led to a lack of secure economic livelihoods and thereby

Neighborhood associations dedicated to needs fulfillment were successful at securing the consolidation of Caracas's and Lima's informal settlements. This likely had important implications. In Caracas, AD and COPEI were initially successful at conquering the Caracas vote: between 1968 and 1973, AD surged from 16.6 to 37.9 percent of the congressional vote in the Federal District and COPEI grew from 15 to 30.5 percent, together edging out the leftist menace (Consejo Supremo Electoral 1983:17). But with urban consolidation, the urban poor's loyalty was no longer forthcoming. The base of support for Venezuela's two main political parties and the system of governance they jointly ran gradually hollowed out. This gave rise to a crisis in 1989, when the urban poor rose up in unprecedented spontaneous riots across the city in response to austerity. And many among the urban poor expressed their newfound political independence by supporting left-populist Hugo Chávez's rise to power a decade later (López Maya 2005).

Needs-fulfilling neighborhood associations mobilized to outfit, and succeeded in consolidating, Lima's informal settlements. During the process of urban consolidation, the government offered a modicum of aid, leading Lima's urban poor to comport themselves obediently vis-a-vis political officials. Now that the urban environment was consolidated, and since the government channeled essentially no more resources through neighborhood associations, Lima's neighborhood association leaders were sometimes able to retain their positions for an inordinate amount of time (Degregori et al. [1986] 2014:114-16, 137). No longer compelled to be obsequious to receive political officials' favor, the urban poor were also free to express new political preferences. This was exemplified by the urban poor's decisive support for rookie right-populist Alberto Fujimori, who with their support won the presidency in 1990 (Cameron 1994).

***Urbs + Civitas* And Critical Political Sociology**

Neighborhood associations arose in order to develop their urban habitat. Importantly, they trespassed the analytic distinction conventionally made in social research between *urbs* (the built environments that constitute cities) and *civitas* (the associational activities that take place

promoted heterogeneous political identities in Latin America and the postcolonial global south more generally.

within cities). And it was because, to do their work, these neighborhood associations found it efficacious to promise political elites mass support that different kinds of political elites, who disagreed with one another about so much else, could nevertheless agree to orient to one another, thereby constituting a political field. Only on the basis of an understanding of the interpenetration of *urbs* and *civitas* can we account for the advent of mass clientelism and thus the rise and persistence of historically-aligned power blocs which supported the continuity of government institutions.

The configuration of mass clientelism accomplishes the simultaneous alignment of the political elite and division of the masses, responding to Poulantzas's theoretical challenge to integrate a focus on popular will to support elites—who in turn converge in practice in spite of their real disagreements. Mass clientelism arises with the formation of, and from the spaces comprised by, squatter settlements, from which neighborhood-level intermediaries arise. Through their neighborhood leaders, the masses solicit their own subordination and thus actively help bring about a scenario in which they both disavow their own sovereignty and undermine popular sovereignty more generally. Mass clientelism unites elites because, enticed by the prospect of a mass base borne of squatters' requests for subordination, a broad array of them can agree with a pro-squatter position;⁸²⁷ the only elites who are likely to recoil in the face of a proliferation of squatter settlements are a minority of zealous members of the professional middle class, especially urban planners and architects.⁸²⁸

Mass clientelism divides the masses because in order to link squatters to political elites, intermediaries encourage their respective groups of squatters to struggle against one another in an effort to distinguish themselves as especially deserving of disproportionate amounts of finite resources (access to land and urban services installation). Mass clientelism also generates intra-class conflict within a broader framework of mass politics, compromising the strength of the peasantry and the working class, and jeopardizing the prospects for unity between them. The peasantry is best able to block land usurpation and secure government supports when firmly united behind these demands. But rural-to-urban migration presents some peasants with an

⁸²⁷ It is a relief valve for the agrarian elite who pushed peasants from the land, generating a large landless peasantry; it absolves industrialists from having to house workers themselves; and it relieves all of them, and the government apparatus as well, from a fiscal system that would be necessary to fund enough public housing.

⁸²⁸ Such as Mexico's Mario Pani, Peru's Fernando Belaúnde, and a variety of individuals in Venezuela.

alternative to unity and thereby makes it more difficult for the peasantry as a whole to stand its ground. And workers are strongest when united behind strike action and other disruptive mass protests. But squatters have a live interest in instead genuflecting to elites. So to the degree that the two groups overlap, workers genuflect, and their disruption-based power diminishes. More generally, the advent of the social and political actor of the “urban poor” presents special obstacles to any alliance between the popular classes. Peasants’ interests are already considerably different from those of workers, to say nothing of the variation in workers’ interests (Offe and Wiesenthal 1980). But when the “urban poor” are added to the picture, interest divergences multiply.

Mass clientelism is thus a social basis for what some would call “false consciousness” and the foundation of bourgeois government institutions of all kinds. It serves to simultaneously unify and strengthen the political elite and weaken and divide the popular classes. And it has been especially enigmatic because its source is principally bottom-up and social—representing the exercise of popular will but in a way that precludes popular sovereignty.

Dialectics, History, And Totality

Mass clientelism is a momentary phenomenon, however. It is both historically unique and likely temporary—in part because it is subject to sublation. Pursuing a dialectical explanation in a given research endeavor involves at least three aspects. First is to identify episodes that can be disaggregated into at least two *moments*. Second is to identify the *spatio-social dynamics* that characterize the respective cases; this implies identifying the case-specific, evolving distribution of social groups across space. Third is to identify the *dialectical nature* of the *developmental dynamics* in which a subsequent moment sublates an earlier one. The approach can be applied widely. The substantive nature of the result will depend on the subject matter to which it is applied. If the approach can be and is successfully used to examine an episode of political development, the theoretical result will to be reveal what I call a *mode of political intermediation*.

Modes of Political Intermediation

The existing literature points to at least two modes of political intermediation—i.e., major episodes of political development that share these three features just adumbrated—namely, French citizenship extension and United States civic accountabilism. But since dialectical explanation is under-appreciated, many fail to see them as such. So let me recount both before outlining how the Latin American case reveals a third, i.e., mass clientelism.

Scholars of 19th-century French political development emphasize the extension of citizenship from the capital city into the hinterland. Through a series of “radial institutions,” the government projected itself from the capital city and “penetrat[e] its territories,” establishing a “two-way street” between government and society (Mann 1993:59). For citizenship to reach a mass scale, the entire population had to be made relatively “homogeneous” for each person to be universally equivalent (p. 730). Thus, the French government turned disparate kinds of “peasants” into a general type of “Frenchmen.” Projecting itself into the hinterland—through transportation infrastructure, among other means—it promoted “national unity” by “[welding] the several parts into one” (Weber 1976:218). This was the first moment of citizenship extension.

And yet as the government extended its uniform grid across the entire territory, eventually lingering “heterogeneity within it created problems” (Hobsbawm 1992:21), ultimately sublating the universalizing tendency of citizenship extension. Groups who had succumbed to assimilation ostracized others who failed to conform, thereby turning an initiative to promote universal inclusion into much the opposite: a basis for episodes of xenophobic exclusion (as exemplified, e.g., by the Dreyfus affair) (Hobsbawm 1992:117-22; see also Poulantzas 1978:107). Taken together, these two moments and the relationship between them suggest that France’s citizenship extension process was characterized by a dialectical pattern, making it an episode in precisely the sense that the rise and fall of mass clientelism was, albeit one whose spatio-social dynamics were fundamentally different.

American political development points to a second mode of political intermediation. Civic associations played a crucial role in 19th century American politics by “[influencing] the course of public policy” (Skocpol 2003:12-13; cf. Tocqueville [1840] 1966:697). This relationship took hold “as waves of migration spread across the continent” with westward expansion, because “new arrivals established familiar kinds of lodges or clubs at the same time

that they built farms, businesses, and churches” (Skocpol 2003:38). Settler-colonists’ civic associations were able to “bind elected representatives” to their proposals “in the more recently settled sections of the nation” (Clemens 1997:29, 66) during the first moment of civic accountabilism.

But continued settlement of the western United States sublated this accountability relationship. Civic associations’ ability to hold officials accountable on behalf of non-elite constituencies did not last. Using the very same channels of political influence that had worked in settler-colonists’ favor, a form of lobbying dominated by “corporate interests” arose (Clemens 1997:39), sublating popular control with something that was almost the opposite in a second moment of civic accountabilism. Thus, American political development points to a second mode of political intermediation, characterized by two distinct moments related to one another through sublation, albeit, again, arising from unique spatio-social dynamics.

In the chapters above, I have argued that mass clientelism was a mode of political intermediation in Latin America in the same way that citizenship extension and civic accountabilism were modes of political intermediation in France and the United States, respectively. First, the historical arc had earlier (benevolent mass clientelism) and later (bossist mass clientelism) moments. Second, the dynamics of mass clientelism were driven by a spatio-social dynamic (urban concentration). And third, on this basis, there was a dialectical developmental dynamic according to which the one moment (bossism) sublated the other (benevolent mass clientelism).

This account contributes to a theory of the historical evolution of the social totality (McMichael 1990; Newman Forthcoming). Evidence of theoretical progress can be observed on analytic grounds. The clientelist mode of political intermediation shares some factors in common with the other modes, but also differs from them in key ways. First, the clientelist mode is *informal* or non-codified, like the American mode but unlike the Francocentric one. Second, the political relations characteristic of the clientelist mode are *hierarchical* or unequal, like the French state’s penetration of the hinterland but unlike the relations captured in Tocquevillian theory of the United States. Third, unlike the territorially-defined political-geographic underpinnings of the other modes, the mass clientelist mode of political intermediation is *population-concentric*. The population colonizes the capital city. Mass clientelism arises from this socio-spatial dynamic. And since more of the same factor that supports government

institutions can ultimately underwrite their decline, there is not necessarily a “solution” to the “problem” of institutional flux.

Appendix A: Dialectical Explanation as an Approach to Theorizing Particularity

Historical sociologists strive to strike a balance between theoretical generality and case-specific particularity.⁸²⁹ There are essentially three methodological proposals. The one I adopt in this dissertation is *dialectical explanation*, a method⁸³⁰ inspired by on Hegelian-Marxian social theory. Since there are only hints of this approach in American historical sociology (Riley and Fernández 2014:445, 492-93; Sewell 1987), and even though it is obviously closely related to world-system theory, it stands to be further elucidated in addition to being put to work. The purpose of this appendix is accordingly to elucidate.

In practice, dialectical explanation involves viewing the social world in terms of episodes that are (potentially) comprised of at least two distinct moments, themselves related to one another via “sublation.” Since it centers on sublation, dialectical explanation views episodes as both particular (substantively specific) and general (similarly subject to sublation). Sublation is an *internal* dynamic that is *general* to a variety episodes; it is said to recur across episodes precisely because it is *particular* to each of them.

When adopting dialectical explanation, scientific progress is measured in terms of the gradual elaboration or improvement of a composite theory of the *singular universal*. This is essentially a matter of aggregating conclusions drawn from dialectical explanations to develop or improve a synthetic account of the “totality.” This composite theory is itself general or universal,

⁸²⁹ The pursuit of generality is wholly compatible with an appreciation for particularity, and some even argue it requires it (Villegas [1960] 2017).

⁸³⁰ Dialectics are metaphysics for Hegel. But his reasoning is not sound, so this conclusion cannot be sustained (see note 34). So I demote dialectics to a mere method.

since it encompasses the aggregated specific studies, but also particular, in that *by* aggregating particular cases it gradually moves towards capturing all of *the* reality,⁸³¹ which is a singular thing.

The Nature Of Dialectical Explanation

Given that dialectical explanation is uncommon in American sociology, let me unpack the goal—identifying the singular universal—by comparing it to prominent themes in the historical sociology methods literature. *Universal* means that there is only one historically variable social totality or *N* (world system or society) (Bhaskar [1979] 1998:96; Lukács [1923] 1971:8-10). From the point of view of totality, *cases* (however construed) *jointly constitute the totality* (McMichael 1990; Wallerstein 2011:39). If we (temporarily) bracket the totality in an effort to delineate cases from one another—which we do routinely for practical-methodological purposes—we can only do so rationally if it can be said that they *diverge from one another*. Thus, cases are only cases insofar as they are incommensurable (Steinmetz 2004).⁸³² Since we lack reason to hazard a belief in “general linear reality” (Abbott 2001: chapter 1), it is accordingly unreasonable to look for the effects of a given variable across cases, as is characteristic of Humean approaches. Rather than appeal to recurring correlations, dialectical explanation instead maintains that (case-specific) description is the better part of explanation (Abbott 2001: chapter 4; Ermakoff 2019:592; Gorski 2018:28), which points in turn to the potential importance of granular primary-source evidence (Adams, Clemens, and Orloff 2005:27; Mayrl and Wilson 2020).

The *singular* part of “singular universal” means that the totality (and *mutatis mutandis* for each case) is a *substantive* thing. This thing exists independently of our knowledge of it. But we can only apprehend it via theory (Bhaskar [1979] 1998:12, 45). The goal as regards theoretical contributions is thus to improve some aspect of our current existing understanding, or apprehend

⁸³¹ One need not endorse a correspondence realist position according to which the composite theory *does* reflect reality to accept that one iteration of this theory may be a *better* or *worse* reflection of reality, just as one does not need to insist that Copernican theory is perfect to recognize that it is superior to Ptolemean theory.

⁸³² It is not the case that a unit—merely because it is co-extensive with national boundaries, the person, or any other element of the social totality—is automatically a case; to assume otherwise would be to proceed with a spontaneous epistemology.

some new aspect, of the totality (McMichael 1990). (The brand of theory in question thus contrasts with analytic propositions and heuristics—frequently considered the stuff of theories in other intellectual traditions—in that it is specific or substantive in nature.) Because the totality is a *single* thing, and in spite of their incommensurability, we can and should apply comparable investigative techniques across cases (Ermakoff 2019:594-95; Steinmetz 2004).

In practice, dialectical explanation proceeds by identifying historical episodes and disaggregating them into at least two “*distinct but inseparable*” moments (Bhaskar 1993:58). *Distinctness* means that consecutive moments appear to be near-opposites due to contrasting so strongly. Between any two such moments, the second stands in a relationship of negativity or contradiction vis-a-vis the first. Such a contrast between moments can be observed at the level of the set of elements comprising each respective moment: these elements themselves undergo a change from latent to manifest (in the case of actors, for example, this may involve a transition from a passive to an active government). The contrast can also be observed at the level of the way the elements hang together: while the elements that constitute a given social configuration retain some continuity from one moment to the next, the way they hang together changes. In Hegel’s classic example, the elements comprising the slavery relationship—master and slave—persist, albeit in modified form, from the moment of servitude (in which the slave’s agency is latent) to the moment of manumission (in which it is manifest). On the one hand the slave’s agency transitions from latent to manifest; on the other, there is a fundamental contrast in how master and slave relate to one another during, as opposed to after, slavery (Hegel [1807] 2018: pars. 182-96).

The *inseparability* part of “distinct but inseparable” moments has two implications. First, a given earlier moment has an *influence* on a given later one. The idea here is perhaps best captured by Aristotle’s distinction between potentiality (*dunamis*) and actuality (*entelecheia*): potentiality (an earlier moment) has a major causal impact on actuality (a subsequent moment). Second, for any two consecutive moments that are related dialectically, the second one is a determinate negation, or *sublation* (*Aufhebung*), of the first. That is, the manifest characteristics of the elements and the overarching configuration characteristic of the later moment negates those of the earlier one while also taking the earlier one as their condition of possibility. This, in turn, implies that “the concrete connections linking different phases of any historical process are

as much a process of ‘negation’ as they are of production or causality in a Humean sense” (Riley and Fernández 2014:493).

A good example of the inseparability of distinct moments is found in Marx’s characterization of competitive capitalism. Marx argues that “the necessary result of competition is the accumulation of capital in a few hands, and thus . . . monopoly” (Marx [1932] 1978:70). The social configuration of competition is impelled towards its own demise, monopoly, making these two moments—competition and monopoly—distinct but inseparable. Importantly, the inseparability of two moments in a dialectical explanation need not imply endorsement of (and I do not endorse) teleology, that is, the idea that “events in some historical present . . . are actually explained by events in the future” (Sewell 2005:84). It references, instead, the idea that historical episodes are oftentimes “ironic”: a given set of factors may lead in one direction for a time only to then move in much the opposite direction (Sewell 1987:170). The essential idea is that underlying incremental change, in one domain, builds up in a latent state until it becomes manifest, giving rise to a transition, in another domain, from one form of social relations to another, after reaching a tipping-point.⁸³³

Contrasting Dialectical Explanation With Prominent Alternatives

There are implications to centering a method on sublation. Namely, while dialectical explanation shares a lot in common with a variety of post-Humean and neo-Kantian historical-sociological approaches, as just adumbrated and just as Hegel arguably transcended Hume and built from Kant, it differs from Humean and Kantian sociology. Humean sociology focuses on individual-level attributes. Its strength is that it supports the study of *change*. In its traditional Hempelian variety, it is capable of appreciating change by pointing to how one amount of a given individual-level attribute is correlated with one outcome while another amount, at a later point in time, is correlated with a different outcome. A phenomenological spinoff, pragmatist neo-Humean sociology,⁸³⁴ dwells on variation in agents’ capacities to solve period-specific

⁸³³ The idea here is similar to threshold models of collective action, though the units of analysis in dialectical explanation are not individuals, as in such models (Ermakoff 2008; Gladwell 2006; Granovetter 1978), but structural or relational configurations.

⁸³⁴ I follow Riley et al. (2021:319) in characterizing pragmatism (for them, Dewey) as a form of empiricism (for me,

problems, attributing change to agent-level problem-solving (Haydu 1998). The weakness of Humean sociology is that this ability to study change comes at the expense of failing to study properly-social phenomena in favor of individuals. Accordingly, scientific progress in Humean sociology takes the form of a search for statements about the relationship between individual-level attributes that transcend empirical contexts: e.g., how much money one needs to hire a workforce or how much routine-breaking one needs to innovate.

Dialectical explanation, in contrast, proceeds by identifying the impact of a prior structural dynamic on a subsequent one. Meanwhile, the strength of narrowly-Kantian sociology⁸³⁵ is that it succeeds at studying properly *social* phenomena: solidarity in Durkheim, unintended consequences of socially-situated action in Weber. Its weakness is that it is quite limited in its ability to study how they *change* qua *social* phenomena. Durkheim invokes his supra-individual reification, which is either present or absent and may take one or another form, only to assume rather than explain why it *changes* (other than to gesture at the industrial revolution).⁸³⁶ Weber invokes rules (ascetic acquisitiveness, meritocratic recruitment, etc.) and action (specifically, the unintended and socially-ramifying consequences stemming from intended actions) to explain the rise of social objects, but rather than explore the transition from one type of social object to another he assumes that these objects populate relatively-distinct spheres (religion, statecraft, etc.).⁸³⁷ Scientific progress in Kantian sociology is conceptual—iconically, the elaboration of distinct ideal types—but not necessarily dynamic. Indeed, it may be that Kantian sociology is inherently limited in its ability to study social change. For after all, Kant’s method was designed to identify transhistorical concepts, not things that even *can* change.

If Humean sociology focuses on individual attributes and Kantian sociology focuses on social concepts, they do not exhaust the alternatives. There is still narrative positivism, which

Humean sociology).

⁸³⁵ By Kantian sociology, I mean a sociology based on specific answers to the question “how is society possible?” Both Durkheim’s and Weber’s sociology are Kantian in this sense, even though they propose different answers (Rose [1981] 2009).

⁸³⁶ Other Durkheimians modify the definition of the supra-individual reification and repeat (Alexander 2006), thereby also failing to explain how their social object changes.

⁸³⁷ A Weberian approach which does examine the transition from one type of social object to another (Tilly 1990) resorts to an atomistic, Hobbesian form of explanation rather than a social one.

involves fitting specific cases into general sets of stages. These sequences are assumed to recur within a specific substantive domain (or “niche”) such that the narrative arc is essential but the particular characters are incidental (Abbott 1990; 1995:102; 2001:147-51). This enables researchers to invoke the same narrative frame when examining novel empirics and to compare disparate sets of empirics according to a single frame. The strength of narrative positivism is that it searches for generality at the level of change within substantive domains. (This sets it apart from Humean sociology, for which generality is a matter of mathematical averaging.) For narrative positivism, scientific progress therefore takes the form of series of “natural histories”: e.g., theories about stages in the life course, the stages of economic development, etc. But this also presents a weakness. To the extent that it inserts cases into narratives of change to elaborate sequences of stages that lead to a given outcome across a variety of cases, the approach does not take cases as unique wholes. Cases are merely a means to discover, illustrate, and/or verify these theories.

Dialectical explanation would seem to solve a variety of shortcomings seemingly inherent to these alternatives. Like Humean sociology and narrative positivism, it is well-equipped to study change. But in contrast to the former, it is not focused on individuals. And in contrast to the latter, it views change as internal to cases rather than transversal across them. Like Kantian sociology and narrative positivism, it views scientific progress in terms of theory development. But unlike Kantian sociology, the theory in question is fundamentally processual. And unlike narrative positivism, it takes cases as essential rather than incidental to the theory.⁸³⁸ The result is that dialectical explanation (Hegelian-Marxian sociology) allows the researcher to focus on properly-social configurations that may necessarily change, sometimes in a patterned way.

The Need For Supplementation With Aleatory Explanation

As a fixture of Hegelian-Marxist social theory, dialectical explanation has been commended by some (e.g., Lukács [1923] 1971:10-18; Reuten 2014) and criticized by others

⁸³⁸ Thus, whereas for narrative positivism sequences recur across cases *within* substantive domains, for dialectical explanation sublation recurs *across* substantive domains because cases themselves are viewed substantively.

(e.g., Wright 1995:16). Its contested epistemic status is perhaps apt. Because insofar as one explains the totality tout court—the singular universal—wholly on the basis of dialectical explanation, s/he must embrace teleology (dialectics + totality = teleology). Indeed, even positing that an entire single episode develops dialectically may inspire a healthy amount of skepticism about crypto-teleology. For this reason, it is perhaps best to pursue dialectical explanation only to identify the *degree* to which it is capable of describing a given case, the *degree* to which a given case behaves dialectically, to thereby supply only tempered conclusions (i.e., conclusions that are at least somewhat negative as regards dialectics) for aggregation into a theory of the totality, making the latter singular but *not* teleological.

Epistemologically, this involves retaining an aleatory form of explanation—i.e., a form of explanation based on the contingent conjunction of causal factors—as default, and determining through empirical inquiry the extent to which a given case behaves dialectically.⁸³⁹ Hegel seems to allow for this, in spite of the fact that he ultimately wants to endorse teleology. He explicitly states that to deny contingency would be “an empty game and a strained pedantry” (Hegel [1817] 1991: §145; see also Bialas 1997:33). But while contingency is thus compatible with dialectical explanation, the two are not the same thing. Parts of history may be explicable dialectically even while other parts require an aleatory explanation (Taylor 1979:63). The problem is only to identify what kind of aleatory method is compatible with dialectical explanation—which kind of aleatory explanation aligns with dialectical explanation in pursuit of a theory of the totality.

Aleatory analysis involves describing particular outcomes by invoking the contingent concatenation of general causal factors. This may be the default in historical sociology (Steinmetz 1998), but certain versions do run the risk of invoking causal factors arbitrarily (Stuart Brundage Forthcoming). A Kantian version, *trans-historicism*, makes recourse to *categories of analysis* transposable across cases but not necessarily present in any particular case (Mannheim [1924] 1952; see also Clemens 2007; Tilly 2008).⁸⁴⁰ The divorce between categories

⁸³⁹ The dissertation proceeds in this way, appreciating parts of the case of Latin America which did *not* behave dialectically (i.e., Lima and Caracas), but *also* pursuing dialectical explanation for the part which *did* (i.e., Mexico City).

⁸⁴⁰ A contrarian variant, trans-historicist *critique*, involves describing trans-historical categories of analysis by making recourse to particular cases (Mann 1994:47, 51), though insofar as its main proponent himself defaults to ordinary trans-historicism in his substantive work (see Stuart Brundage Forthcoming) it would seem to be more of a gadfly position than a truly viable epistemology.

and cases would seem to make trans-historicism incompatible with dialectical explanation.⁸⁴¹ Another version of aleatory analysis, *over-determination*, draws inspiration from Spinoza and involves the invocation of generative mechanisms thought to be *immanent*—latent aspects of the totality—to craft explanations for specific outcomes (Althusser 1969; 1971:161; Steinmetz 2004). As opposed to trans-historicism, this does seem compatible with dialectical explanation (despite the fact that Althusser was himself famously hostile to Hegel).

Pursuing a viable form of dialectical explanation may prove sociologically advantageous. In the Conclusion, I argue that when applied to the political domain it points to an entire research program dedicated to identifying and delineating the mechanics of what I call “modes of political intermediation.” My explication of the dialectic of mass clientelism in 20th-century Latin America illustrates the potential of dialectical explanation—tempered by aleatory explanation—for historical sociology by elaborating one such mode of political intermediation.

⁸⁴¹ Since generality for this approach lies at the level of casual factors, scientific progress on this approach takes the form of the gradual elaboration or refinement of a menu of causes potentially at work in any given case. Science thus proceeds independently of a theory of the totality per se, and the approach would thus seem to be at odds with dialectical analysis.

Appendix B: The Historiography of 20th-Century Mexican, Peruvian, and Venezuelan Political Development

This appendix summarizes prominent interpretations of the countries and periods examined in this dissertation. The discussion is organized to mimic the sequence of chapters above. Thus, I discuss interpretations for the PRI's rise to its dominant position in Mexico (which corresponds to Chapter 2), for the pattern of political development that prevailed in Peru (which corresponds to Chapter 3), and Venezuela's "exceptional democracy" (which corresponds to Chapter 4), and then return to discuss interpretations of the PRI's decline and fall, which corresponds to Part II, elaborating the latter in more depth than the historiographies concerning the country-specific chapters corresponding to Part I.

Existing Explanations For PRI Dominance

My argument about the crucial contribution of benevolent mass clientelism to the consolidation of the PRI contrasts with several leading accounts of post-revolutionary Mexican political development, namely, those which emphasize the cooptation of peasants, the pacification of workers, and the exceptional circumstances borne of the Second World War. Let me briefly discuss each of these kinds of accounts, albeit without surveying the literature comprehensively. My intention is not to deny or refute these interpretations, for each successfully captures a dimension of the problem. Nevertheless, they all suffer from a key weakness: they attribute too great a part of the dominance of the PRI to the party's organizational features. Thus, when these interpretations are rendered as arguments, they appear circular—the PRI was such a formidable organization that it succeeded in establishing a formidable

organization—and thus not very compelling. More importantly, they downplay or even obscure the social forces responsible for making the organization appear so powerful.

Let me start with the argument that the cooptation of the peasantry explains the PRI's dominance. In *The Logic of Compromise in Mexico: How the Countryside Was Key to the Emergence of Authoritarianism*, Gladys McCormick (2016) argues that PRI control was a rural invention in the 1950s, and that it migrated from there to the cities (see also Benjamin 1990). It is impossible to deny that rural control was a major factor in both peasants' lives and in the consolidation of the official party (Ames 1970; Reyna and Weinert 1977). There are however two problems with this interpretation. First, it is difficult to square with the copious research showing that the Mexican countryside remained a cauldron of agrarian radicalism long after the armed phase of the revolution. Even after the post-revolutionary government stabilized, peasants continued "collective bargaining by riot" (Gillingham and Smith 2014:13). As Knight (1985:18) summarizes, "the revolution . . . set in motion a long process of agrarian mobilization." In a word, peasants were far from a loyal base of support (Fowler-Salamini 1978; Padilla 2008; Purnell 1999; Tutino 1986). Second, as the basis of an argument for PRI dominance, it is circular. Only if we assume that features of the party organization were themselves capable of subduing the peasantry can such an interpretation account for the dominance and longevity of the PRI. But to do so would be to assume precisely what we are supposed to explain. Finally, there was significant flux in the category of "peasant" itself. The most important for my account is that a large number of "peasants" migrated from the countryside to major cities, especially Mexico City. Thus in addition to questions of peasant cooptation versus peasant radicalism, there is a higher-order question concerning the ways and degrees to which the people in question remained "peasants." Thus, while I do not deny that harnessing peasant support was important, for reasons I elaborate below, I think perhaps the key difference-maker stemmed from the urban context—namely, from urban concentration, benevolent mass clientelism, and the emergence of an historically-aligned power bloc.

Do arguments about the pacification of worker militance fare better? In *The Paradox of Revolution: Labor, the State, and Authoritarianism in Mexico*, Kevin J. Middlebrook (1995) argues that the PRI's almost-complete political control was largely a product of its cooptation of organized labor: both the leaders and rank-and-file membership of organized labor (with the exception of pockets and periods of rebellion) received preferential treatment, in exchange for

which they delivered political loyalty to the party. There is no denying that pacification of the workers' movement was a major factor in the consolidation and subsequent dominance of the PRI (see also Collier and Collier 1991:407-16; Snodgrass 2003). But there are two problems with the interpretation. First, if it were to be used as the basis of an explanation for PRI dominance, such an explanation would be circular, just like the peasant-centric account. Taking the power of the PRI organization as our explanandum, we cannot cogently invoke the organization's power as explanans. Second, a considerable part of the story concerning the pacification of Mexican workers centers on Mexico City—the second-most industrialized region in the country, especially important by the 1940s-1960s—where the workers' movement surged before and during the revolution (Davis 1994; Lear 2001:192-340). The most politically important part of the working class lived in Mexico City, where properly-urban dynamics affected the class's political allegiances. Not only did the government pacify organized labor in part by dangling occasional housing concessions before rebellious unions (Perló Cohen 1979:814, 817; Sánchez Mejorada 2001:2001:276); many workers lived in and were affected by the political dynamics surrounding squatter settlements. This meant that the cooptation of organized labor was in part a consequence of harnessing squatters' support.

What role did timing and exceptional wartime circumstances play? In *The War Has Brought Peace to Mexico: World War II and the Consolidation of the Postrevolutionary State*, Halbert Jones (2014) argues that the Second World War stabilized President Manuel Ávila Camacho's (1940-1946) precarious grip on power, cementing the PRI's long term control over Mexico. It would be futile to deny that wartime exceptionalism contributed to the consolidation of PRI control (cf. Garrido 1982:325-28; Niblo 1999:115-23). But as an argument this is insufficient on its own, in large measure because its strength—a focus on a short period and, more broadly, the emphasis on matters of timing—is also its chief weakness. First, events during the war cut in both directions. On the one hand, massive outpourings of nationalist sentiment and rallies of tens of thousands of people buoyed incumbent political elites (Sánchez Mejorada 2001:259). Through wartime mobilization, the government made important inroads towards organizing and harnessing Mexico City's squatter neighborhoods (Sánchez Mejorada 2001:274-75), in part because when squatters mobilized in preparation for possible invasion (Sánchez Mejorada 2001:265, 270) they did so, implicitly, *behind* the incipient party. On the other hand, though, workers' militias (totaling 15,000 men in DF) under the command of Celestino Gasca

struck fear into the hearts of all who sought to conserve power (Sánchez Mejorada 2001:259-60). (The Liga de Colonos del Distrito Federal also organized 3,000 volunteers [Sánchez-Mejorada 2001:265].) As long as the masses were armed, it was impractical, to say the least, for political elites to behave as if Mexicans should obey their dictates. Second, and in part due precisely to the contradictory nature of wartime events, the PRI's consolidation extended well into the postwar period. The party machinery only really consolidated during President Miguel Alemán Valdés's (1946-1952) term in office (González Casanova 1982:59-62; Navarro 2010:255). In addition to ongoing lower-intensity hemorrhaging, the PRI suffered significant splits during the presidential elections of 1940 (led by General Juan Almazán), 1946 (led by Ezequiel Padilla), and 1952 (led by Manuel Henríquez Guzmán) (see Knight 1990:60-63; Navarro 2010).⁸⁴²

My account differs from those just outlined in three ways. First, mine differs in social aspect of interest. Rather than focus on peasants or workers, I focus on the urban poor. Second, I adopt a somewhat more general explanatory objective. Rather than focus directly on the PRI, assuming that the goal is to explain the rise of a powerful organization per se, I view the PRI as an expression of a balance of forces, itself congealing around and reflecting an historically-aligned power bloc. Third, I periodize accordingly. Rather than a war-specific timeframe, I focus on a period defined by urban concentration, on the one hand, and the emergence of the historically-aligned power bloc, on the other.

My argument is that urban concentration furthered the concentration of power. Maintaining that what happened in the capital city fundamentally shaped Mexican politics, that is, that “national political dynamics were . . . subordinated to local ones” (Davis 1994:25 *et passim*), puts me broadly in line with Diane Davis's *Urban Leviathan: Mexico City in the Twentieth Century* (1994: see esp. 306-15). But whereas Davis takes as her explanans conflicts between local and national class-based organizations (unions and industrial groups) and those between different levels of government institutions (local versus federal government), focusing on how they played out with reference to public transportation policymaking, I focus on the emergence of an historically-aligned power bloc capable of undergirding the PRI, making explanatory recourse to demographic dynamics and associational forms. And whereas Davis

⁸⁴² Langston (2017:39) argues that these splits followed a common pattern: “the regime challenger moved openly *within* the ranks of the party to promote his presidential bid several months *before* the sitting president chose his successor; and in doing so, the potential candidate was able to gauge his popularity and support within the regime.”

(1994:313) views the middle classes as a highly agentic actor, “a critical swing force,” I view the agency of the main group upon which I focus—the urban poor—as highly circumscribed, tracing political change not to agency per se but to dynamics at the level of the relational structures of mass clientelism.

My account is also closely related to the work of Mexican researchers Antonio Azuela de la Cueva and María Soledad Cruz Rodríguez, and especially Manuel Perló Cohen and María Cristina Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández. However, whereas they emphasize lawmakers’ and judges’ legal innovations around squatter settlements (Azuela 1989; Azuela de la Cueva and Cruz Rodríguez 1989) and officials’ machinations regarding housing the urban poor (Perló Cohen 1979; Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández 2005), concluding that the *government* was the decisive actor, I argue that we must explain the post-revolutionary government institutions in part on the basis of urban concentration—a demographic process that is *social* in nature. Whereas for these authors, Mexico City was an environment in which the government concocted a base of support, for me, the way Mexico City grew and the myriad political reactions to this process had a decisive impact on state formation and the government.

Existing Accounts Of Peruvian Political Development

There are two leading accounts of modern Peruvian political development, one emphasizing the failure of the foremost party to take power and the other the success of its oligarchic opponents. The first is essentially counterfactual, pivoting on why the foremost mass political party, the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), failed to acquire power and thus failed to lead a new phase of national political development as happened elsewhere in Latin America. In his classic book *Clases, Estado y nación en el Perú*, Julio Cotler (2005)⁸⁴³ argues that the party progressively abandoned its commitment to radical leftism the closer it got to holding power (see also Collier and Collier 1991:479-83), and that it was systematically blocked from power—until the 1980s, by which time it had completely disavowed its radicalism.⁸⁴⁴ I agree that APRA’s capitulation was of monumental historic importance. I do not,

⁸⁴³ Originally published in 1978.

⁸⁴⁴ The process started with APRA’s first national congress (1931), when it approved a minimum program calling for mere progressive reforms that even in the program fell far short of making inroads on domestic private property,

however, think that APRA's failure to win power is a very compelling explanation for what *did* transpire. This is especially apparent when focusing on Lima, where APRA was never especially strong (Bourricaud 1964:92). In large part for this reason, APRA, "Peru's most durable political party," was "permanently involved in national politics but never in command of them" (Bertram 1991:405, 386). And precisely because APRA did *not* take the helm, history was written largely by the party's opponents.

In his excellent book, *The Oligarchy and the Old Regime in Latin America, 1880-1970*, Dennis Gilbert (2017) argues that the oligarchy remained a prominent part of Peruvian politics until the agrarian reform of 1968. By the 20th century, with the rise of mass politics, the oligarchy faced the problem of how to retain power. Some of their number understood that outright opposition to mass politics could make them politically irrelevant. Others thought mass politics was an unnecessary evil that could well result in uncontrollable revolutionary social convulsions. Their solution was to enlist the military. The result was that a configuration of "trilateral politics" obtained from 1933 (with the assassination of military populist president Luis Sánchez Cerro) to 1968 (with the modernizing military coup resulting in the Juan Velasco regime). Three political actors—the oligarchy, the military, and APRA—constantly reoriented to one another in different configurations of antagonism and alliance, none able to rule on their own, none wanting the other two to unite against them, and none ultimately morally opposed to collaborating with their chief enemy if that is what it took to prevent the other two from forming an alliance (Gilbert 2017:121 ff.).

There is a lot to recommend Gilbert's analysis. But his conception of "trilateral politics" assumes a recurring regime type which he calls "oligarchy-backed military-led governments," namely those of Luis Sánchez Cerro (1931-1933), Óscar R. Benavides (1933-1939), and Manuel A. Odría (1948-1956). But this apparent type classification obscures important variation between these governments, and specifically what set the first two apart from the third. Sánchez Cerro

much less foreign firms (Colter 2005:218-21); continued with Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy (1933), which APRA leader Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre interpreted as the dawn of a new era in U.S.-Latin American relations wherein the former would respect the latter countries' national sovereignty (Colter 2005:235); continued during the Second World War, when APRA (along with the Communists) promised to reign-in its members' militancy in support of the war effort (Colter 2005:232); crescendoed during the late-1940s when the party controlled the legislative agenda and held cabinet posts but failed to introduce any significant reforms (Cotler 2005:239); and culminated soon after the tragic failure of a military uprising that the radical APRA base had organized in 1948, in the aftermath of which the party leadership was brutally repressed and disabused of the idea that insurrectionary action should any longer be part of the APRA playbook (Colter 2005:246, 265).

capitalized on *mass* discontent with the previous Augusto B. Leguía government to put himself at the helm of a popular military uprising, then certified his rule with both an election and an amiable relationship with the oligarchy (Gilbert 2017:119). Benavides was put forward by the oligarchy, after the APRA-orchestrated assassination of Sánchez Cerro, to restore order. So while it is true both were military men (albeit of different sorts) and both had a relationship with the oligarchy (although this was unavoidable for presidents), the one was a proto-populist and the other an exemplary authoritarian.⁸⁴⁵

Meanwhile, and more importantly for my analysis, Odría differs from both. He did not ride popular discontent to power, and was thus not a symbol to the oligarchy of how mass politics could be made palatable (like Sánchez Cerro). Odría was backed by the oligarchy as someone they thought would be able to get out ahead of a wave of mobilization like the one that had catapulted Sánchez Cerro to power. In a political career much the opposite of Sánchez Cerro's he started as the oligarchy's partner (like Benavides but unlike Sánchez Cerro) but trended in an autonomous direction (unlike both Benavides and Sánchez Cerro). He was not the oligarchy's deputy. Rather than remain loyal (like Benavides), he was propelled by urban concentration towards autonomy from them. This set Odría apart from the other oligarchy-backed military-led governments. And, I argue, his autonomy—itsself based on abiding requests for subordination from the urban poor—led him to shape the realm of elite politics. He inadvertently helped field elite politics, initiating the historically-aligned power bloc.

I build on but also transcend both Cotler and Gilbert by examining how APRA came to converge with the oligarchy, which was itself a function of the oligarchy closing ranks by stealing Odría's orientation to the urban poor. The shortcoming of these accounts is that they overlook how the major social changes that were underway by the mid-20th century—specifically, urban concentration—affected the course of national politics. These are better captured in works that do not focus on political development. In *Perú: Estado desbordado y sociedad nacional emergente*, José Matos Mar (2012) emphasizes the enduring effects of colonial rule that were transcended only with urban concentration. From colonization forward, he argues, Peru was characterized by a dualism between Lima and the rest of the country,

⁸⁴⁵ Arch-conservative José de la Riva Agüero served as prime minister during Benavides's regime (Bourricaud [1967] 1970:206).

collectively referred to as “*la provincia*” (Matos Mar 2012:73), which did not develop anywhere else in Latin America (see Chapter 1). As one *hacienda* owner put it, “we have held our Indians in bondage and misery since the Conquest.”⁸⁴⁶ Matos Mar argues that bottom-up actions did indeed help overcome the dualism, but only because they transpired on a massive scale; it was only because *many* of the people who had lived in “*la provincia*” and then moved to Lima—where they established squatter settlements (*barriadas*)—that the dualism was overcome and a single Peruvian nation took shape (Matos Mar 2012:216).⁸⁴⁷ In other words, the Lima-provincia dualism was fundamental to Peruvian society until the 20th century; migration from the provinces to the capital city was the principal reason that it was overcome; and the proliferation of squatter settlements made this possible. Therefore, urban concentration was the revolutionary source of Peruvian national unity (Matos Mar 2012:74).

I argue, in contrast, that urban concentration fundamentally shaped Peruvian society not through this bottom-up process alone, but instead due to the relations which it made possible for the first time, in which political elites also featured prominently. David Collier makes a somewhat similar argument in *Squatters and Oligarchs: Authoritarian Rule and Policy Change in Peru* (1976). However, in his effort to impute causation to government institutions, Collier attributes far too much agency to presidents, especially Odría. He claims that “Odría sought to build the idea that the poor enjoyed a special relationship with him,” so he (1) offered them *land*, (2) used settlement names associated with him and his inner circle to tie squatters to the regime *symbolically*, (3) availed himself of their mass *demonstrations* in the central plaza, and (4) gave them charitable alms and Christmas presents (Collier 1976:60). But only the fourth item on this list was actually in Odría’s control; the urban poor took land, named settlements, and organized demonstrations *themselves*. Collier rightly observes that Odría engaged in “extensive promotion of the formation of squatter settlements” (1976:59) and pursued a “strategy of deliberate urbanization,” encouraging urban growth, though he implies Odría was the prime mover when evidence he furnishes (1976: table 3, see also 57) shows that squatter settlement formation began to ramp up during the preceding José Luis Bustamante y Rivera government, and that during

⁸⁴⁶ *Time*, 12 March 1965, p. 32.

⁸⁴⁷ “The success of millions of migrants’ urban adaptation,” he argues, gave them the ability to participate in “the long-awaited and longed-for national life. A whole new route of life. The *barriada* was the expression, the alternative, and the means of achieving it” (Matos Mar 2012:150).

Odría's government the boom merely continued (and thus cannot have been caused by the Odría government).⁸⁴⁸

Odría was impelled by the forces of urban concentration; he did not impel them. Matos Mar (2012:116), the doyen of *barriada* studies, argues that after the formation of San Cosme, in 1945 (before Odría was in power and thus before he could have encouraged *barriada* formation),

“the subsequent *barriadas* followed almost the same route: as an objective, identification of an available and appropriate or convenient place for their needs; invasion as means of achieving it; association of residents as local government; subordination and imitation of urban planning as a way of gaining official recognition from the respective institutions and securing services; and, as a strategy, a special way of relating to the government, various agencies, institutions, officials and prominent figures.”

Settlement formation was by and large a bottom-up process.

I argue that, by responding to bottom-up pressure, general Manuel A. Odría produced a new political configuration, and that subsequent leaders played into and reinforced the pattern such that elite fractions converged politically as an historically-aligned power bloc. That the urban poor and political elites would develop an important relationship in the context of urban concentration was almost inevitable, since urban concentration itself involves the movement of lots of people from the hinterland to the city, and in Latin America typically to the capital city, the home base for nationally-oriented political elites and thus a natural focal point for their attention. This was not something they could conjure-up nor will-away.

Existing Explanations For Venezuela's "Exceptional Democracy"

After the overthrow of general Marcos Pérez Jiménez, two political parties representing reconstructed Liberalism and Conservatism—Acción Democrática (AD) and COPEI, respectively—alternated in power at five-year intervals from the early-1960s to the early-1980s. This made Venezuela Latin America's "exceptional democracy." I argue here that AD recognized COPEI as legitimate, while still disagreeing about fundamentals and competing against COPEI in the electoral sphere, and vice-versa for COPEI vis-a-vis AD, in large measure because they

⁸⁴⁸ Collier's efforts to attribute causation to government institutions is also behind his argument that different types of government orientations to squatter settlements—paternalistic, liberal, and corporatist—shaped the latter in distinct ways. While governments adhering to these distinct approaches do seem to have sought to produce different effects, in some ways the effects were quite similar: they all seem to have reinforced neighborhood association leaders' local authority (Newman 2019).

agreed that squatter settlements were an important part of the solution to the social question. This was an agreement about particulars that led vying political forces to orient to one another as an historically-aligned power bloc.

My argument that Venezuela's "exceptional democracy" is attributable to a significant degree to urban concentration and the mass clientelism to which it gave rise, differs from existing accounts. Three major explanations have been advanced to account for why Venezuelan politics became structured according to a two-party "democratic" system, emphasizing enlightened leaders, within-elite solidarity, and the conflict-lubricating qualities of the country's oil wealth.

In *Conflict and Political Change in Venezuela*, Daniel H. Levine (1973) argues that Venezuela's supposedly-enlightened, moderate leaders worked to set up institutions within which to channel conflict—namely powerful political parties—and then reinforced that institutional configuration by progressively marginalizing the military and the left. Central to such accounts is the idea that the pact of Punto Fijo, between the three leading political parties excluding the Communists, was a watershed moment, ensuring elites abide by political rules of mutual respect for electoral outcomes, which vouchsafed "democratic" institutions. And once these political norms and institutions were well-entrenched, they were important in precluding a return to military rule.

Pacts are overlaid in such accounts,⁸⁴⁹ substituting for explanations as to why the institutions agreed to in the pacts successfully structured relations. For to assert that political institutions were important is a far cry from explicating how they became important. As it stands, the pact argument is thus circular, asserting that political institutions were important because political action made them important, action which was a success because it created political institutions. We need to know *why* the political decisions in this case were such important moves that they helped bring about the consolidation of "exceptional democracy," so that we do not

⁸⁴⁹ Pacts are just promises, and promises can be broken. The Peruvian military negotiated a pact with APRA according to which the party would be legalized and allowed to run for the presidency (barred until then) in 1962 in exchange for supporting oligarch Manuel Prado during the presidential campaign in 1956 (Gilbert 2017:133-34). But the military did not respect the promise, overturning the 1962 election results and holding power itself for a year while it arranged a new election and helped ensure Fernando Belaúnde Terry instead win the election. With such episodes in surprisingly frequent evidence, one wonders why some people place so much emphasis on pacts in explaining subsequent developments (e.g., Burton and Higley 1987). The fact that Venezuelan political elites made a pact does not explain why they converged as an historically-aligned power bloc.

mistakenly attribute importance to just any initiatives leaders happen to take just because the leaders who take them would like to build institutions. What explains mass obedience to the pact makers' institutions? Pact-making itself fails to tell us.

In *The Magical State: Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela*, Fernando Coronil (1997) argues that the consolidation of two-party “democracy” in Venezuela stems from the way oil wealth shaped conflict within the Venezuelan economic elite. In addition to allowing the government to use spectacles to dazzle society into consent by building “grandiose public works” (Coronil 1997:167), Coronil argues that the circulation of petroleum wealth through Venezuelan society fundamentally shaped elite politics, modifying the way that class struggle manifested in Venezuela; as opposed to class forces' attempts to capture the government and wield it as an instrument to dominate other classes, Venezuelan elites sought to “use each other to gain access to the state [i.e., government] as the primary source of wealth” (Coronil 1997:223). Although there was “intense competition” within the dominant class (especially between politicians and businessmen), the group saw itself as “custodian and manager of the nation’s major resource,” giving rise to a doxic, “fundamental” kind of “solidarity,” manifest in an “implicit rule” that “internal differences with this class ought to be resolved informally” (Coronil 1997:358).⁸⁵⁰

This fundamental kind of solidarity does a lot to explain why politicians-businessmen conflict did *not* structure Venezuelan politics. But it does little to explain why the Liberal-Conservative cleavage became primary. Accordingly, it cannot explain Venezuela’s “exceptional democracy.”

In a variety of works, Venezuelanists argue that the chief reason for the advent and longevity of Venezuela’s two-party “democracy” is that oil wealth enabled the government to grant significant concessions to different groups, incentivizing cooperation with rather than opposition to the country’s government institutions. Venezuelan society did not erupt into violence, as was characteristic of other modernizing societies, “because of the ability that the government has had to use oil resources to reduce social tensions” (Naím and Piñango [1984] 1996:556; cf. Ahumada 1967:8; Rey 1991:546-47). Different observers emphasize slightly

⁸⁵⁰ Relatedly, the “relentless pursuit of money became a normative practice” during the 1970s oil boom, such that “illegal behavior . . . established its own legitimacy” (Coronil 1997:324).

different pathways through which oil wealth caused the putative societal consensus. Some argue that oil wealth plus growth in the government bureaucracy provided opportunities for the middle classes, and their representatives played an important role in the promotion of political moderation and the pacification of class conflict (Karl 1987). Others argue that oil wealth made concessions to the working class possible, and that in exchange, the leaders of Venezuela's main union federation, the Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela (CTV), agreed to pacify the workers' movement, taking strikes and socialism off the table (Chiasson-LeBel 2020:100). And still others argue that it was oil wealth plus the advent of "democracy" that was crucial, because this gave rise to a "populist conciliation system" characterized by "a complex system of negotiation and accommodation" between a "plurality of heterogeneous interests" (Rey 1991:543).⁸⁵¹ Via one or more of these pathways, the works argue, oil wealth allowed Venezuela to avoid both a conservative military coup and a leftist social revolution, leaving its Liberal and Conservative political parties in control (López Maya and Gómez Calcaño 1989:71-72; Rey 1991:543-44).

The problem is that accounts which emphasize oil-based between-group solidarity tell us relatively little about how conflict was transfigured into the alleged consensus.⁸⁵² This is especially vexing since "exceptional democracy" arose in the aftermath of a major revolt that harbored the live possibilities of either deepening into a revolution or provoking a counterrevolution. Thus, while I agree that petroleum was important in the advent of a kind of consensus, I view both the pathway through which this happened and the nature of the consensus differently. I argue that petroleum wealth helped make the Liberal-Conservative conflict the primary elite cleavage in Venezuela because some of it was channeled to squatter settlements (in the form of material aid and conflict mediation). This use of oil wealth had two major effects. First, it encouraged squatters to lean into vertical bonds with both AD and COPEI, thereby making each of these political organizations viable and thus ensuring the perpetuation of the

⁸⁵¹ Rey argues that this contained political conflict within the new "democratic" institutions built from "utilitarian" quid-pro-quo exchanges, which convinced powerful elite minorities that their interests were not in jeopardy when the masses weighed in on government decisions and convinced the masses that representative "democracy" was a good means of achieving liberty, freedom, and wellbeing (Rey 1991:543).

⁸⁵² They also proceed on the basis of erroneously overlooking the fact that there *was* class conflict. Thus, Ellner (2008:71) criticizes them for "inadvertently applying trends that occurred during the prosperous oil-boom years of the 1970s to the entire 1958-1989 period, while ignoring the diverse expressions of class tension that were often difficult to interpret because they were accompanied by political party sectarianism and personal ambition."

competition between them. Second, it simultaneously inclined squatters to settle into a political identity which set them apart from workers and peasants, dividing the popular classes.

The leading interpretation of the political implications of the growth of Venezuela's squatter settlements (*barrios*) is that they were politically passive and that political elites coopted them. This view is put forth most clearly in Talton Ray's *The Politics of the Barrios of Venezuela* (1969), upon which I draw heavily. The urban poor rarely had "their own spokesmen" (Ray 1969:141), leaving party leaders as prime movers: due to "their capacity to mobilize mass action by the urban poor," the leaders of political parties "were able to set the style and rules of the new system" (Ray 1969:150), essentially "speak[ing] for their own parties but in the name of the barrios" (Ray 1969:141) and thereby relegating the "military and the economic elites" to the political margins (Ray 1969:149).

I agree that squatters were not *agents* in Venezuelan politics. But nor do I think they were passive. My view is that, due to urban concentration, they surged into Venezuelan politics, became impossible to ignore, and forced political elites to reorient around them; Liberals and Conservatives were most effective at doing so, which made the Liberal-Conservative cleavage the leading elite cleavage in Venezuela, thereby giving rise to "exceptional democracy." Abiding squatters' requests for subordination was something about which both Liberals and Conservatives could agree. This particular agreement as to the importance of securing squatter support structured the field according to a transfigured version of the age-old Liberal-Conservative conflict, now taking the form of mere agonistic competition.

Explanations For The Decline And Fall Of The PRI

There are three main explanations for the decline and fall of the PRI. The first emphasizes the government's massacre of university students in 1968 and how this impacted its legitimacy. The second emphasizes the economic crisis stemming from the sovereign debt default and how this impacted the allocation of patronage. And the third emphasizes the civic associations that proliferated in the 1980s, especially after the 1985 earthquake that ravaged Mexico City. I survey each in the sections to follow, finding them inadequate both on their own and in combination.

The Student Massacre

Subscribers to theories stressing the importance of legitimacy argue that the government's student massacre foretold the decline and fall of the PRI. But some disagree. Loaeza argues that conformism prevailed during Díaz Ordaz's term (Loaeza 2008:289-90). Pensado goes further, arguing that there was broad sympathy in Mexican society with the Díaz Ordaz government's 1968 student massacre (Pensado 2013:201 ff.).⁸⁵³ Like most scholars, I am doubtful Mexicans were as reactionary as Pensado thinks. But he does capture an aspect of the problem few other observers have adequately appreciated: in some ways, the massacre provoked far less discontent with the government than routinely assumed.

Participating in an international wave of mobilization, in the 1960s Mexican students mobilized considerable opposition to the Gustavo Díaz Ordaz government with a series of student strikes right up to the eve of the 1968 Olympic Games (which were to be held in Mexico City, the first time they would take place in Latin America). Díaz Ordaz was never enthusiastic about the Olympic Games (Loaeza 2008:325). But he was hell-bent on "national unity" (Loaeza 2008:329) and thus found the protests unacceptable. Whether because it was uninterested in or unable to respond to their demands, the Díaz Ordaz government massacred an unknown number of students and bystanders on 2 October at the Plaza de Tres Culturas, in Tlatelolco.⁸⁵⁴

⁸⁵³ His conservative perspective, and his emphasis on conservative views, is the defining feature of Pensado's interpretation.

⁸⁵⁴ The Díaz Ordaz administration is sometimes remembered as a time of presidential omnipotence, in part because of the massacre. But Loaeza (2008) argues that the opposite was actually the case: he confronted a political impasse which made the massacre almost inevitable. Three factors were paramount. First, there were significant restrictions placed on the exercise of power. Having taken the helm in the context of the "Mexican miracle," wherein economic growth was seen as a major success, and experiencing pressures emanating from the United States to help contain the spread of communism in Latin America subsequent to the Cuban Revolution, Díaz Ordaz attempted, almost desperately, to maintain the status quo (Loaeza 2008:297-99). As he put it in a speech, "Maintaining economic stability and political tranquility is even more difficult than having achieved them" (quoted in Loaeza 2008:302). Second, borne of the reverberations from the Cuban Revolution, the resurgent Mexican left posed a challenge to the status quo, especially among the youth. But since the pervasive popularity of Marxist ideology took place amidst the weakness of Marxist political organizations, the left challenge took a diffuse and un-institutionalized form that was difficult to combat via surgical repressive techniques. Third, there were no institutional mechanisms for the administration to negotiate an agreement with the radicalizing left, specifically between the government and the student movement (Loaeza 2008:330). Prior to the massacre there had not even been any dialogue between the president and student leaders (Loaeza 2008:333). Perhaps for this reason, and with the Olympic Games approaching, Díaz Ordaz was seemingly unable to distinguish a problem of public order from a plan to destabilize the country (Loaeza 2008:331). Due to the confluence of these three factors, Loaeza argues, the massacre, or something else very much like it, was almost inevitable (Loaeza 2008:328-34).

There is a debate about the degree to which the 1968 student massacre undermined the PRI's legitimacy. Most scholars point to 1968 as a watershed, after which the government's legitimacy deteriorated irreparably. However, those who examine empirically how Mexico responded find surprisingly little evidence for this among all major social groups except intellectuals. The left took a major hit.⁸⁵⁵ But organized labor's loyalty was hardly in question. Although students had sought to join forces with workers since 1958 (Pensado 2013:133), the PRI-aligned CTM did not respond to the 1968 massacre with any sort of solidarity; Fidel Velázquez “mumbled about foreign ideologies and applauded the repression of young subversives. Organized labor had migrated to the right wing of a ruling party” (Snodgrass 2010:168). The Mexican bourgeoisie also seems to have been unperturbed, if we are to judge from the limited evidence available (Adler Lomnitz and Pérez-Lizaur 1987:200). And nothing leads us to suggest that they would be against a massacre on principle. For the urban poor, the fundamental development stemming from the student movement was that it gave them “breathing room,” allowing them “more political space . . . to maneuver” than had been the case (Yee 2021:133). In this way, the student movement was not sufficient to undermine the PRI's support among the urban poor, but it was perhaps a necessary precondition. Some, however, argue the urban poor did not sympathize with students' plight (Guttmann 2002). And the implications stemming from the government's massacre cut in the opposite direction: the massacre had a “chilling effect” on neighborhood leaders (Yee 2021:133). And intellectuals were able to “[bring] some political and religious leaders along with them” (Camp 2002:119). But if this was enough to accelerate delegitimization, it was far too little to give rise to a different political vision. One observer concludes that “perhaps consensus existed on only one point: the political system was broken” (Aguilar Rivera 1998:86).

But even if we could conclude that the events of 1968 were the main cause of great disillusionment, this would not be especially illuminating. For regardless of the extent to which the massacre made Mexicans disillusioned with the PRI, the party endured. The main fractions of

⁸⁵⁵ The political police—especially the Dirección Federal de Seguridad—“utilized their organizational and technical superiority to infiltrate, monitor, and besiege the radicals, finally smashing the fragile infrastructure of the opposition by the early 1970s” (Navarro 2010:266). Revolutionary discourse dropped off sharply, especially after a sequel government massacre on Corpus Christi day, 1971 (Pensado 2013:239). A small layer of the most militant students went to the countryside to join guerrilla campaigns, especially in the mountains of Guerrero, marking the beginning of the Mexican dirty war (Pensado 2013:239). But even this petered out after the federal police killed the main guerrilla leader, Lucio Cabañas, in 1974.

the political elite remained united under the PRI in the aftermath of the massacre. This may have been because they understood that Díaz Ordaz had little by way of alternatives at his disposal, given his commitment to the status quo, which they shared (Díaz Ordaz repressed students in the name of national unity). No less a figure than Lázaro Cárdenas showed his dedication to the party by joining with Miguel Alemán to call for “national unity” and reject foreign elements that, these political elites alleged, had infiltrated Mexico (Pensado 2013:220). In sum, if the student movement made new popular political initiatives possible, the massacres forestalled growing radicalization. Meanwhile, the political elite remained united. So while the student movement and the government’s response may have furnished necessary conditions for the advent of different political dynamics, they did not constitute sufficient conditions for the erosion of the PRI’s base of support.

The Economic Crisis

Several rational-choice scholars point to the sovereign debt crisis of 1982 as an inflection point marking the beginning of the PRI’s decline (e.g., Greene 2007; Magaloni 2006). These scholars assume that the bountiful years of the economic “miracle” starting with the Alemán presidency allowed political elites to distribute patronage resources to, in effect, “buy” political support and argue that the austerity measures adopted in response to the debt crisis “sapped the PRI’s resource base and forced its massive patronage machine to grind toward a halt” (Greene 2007:115). They assume that government resources served to “buy” support hitherto. Just as patronage resources had kept the PRI’s base loyal, a lack of patronage resources eroded its base irreparably, precipitating its decline and eventual fall from power. Not only is this covering law-based deductive inferential technique itself epistemically unsound (Newman Forthcoming) but the operating assumption is mistaken, as we have seen in Chapter 2 and as can also be seen merely by referencing the relevant events and developments in chronological order.

PRI control was consolidated between the presidencies of Lázaro Cárdenas (1936-1940) and Miguel Alemán (1946-1952). But between 1939 and 1957, real purchasing power declined by 65 percent (Newell and Rubio 1984:96). Income also became more unequally distributed, with the bottom quintile’s income share decreasing from 4.5 to 3.5 percent of the national total between 1950 and 1963 (Camp 2002:232 n. 9). Not only was it that the Mexican miracle had not

been miraculous for average Mexicans. If resources were necessary to “buy” support, the miracle would have coincided with political failure rather than success.

Rational-choice views are also fundamentally misleading as regards the correlation between patronage resources and the decline of the PRI. The PRI tried to use patronage to the ends these scholars indicate at the time they would have needed to in order to secure support. Under President Echeverría, from 1971 to 1976, the number of government enterprises increased from 86 to 740;⁸⁵⁶ the public sector deficit increased from 2.2 to 9.9 percent of GDP; and the foreign public debt increased from \$4 billion to \$22 billion (Knight 2010:32).⁸⁵⁷ Echeverría appointed a disproportionate number of young people to important government posts. Rational choice scholars would expect significant political dividends from distribution of patronage jobs through public enterprises (the number of which grew significantly under Echeverría). If patronage resources had been capable of buying support, support would have surged under Echeverría and his successor, López Portillo. But the opposite was true: support withered at precisely this time.

The argument for which the vote-buying assumption serves is also mistaken. There is no doubt that the Mexican government’s austerity measures contributed to the hardships endured by millions of Mexicans. But many had long endured dire economic conditions; 1982 was not necessarily even an inflection point as regards material hardship. (It was, however, an inflection point for the influence of Yale University-trained neoliberal technocrats who thenceforth increasingly held the levers of power. But for scholars to fixate on them is, again, to magnify the concerns of a social group similar if not identical to themselves—betraying a mixture of obsession with the professional middle class and acceptance of the scholastic fallacy.)

It is true that absolute poverty increased from 1984 to 1989 (Camp 2002:253 n. 47). But by 1982 the PRI was already hemorrhaging support among the urban poor, as I show below. So to say that the 1982 crisis was a watershed is as inaccurate as to say PRI control was a product of the economic “miracle.” It was not the lack of *resources* per se which caused the “patronage machine to grind toward a halt” (Greene 2007:115). It was the machine itself which changed, a

⁸⁵⁶ Beezley (2010:202) claims the number of government enterprises increased from 80 to 1,155 under Echeverría.

⁸⁵⁷ In the countryside, Echeverría tried to bolster support by undertaking agrarian reform measures—the most radical such measures that had been undertaken since Cárdenas—in the northwest (Beezley 2010:201; Knight 2010:33). And for workers, “real wages reached their twentieth-century peak in 1976” (Snodgrass 2010:171).

process which started a decade earlier. That is why the PRI's electoral support temporarily surged in the 1983 midterm elections (Davis 1994:274)—a blip which rational choice adherents would be hard-pressed to explain away—even while it continued to decline in Mexico City (Davis 1994:275). So while it is true that the PRI's patronage machine suffered, this was not principally due to the lack of resources, which were scarce for most of the time the PRI ruled but relatively abundant during the exact period when support began to plummet, and were again relatively scarce when support temporarily rebounded. Resources did not make politics, and resource constraints did not unmake them either.

Civic Associational Proliferation

Tocquevillians argue that civic associations proliferated in the 1980s, and that they sapped the “authoritarian” PRI of support. This is not exactly wrong. The problem is that it is very imprecise and remains a mere descriptive account, not an explanatory one that tells us *why* associations were not incorporated—why they now opposed the PRI rather than supported it, as they had in the previous era. There is nothing inherent about associations that leads to a lack of support for authoritarianism (Berman 1997; Riley 2005; Satyanath, Voigtländer, and Voth 2017). Indeed, Echeverría tried to use the technique of association to bolster the government by developing a *junta de vecinos* system, which, Davis explains,

“sought to quickly build grassroots support by constructing a direct line of communication between the neighborhoods and the Distrito Federal government and bypassing the old-guard networks. The nucleus of this new system was the *junta*, or community organization. Each of the sixteen electoral *delegaciones* of the Distrito Federal would now have a *junta de vecinos*, or neighborhood council, whose elected leader would serve on a consultative council to the Mexico City mayor. . . . to restore incentives for the urban poor and middle classes to participate politically” (Davis 1994:198).

Everyone agrees *that* this worked out poorly for the PRI. The question is *why*.

Some point to the upsurge in civic organizations in the aftermath of the government's incompetent response to the 1985 earthquake, which rocked and ravaged Mexico City. Disillusionment in the government was widespread in the aftermath of the disaster (e.g., Poniatowska 1995:118, 153, 219-21, 234) and anti-government civic organizations proliferated (Marván Laborde 2012:514 ff.). There had already been an upsurge in anti-government urban social movements among both the middle classes and the urban poor, which coalesced into the

National Coordinating Committee of the Urban Popular (Coordinadora Nacional del Movimiento Urbano Popular, CONAMUP), in 1981 and 1982. Davis (1994:272) notes that “before 1982, Mexico City’s urban social movements had been based primarily in specific neighborhoods, which made it easier for the CNOP and other party activists to co-opt or accommodate urban demands. But when these urban social movements joined together into the CONAMUP in late 1981 and 1982, they became a danger to the CNOP’s institutional efficacy. Making matters worse, it was becoming clear to residents themselves that the CNOP was losing control over low-income populations and middle classes in the capital city, which gave further incentive to bypass the party and join urban movements. It can be estimated that by 1982 there were close to 180,000 residents active in urban social movements in Mexico City.”⁸⁵⁸

If an earthquake was not necessary to spawn CONAMUP, what was responsible for its advent? Two kinds of actor-centric accounts have been put forward. Some argue that, due to their political exclusion and spatial segregation, the urban poor developed neighborhood association-based forms of local democracy (Monsiváis 1987:33 ff.). But their efforts would have had to be truly Herculean to cast off PRI control if it was as tenacious as many claim. Others emphasize the role of outsiders who attempted to organize the urban poor, such as radicalized Jesuit students (Yee 2021). But liberation theology had a relatively limited impact in Mexico, at least when compared to elsewhere in Latin America.⁸⁵⁹

As I argue in the chapters above, the reason for the advent of anti-government associational phenomena in the poor neighborhoods of Mexico City, such as those affiliated with CONAMUP, lay in how urban concentration affected pre-existing associational patterns,

⁸⁵⁸ On the development of urban social movement coalitions, see also Ramírez Sáiz (1986:141 et passim). On the subsequent evolution of urban social movements into “citizenship” movements, see Tamayo (1999).

⁸⁵⁹ Liberation theology did not impact Mexico as much as some other Latin American countries. While those who attended the Gregorian University in Rome between 1962 and 1965 “were deeply affected by the experience” (Camp 2002:2002), the old guard managed to retain control for the most part. On the one hand, Mexican priests who attended the Gregorian University after 1963 were housed in a separate college from the rest of the Spanish American contingent (Camp 2002:242 n. 26). On the other, during the late-1960s and 1970s the Mexican Catholic Church flushed a large number of students from its seminary programs because they showed excessive zeal and an orientation to serving the poor (Camp 1997). Vatican II was still important. Mexican bishops thought the Church would not have adopted a pro-democracy activist role in the 1980s and 1990s had Vatican II not taken place (Camp 1997:87). And priests’ “attitudes toward politics, civic responsibility, and political participation were fundamental in laying the groundwork for much of the grass-roots movements supporting electoral choice and competitiveness, especially in the provinces” (Camp 2002:203).

generating conflict that enhanced neighborhood leaders' autonomy and ability to peel support away from the PRI and throw their weight behind other political initiatives.

Appendix C: Archives and Libraries Consulted

This dissertation is based on over 45,000 pages of primary sources culled from numerous archives and libraries, many of which sources have never been consulted by historical researchers before. (In addition to the primary sources, I of course draw from the rich secondary research on each case in English, Spanish, and French.) The archival fieldwork alone took 20 months. I list each of the archives and libraries from which I gathered materials below.

Mexico

Archives

Archivo General de la Nación (Mexico) (AGN[M])/

Dirección General de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales (DGIPS)

Presidentes/

Lázaro Cárdenas del Río (LCR)

Miguel Ávila Camacho (MAC)

Miguel Alemán Valdés (MAV)

Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (GDO)

Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional (SEDENA)

Archivo Histórico de la Ciudad de México/

Departamento del Distrito Federal (DDF)/

Obras Públicas

Libraries

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México/

Hemeroteca Nacional

Private library of María Cristina Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández

Peru

Archives

Archivo General de la Nación, Archivo Republicano (AGN[P])/

Poder Ejecutivo (PE)/

Gobierno (G)/

Ministerio de Interior (MI)/

Prefectura de Lima (PL)/

Particulares (P)/

Expedientes/

Guardia Republicana/

Ministerios/

Policía/

Subprefectura de Lima/

Ministerio del Interior (MI)/

Prefecturas/

Fondos Varios y Colecciones (FVC)/

Comisión Distribuidora de los Fondos Pro-Desocupados/

Libraries

Biblioteca Nacional del Perú/

Hemeroteca Nacional

Instituto Riva Agüero/

Hemeroteca
Private library of José Ragas

Venezuela

Archives

Archivo del Distrito Sucre, Estado Miranda
Archivo General de la Secretaría del Concejo Municipal del Distrito Federal (AGSCM)
Archivo General de la Secretaría del Concejo Municipal del Distrito Federal (Tinajitas)
(AGSCM[T])
Archivo Histórico de la Asamblea Nacional
Archivo Histórico de Miraflores
Biblioteca Nacional de Venezuela/
 Fondos Documentales/
 Archivo Partido Comunista de Venezuela
Centro de Documentación Ramón Tovar

Libraries

Archivo del Cronista de Caracas/
 Biblioteca
Archivo General de la Nación (AGN[V])/
 Biblioteca
Banco Central de Venezuela (BCV)/
 Biblioteca
Biblioteca Nacional de Venezuela (BNV)/
 Hemeroteca
 Libros Raros y Folletos
FUNDACOMUNAL/
 Biblioteca del Instituto Nacional de la Vivienda (INAVI)

Universidad Central de Venezuela (UCV)/
Biblioteca Central

Elsewhere

University of California, Berkeley, United States of America/
Environmental Design Library/
Francis Violich Collection

University of Westminster, London, England/
John Francis Charlewood Turner Collection (JFTC)

A Note About The Main Primary Sources Upon Which This Study Is Based

This dissertation draws far more on some kinds of primary sources than others,⁸⁶⁰ depending on case. Since the cases examined here themselves differed as regards the government agencies most attuned to squatter settlements, it would not be epistemically appropriate (or even possible) to use equivalent administrative records as sources. Let me elaborate on this point, taking each case in turn. First, in addition to correspondence from citizens to the President, which are valuable sources, Mexico had a federal government spy agency that was responsible for keeping close tabs on local affairs and sending reports to federal security officials, making its records “a gold mine” for studying local politics in general (Padilla 2008:17; see also Gillingham and Smith 2014:8; Knight 2005:5 n.12) and those of Mexico City in particular. But neither Peru nor Venezuela had such a security agency with that kind of responsibility, at least insofar as historical researchers are aware. Second, Lima’s prefecture was the main government agency responsible for addressing squatter-settlement problems in that city, making its records the most relevant source. In contrast, while there was a prefecture of Caracas, it was not of central

⁸⁶⁰ John Goldthorpe (1991) has argued that primary sources writ large are a poor basis upon which to pursue sociological conclusions, for such “relics” are inevitably less complete than “sociological” evidence tailored to the research question and collected in real time. While it is true that, if one could choose, it is often preferable to collect data and draw conclusions contemporaneously, this is far from always the case, for official records, which are often important sources, are sometimes released only long after the events and processes in question have entered into the past (Bryant 1994:7; Mann 1994:38). The latter is the case for the present study.

importance for squatter affairs, making its records (whose whereabouts is unknown) of seemingly little relevance; and in Mexico, prefects (*jefes políticos*) were fashioned into the federal government's means of penetrating the hinterland in the 19th century, making them and the data associated with them irrelevant for Mexico City's squatter settlements. Finally, Caracas's city government had an agent of the aggrieved party (a *síndico* headed the Sindicatura Municipal's Oficina de Asistencia Jurídica), which was the main government agency responsible for resolving disputes in the city's squatter settlements, making its records one of the best existing sources of information on local dynamics in the city's squatter settlements. In contrast, Mexico's and Peru's *síndicos* were tasked mainly with overseeing public financial matters, making their records largely irrelevant. Thus, the government agencies most attuned to squatter affairs—and thus the public administration records most relevant for studying squatters—varied by case.

Mexico

Presidential correspondence is a valuable window into neighborhood-level politics in Mexico City. This is, in part, because other local leaders and organizations emerged alongside the officially-recognized neighborhood associations and appealed to the president for the redress of grievances: “in the face of the arbitrariness of the leaders and authorities, and in the face of the corrupt and repressive practices that prevailed in the Federal District's Oficina de Colonias [the agency in charge of *colonias proletarias*], several associations opposed to the [officially-recognized] Pro-mejoramiento associations emerged, directing their demands towards other government agencies, above all to the president of the republic” (Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández 2005:248, note omitted). The fact that they appealed to the sitting president makes presidential correspondence a valuable source for examining local events (Azuela de la Cruz and Cruz Rodríguez 1989; de Antuñano 2017; Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández 2005).

The central government's spy agency, the Dirección General de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales (DGIPS), was, with some alterations of the name, in existence from 1947 to 1985.⁸⁶¹

⁸⁶¹ It was initially called the *Departamento* de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales, then *Dirección* de IPS, and then *Dirección General* de IPS.

According to the *Memoria de la Secretaría de Gobernación* for 1976-1982 (quoted in Salazar Anaya and Hernández y Lazo 2006:11), it was dedicated to “investigating and analyzing relevant sociopolitical events of national life and [writing] reports on these matters.” Its agents “spied on dissidents and on the PRI itself, [including] its various organs and affiliated organisations” (Padilla and Walker 2013:4). The spy reports have been immortalized in fiction and film,⁸⁶² but researchers also deem them fairly accurate—as opposed to publicly-oriented propaganda or political operatives’ hopeful projections—since they were used to inform decisions at the highest levels of Mexican politics.⁸⁶³ One should not, of course, approach such sources in an unmediated, pre-theoretical way, as if they were self-evident datapoints (cf. Stoler 2009:44-46). Some reports are of course erroneous.⁸⁶⁴ But it is possible to cross-reference spy reports and to compare them with newspaper reports to correct at least some errors and, more importantly, to gradually construct what is probably a pretty accurate picture of the relationships at play and how they changed over time. It is, therefore, fortuitous that researchers can read these spy reports at all; they were declassified in 2002 (Padilla and Walker 2013:2; Salazar Anaya and Hernández y Lazo 2006:2).⁸⁶⁵

Peru

Historical researchers of Peru face the daunting task of poor cataloguing of materials in the resource-strapped Archivo General de la Nación, at least in the division of the archive dedicated to the republican period. There are, however, very valuable sources to be found for those who sift through the thick *legajos* comprising the *particulares* section of the Prefectura de Lima (PL) records (Drinot 2001; 2011). I systematically combed through *legajos*

⁸⁶² Two novels—Carlos Montemayor’s *Los informes secretos* (1999) and Fritz Glöckner *Cementerio de papel* (2007), which was also turned into a film directed by Mario Hernández carrying the same title (2008)—revolve around these archives.

⁸⁶³ Gobernación was, along with the PRI itself, the main mechanism for centralized political control in Mexico (Langston 2017:43-44).

⁸⁶⁴ E.g., AGN(M)/DGIPS/Caja 1658A/Exp. 5/Folio 176 (23 August 1980).

⁸⁶⁵ Declassification was the result of passage of the Ley Federal de Transparencia y Acceso a la Información Pública Gubernamental, *Diario Oficial de la Federación* (11 June 2002), pp. 2-15.

3.9.5.1.15.1.11.26 to 3.9.5.1.15.1.11.72, which cover the mid-1940s to the early-1960s, collecting all dossiers (*expedientes*) concerning squatter affairs. These *expedientes* typically start with a complaint (*denuncia*) written by a neighborhood leader or an ordinary resident, followed by several reports from police officers the prefect dispatched to look into the matter at hand. While such sources often fail to illuminate the topic of this dissertation, a number of them do shed valuable light on the political relations surrounding Lima's *barriadas*, especially those which include additional materials from neighborhood leaders and residents.

Venezuela

Social historians of Venezuela suffer from a paucity of rich archived primary sources (Parker 1985). The existing historical research dealing with 20th century urban politics in Caracas is based principally on interviews. Historians have employed such sources masterfully, and supplemented them with urban planning documents and newspaper sources to craft insightful and compelling accounts (Ollivier 2017; Velasco 2015). Nevertheless, for this study, I wanted to rely mostly on sources produced by (and with) the people upon whom I focus at the time of the events I study. Fortunately, I was able to gain access to Federal District city government sources from the Archivo General de la Secretaría del Concejo Municipal del Distrito Federal (AGSCM) and, with considerable effort and invaluable help, to the records of its Sindicatura Municipal—specifically, its Oficina de Asistencia Jurídica (AJ), which was created in 1963 to “provide free legal aid to low-income communities”⁸⁶⁶ and presented itself as the main government agency responsible for resolving disputes in Caracas's squatter settlements⁸⁶⁷—they have in storage. For this reason⁸⁶⁷, my account provides insights that historians who value granular evidence will appreciate. Besides the reports written by AJ functionaries,⁸⁶⁸ these sources include a variety of letters and petitions written by squatters and

⁸⁶⁶ Ovidio Gimenez D'Martini, *Informe anual de actividades: Sindicatura Municipal, Sección de Asistencia Jurídica, año 1980* (January 1981), n.p., AGSCM(T)/Caja 405 [1981]/ Exp. CORRESPONDENCIA RECIBIDA 3. Asistencia Jurídica also inherited materials on squatter affairs from the Sindicatura Municipal dating to before it existed; its records include files from as early as 1959. To my knowledge, only one study has drawn upon these sources to focus on the nature of property rights in Caracas's squatter settlements (Pérez Perdomo and Nikken 1979).

⁸⁶⁷ *La Verdad*, 13 September 1965.

⁸⁶⁸ Pérez Perdomo and Nikken (1979) appear to have drawn most of their conclusions from these reports.

neighborhood leaders, providing valuable documentation of the myriad disputes and conflicts that arose between residents in Caracas's *barrios*, especially between 1966 and 1977. They are warehoused in edificio Tinajitas (T).

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