Protest in space, among social groups and in time: towards an historically informed agenda of studying urban discontent in autocracies

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FROM THE EDITORS: Cities and Urban Politics

by Eugene Finkel, Adria Lawrence, and Andrew Mertha

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The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in the 11-million-person city of Wuhan, China, has had a particularly severe impact on cities across the globe to date. At this writing, New York City, Detroit, New Orleans and Boston are among the hardest hit in the United States, and the number of cases is increasing in cities and towns in other parts of the world. The combination of poverty and pollution in densely-settled areas provides a particularly acute set of challenges. This current global crisis underscores an urgent need to pay attention to how the environments in which we live affect our politics. How do politics vary from city to town to village? How do urban and rural spaces affect public attitude and behaviors? How does space configure the kinds of public programs that can or should be implemented? How does it shape contentious politics? Is there a kind of politics that is specifically urban? How do urban politics differ in developing countries?

The crisis we face today makes the study of urban settings more critical than ever before. When we set out to devote the current issue of the newsletter to this topic, the pandemic had not yet begun, but there were still two pressing reasons to reflect on cities and urban politics. First, there has been a growing sense of the substantive importance of understanding cities in the 21st century. Cities, as the authors in this issue note, have grown rapidly over the last half century, with urbanization leading to the concentration of population in urban centers in many countries. This concentration has consequences not only for issues such as resource use and allocation, but also for the political context. Scholars and analysts have noted that an increase in political polarization may reflect a growing divide between rural and urban populations, with space affecting the ways in which people understand their interests. Political ideology appears to differ from city to suburb to small town. The spaces in which we live increasingly appears to configure political demands, identities, behaviors and policies.

The second reason we chose to highlight this area of research is because urban politics is experiencing a bit of a renaissance in the discipline. Urban politics was, in decades past, relegated to a small corner of American politics, but with the growth of urban centers and the particular challenges and promises of that growth, scholars in comparative politics have undertaken new research on cities and space that assesses substantive arguments using cases from all over the world.

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In this issue, we turn to a group of scholars who are doing cutting-edge research on political processes that unfold in urban spaces. Our contributors use a diverse set of qualitative and quantitative research techniques to discuss a wide range of well-established and emerging topics in the study of urban spaces and urban politics: housing, protests and social movements, crime, informal economy, environment, political behavior and attitudes.

Several contributions address housing politics, a paramount issue in any urban space. Maureen M. Donaghy focuses on the provision of public benefits by municipal authorities. Public benefits provided by national level governments are at the center of social science research and political debates, but benefits provided by local governments are no less important for the survival and wellbeing of millions of urban residents across the globe. Zooming in on the provision of affordable housing and comparing Atlanta, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Washington, Donaghy highlights the importance of social movements and grassroot organizations for our understanding of public benefits offered by cities. Yue Zhang also approaches urban housing policies from a comparative perspective. Focusing on urban governance issues in China, India, and Brazil she provides a typology of urban governance regimes – integrated, pro-growth, contested, and clientistic. Tanu Kumar studies the impact of homeownership on political behavior and attitudes in developing countries. The contribution utilizes a natural experiment in Mumbai, India, where citizens were assigned subsidized homes through a lottery. Kumar finds that homeownership increased the lottery winners' interest and participation in communal and political affairs.

Governance of mega-cities is a key issue of 21st century politics. Focusing on the case study of Nanjing, Kyle A. Jaros analyzes the changes to the district structure of Chinese urban centers. Such changes, the article shows, help scholars to better understand the internal politics of China's cities. Jaros also demonstrates how the authoritarian and hierarchal nature of China's political system affects urban governance. Climate change, pollution, and other environmental issues also pose governance challenges to urban spaces. Yet comparative politics scholars, notes Veronica Herrera, largely neglect city-level environmental issues and politics. Studying environmental politics in urban settings, the article shows, can substantially improve our understanding of not only this crucial policy area, but also of topics such as collective action, mobilization, regulation and elections. Eduardo Moncada centers on crime and criminal violence, another important political and governance challenge confronting cities in the developing world. Moncada relies on extensive fieldwork in Medellin, Colombia to analyze how citizens resist victimization by criminal groups. The article shows how pre-existing institutions and capture of police forces by criminal actors affect the strategies of resistance to criminal violence.

Contentious politics and protests are a major focus of urban politics scholarship. Jeffrey W. Paller studies protest mobilization in Africa and offers an analytical framework that sees urbanization as "a contentious political process where population growth leads to competing and often conflicting claims on a city." Perceptions of urban citizenship and claims to urban space, Paller argues, help us to better understand mobilization processes in the Global South. Contributions by Tomila Lankina and Regina Smyth focus on urban protests in Russia and post-communist states. Lankina argues

for the incorporation of historical legacies into urban politics research. The past, she shows, matters for understanding present-day protest and non-protest in post-communist states. Scholars of urban mobilization ignore history at their peril while closer attention to legacies of the past can substantially improve our understanding of contemporary contentious politics. Smyth analyzes small-scale, non-political urban activism in Russia. Whereas most research on contentious politics and mobilization in post-communist states centers on large scale political protests and revolutions, Smyth demonstrates how and under which conditions non-political mobilization targeting local level authorities might allow for subsequent politically oriented collective action.

Technological innovations and changes affect politics not only at the national but also at the local levels. As Eleonora Pasotti shows, one effect of such innovations was the growing importance of branding in urban politics. Instead of relying on traditional political divisions, now both city governments and protesters rely on branding to promote or fight against urban development and growth policies.

Understanding individuals in various urban contexts is another important and growing research area. Chagai Weiss discusses the role of residential segregation in shaping intergroup relations. More specifically, he reviews the existing scholarship on how, why, and under what conditions segregation affects intergroup relations. According to Weiss, unpacking the black

box of contact in urban spaces can substantially improve our understanding of intergroup relations in urban settings. Hakeem Bishi and Shelby Grossman discuss the methodological issues of conducting research on participants in informal urban economies in the Global South. By drawing on their experience surveying informal market traders in Nigeria and Benin they discuss the limitations of the traditional sampling strategies and offer two new approaches: "full census" and "grid + partial census," which help to better analyze political attitudes and informal economies in the developing world. Finally, whereas most urban politics scholars focus on large cities, Jennifer Fitzgerald studies how citizens think about, relate to, and experience their local communities in the small towns and villages of France. Focusing on such communities, Fitzgerald argues, allows scholars to better understand the "locally embedded individual," namely the political implications of the ways individuals relate to their communities and processes and conditions which shape these individuals' political beliefs and behavior.

These articles precede this Newsletter's special feature. Neither scholars of comparative politics nor the broader public can avoid the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals and societies. The special feature of this Newsletter issue is a collection of short Q&As with experts on topics ranging from media to military medicine discussing the impact of the pandemic on the issues they study. ●

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THE ORGANIZED SECTION IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

BACK TO SUMMARY

ELICITING URBAN PUBLIC BENEFITS AND SERVICES: Evidence from community organizations for housing

by Maureen M. Donaghy

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For nearly a century, political scientists have debated why some countries offer more generous welfare benefits than others. The answers generally revolve around democratic institutions, political culture, and wealth, among other variables. While questions about the provision of public benefits continue to provide new avenues of research at the national level, decisions around benefits at the federal level significantly impact the day-to-day survival of billions of people living in cities. Research at the city or municipal level on public benefits and services not only serves to elucidate the influence of national governance systems, but also demonstrates how local politics differ in responding to the needs of residents. In other words, we need to know not just the impact of national governments, but also how politics in cities, themselves, generate responsiveness and accountability and drive the motivations of actors within municipal institutions.

Whether or not we, as academics, are directly involved in research on cities in the Global North or South, we know that too many low-income urban residents around the world lack the basic necessities of sufficient food, clean water, and secure shelter. The current crisis surrounding COVID-19 lays bare the severity of health and economic consequences resulting from these inequities. Basic services, such as trash collection, schools, health care clinics, and public transport often remain outside the means of too many citizens. We also know that given the scale of these challenges, the state must be involved in providing solutions, in terms of subsidies, infrastructural development, land rights, and direct provision of benefits and services. Individuals, communities, and non-governmental organizations simply cannot meet current needs without public support. But how are city, state, and federal governments persuaded to prioritize low-income urban residents given the many demands of their constituencies?

The answer from scholars and practitioners across the world has often been that a strong civil society is needed to push government authorities into meeting the needs of low-income communities. At the city level, however, there has been a long debate about whether community organizations can outweigh the force of coalitions formed by business and government, eager for profit and revenues to be had from urban development (for example, Stone 1988). More recently, though, scholars acknowledge

the key role that community organizations play in enabling the stronger, more stable growth that comes from increasing equity and security among residents. A growing literature on urban politics finds evidence of the expanding role that civil society plays in providing information on the problems facing low-income residents and advocating for government interventions (for example, see Pasotti 2020 and Paller 2019). As I argue below, from social movements in São Paulo to non-profit community developers in Washington, DC, and everywhere in between, community organizations are fighting every day for city governments to provide greater resources and enact regulations that serve the needs of low-income residents.

For decades a crisis of housing affordability had been devastating low-income communities.

More specifically, I investigate the role of civil society in bringing about benefits for affordable and secure housing. For decades a crisis of housing affordability had been devastating low-income communities in cities from Brazil to the United States. In this time, housing security has become an increasingly significant issue in urban politics as residents beg their governments to protect them from surging rents, home prices, taxes, and insecurity. In this context, mayors debate the merits of various policies and programs to promote affordable and secure housing. But what is not up for debate, generally, is the scale of the challenges increasingly apparent to all.

In this brief essay, I share insights on what we know about the strategies community organizations pursue to elicit investment from municipal governments and what we still need to understand in terms of what works across cities that vary by institutions, resources, and governance.

In particular, I focus on the provision of direct housing benefits and policies meant to enable low-income urban residents to access secure and decent shelter in cities across the North/South divide. Evidence from my own research in cities in the United States and Brazil suggests that the strategies of these organizations, which directly reflect their ideology and their relationship with the state, matter for the outcomes they achieve. The means of empowerment organizations pursue effects the path for accomplishing the grand goal of inclusive cities called for by the UN and "right to the city" advocates around the world. In the near future, however, more comparative research across cities will clarify the extent to which differing institutions, cultural traditions, and governance arrangements influence the reach of community organizations working to demand public benefits and services for low-income residents

Urban Challenges

The imperative to study cities is clear to scholars and practitioners of development worldwide. Compared to rural areas, cities across the world hold significant promise for development, including gains in education, health improvements, and income generation. As such, we must confront the many challenges facing cities in order to fulfill the long-term promise of improving the quality of life for all. Between 1990 and 2015, the number of people living in cities practically doubled, led by growth in Asia, and followed by Europe, Latin America, and Africa (UN-Habitat 2016). With this enormous growth in cities has come expanded challenges for providing basic services and infrastructure, key elements for the ability of cities to provide for the quality of life of residents and to maximize productivity among the population. In a study of basic services, in-

cluding potable water supply, sanitation, waste management, transportation, and energy, the United Cities and Local Governments found that as cities gain in wealth, they are better able to provide these services to a growing proportion of the population (UCLG 2013). Significant variation remains between regions as to which cities are increasingly meeting basic needs, and without basic services to start, developing country cities are at risk of stagnation or worse.

Alongside the inability to provide basic services is the growth of people living in slums and informal settlements. According to UN Habitat, though the percentage of the urban population living in slums has declined over the past two decades, the total number of people in slums continues to rise, surging to close to a billion people in 2015 (UN Habitat 2016). Though cities in the Global South have experienced the greatest rise in population and influx in slums, cities of the Global North confront many similar challenges of housing insecurity and affordability. In the United States, cities including Atlanta, Washington, DC, and New York have inequality levels, – as measured by the GINI index – similar to developing country cities, such as Nairobi and Buenos Aires (UN Habitat 2016). By 2025, UN Habitat estimates that over 2 billion people across the globe will require access to adequate, affordable housing. Contributing to the problems of housing globally are lack of supply, lack of political prioritization, and ineffective policies and programs. The scale of these challenges has motivated governments to increasingly undertake public-private partnerships, leveraging the resources of the private sector while often commoditizing basic goods and services for the population. But clearly more must be done to ensure a basic standard of living for urban dwellers.

In Latin America, and Brazil in particular, dissatisfaction with new democratic governments in the late 1990's and early 2000's led to a shift to the left in many cities, often aligned with social movements and non-governmental organizations oriented around housing issues. In the United States, evolving recognition of the continued role of race in housing access, growing frustration with income inequality, and reaction to gentrification pressures fueled the origin and revival of community-based organizations fighting for housing among low-income residents. A convergence in the crisis of affordability across cities motivated an urban politics increasingly focused on the role of the state in meeting residents' need for shelter. UN Sustainable Development Goal 11 states that by 2030, all member nations should "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable," with 11.1 calling for states to "ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services" (UN-Habitat 2016). The question is what or who will drive cities to meet these goals.

Urban Community Organizations

As mentioned above, though past research on urban politics, particularly from the United States, argued against an influential role for community organizations, more recently scholars and practitioners recognize the increasing impact of civil society on creating more equitable conditions for economic development. In particular, Clarence Stone, the pioneer of regime theory in the US, now argues that we are living in "a new era" in which community-level actors have a greater role to play in directing urban policies and programs (Stone et al. 2015). No longer do business interests and government officials simply coalesce to undermine the pow-

er of community organizations, but rather each increasingly recognizes the strength of local actors in creating more holistic, balanced development that ultimately benefits all sectors. In Latin America, as well, there are numerous examples of organizations representing low-income communities confronting the coalition of public officials and real estate interests to elicit investment that benefits the poor (see for example, Rubin and Bennett 2015; Sandbrook et al. 2007).

In addition, the debate coming out of the neoliberal era regarding the preference for the market over the state to solve social challenges no longer drives discussions of public benefits provision, with acknowledgment that both the private and public sectors play critical roles. In the past two decades cities have seen a surging role for community organizations advocating for affordable and secure housing amidst recognition that the market cannot solve the crisis of affordability nor provide safe options for the lowest-income citizens. Still, housing in particular tests this notion that businesses and government accept the role of community organizations representing low-income citizens because of the direct threat to quick profits and revenues. As such, business interests and public officials still need strong incentives to preserve and create low-income housing (Purcell 2008). The question is how community organizations are best able to wield power to shape program and policy decisions and implementation.

Recent evidence from a survey conducted by UN Habitat, the Global Network of Cities, Local, and Regional Governments, and the London School of Economics provides confirmation

that civil society organizations in general have a largely positive influence on the decisions of municipal government officials to enact urban policies (London School of Economics 2016). While officials ranked elections as the most influential type of participation, they also identified local referenda, public consultations, protests-demonstrations, neighborhood advisory committees, social media campaigns, and public hearings as wielding significant influence.[1]

As the survey indicates, community organizations in cities around the world have developed wide-ranging repertoires of activities to influence public policies and programs. While courts adjudicate property disputes, protests arouse disruption in the city, which can lead to enhanced incentives for officials to attend to the demands of protestors. Organizations across cities also undertake occupation of land, buildings, and government property, both out of necessity for a place to live and as a form of bringing the attention of government officials to the problems of housing insecurity. Legal claims, protests, and occupations may also coincide with public campaigns domestically and internationally to shame governments into taking positive actions. Further, collectivizing information, through advocacy campaigns and media reports builds public pressure. Together, all of these tactics often lead to direct negotiation with government officials in face-to-face meetings, sometimes resulting in the promise of new policies and programs.

But the debate remains as to how community organizations make decisions about the best ways to achieve their stated demands, and further, what works in bringing about their pre-

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1. For further information, please see: https://urbangovernance.net/en/.

ferred outcomes. In my book, *Democratizing Urban Development: Strategies and Outcomes of Community Organizations for Housing across the United States and Brazil* (2018), I argue for recognizing the importance of strategies, rather than tactics alone, in shaping the impact of community organizations in eliciting policies and programs to address housing needs. Sidney Tarrow (1998) famously argued that social movements adopt "repertoires of contention" that range from cooperative to contentious actions, choosing activities at certain times based on the greatest possibility for leveraging power. But by looking at the strategies of organizations, rather than repertoires, we gain a more holistic understanding of the goals, tactics, and targets, without dichotomizing the actions they undertake as either cooperative or contentious.

Strategies involve a plan of action, which is purposive, collective, and context specific (Maney et al. 2012). To this end, in the book I developed a typology of strategies the reflects the locus of collective efforts and the nature of the desired change. *Inclusionary strategies* are those in which organizations intend to influence public decision-making from within government institutions and enable citizen choice, while *indirect strategies* are those in which influence is mediated by persuasion of government officials, voters, or other actors. For example, inclusionary strategies may involve the use of participatory institutions to directly make program and policy proposals, often with the ability to vote on their adoption by the state. Indirect strategies rely on public pressure, votes, or the will of government officials to act as the organization requests. Further, I identified *overhaul strategies* as those that seek to change institutions

or leadership, and *exit strategies*, which involve autonomous solutions or assistance external from the local government. The typology builds on Hirschman's (1970) revered *"Exit, Voice, and Loyalty"* treatise, indicating the choices individuals and groups make in the face of discontent with the state.

The choice of strategies, I find in my case studies of Atlanta, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Washington, DC over the last decade, is largely dependent on two key variables: the ideology of the organization and its relationship with the state. On the ground, we see tremendous variation in the strategies organizations pursue, particularly among those that fight for the right to the city and those that are more conservative in their approach to working within existing political institutions and structures. Organizations that adopt Lefebvre's classic call for the right to the city in which citizens seek to re-shape the city to be more inclusive and reflective of citizens' needs, tend to adopt inclusionary strategies, particularly when they enjoy a close relationship with the state.[2]

For example, housing movements in the city of São Paulo, under a left-leaning mayoral administration in the mid 2010's, demonstrated a preference for inclusionary strategies as they sought to work within the long-fought over participatory institutions, undertook leadership roles within the city government, and used judicial institutions to claim the rights of citizenship. In Washington, DC, where housing organizations also benefited from a close relationship with Mayor Muriel Bowser and her administration, leaders took a different approach to eliciting money for government programs through ad-

2. See Lefebvre, Henri. 1995. "The Right to the City." In *Writings on Cities*, eds. E. Kofman and E. Lebas, 63–181. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

vocacy campaigns and public testimony to city council hearings. The constant pressure from groups across the two cities succeeded in prioritizing housing within both administrations, though the outcomes looked different as groups in São Paulo achieved a more expansive institutionalized role while those in DC primarily won gains in funding for housing programs. Both outcomes were critical for assisting low-income residents to secure housing, but in the long run, I argue that community organizations need to be more radical in their approach to structural change in governance arrangements to promote long-term prioritization of housing needs.

Further, Atlanta and Rio de Janeiro represented cases in which community organizations fighting for low-income housing had very weak relationships with the city administrations. In Atlanta, in the mid-2010's, housing organizations lacked the political clout, for the most part, to play a major role in policy making. Their activities were limited by a lack of leadership and fear of disrupting the power structure. In Rio de Janeiro, prior to the 2016 Olympic Games, community organizations, including those fighting against removal for stadium development, sought to circumvent the conservative administration by seeking international attention in the midst of media leading up to the Games. While this type of "exit" strategy held some success for members of the community of Vila Autódromo, in particular, they were unable to break through the political structure for the long-term.

Sustaining the momentum of community organizations to influence urban policies and programs for years if not decades takes extreme amounts of commitment from leaders and members dedicated to the fight. However, if cities are to be more inclusive, these organizations need to be present at the decision-making table, ensuring that a diversity of voices are not only heard but acted upon in policy making and implementation.

Future Research

Perhaps never before in recent history has it been more important to address the well-being of low-income residents as we face new challenges of global depression and disease. Civil society will have to be at the forefront of efforts to make sure governments respond to the needs of low-income residents as they consider how best to re-start and re-grow global economies. To understand this possibility, we still need to know much more about how an organization's ideology and relationship with the state encourage adoption of various strategies across cities that vary by regime type, cultural traditions, and governance arrangements. For instance, in Sub-Saharan African cities, tribal norms concerning land rights may mediate the relationship of community organizations with government officials. Comparative case studies could serve to identify what works – as well as where and when –in term of eliciting government benefits and services. The imperative for understanding these issues has never been greater, particularly as the world faces the increasing economic, social, and health challenges of the coronavirus, and millions of urban residents are already unable to meet their basic needs. With more conservative governments in power across much of Latin America and the United States, we also need to understand how politics at the city level adapts to these changing realities and enables community organizations to influence the landscape for local funding and implementation of policies and programs. ●

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BACK TO SUMMARY

THE URBAN TURN IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS:
Cities as the Anchor of Cross-Nation, Cross-Regime Comparison

by Yue Zhang

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What matters for urban governance is not only the effectiveness of governance but also the inclusiveness of governance.

Cities have a special position in political science. Many classics in the field are city-based research (Hunter 1953; Banfield 1961; Dahl 1961). However, with its almost exclusive focus on U.S. cities and narrower selection of topics, the subfield of urban politics has been constrained by its own ethnocentrism and estranged from mainstream political science for decades. The situation has recently changed as a result of two concurrent trends. First, with the renewed interest in subnational research in comparative politics, more light has been shed on the city level (Snyder 2001; Sellers 2005, 2019; Gibson 2013; Eaton 2017; Giraudy, Moncada, and Snyder 2019). Second, there is an emerging scholarship that conducts urban politics research on a global scale, forging a connection between comparative politics and urban politics (McCarney and Stren 2003; Pasotti 2009, 2020; Read 2012; Zhang 2013; Donaghy 2018; Paller 2019). The two trends signal a vibrant urban turn in comparative politics.

Cities and urban politics deserve more attention from comparativists because massive and rapid urbanization is one of the most significant challenges facing the developing world. While cities have long been the focal points of pressing political and social issues, their importance and relative autonomy has substantially increased in the context of decentralization and globalization (Post 2018). Besides the compelling substantive reasons for studying cities and urban politics, I would argue that analyzing politics at the city level provides an exciting opportunity for scholars to pursue innovative comparisons across nations and across regime types, especially between substantially dissimilar political systems. This approach can contribute to comparative-historical analysis and development studies by showing that local conditions and multilevel governance are as important as national processes in shaping development outcomes within nations (Mahoney 2015; Duara and Perry 2018). The cross-system comparison, as Read (2018) argues, has the potential of facilitating new, thought-provoking theoretical and conceptual departures, echoing what Charles Tilly (1984) called "big structures, large processes, huge comparisons."

In the rest of the essay, I illustrate the possible theoretical and conceptual advances that may be made by cross-system comparison with examples from my forthcoming book on informal housing and urban governance in China, India, and Brazil. Specifically, I examine the production and governance of three types of informal

settlement in three megacities across the three large developing countries. The comparison reveals the differentiation within the informal sector. It also demonstrates that what matters for urban governance is not only the effectiveness of governance but also the inclusiveness of governance. A typology of urban governance regimes – integrated, progrowth, contested, and clientistic – is developed to describe the patterns of urban governance in the three countries and beyond.

Urbanization and the Politics of Informality in the Global South

We live in a century of urbanization. While more than half of the world's population are urbanites today, the number is expected to reach 68 percent by 2050, and most of this expansion has occurred in urban centers of the Global South (United Nations 2019: 12). A distinguishing feature of urbanization in the Global South is the prevalence of informal settlements that fall outside of government control or regulation. According to UN-Habitat (2003: v), one third of the world's urban population, or more than one billion people, lives in "slums" of southern metropolises. The issue of informal settlements is worth studying on its own merits given its enormous scale and huge impact on humanity. Further, these settlements represent a unique urban space where political and social tensions are especially intense, so that they provide an important lens to investigate state-society relations, governance, and citizenship in the Global South (Davis 2017).

To be sure, poverty, inequality, and precarious living conditions are not unique to the Global South. There is a rich literature on concentrated poverty in urban America, with a focus on inner-city neighborhoods, public housing projects, and race and ethnicity (Zorbaugh 1929; Hirsch 1983; Dewar and Thomas 2013). Nevertheless, we cannot simply apply the theories developed in North America or Europe to the Global South due to their distinct institutional and urban contexts. First, under a decentralized federal system, urban politics in the U.S. is generally studied at the local or regional level. In the Global South, by contrast, national political institutions play a more visible role in urban politics, and the relations between urbanization and national development are more salient. Second, social mobilization and political participation take different forms in new democracies and non-democratic regimes of the South than in well-established democracies of the North. Third, the definitions of urban are different between the North and South as well as between Southern countries. Given the major divergences, it is imperative to develop new theoretical and methodological approaches to study urban politics in the Global South.

The term "informal sector" was coined by British anthropologist Keith Hart in his 1973 study of the local economy in Ghana. Since then, scholars have explored the issue of informality from various disciplinary backgrounds, such as economics, sociology, and urban planning. Political scientists have paid keen attention to the relations between the state and informality. In his book on the relations between squatters and the oligarchs in Peru, Collier (1976) argues that the state encouraged the formation of squatter settlements in Lima to facilitate its agenda of rural and urban development. Chatterjee (2004) developed the term "political society" to describe how slum dwellers in India have to use their votes to negotiate with political authorities for access to land and services. A number of recent studies provide in-depth analysis of the clientelistic relations between the state and

the informal sector, including party networks in squatter settlements and informal welfare distribution for the urban poor (Holland 2017; Auerbach 2019). It is within this scholarly tradition that my research on the politics of informality is situated.

Large-scale Comparison: Challenges and Possibilities

Before elaborating my own research design, I would like to discuss the methodological challenges facing comparison across developing countries, especially those in different world regions and having dissimilar systems. The first and foremost challenge is to find comparability across cases. I argue that a viable strategy is to use cities as the anchor of comparison. Due to their more manageable sizes and shared socioeconomic and spatial characteristics, cities are more comparable to one another than nations are, and it is easier to identify key variables at the city level than at the national level (Post 2018).

Using the city as the unit of analysis, however, raises the question of generalization: how do findings based on cities apply to nations as a whole? There are two possible solutions. First, as Sellers (2005, 2019) stresses, the national context as "infrastructure" needs to be taken into full consideration. This calls for a multilevel analysis to integrate the comparison between cities with a comparison between the nations within which they are located. Second, the scope of arguments needs to be effectively defined. According to Goertz and Mahoney (2009), researchers need to set limits on the scope of their arguments ensuring that both measurement and causal relations are stable across all observations. These insights help illuminate how city-based analysis can inform our understanding of nations.

Another challenge for large-scale comparison is to collect reliable and commensurable data in a cross-national context. While this is a common problem for comparativists conducting research in the developing world, data collection is especially difficult when studying informality, given data scarcity and social and institutional complexity in the informal settings. Scholars have developed novel approaches to address this challenge, including the use of informal archives, worksite-based sampling, ethnographic survey design, and crowd-sourced data (Auerbach 2018; Post et al 2018; Thachil 2018).

To develop a bigger picture on urban governance in the Global South, I compare the production and governance of informal settlements in China, India, and Brazil. Specifically, I choose one type of informal settlement in one megacity of each country to address the issue. While the three countries are drastically different in terms of history, culture, and national institutions and regimes, they have all experienced rapid urbanization alongside economic growth in recent decades *(Figure 1);* and they all have a high percentage of their urban population living in informal settlements. These conditions make their cities ideal sites for comparison despite national level differences. In all three cities, state intervention has taken place to regularize or redevelop the informal settlements; however, the processes and outcomes of state intervention vary significantly. These variations imply that different modes of development and governance are at play in the three countries.

A Typology of Urban Governance Regimes

The literature on state capacity provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding the relations between the state and informal-
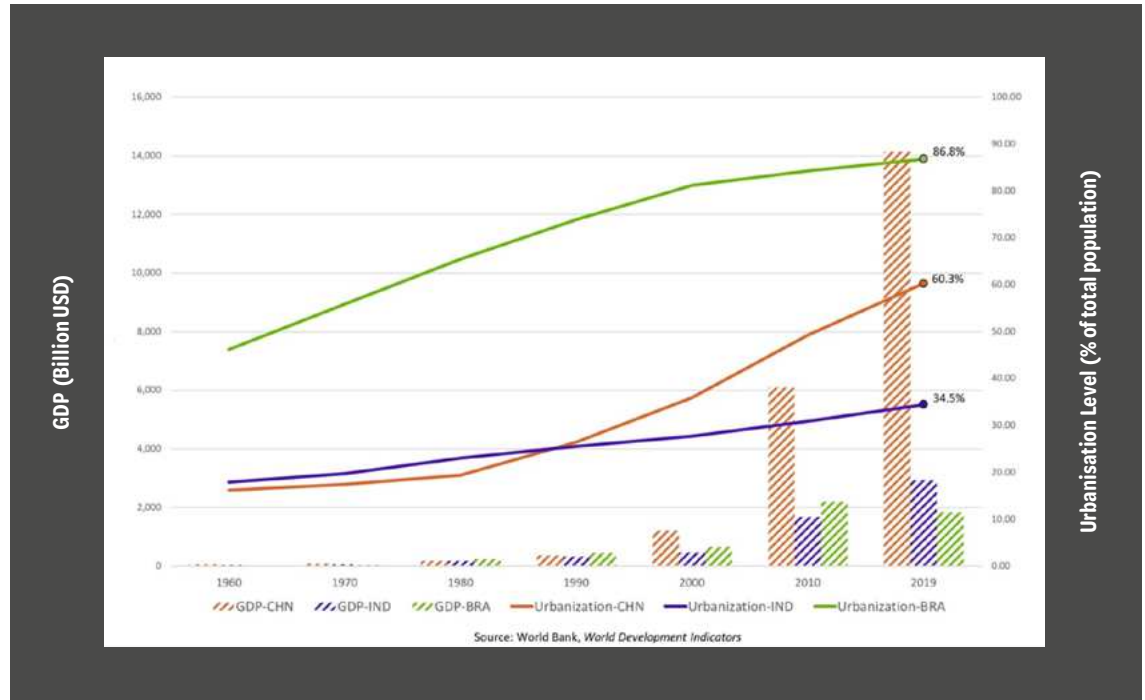
Figure 1:
GDP and Urbanization Level in China, India, and Brazil

ity (Boone 2012; Slater and Kim 2015; Centeno, Kohli, and Yashar 2017). Specifically, in his study of urban development in India, South Africa, and Brazil, Heller (2017) brings the focus from the national level down to the local level, and argues that economic growth and social inclusion are two critical dimensions for examining state capacity. Building on these insightful notions, I develop a typology of urban governance regimes to explain the varied processes and outcomes of state intervention in the informal housing sector. I define an urban governance regime as the interrelations between the state apparatus and the associated nonstate networks. It has two dimensions: effectiveness and inclusiveness. Effectiveness refers to the degree to which governing projects are successfully implemented, whereas inclusiveness is about the social base of governance, or the spectrum of social interests that are included in the governing process. The two dimensions are shaped by three variables: intergovernmental relations, party systems, and nonstate networks. The first

two influence the effectiveness of urban governance and the third affects the inclusiveness of urban governance.

As *Figure 2* demonstrates, there are four types of urban governance regimes. An integrated regime is an ideal type defined by a high level of effectiveness and a high level of inclusiveness. Building on the integration and collaboration between different political and social interests, it is most likely to promote effective, inclusive, and sustainable development. A progrowth regime, characterized by a high level of effectiveness and a low level of inclusiveness, normally relies on a coalition of local state and business interests. While a progrowth regime may promote large-scale governing projects, it often results in unbalanced economic and social development. A contested regime, featuring a low level of effectiveness and a high level of inclusiveness, is defined by the competition between different stakeholders. This model is built on a broader spectrum of social interests, but the contestation may impede policy im-
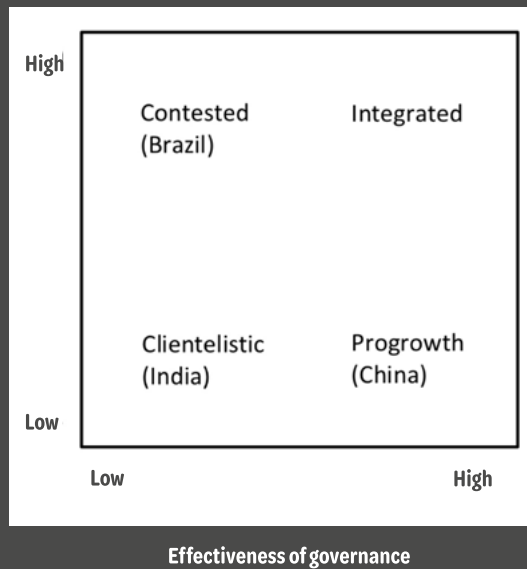
Figure 2:
A Typology of Urban
Governance Regimes

practice that the city is known for. A megacity is defined as a metropolitan area with a total population of over ten million people. There are currently thirty megacities in the world, and two-thirds of them are in the developing world. They are not only the magnets for much of the urban growth in developing countries but also epitomize the challenges facing the urban world (United Nations 2014: 13-14). The three cities are all rising global cities and major national economic, financial, and trade centers. They have all attracted large numbers of migrants and experienced a high level of inequality. There is a high percentage of each city's population living in informal settlements.

Urban Villages, Guangzhou

Guangzhou is in the forefront of China's economic reform and opening-up. Among its 14.5 million residents, 38% of them – primarily rural migrants – live in urban villages. This is a type of informal settlement produced by the government's selective land expropriation. After expropriating a large amount of agricultural land for new development, the government leaves alone villagers' homesteads to reduce the cost of land expropriation. Villagers build multi-story apartment buildings on their collectively owned homesteads and rent the units to migrant workers, who are otherwise ineligible for affordable housing in cities due to their lack of local household status.[1] The construction and management of rental housing in the villages is not subject to any government regulation. Every urban village has a complex set of self-governing institutions including the village committee, the party committee, the village shareholding company, and clan networks, with overlap between the various

plementation. A clientelistic regime is formed around the state's rent-seeking activities and characterized by low effectiveness and low inclusiveness. It may lead to slow and exclusive development.

Of these four possible regime types, three types of urban governance regimes – progrowth, clientelistic, and contested – describe the patterns of urban governance in China, India, and Brazil, respectively. The following section explains how these urban governance regimes work in the three countries.

State Intervention in the Informal Space: A Tale of Three Cities

To explain how the urban governance regimes work in China, India, and Brazil, I select one type of informal settlement in a megacity of every country and examine state intervention in the selected settlements. Each type of settlement represents an important informal housing

1. China has implemented a household registration system since 1958 as an approach to control internal migration. Under the system, every citizen's household status, or *hukou*, is classified as either urban or rural. A person's welfare and housing benefits are strictly associated with their location of origin.

leaderships. These institutions are responsible for the provision of infrastructure and services in the villages.

Under the support of the central party authority, Guangzhou began the redevelopment of urban villages in 2009. This was part of the central government's agenda of economic restructuring, which aims to build high-tech and high value-added industries and replace labor-intensive processing industries. The Municipal Bureau of Urban Renewal was created to supervise the redevelopment. The redevelopment projects were monopolized by a few large development companies. State-owned enterprises had more advantages because of their close ties with the government.

While village committees represented villagers in choosing developers, developers needed to negotiate with villagers house by house to decide the compensation. The common model of redevelopment is to demolish the entire village and rebuild on the village land. Developers provide free housing to villagers as compensation, and every family can receive multiple condo units. The rest of the land is reserved for developers to build market-rate housing and commercial facilities in order to finance the projects. The density of development is usually extremely high and breaks the zoning and density regulations of the local government.

The progrowth coalition between the local state and developers has generated dramatic changes in urban China. Slum-like urban villages have been replaced by luxury condominiums, global hotel chains, and upscale retail spaces. The redevelopment projects have had a narrow social base and provide insufficient channels of participation. While the projects brought a substantial increase in income to villagers and

village collectives, migrant tenants were simply expelled from the villages and their need for housing was never addressed. Despite the fact that the Chinese government prioritizes urbanization as a major strategy of development, what it has promoted is primarily an urbanization of land, not an urbanization of people. The urban-rural divide has been reproduced through the redevelopment of urban villages.

Squatter Settlements, Mumbai

Mumbai is the economic capital of India. It has a population of 12.4 million, and 42% live in squatter settlements, commonly known as slums. These are unauthorized and illegal structures built on public or private land where inhabitants do not have a legal title to the land. The areas lack basic infrastructure and services and are characterized by the prevalence of unsanitary, squalid, and overcrowded conditions. The proliferation of slums is closely related to a series of restrictive rent control and land use policies that Mumbai has implemented since the 1960s. These policies disincentivized the private sector from creating rental and affordable housing units. Meanwhile, due to the large number of inhabitants, slums have become political parties' "vote banks." To capture the votes of slum dwellers, politicians helped them register as voters and provided services during election seasons, thus institutionalizing the existence of slums.

Slum redevelopment was launched in Mumbai in 1995 under the leadership of the Slum Redevelopment Authority, a state-level agency chaired by the chief minister of the Maharashtra State. This model of redevelopment entails demolishing slums and providing free housing to slum dwellers who have arrived in the areas before January 1, 2000. The scheme of redevelopment resulted from party politics. Shiv Sena,

the long-time dominant party of Mumbai, made a campaign promise to provide free housing to slum dwellers during the state assembly election in 1990 as an effort to obtain their votes (Mukhija 2003).

The scheme of redevelopment provided in-situ allocation to slum dwellers, allowing them to stay on the same land after redevelopment, because politicians did not want to lose their "vote banks." The standard size of rehabilitation unit is rather small, only 269 square feet per household regardless of the size of the family. Many rehabilitation buildings are poorly designed and constructed and have become "vertical slums." Developers have used the rest of the slum land to construct market-rate housing. Some of Mumbai's most prominent real estate projects were built through this model on slum land. Owners of these multi-million-dollar homes live next to the shabby apartments of former slum dwellers. The two worlds are separated by a wall.

Under a clientelistic urban governance regime, slum redevelopment in Mumbai has been extremely slow and many projects have stagnated for years. While the redevelopment led to the formalization of property rights for former slum dwellers, it has not reduced their political dependency on political parties. They need to rely on party officials for building maintenance and service provision after redevelopment, leaving clientelistic relations intact. In an effort to eliminate informality, slum redevelopment has generated a polarized housing market and has reinforced spatial and social inequalities in India.

Movement Occupation, São Paulo

São Paulo concentrates a large share of the Brazilian GDP. The city has a population of 12.2 million, and a large proportion of its people lives in self-built informal settlements, known as *favelas*, or substandard tenements called *cortiços*. Meanwhile, in the historic city center of São Paulo, where seventy percent of jobs are concentrated, the rate of under-occupation and vacancy is around thirty percent. Radical housing movements started in São Paulo in the early 1990s, during which time working-class families who worked in the city, but could not afford a place to live, mobilized to occupy vacant buildings in the city center. From 1997 to 2012, a total of 120 buildings were occupied by housing movements. As of May 2018, 70 buildings remain occupied and have become home for more than four thousand families.

Different from other types of informal housing practice, housing movements in São Paulo have actively used legal and institutional devices to negotiate with the state. Thanks to the urban reform movements in the 1980s, Brazil has one of the most progressive legal systems in the world. The 1988 Constitution recognizes the "right to housing" and emphasizes that the city and urban property should fulfill social functions. Movement leaders have made frequent reference to law in meetings and interviews, emphasizing that housing is a constitutional right and that the lack of adequate housing is a violation of citizenship rights. Movement leaders are part of the constitutionally mandated municipal housing council created in 2002, and they have used the council as a platform to delay eviction (Donaghy 2018).

Despite the fact that movement occupations are a breach of property rights, the legitimacy of the housing movements has been acknowledged by officials at different levels of the state. Under the leadership of the Workers' Party Mayor Fernando Haddad, the city passed progressive property tax policies on unutilized

properties. It also expropriated a number of occupations in the city center and converted them into social housing and approved plans for more social housing construction. However, partisan politics has slowed down the implementation of these progressive policies and resulted in a stalemate between the movements and the state.

Housing movements in São Paulo have revealed a contested pattern of urban governance, through which different actors and interests competed with one another and the policy process was shaped by the contestation and negotiation between different stakeholders both inside and outside state institutions. Meanwhile, the housing movements have demonstrated a rights-based approach of social movements under the banner of the "right to the city." The rights-based approach opened up new space of collective mobilization and provided new discourse and tools for disadvantaged citizens to carry out their struggle.

Conclusion

China, India, and Brazil have different urban governance regimes, which play a major role in shaping the processes and outcomes of state intervention in their informal settlements. This comparison has a number of implications for understanding state, governance, and urbanization in the Global South. First, the informal housing sector is highly heterogenous, so that we need to move beyond the simplified notion of "slums" in order to better understand the politics of informality. Different forms of informal settlements are spatial manifestations of different state-society relations. Second, state capacity and urban governance need to be understood in terms of both effectiveness and inclusiveness. Unless the governing project is built upon a broader spectrum of social interests, the effort to formalize the informal may generate more informality and increase inequality. Third, urbanization is not a linear process. The definition of the "urban" is contested and contextualized in the state's broader agenda of development.

As the old saying goes, all politics is local. And, yet, analyzing politics at the local level yields insights into politics at higher levels. Since cities are more comparable to one another than nations are, city level analysis can facilitate cross-nation and cross-regime comparison, and thus contribute to theory development. Moving forward, there are two issues that scholars conducting comparative urban politics research should keep in mind. For one thing, after scaling down, it is critical to scale back up, so that city-based analysis can help us better understand national and global phenomena and address big questions. For another, political scientists need to have greater engagement with urbanists in other disciplines in order to be part of the broader debate on urban issues and to advance a more dynamic understanding of cities and urban politics. ●

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SUBSIDIZING HOMEOWNERSHIP BUILDS WEALTH, CHANGES ATTITUDES, AND GENERATES URBAN CIVIC PARTICIPATION: Evidence from India

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Today, over half of the world's population lives in cities. While low- and middle-income countries remain predominantly rural, urbanization is expected to add 2.5 billion people to the global urban population by 2050, with 90% of this increase slated for Asia and Africa. India alone is expected to contribute 404 million individuals to this figure (UN World Urbanization Prospects 2015). As demand for living space increases, governments have attempted to increase the formal housing supply by encouraging private developers to build and by constructing housing themselves.[1]

One common policy is the subsidized sale of homes to lower-middle class households. Such policies exist in cities in many countries, including India, Brazil, Uruguay, Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Africa. Even while the *stated* reason for these policies is most often a shortage of housing, the subsidies actually constitute wealth transfers to beneficiaries experienced in some combination of three payout structures: 1) a stream of in-kind benefits for those who choose to live in the subsidized home; 2) cash benefits among those who choose to rent it out; 3) or lump-sum through resale. Aside from transferring wealth directly, the programs also facilitate the purchase of an asset that forms the cornerstone of wealth accumulation for many families. This wealth accumulation will be largest for those who live in cities with rising home prices.

The programs are, in some ways, reminiscent of homeownership subsidies that have been in place in many high-income countries since World War II. Examples of relevant policies include Britain's Right to Buy program and both targeted and universal mortgage subsidies in Japan, Canada, and the United States. These programs are consequential not only because they have transferred wealth, but also because they have turned the relevant countries into

1. These attempts are distinct from policies attempting to solve problems associated with illegal settlements or housing on a city's outskirts to which public services may not yet extend. Solutions to these problems include land titling (see e.g. Di Tella et al. 2007; Feder and Feeny 1991; Field 2005; Galiani and Schargrodsky 2010) and the extension of services (see e.g. Burra 2005; Gulyani and Bassett 2007; Imparato and Ruster 2003). These interventions mostly help alleviate problems of informality faced by a city's poorest residents, but low housing supply affects members of higher socio-economic strata, too.

nations of homeowners. Jordá, Schularick, and Taylor (2014), for example, find that mortgage subsidies increased homeownership from 40% in the 1930s to nearly 70% by 2005 (and to about 65% in the wake of the 2008 housing crash) in the United States, with similar changes seen in the United Kingdom.

Winners were about 29 percentage points more likely than non-winners to report attending local municipal meetings.

We also know that homeownership affects political behavior in these contexts. A home is a large asset comprising, in the modal situation, most of a family's wealth. Homeownership therefore leads households to engage in behavior that improves their most immediate neighborhoods to maximize the value of the home (Fischel 2001). Studies of homeownership in the United States have focused on a resulting "not-in-my-backyard" mentality (NIMBYism) that leads homeowners to defect from city-level public goods such as landfills and homeless shelters due to the costs they impose on local communities (Portney 1991; Dear 1992; Fischel 2001; DiPasquale and Glaeser 1999). To the extent that wealth affects political participation (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995), the asset accumulation generated by homeownership, particularly in cities, may also affect political behavior. By increasing rates of homeownership in the US and UK, subsidies have thus affected local-level politics in these countries as well.

How, then, do subsidized housing programs affect local politics and political behavior in low and middle-income countries? It is not clear whether findings from the US translate to urban India, where political participation is often correlated with fixed aspects of one's religion or caste (e.g. Chandra 2004). Could a simple wealth transfer change decision-making that has often been described as tied to identity?

The existing literature's focus on identity might just be a result of the fact that it tends to focus on voting. Studying voting behavior does little to reveal citizens' preferences and their expectations of government, mainly because turnout and vote choice are one-dimensional measures of a decision based on numerous factors. To truly understand how the wealth transfer changes political preferences, I study what comprises a large portion of everyday local politics in urban India: demands to improve services, such as piped water and sanitation, one aspect of what Kruks-Wisner (2018b) calls "claim-making."

The program

I investigate this relationship in Mumbai, India by exploiting a natural experiment wherein applicants were assigned subsidized homes through a lottery system in 2012 and 2014. Such programs have been spearheaded in all major Indian cities by state-level development boards created by India's Second Five Year Development Plan (1951-1956) that provided central government funding to states to develop low-income housing (Pornchokchai 2008). This same development plan advocated cooperative citizen ownership in all sectors of the economy; as a result, the housing boards developed apartments that would be sold, rather than rented, to individuals and buildings that would be collectively maintained by all owners (Ganpati 2010; Sukumar 2001). The policy of construction for ownership continued even as the central government's development plans moved towards policies favoring the facilitation of private construction after the economic liberalization of the 1990s. Moreover, in 2015, India's federal government claimed a housing shortfall of over 18 million to motivate a plan, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (P-MAY), to build 20 million affordable homes by 2022. Grants to

subsidize the construction and sale of low-income housing by local municipal boards remain a central component of this policy.

I studied an instance of the program implemented in Mumbai by the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA). Every year, MHADA runs subsidized housing programs for economically weaker section (EWS) and low-income group (LIG) urban residents who 1) do not own housing, and 2) who have lived in the state of Maharashtra for at least 15 continuous years within the 20 years prior to the sale. Winners have access to loans from a state-owned bank, and most take out 15-year mortgages. Households are not permitted to sell the apartments for 10 years, but they can rent them out.

The lottery homes were sold at a "fair price" that government officials claim was 30-60% of market prices at the time of sale. Winners could eventually hope for large gains; 3-5 years after the lottery, the difference between the apartment purchase price and list price for older MHADA apartments of the same size in the same neighborhood lies anywhere between Rs.661,700 (about $10,300 at 2017 conversion rates) to Rs.2,869,015 (about $45,000).[2]

The yearly lotteries are advertised in newspapers (Figure 1), on the internet, over the radio, and through text messages. Applicants can apply online or in person at the MHADA offices, and need only an Aadhaar card, personal account number (PAN) card, a passport photo, mobile number, email, and cancelled check.[3]

Most of these items, particularly the Aadhaar card and PAN card, are required for most formal transactions; possession of the application materials thus forms a low bar to entering the program. The 200 INR (3-4 USD) application fee is nominal, and most applicants reported applying for the lottery year after year, with no real expectation of ever winning.

From the perspective of an applicant, the program is an opportunity to completely change a family's life and economic trajectory. The lottery apartment buildings are close together, densely populated, and stamped with the implementing agency's logo (Figure 2), but interviewees rarely seemed worried about any social stigma associated with living in the homes. "People who win these homes have the chance to make their lives better, everyone knows that," replied one applicant when asked about how the apartments are perceived. "It's the chance to win a home in this extremely expensive city. I could never dream of that otherwise, and it would make me feel more financially secure than any job ever could. If things keep on going the way they have in Mumbai, maybe I can sell it for a high price one day and become comfortable, even wealthy," answered another.

Nevertheless, the program is not targeted at the poorest households in a city. Winners must, after all, be able to pay a down payment and 15-year mortgage. The sample of applicants I surveyed was at about the 63rd percentile for mean years of education in Mumbai based on the India Human Development Survey- II, which was conducted in 2010 (Desai and Vanneman

2. Data collected from magicbricks.com in 2017.

3. An Aadhar card is part of India's biometric identification program. A PAN card is used for most formal financial transactions.

Figure 1:
An ad for the 2014 lotteries included in the study.

2016). Roughly half of each family was employed, compared to about 42% for Mumbai overall (2011 Census). At the time of application, most already lived in dwellings with permanent floors and roofs. This housing was often a *chawl*, or cheap apartment with shared taps and toilets – extremely common throughout the southern part of the city. I thus describe the applicant pool as lower middle-class and upwardly mobile. Citing experience from Latin American cities, Alan and Ward (1985, 5) similarly find that public housing interventions generally do not benefit a city's poorest citizens, as they simply cannot afford the requisite rent or mortgage.

Figure 2:
Examples of the buildings in which lottery apartments are located.

Data collection

Because this program, like most others run by state housing boards, allocates apartments through a randomized lottery system, a study of winners (treated) and non-winning (control) applicants is a randomized experiment. Estimation of treatment effects requires that I observe outcomes for both treated and control units. For the 2012 and 2014 MHADA lotteries, I received from MHADA 1,862 phone numbers and addresses for winners and a random sample of applicants.[4] I then mapped these addresses using Google Maps and removed those that were incomplete, outside of Greater Mumbai, or could not be mapped. This left 531 and 532 control and treatment households, respectively. From this sample, I randomly selected 500 households from each treatment condition to interview with the help of a Mumbai-based organization.

The data collection process entailed using phone numbers and addresses that were 3-5 years old to track down respondents. Friends and neighbors assisted in the cases that respondents had moved away. After 9 months, we were able to contact 834 of the 1000 households,

with 413 of the surveyed households in the control condition and 421 households in the treated condition. There was balance on a number of fixed or pre-treatment covariates specified in the pre-analysis plan for this project.

Findings

I estimate effects on local political participation as measured through this survey.[5] I find that **winners were about 29 percentage points more likely than non-winners to report attending local municipal meetings** where they met with representatives and discussed community improvements. During the time of the survey, these meetings surrounded the Mumbai Draft Development program, which addressed land use issues in the city. Winners were particularly concerned about the use of parks and gardens near their apartments and wanted to protect them from encroachment by squatters and hawkers. They were also 11 percentage points more likely to report approaching bureaucrats and representatives to make complaints about community issues, particularly the arrival of water and electricity in the hot summer months preceding the monsoon. This reported action was accompanied by demonstrated changes in knowledge, as winners were 11 percentage points more likely to be able to correctly name their local elected municipal officials. These municipal officials had been elected just six months prior to the survey, suggesting that winners were quick to learn new information relevant to their neighborhoods.

It might be possible that these effects were driven by winners relocated to new neighborhoods that were simply more politically active. Yet this political participation was not confined

4. There are more than 300,000 economically weaker section applicants for roughly 300 spots.

5. More details on the estimation strategy can be found in Kumar 2019.

Figure 3:
A weekly meeting to discuss neighborhood improvements. Many of the attendees are landlords who do not live in the lottery apartments but rent them out.

only to those living in the new apartment buildings. Winners were not required to move to the homes, but could rent them out. Nevertheless, those who rented out the homes might have wanted to participate in local politics to improve communities to increase the rental or resale values of the homes. Fifty-nine percent of landlords traveled over an hour to the lottery homes to participate in weekly neighborhood meetings in the communities in which they owned homes but did not live *(Figure 3).* When they could not make this trip, they participated through WhatsApp and video calls. This effort suggests strong incentives for organizing separate from the effects of social norms within a community. Also, rates of reported demand-making and knowledge about politicians were similar across winners who live in the homes and those who rent them out.

Why do we observe these changes in behavior? One explanation is that winning the home made recipients feel wealthier and altered their time horizons. Recent work (e.g. Mani et al. 2013; Haushofer and Fehr 2014) finds that the stress created by poverty can make it difficult to focus on long-term goals and lead to short-sighted behavior. Positive income shocks can increase psychological well-being, happiness, and time horizons, thereby reducing the cognitive or time related cost of action. In my qualitative interviews, I similarly found that winners reported feeling "less stressed" on a daily basis and had more time to think about making their futures more comfortable.

In line with this explanation, I estimate that winners were 19 percentage points more likely than non-winners to claim to be "happy" with the financial situation of the household. They also appeared to believe they would pass on their good fortune to their children, as they were roughly 12 percentage points more likely than non-winners to say "yes" when asked if their children would have better lives than them. Their predictions might be supported, as youth from winning households had higher rates of secondary school completion than those from non-winning households, even though on average, lottery homes were in neighborhoods with worse schools than the non-lottery homes. Winners were further 8 percentage points more likely than non-winners to respond that they "would never leave" when asked if would ever consider relocating from Mumbai, suggesting increased time horizons. Multiple interview respondents reported being less worried about having to return to their "native places," or the villages from which the migrated to the city, in the case of a job loss.

A subsidized home may also affect political behavior by altering a beneficiary's perception of her own status. In July 2018, *The Hindustan Times* ran a story documenting the pride and satisfaction reported by members of 13 households in Mumbai that had fulfilled their dreams of homeownership (Hindustan Times (2018)). I also estimate an 8.9 percentage point increase in the likelihood of respondents selecting "No," when asked "Do you/people like you need to listen to what leaders in the area say?" I interpret this effect as an increase in respondents' perceptions of their own status or efficacy. As stated by one of the winners, "[Beneficiaries] now have some status. The *sarkar* [government] needs to listen to *us* now."

Finally, as demonstrated by the literature on NIMBYism, subsidized homeownership can create interest groups of beneficiaries who are particularly motivated to work together to protect their benefits. To illustrate this mechanism, I also measure effects on stated motivations for another form of local political participation, namely voting in local elections. Relative to nonwinners, I estimate that winners were 22 percentage points more likely to state neighborhood problems as a reported reason for voting, thus supporting increased interest in local problems as a mechanism for my findings. As one winner stated, she "looked for politicians who made an effort in improving the water, cleanliness, and squatter situation in the neighborhood." In contrast, a non-winner said he voted for "those who help people like us."

Implications for the study of comparative politics

These results differ from existing comparative politics research on political behavior in important ways. First, I focus not on voting behavior, but demands for service improvement. In cities in the developing world, the demand for services such as water and electricity can far outstrip supply. This leads to uneven service access and service quality across a municipality. Oftentimes, communities must secure these services through negotiation with politicians (Auerbach 2016), brokers (Stokes *et al.* 2013), or other intermediaries (Jha *et al.* 2007, Krishna 2011). Much is written about politicians' strategies for allocation among different individuals or groups (see Golden and Min 2013). We know less about when and *why* citizens will prioritize improvements to public service delivery over other demands.

Second, in an attempt to learn about the causes of this behavior, I move away from the literature on clientelism, which focuses on ethnicity and reciprocity between politicians and citizens. Instead, I focus on citizens' *capacity* and *aspirations* to make *new* demands (Kruks-Wisner 2018a, 29). I show that government benefits might actually alter how beneficiaries think and *what they want*, thereby motivating and enabling citizens to improve their communities. These important determinants of individual political behavior may change over time in spite of fixed characteristics such as ethnicity or religion, particularly in response to changing economic fortunes.

I also demonstrate the importance of homeownership subsidies, which remain relatively unstudied outside of the US, to urban politics all over the world. The research shows that theories of urban politics based on evidence from the US will be enriched by the study of low- and middle-income countries. US-based studies, for example, emphasize the negative externalities of homeownership that occur when homeowners defect from city-level public goods such as

landfills and homeless shelters due to the costs they impose on local communities (Portney 1991; Dear 1992; Fischel 2001; Schively 2007; Hankinson 2018). They describe a collective action problem wherein homeowners defect from land use policies that are of general benefit to a municipality because they impose costs (in the form of land depreciation or externalities such as crowds and pollution) on the very local communities in which individuals own homes.

But cities in India experience variation in service quality rarely seen in cities in countries like the United States or United Kingdom. The homeowners I interviewed in India were rarely fighting for better views or schools, but rather hoping for regular water service, covers for open manholes, and effective sewage drainage during the monsoon months. Thus, if homeownership leads to the improvement of these vital community-level public services, then it has the potential to generate *positive* externalities at the community level not possible in cities with more uniformly high levels of service provision. This is not to say, of course, that homeownership cannot have negative NIMBY-type externalities in urban India as well. Many have documented, for example, the urban middle class's attempts to clear slums and "beautify" cities; such actions likely share the same underpinnings as NIMBYism in that they benefit homeowners at the expense of others in the city (Fernandes 2006; Heller, Mukhopadhyay, and Walton 2016).

The point is that homeownership subsidies are wealth transfers, and wealth both confers power and motivates people to exercise power. As cities grow, these subsidies will only become more consequential because of both the growing potential for home value appreciation and the increasing number of people city politics will reach.

The study of comparative urban and local politics will thus benefit from the further study of this common policy initiative. One important avenue of future research is to see whether policies in other contexts affect political behavior in similar or other ways. Another is to understand *why* governments pursue such initiatives. Formal housing programs may be particularly appealing to governments for political reasons. Alan and Ward (1985, 5-6) claim that public housing serves three main functions in society: it provides visual evidence that the government is providing for the poor, construction creates jobs, and it provides homes for government supporters and officials. Leaders may also, as we have seen in the case of the UK and US, be ideologically motivated to promote homeownership and/or civic participation. Ultimately, home subsidies remain an important cause and effect of political processes across and within many different countries, and there is still a great deal to be learned about them. ●

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REMAKING URBAN GOVERNMENT IN CHINA:
District Restructuring as a Window onto Territorial Politics

by Kyle A. Jaros

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If the governance of swelling mega-cities is central to the politics of the 21st century, there are few settings where the stakes are higher than China. China is home to dozens of multi-million-person metropolises — both national centers like Beijing and Shanghai, and regional hubs like Wuhan and Nanjing.[1] For an autocratic party-state, managing these cities represents a key political challenge and balancing act. Large cities are China's most important economic growth engines, centers of innovation, and gateways to the global economy (Jaros 2019). But large cities also strain the party-state's governance capacity. On the one hand, they represent latent threats to regime stability, with their potential for concentrated social unrest (Wallace 2014). On the other hand, big cities face a host of more routine — though no less serious — policy challenges, such as providing public services to diverse and demanding populations, reconciling economic growth with inclusive development, and managing environmental pressures (Saich 2008). In moments of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic, both sides of this urban governance challenge become vivid.

One of the most fundamental, yet most difficult aspects of metropolitan governance in China

— as in other national settings — is the question of how to administratively organize sprawling urban areas. Around the world, the architecture of urban government varies widely. We find diversity in the pattern of power devolution, the degree of administrative fragmentation, and the blend of territorial and functional governance. Comparative scholarship makes it clear that these varying metropolitan governance arrangements have important consequences for development and politics. Among other things, metropolitan government structures affect the distribution of economic and social opportunities (Frug 1999; Freemark et al 2020), the dynamics of political power and participation (Myers and Dietz 2002; Lassen and Serritzlew 2011), and the efficiency of administration (Zhang 2013; Blom-Hansen et al 2016).

In China, where the entities called "cities" (*shi*) are often much larger than their counterparts abroad, and where the party-state penetrates virtually every aspect of political, economic, and social life, the structure of urban government would seem especially significant. Yet, despite extensive research by political scientists and other scholars on urban issues in China, there has been relatively little attention to the internal

Hierarchical governance system of China's party-state raises the stakes of conflicts over urban territory.

structure and workings of urban government. It is clear that in recent decades, China's big cities have existed in a state of near-constant institutional flux as the party-state has tried to adapt its structures of rule to manage population growth, land expansion, and economic restructuring (Chung and Lam 2004; Hsing 2010; Rithmire 2015; Cartier 2015). However, many key questions about China's urban government system remain only partly answered: How, and on what basis, is the territory of cities divided into different sub-units? In what ways does the urban district structure shape the political, economic, and social life of cities? When and why do territorial-administrative arrangements in cities change, and how do such changes affect political elites and ordinary residents alike? Answering these questions is important not only for making sense of urban politics in China, but also to add a crucial dimension to comparative debates about the determinants of effective metropolitan governance.

To help address this gap in the literature, my current research examines the changing forms and workings of big-city government in China. As one element of this research, I examine cases of urban "administrative division reform" (*xingzheng quhua gaige*) (ADR), or changes to the district structure of cities, to better understand the evolving nature of urban governance and the complex internal politics of China's metropolises. Urban district restructuring has occurred frequently in recent decades, reshaping the territory and governance arrangements of many Chinese cities. Though officials speak of ADR in technocratic terms as a way to enhance urban competitiveness, spatial coordination, and administrative efficiency, such reform is ultimately a manifestation of territorial politics within

Chinese cities. Urban ADR reflects pent-up tensions and political divisions within urban government, and it produces clear winners and losers.

In what follows, I use the case of the 2013 ADR in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province as a window onto the multifaceted territorial politics of a large Chinese city. As I discuss below, ADR in Nanjing highlights accumulating strains within the governance system of a fast-growing provincial capital and reveals conflicting interests between different groups of urbanites, different government units, and different urban priorities. Indeed, by examining changes to the urban district structure, the underlying significance of this structure becomes clearer. Urban districts in China are as large as municipal units in other settings, and are responsible for many of the same functions. In Nanjing, we find some of the same types of horizontal conflicts among different urban districts—and their residents—that might be observed between neighboring cities in other national contexts. But we also see how the hierarchical governance system of China's party-state raises the stakes of conflicts over urban territory.

Urban district structure and restructuring in the Chinese metropolis

The territorial units designated as cities in China are less like municipalities in other contexts than city regions or provinces: their administrative boundaries encompass densely populated urban cores but also suburbs, satellite cities, and large rural hinterlands. Four of China's largest cities, Shanghai, Beijing, Tianjin, and Chongqing, have populations in the tens of millions, land areas of several thousand square miles, and province-level administrative rank. Even prefecture-level cities, of which there are currently over 290, are typically home to several

million people and comparable in land area to small American states.

Based on province-level and prefecture-level cities' size alone, their internal administrative structures have important consequences for development and governance. Indeed, the administrative divisions of prefecture-level Chinese cities are large units in their own right. In addition to any remaining rural counties or county-level cities in their jurisdictions, prefecture-level cities contain one or more urban districts—administrative units with county-level rank that play a major governance role as the lowest full-fledged level of local government in urban areas. Urban districts have populations ranging from a couple hundred thousand to upward of one million, and are themselves sub-divided into dispatched organs called street offices (*jiedao ban*). Urban districts are highly heterogeneous in character: in large Chinese cities, older core urban districts tend to be smaller and more densely populated than erstwhile suburban areas that have subsequently turned into districts. Additionally, both urban and suburban districts often differ strikingly from districts formed through cities' annexation of outlying counties or county-level cities, units that are often much larger in land area and largely rural in character (Lam and Lo 2010). Urban districts are often overlaid by special functional areas, including development zones of different types, ranks, and sizes, further complicating the territorial structure of urban governance.

With multiple local government units and levels of administration and dramatic variation in local conditions found within a typical Chinese municipality, it is natural for different political and economic interests to collide. Frictions often emerge at the boundaries between different

urban sub-units, and significant tensions can accumulate within cities over time. Although the lively territorial politics at play within China's cities often stay unreported and out of public sight, political fault lines erupt into view at times of change—particularly during moments when the structure of urban government itself is altered.

For contemporary New Yorkers, it would be almost unthinkable for the Bronx and Staten Island to suddenly cease to exist as separate boroughs and instead be absorbed into Manhattan and Brooklyn. But sweeping changes of this sort occur frequently in large Chinese cities, and more generally as well, large-scale "reterritorialization" is a regular feature of China's subnational governance system (Cartier 2015). For China's major cities, in particular, the past decade-plus has seen a major wave of changes to urban administrative divisions, with far-reaching consequences for the territorial make-up of cities and for authority relations, resource allocation, and state-society dynamics in the metropolis. In 2009 and the years following, many major cities, including Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Nanjing, and Ningbo, altered their district structures. Like earlier municipal restructuring in the late 1990s and early 2000s, ADR over the past decade has included various cases in which outlying counties and county-level cities have been converted into districts and incorporated into the city proper of Chinese metropolises. There has also been a growing number of cases of urban district mergers and more complex rearrangements of urban territory (Yin and Luo 2013). In some cases, such as in Nanjing (2013) and Ningbo (2016), multiple changes to a city's territorial configuration have occurred at once.

Some scholars have viewed recent cases of ADR as a product of practical considerations

like ensuring sufficient space for new urban development and growth, improving public service delivery through larger jurisdiction size, and reducing administrative costs (Yin and Luo 2013; Lin and Yang 2017). But ADR is also deeply political in the way it redraws territorial authority relations and changes the distribution of resources across different parts of the metropolis, and it must therefore be understood as an outgrowth of urban territorial politics. Along these lines, Cartier (2015) emphasizes the central party-state's ultimate control over ADR and its use as a tool of party-state power to achieve political and developmental objectives. Power asymmetries in the party-state hierarchy be-

Figure 1:
Map of Nanjing, post-2013 restructuring.

Source: Map image from wikipedia.org; labels by author.

come reinforced through reforms that expand the boundaries and resource bases of politically privileged territorial units. Lu and Tsai (2017), for example, note how provincial capitals are more successful than other cities in annexing wealthy counties.

Overall, however, the politics of ADR in urban China remains a rich and little studied topic. As I discuss below in my analysis of the case of

Nanjing's 2013 ADR, municipal restructuring brings together multiple aspects of urban territorial politics and provides important clues into the conflicts playing out between different state actors, economic interests, and societal groups.

Nanjing's 2013 big bang-style ADR

Of the many instances of ADR across China over the past decade, the 2013 reorganization of Nanjing, the provincial capital of Jiangsu Province, was one of the most far-reaching. On February 20, 2013, with little prior public warning, authorities in Nanjing announced that the city had received approval from the State Council and Jiangsu to carry out a significant territorial restructuring. The city's two remaining rural counties, Gaochun County and Lishui County, would be converted into urban districts, bringing their territory under more direct municipal oversight. In addition, two pairs of core urban districts would be consolidated to form larger, more populous units. Gulou District, a densely populated and dynamic central city area home to Jiangsu's provincial government and party headquarters, would be merged with neighboring Xiaguan District to form a New Gulou District. And Qinhuai District, a commercial and residential area with a rich history, would merge with adjacent Baixia District to form a New Qinhuai District. This ADR thus involved 6 out of Nanjing's 13 sub-units, areas accounting for 29.7 percent of Nanjing's land area, 38.7 percent of its population, and 36.4 percent of its GDP.

This sweeping change to Nanjing's administrative geography was intended by city authorities to enhance Nanjing's economic competitiveness, spatial coordination, and government efficiency. First, authorities noted, the goal of economically integrating Lishui and Gaochun

Counties with the rest of the city had been hindered by the counties' underdeveloped infrastructure and public services. Converting counties to urban districts would allow for upgraded infrastructure and public service standards and would simplify administrative relations between the municipal government and erstwhile counties. Second, Nanjing authorities pointed to a lack of space for new development in "cramped" central-city districts like Gulou and Qinhuai. By consolidating core districts, economies of scale in urban development and improved planning coordination would result, while cost savings could be reaped (Zhang and Zhang 2013).

During March and April 2013, Nanjing mobilized municipal- and district-level leaders for a fast-paced implementation effort. The city established a leading small group and subordinate working groups to oversee district reorganization, issued a series of policy notices to guide the merger process, and launched a propaganda campaign and party discipline enforcement efforts to ensure smooth progress and to pre-empt backlash from affected district officials or residents. By early May 2013, new district leaders and departments were in place and open for business (Yong 2017, 196-197). Still, the work of district restructuring was far from over, as harmonization of institutions and policies in newly established or merged districts

would be phased in over several years. Lishui and Gaochun, which as counties had enjoyed greater fiscal and administrative autonomy than urban districts, were reassured that they could retain most of these privileges for another five years (Ibid., 203). Meanwhile, the city promised a tailored approach to administration of the newly merged core districts. There would be no fundamental changes to district-level policies during 2013, while gradual harmonization of practices across formerly separate districts would begin in 2014 (Ma 2013).

Involving several of Nanjing's sub-units, the 2013 ADR significantly affected the contours of the city as a whole and the average characteristics of its districts, as shown in *Table 1.* By annexing two rural counties, Nanjing achieved — statistically at least — a major expansion in urban land area, urban area population, and urban area GDP. By eliminating two sub-units, Nanjing further consolidated its administrative geography. With these changes, the average population, land area, and GDP of Nanjing's urban districts increase substantially.

The four central-city districts saw more dramatic changes. Merged districts differed from each other in terms of population, land, and economic indicators, and the resulting new districts also differed in important ways from their predecessors. *Table 2* compares indicators of the New

	Total of urban districts	Average of urban districts
Resident population 2012 (mn)	7.323	0.666
Resident population 2013 (mn)	8.188	0.744
Land area 2012 (sq km)	4,728	429.8
Land area 2013 (sq km)	6,587	598.8
GDP 2012 (bn CNY)	465.1	42.3
GDP 2013 (bn CNY)	617.0	56.1

Table 1:
Nanjing's district indicators before and after February 2013 restructuring

Data source: Nanjing Yearbook and Nanjing Statistical Yearbook.

Gulou District with those of the former Gulou District and former Xiaguan District. At the outset, Gulou was a more populous and densely populated district with a larger overall economy and higher per-resident endowments of fiscal revenue and social resources than Xiaguan. Relative to the former Gulou, New Gulou had a substantially larger resident population of 1.29 million (first among Nanjing's sub-units) and GDP of 79.14 bn CNY (rising from fourth to second ranked among Nanjing's sub-units) and almost twice its original land area. Although its large size ensured it would have a high political profile, New Gulou had lower per-resident endowments of fiscal revenue and social resources than its predecessor.

District restructuring and urban territorial politics

While Nanjing's restructuring was justified by authorities in technical terms, this and other cases of ADR are intensely political in practice. As one media account acknowledged, a "change to administrative divisions is to some extent the reallocation of power and the readjustment of interests," and authorities saw the potential for serious political difficulties (Zhang and Zhang 2013). Indeed, on closer examination, Nanjing's ADR highlights several aspects of urban territorial politics that normally remain hidden behind a façade of technocratic urban governance.

First, and most basic, this reform in Nanjing, like cases of ADR elsewhere, calls attention to the frictions that can arise between neighboring urban districts and between districts and city-level authorities. China's urban districts are often written off as mere "vassals" of the municipality, and sometimes not even regarded as a full-fledged level of local government (Lam and Lo 2010). But, as noted above, districts are large entities in their own right—comparable to major cities in other national settings. The fact that authorities go to great trouble to alter district boundaries makes clear that these boundaries matter significantly in the first place. Like city limits in other national settings, district boundaries are important for urban economic development and social governance as well as for the provision of many public services, such as pri-

	Gulou District (2012)	Xiaguan District (2012)	New Gulou District (2013)
Resident population (mn)	0.839 (2nd/11)	0.451 (8th/11)	1.291 (1st/11)
Land area (sq km)	24.65 (9th/11)	28.35 (8th/11)	54.18 (9th/11)
GDP (bn CNY)	44.56 (4th/11)	25.36 (8th/11)	79.14 (2nd/11)
Local fiscal revenue (bn yuan)	5.14 (3rd/11)	1.67 (10th/11)	7.51 (3rd/11)
Local fiscal revenue per resident (bn yuan)	5974 (6th/11)	3703 (10th/11)	5812 (10th/11)
Residents per sq km	34,049 (1st/11)	15,901 (4th/11)	23,850 (1/11)
Middle school teachers per 10000 residents	27.1 (3/11)	19.4 (10/11)	24.5 (9/11)
Hospital beds per 10000 residents	116.64 (1/11)	32.59 (8/11)	103.12 (1/11)

Table 2:
Indicators for Gulou District, Xiaguan District, and New Gulou DistrictData source: Nanjing Yearbook and Nanjing Statistical Yearbook.

Data source: Nanjing Yearbook and Nanjing Statistical Yearbook.

mary and secondary education and basic urban welfare. And, though some urban districts are indeed tightly controlled by city-level authorities, other districts enjoy considerable autonomy in fiscal and administrative matters. Coordinating economic and spatial planning and public service provision across district boundaries is often a challenge for city-level authorities, a fact underscored in recent interviews with municipal officials in Nanjing (Author's interviews, 2019). As Hsing (2010) notes, China's municipalities have achieved a measure of territorial consolidation over the past few decades and work hard to present a unified face to the outside world, they remain internally divided entities in which district governments and other territorial players (e.g., development zone authorities, major state-owned enterprise units, etc.) continue to exercise considerable sway, resulting in frequent turf battles over development and governance.

Second, Nanjing's 2013 ADR highlights the differing priorities of city-level authorities and higher-level state actors when it comes to urban governance arrangements. Although ADR has been a recurring phenomenon across China's major cities, it is by no means easy to accomplish. Changes to China's county-level administrative divisions require State Council approval and must pass through the provincial level first. Gaining official authorization to conduct such reforms is a fraught, multi-year process. Even the 2013 Nanjing ADR, not a particularly contentious one, involved years of advance discussion and planning as well as a nearly year-long intergovernmental approval process. Following lengthy informal consultations with higher-level authorities, Nanjing's government submitted its proposal for restructuring to the Jiangsu Provincial Government on April 17, 2012. In late June, Jiangsu province gave its tentative support to the proposal and relayed it upward to the State Council. Final State Council approval for the proposal did not come until February 8, 2013, and formal provincial guidelines for the ADR were not issued until February 19, 2013. In the interim, Nanjing officials engaged in a lengthy negotiation with higher-level officials, during which the latter expressed concerns about Nanjing undertaking such a large restructuring in one-off fashion and suggested more piecemeal changes instead (Yong 2017, 192-193).

The difficulty of securing higher-level approval for such changes speaks to the conflicting priorities of officials at different levels of the party-state hierarchy: While city authorities were intent on using administrative reforms to enhance the city's economic strength and competitiveness, central authorities were more concerned with maintaining stability and order in the city's governance arrangements. In this case, the provincial level of government, which likely perceived benefits in the economic strengthening of its capital city, was supportive. However, in many other such cases provincial support is withheld, thwarting cities' efforts to change their administrative geography. For Suzhou, another major city in Jiangsu that has historically been on strained terms with provincial authorities, it took years to gain approval for a similar administrative restructuring in 2012. Even then, the city had to make significant concessions to the province to get what it wanted (Cartier 2016; Jaros 2019, 216-218).

Third, Nanjing's ADR brings into sharper focus conflicts between municipal authorities and subordinate district and county leaders over resources and territory. For the leaders of outlying rural counties, "upgrading" to district status is a decidedly mixed blessing. Although district sta-

tus confers higher standards of public service provision and infrastructure, it can compromise the administrative and fiscal autonomy counties enjoy. In the case of Nanjing's 2013 merger, the existence of such concerns and pushback on the part of county leaders from Gaochun and Lishui can be inferred from the assurance given that existing powers and special policies enjoyed by the counties would not be changed for five years and by the fact that incumbent county leaders were left in place through the transition. In Nanjing's central city, by contrast, we see the greater ability of municipal authorities to flex muscle over district authorities. The elimination of existing districts and reorganization of their staff and territory gave city-level leaders an opportunity to dislodge entrenched district-level actors and to redraw districts in a way compatible with municipal development and governance priorities. During the process of consolidating four central urban districts into two, existing district governments were disbanded, and new leadership lineups and staffs were chosen. Unsurprisingly, there were concerns about potential grievances and pushback from affected personnel amid this major shake-up, and great care was taken to ensure a smooth reorganization. On the one hand, Nanjing carefully managed official discourse and public opinion around the district restructuring and placed heavy emphasis on enforcing party discipline throughout the process (Zhang and Zhang 2013). On the other, the effectively city co-opted several leaders of the abolished districts. After the Gulou-Xiaguan merger, for example, the former directors of each district were appointed as party secretary and director of New Gulou district, respectively, while the former party secretaries were reassigned to city-level leadership positions.

Fourth and finally, Nanjing's ADR lays bare the conflicting interests of different groups of urban residents. Insofar as significant cross-district disparities exist in the social resources and public services districts, restructuring of districts affects how resources are shared and influences the relative privilege of different territorial constituencies. During the Gulou-Xiaguan merger, a fiscally strong district with high-quality public services (Gulou) was paired with a district that lacked a comparably strong fiscal base and high-quality public services (Xiaguan). Many Xiaguan residents saw benefits in a merger that would help them access the superior amenities of Gulou. But some Gulou residents, including elderly residents receiving minimum-income guarantee (*dibao*) payments, feared their benefits would be diluted by merging with a poorer district (Wang et al 2013). The Gulou-Xiaguan merger and others like it also have major consequences for urban real estate prices, which affect different territorial constituencies and socioeconomic groups unevenly. Xiaguan's average real estate prices were roughly 6,000 CNY cheaper per square meter than Gulou's prior to the merger but were poised to appreciate quickly after the announcement, given the upgrading of district brand as well as public amenities (Zhang 2013). While this would benefit homeowners in Xiaguan and economic elites able to invest in Xiaguan real estate development, the district merger was less beneficial for Gulou owners, who saw some of their district's privileges reduced.

Similar dynamics have been documented during district mergers in other cities. In the month following the April 2019 announcement of a merger between Shanghai's Nanhui District and Pudong New Area, for example, real estate prices rose over 10 percent in the less-devel-

oped Nanhui (Tian 2009). Whereas urban residents in China have limited recourse to fight district mergers (indeed, they typically only learn of them once they are underway), mergers redistribute resources across different resident groups and between ordinary residents and those with the economic clout or political connections to financially speculate on news of such changes.

Conclusion

During moments when the administrative structures of large cities are in flux, observers get a glimpse into the multifaceted territorial politics of urban China. As discussed above, the case of Nanjing's 2013 ADR shows the politically charged nature of municipal restructuring and highlights different dimensions of territorial interest conflict and intergovernmental bargaining. Given the frequency with which Chinese metropolises undergo such reorganizations and the variety of approaches taken, there is ample scope for research to clarify the political-economic drivers and consequences of ADR. Such work promises new insights into the evolving urban government system and patterns of urban politics in China, and will also offer an instructive counterpoint to studies of metropolitan governance restructuring in Western settings. ●

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THE CASE FOR STUDYING URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

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The Urban Turn in Comparative Politics

Comparative politics scholars are increasingly turning their attention to subnational and urban politics in developing countries. There are many reasons to study city politics in the Global South. Over half of the global population lives in cities, and this figure is projected to rise to over 65% by 2050, with 90% of this increase taking place in Asia and Africa, as Latin America is already over 80% urbanized (UN DESA 2018). Urban population growth and decentralization trends have created more policy arenas for which local governments are responsible, and thus more spaces for citizen demand-making on government and ensuing political contestation. Political science scholarship focused on cities in developing countries has broken new ground on, for example, political order and urban violence, clientelism, and public services provision (see Post 2018), but has neglected a critical urban policy arena that is increasingly politically contested: the environment.

Despite growing attention to global environmental governance (Hale 2020), comparative politics scholars have been slower to examine this fertile area of research, and this neglect has been even more pronounced at the city level. Yet climate change mitigation planning is inti-mately linked to city leadership and multi-level governance (Bulkeley and Betsill 2013), and pollution is responsible for one quarter of global deaths, most of which occur in low-income countries (WHO 2016), which are increasingly urban. Indeed, environmental problems permeate the lives of many residents in Global South cities (Hardoy et al. 2001), and comparative politics has not done enough to study this growing reality. Environmental issues are a key policy arena that drive politics at the subnational level and require study. For this to happen, however, we must overcome outdated assumptions that environmental politics is not politically salient or that it is too difficult to study in weak institutional environments like those that characterize much of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

There are many lenses through which to study the environment in the Global South, but existing research suggests that any environmental law, standard, or institution with real authority is such because of sustained pressured from collective citizen action. While social mobilization has played a big role in environmental policy-making worldwide, the role of organized citizen pressure in environmental institution building has been particularly pronounced in the weak institutional setting of the Global South. Thus, comparativists can draw important lessons

about the relationship between social accountability and institution building by examining political conflicts over environmental issues in these spaces.

Environmental Concern in the Global South and its Politics

Perhaps because of Inglehart's famous post-materialist thesis (1990; 1995) much of the scholarship on local environmental issues in developing countries has developed outside of political science. Inglehart argued that only countries that enjoy economic security will undergo a "value change" towards environmentalism, making environmental concern a "post-material" issue

Environmental policy arenas in cities allow political scientists to study themes central to the discipline.

developed only in advanced industrial economies. Inglehart assumed that environmental concern would be visible only through formal institutions such as political parties, leading political scientists to associate a lack of ecological parties with low environmental concern and perhaps conclude that the environment was not politically salient and thus irrelevant for study in developing countries.

Other scholars outside of political science reject the post-materialist thesis, and have probed the varied manifestations of environmental concern around the world. Some have found that environmental concern is even higher in low-income nations (Dunlap and Mertig 1997) and that we should expect to see mobilization around slow harms that are framed as "claims of vulnerability" such as when a community's economic livelihood is at stake (e.g. Martinez-Alier 2002; 1991). In contrast, ethnographic research has documented the propensity for low-income communities to be faced with resignation and "environmental suffering" and thus fail to mobi-

lize (Auyero and Swistun 2009; Lora-Wainwright 2017). Recently, comparative politics literature has turned its attention to the rise in socio-environmental conflicts in some non-urban settings, such as political conflicts over extractives (Jaskoski 2014; Amengual 2018; Falleti and Riofrancos 2018; Arce 2014; Eisenstadt and Jones West 2017), forest protection (Kashwan 2017; Milmanda and Garay 2019; Andersson 2013) and conservation policy (Steinberg 2001). Thus, although political scientists have begun to revisit the uptick of environmental concern in developing countries, the focus has not been on how these dynamics shape city politics.

Yet this reality is ripe for change. Comparative politics scholars interested in cities and development can look to the environmental policy arena as a fertile area of study. Urban governments typically have authority over key policy arenas within which environmental goods are provided, regulated or consumed (although this authority may be shared between multiple tiers of government). These responsibilities might include regulating building codes; regulating industrial pollution; allocating land use permits; regulating environmental impacts from water and sanitation provision, landfills, incineration, and transportation; managing forests, parks, and waterfronts; and responding to environmental disasters such as flooding, landslides, and wildfires.

Environmental policy arenas in cities allow political scientists to study themes central to the discipline in new empirical terrain. First, environmental institution-building is tightly linked to social mobilization, and students of civic participation and collective action will be able to fruitfully link these bodies of research with conflicts over local policymaking in response to

climate change. Second, regulatory politics, including issues of state capacity and firm-state relations, is also an arena that plays out in urban environmental policymaking and can be further probed in both democratic and nondemocratic settings. Third, similar to the study of clientelism, political scientists are well poised to study the relationship between electoral cycles and environmental goods provision and regulation. This is an area of great interest to the interdisciplinary study of climate change. Finally, many local governments enjoy autonomous authority over public services provision, which have important environmental causes and consequences that merit further study.

The Role of Citizen Mobilization: New, Existing and Future Research

In my research on environmental policymaking in Latin American cities, I have found that citizen collective action has been critical for building state capacity for enforcing environmental regulations. By focusing on slow moving harms, such as water and land pollution, my research highlights environmental problems that become part of the everyday landscape in many urban communities and thus become stymied by citizen and political inaction. For instance, my research with Lindsay Mayka focused on the role of litigation for social accountability in Bogotá, Colombia, which put urban river remediation on the policymaking agenda (Herrera and Mayka 2019). In another work, I argue that the historical legacies of pre-existing social movements—such as the human rights movements in South America—can create an infrastructure of institutions, NGOs and frames—that can issue-link with environmental issues, providing policy entrepreneurs a pathway towards slow harms remediation, as was the case in Buenos Aires, Argentina (Herrera 2020).

My research builds on earlier work on social mobilization around environmental issues. For example, in Brazil civil society groups have always had environmental expertise and created pressure on the state, moving between state agencies and NGOs (Hochstetler and Keck 2007). This is seen clearly in the alliance building between popular movements and technocrats to clean up "Death Valley" or Cubatão, Brazil which was once one of the most contaminated places in the world (De Mello Lemos 1998; Hochstetler and Keck 2007). More recently, scholarship on social mobilization around the environment has focused on litigation as a demand making strategy, for example in China (Stern 2013; Van Rooij 2010), Argentina (Botero 2018) and Brazil (McAllister 2008).

Political scientists interested in social mobilization have a rich tapestry of empirical developments to choose from when studying environmental movements in the Global South. Combining findings from environmental justice literature (Bullard 2000; Hofrichter 2002) with other political and social movements literature, comparative politics scholars can further interrogate the collective action underpinnings of mobilization surrounding environment. Framing, alliances, the role of NGOs, material resources, and prior organizational strategies are some factors that can be explored for movement formation in new waves of environmental contestation in Global South cities. Some of this existing work that focuses on the utility of environmental justice framing in the Global South context (Urkidi and Walter 2011; Carruthers and Rodriguez 2009; Diez and Rodríguez 2008) could be combined with questions central to comparative politics. For example, research could focus on how movements impact policy change, whether they depend on political parties or mayoral leadership, or how they navigate

multi-tiered governance agendas in climate change mitigation planning spaces. Another area of research is the relationship between national or urban regime change and environmentalism. Future research could build on how, for example, environmental movements expand after shifts from authoritarian rule, as was the case of Brazil (De Mello Lemos 1998) and Argentina (Herrera 2020), or how local environmental protests might contribute to national democratization movements as research on Taiwan and South Korea illustrate (Haddad 2015).

Future Research: Regulatory Politics, Electoral Cycles, and Public Services Provision

Regulatory politics at the urban level have been underdeveloped, despite the political influence of urban growth machines in Global South cities (Molotch 1976). Urban growth machines, whether real estate development or industrial plants, create structural challenges for environmental protections. Recent work by Kent Eaton reveals the tensions between politically connected land interests in Bogotá, Colombia, and efforts to regulate them in order to protect peri-urban natural reserves (K. Eaton 2020, 7–9). Socialpolitical conflicts between real estate developers and urban environmental protections in the Global South is a fruitful venue for future research, particularly as these conflicts increase and become co-opted by partisan interests. Research suggests that social mobilization can sometimes provide a countervailing pressure to urban growth machines.

For example, research on agro-industrial plant pollution in Santa Fe, Argentina shows that regulatory enforcement "was made possible by a mobilized community group that put pressure on the plant and developed linkages with regulators" (Amengual 2016, 164). Indeed, regulation as a coalition-building project in the Global South, requiring the support of both engaged citizens and non-state actors, deserves more scholarly attention, in particular for identifying the conditions under which such strategies are successful. How these dynamics play out in authoritarian settings, where social mobilization is likely to be more muted, also merits further study. New work could build on existing research focused on the explanatory role of centralized or decentralized institutional configurations for environmental compliance in China (Van Rooij et al. 2017; Kostka and Nahm 2017), and the role of citizen-led litigation (Stern 2013; Van Rooij 2010), and connect these types of institutional and citizen variables to urban political leadership.

A promising new area of research involves political cycles and environmental outcomes, focused largely on China. Local leaders experience high turnover as they are promoted in line with central directives, reflecting short time horizons that are at odds with implanting environmental policies in line with China's top down model of environmental authoritarianism (S. Eaton and Kostka 2014). Indeed, scholars have documented a "political business cycle" where local leaders selectively enforce environmental regulations to reduce local industries production costs or attract new firms, generating pollution increases leading up to leader turnover (Cao, Kostka, and Xu 2019). More work on these dynamics in China will reveal how political cycles shape environmental goods provision in authoritarian settings. Extending this research to electoral cycles in democratic settings would be an excellent area for future research.

Scholars should continue to build on the logic of prior clientelism studies and find innovative ways to measure the relationship between electoral cycles and local environmental goods provision and regulation. This allows researchers to harness concepts and tools developed within political science to contribute to the interdisciplinary field of climate change politics, while also using environmental issues to address evergreen themes within political science.

Finally, comparative politics scholars could pay more attention to the environmental consequences of different types of public services provision arrangements in cities in the Global South. While the research on the politics of urban public services provision has increased (e.g. Herrera 2017; Post, Bronsoler, and Salman 2017; Auerbach 2016), few researchers focus on their environmental dimensions. Public services such as water and sanitation depend on water pollution mitigation strategies and regulation of over-extraction that could be more systematically incorporated into political analysis of these types of services (e.g. Keck 2002). Cities' political authority also includes waste management, where landfills generate methane gas, and thus more could be done to study the politics of waste governance and climate change mitigation planning, the same goes for transportation, city governance, and CO_2 emissions. As cities adopt climate change mitigation planning and local battles ensue about which subsectors will be targeted for greenhouse emissions reduction campaigns, important political battles will ensue. Distributional conflicts are likely to arise, for example, over urban greening projects that help in the fight against climate change but also disadvantage low-income communities (Wolch, Byrne, and Newell 2014), suggesting that conflicts over equity and representation will characterize environmental goods provision, not so dissimilar from dynamics political scientists have identified in the social welfare literature.

In sum, political scientists are well positioned to use concepts and methods developed to study topics as far ranging as civic participation, institutional design, coalition building, electoral cycles, regulatory politics, and social welfare equity, when contributing to an urgently needed literature on environmental politics in the places where most of the world lives. ●

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BACK TO SUMMARY

CITIES, CRIMINAL GOVERNANCE AND SUBNATIONAL RESEARCH IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

by Eduardo Moncada

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Scholars increasingly use a subnational approach to study longstanding areas of inquiry in comparative politics.[1] Subnational research refers to an analytic focus on "actors, organizations, institutions, structures, and processes located in territorial units inside countries, that is, below the national and international levels" (Giraudy et al. 2019, 7). Cities are fertile terrain in this subnational turn. Over half of the developing world's population currently resides in cities, and the majority of future population growth will take place in the urban Global South (Montgomery 2008). Decentralization has imbued cities with political power, financial resources and administrative responsibilities, while global cities now fulfill some of the functions in the international arena normally reserved for nation-states (Nijmann 2016). Issues long at the center of the comparative sub-field exhibit rich variation both across and within cities, including linkages between voters and politicians (Auerbach and Thachil 2018; Oliveros 2016; Paller 2019), the political economy of social welfare (Eaton 2020; Herrera 2017; Holland 2016; Post et al. 2018), the regulation of land markets (Rithmire 2015), the politics of preservation (Zhang 2013), redevelopment and gentrification (Pasotti 2020; Donaghy 2018), the fortunes of political regimes (Wallace 2014), and experiments in participatory democracy (Goldfrank 2007; Wampler 2010).[2]

The vibrancy and density of developing world cities, however, also makes them epicenters of criminal violence (Davis 2012; Moncada 2013). Across the developing world, diverse criminal actors govern everyday life in the territories they control. Emerging research identifies arrangements between criminals and state actors – including police, bureaucrats, and elected officials – that impact modalities of violence as well as electoral campaigns, civic life, and economic markets (Albarracín 2018; Arias 2017; Durán-Martínez 2018; Magaloni et al. 2020; Wolff 2015). My current research builds on this work by bringing victims of criminal violence into the analysis and studying how victims of similar forms of criminal extortion resist victimization in strikingly different ways throughout Latin America.[3] While much research on crime in the region focuses on illicit drug markets, most people

1. The number of studies that use a subnational approach published in top-ranked political science journals and academic presses has increased over the last two decades (Sellers 2019).

2. See Post (2018) for an overview of comparative urban politics research.

3. Moncada, Eduardo. *Resisting Extortion: Victims, Criminals and Police in Latin America* (under contract, Cambridge University Press).

experience organized crime, not through spectacular acts of drug violence, but through everyday victimization under criminal extortion. In 2017, over half a million Mexican firms reported being the targets of extortion – a figure that is most likely an underestimate given the challenge of underreporting.[4] Furthermore, a recent study provocatively concluded that criminal extortion was so widespread in Central America that it had become "embedded in the [region's] culture" (GIATOC 2019, 3).

Extortion is the foundation for criminal governance in Latin America.

Classic studies of extortion focus on the extraction of money in return for protection (Blok 1974; Gambetta 1996; Varese 2001; Volkov 2002). Studying the economics of extortion is undoubtedly important. But my current research reveals that extortion entails more than the forced extraction of money. Extortion is the foundation for criminal governance in Latin America. First, criminal actors use extortion to make local populations legible and thus optimize informal taxation. Everyday interactions with victims enable criminals to gain knowledge that is otherwise not easily observable, such as whether a person has family members sending remittances back from abroad or the profitability of an informal business. Second, these interactions also generate information on who among victims might be inclined to denounce criminals to their rivals or to the state. As in wartime settings (Kalyvas 2006), this information is key for the ability of armed groups to sustain territorial control. Third, the subor-

dination of victims obtained under sustained extortion reduces the potential threat to other criminal activities in the territory, such as drug trafficking, the sale of black-market weapons, or the commercial sexual exploitation of minors.[5] Finally, regularly physically traversing territory during extortion also enables criminals to monitor for incursions by potential rivals or state actors. These insights advance our growing understanding of criminal groups as dynamic and complex actors that, while not necessarily the precursors to states, do exhibit a range of state-like behaviors.[6] Attention to extortion as the foundation of criminal governance also invites us to complicate how we study victims and, more broadly, relations between criminals and victims.

In my current research, I use data collected in localities where the state is unwilling or unable to enforce the rule of law in Colombia, El Salvador and Mexico to analyze why victims of similar forms of extortion pursue different strategies of resistance. By resistance, I mean publicly observable strategies outside of the rule of law that victims direct at criminals to end or negotiate victimization. These strategies vary in their level and form of collective action, as well as state involvement, and range from one-on-one negotiations with criminal actors in Medellín, Colombia, episodic coordination with individual police to selectively assassinate criminals in parts of El Salvador, and forms of collective vigilantism against criminals in Michoacán, Mexico. Analyzing these outcomes builds on growing re-

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4. *Reforma*. "Extorsiones en México, Régimen Feudal." December 19, 2018. Available at: https://www.reforma.com/aplicacioneslibre/articulo/default.aspx?id=1567664&md5=ecebf6c8bde97e2bcdb7e3a08fd2fb57&ta=0dfdbac11765226904c16cb9ad1b2efe. Accessed on March 1, 2019.

5. On obedience as a civilian behavior in wartime settings, see Arjona (2017) and Wood (2003).

6. On protection rackets as central to both state building and organized crime, see Tilly (1985).

search on the politics of extra-legal responses to crime in the developing world (Bateson 2013; Jung and Cohen 2020; Moncada 2017; Smith 2019). To explain this variation, I build a theory showing how criminals' time horizons, the nature of the pre-existing institutions available to victims, and whether police are captured by criminal actors combine to shape the strategies of resistance that victims pursue.

This essay draws on evidence from my fieldwork in Medellin to show how analyzing criminal extortion in urban settings can generate insights into three aspects of criminal governance within cities: the segmentation of urban space along invisible borders, the strategies that criminal actors use to sustain criminal governance, and the ways that victims resist. This case consists of several hundred vendors in a large informal market who were extorted by a criminal gang that was part of a larger drug trafficking organization. The police that patrolled the informal market were captured by the gang, who paid the police to turn a blind eye to their illicit operations. Over the course of five months between 2015 and 2019, I carried out semi-structured interviews, focus groups and other methodologies to map the dynamics of extortion in this locality and the vendors' strategy of resistance.

Invisible Borders and the Segmentation of Urban Space

Criminal governance within a city can be segmented when multiple and competing criminal actors enforce invisible borders behind which they govern aspects of everyday life (Moncada 2016, 24).[7] The resulting segmentation has implications for urban politics. More criminal competition is associated with greater levels of lethal violence (Friman 2009). Disorder, in turn, makes it politically perilous for local incumbents to move beyond hardline politics because of voter demand for order in the short-term and the potential for political opponents to paint incumbents as soft on crime (Moncada 2016, 24).

While researching the politics of criminal extortion, I found that threats to equilibriums in segmented territorial control reconfigure criminals' time horizons and, in turn, how they carry out extortion and how victims experience it. We can see this by comparing the dynamics of extortion before and after increased criminal competition in Medellin. Initially the informal vendors that I studied welcomed protection by the criminal gang because of the high levels of crime and violence in the city center. Here, gang members treated vendors with respect and vendors paid them for a valuable service where the state failed to do so.[8]

However, in 2013 a fragile city-wide informal pact between rival criminal organizations in Medellin broke down and catalyzed violent micro-level turf wars. Extortion became predatory as the time horizons of criminal actors shortened: the amount of money demanded from the vendors increased, payment was made obligatory under punishment of violence, and the promise of protection became an empty one.[9] As I detail in the next section, gang members began purposefully using disrespectful language and other forms of public humiliation as part of extortion while failing to provide protection.

7. See Kalyvas (2006) and Staniland (2012) on how control over territory influences civil war dynamics.

8. Frye (2002, 574) makes a similar point in a study of private protection organizations (PPOs) in Russia and Poland.

9. Magaloni et al. (2019) identify similar patterns in studying extortion by drug trafficking organizations in Mexico.

Increased criminal competition thus upended the equilibrium of segmented territorial control and prompted change in how the criminal gang ruled and how victims experienced extortion. This is akin to a shift from Olson's (1993) stationary to a roving bandit and, more broadly, invites us to complicate the notions that relations between criminals and victims are either static or always predatory. The evidence I collected from Medellin indicates that micro-level relations between criminals and victims are dynamic and sensitive to shifts in broader macro-level contexts. This shows that the invisible borders imposed by criminal actors within cities is a fertile unit of analysis with which to generate insights into a foundational aspect of criminal governance.

Strategies of Criminal Governance

Coercive capacity is necessary but insufficient to tax populations (Levi 1989, 13). I find that, much like political rulers, criminal actors also use social and political strategies of domination to sustain material extraction. Thus a focus on the material dimensions of criminal victimization, while necessary, is insufficient to understand the full scope of how criminals govern.

Through interviews and focus groups I concluded that the criminal gang used practices of social domination to keep vendors from challenging its informal authority. This included regularly verbally humiliating vendors by insulting their lack of hygiene and old clothes, or simply vocalizing widely held notions of informal vendors as "disposable" social groups that sit outside main-

stream society. As one vendor noted during a focus group: "[The criminal actors] just say what everyone in society already thinks about us."[10] Aligning with James Scott's (1990, 188) concept of "symbolic taxes," these and other practices of social domination fostered a loss of self-respect among vendors that constrained the willingness to contest criminal rule.

I also found that criminal actors invest substantial amounts of time in political domination to encourage victims to "accept their role in the existing order of things" (Steven 1974, 11). Gang members regularly told victims that the state had abandoned them and that key state actors, such as the local police, were more likely to work for them than for the vendors. Sometimes these strategies substituted for the costly use of coercion. One vendor recalled what a gang member told him after he hesitated to pay the informal tax: "He smiled at me because they are all *descarados* [shameless]. And he said to me, 'Of course, you could call the police, but even if they show up, it's more likely that they work for us than that they'll work for you.'"[11]

Conceptualizing criminal victimization as asymmetric but contentious power relations reveals processes that get overlooked when we conceive of crime, particularly violent crime, solely as a one-time physical offense (Moncada 2019). At the same time, unpacking extortion in a micro-level urban space unearths productive analytical links between criminal governance and broader realms of research on relations between subordinate and dominant actors.

10. Focus group participant (MDE_FG2_720), July 2016.

11. Interview, informal vendor (IV_MDE_1010), July 2016.

Resistance and the Politics of Criminal Victimization

The ways in which populations respond to criminal rule vary across space and time. Unpacking this micro-level variation can add to our understanding of the politics of criminal victimization within, but also beyond, cities. Existing research on fear of criminal victimization shows that people self-segregate in privately guarded housing developments (Caldeira 2000), while others mobilize to stop criminal groups from taking over their territories (Mattiace et al. 2019). I complement these analyses by theorizing how populations already under criminal rule resist it.

The vendors in Medellin engaged in "everyday resistance" (Scott 1989). This entailed using subtle individual-level practices to negotiate extortion in ways that bypassed traditional rule of law institutions. To resist material taxation, vendors appealed to the very asymmetry in power between themselves and their victimizers. This echoes Scott's (1990, 18) point that the "safest and most public form of political discourse is that which takes as its basis the flattering self-image of elites." For example, vendors would sometimes tell gang members that because they were the authorities in the market they should show benevolence by being lenient in their taxation. Reductions in material taxation were not always granted and, when allowed, were marginal: criminals sometimes told vendors they could skip a week's payment or pay only half the normal tax. Everyday resistance can mitigate but not end criminal victimization.

Vendors also used rhetorical practices to resist social domination by quietly but firmly urging gang members to stop insulting them because society viewed *both* of them as deviants.[12] And vendors contested political domination by publicly talking about their state-sanctioned rights to work and live dignified lives exactly when the criminals arrived to collect the tax.[13] Vendors did not affirm their relationship to specific state institutions, but instead to the abstract notion of constitutionally-sanctioned rights.[14] This exemplifies how the "myth of rights" (Scheingold 1974) can provide a catalyst for resistance to victimization. Vendors strategically chose to verbalize these rhetorical tools to remind the criminals that they were not the only authority in the vendors' lives.

Taken together, these dynamics belie the conventional notion of criminal victimization as a one-sided affair where criminals impose their will on helpless victims. In my broader research, I identify and study further empirical variation in the strategies and practices that victims use to resist criminal extortion across diverse spaces. Comparing criminal-victim dyads within and across cities can be a fruitful strategy to unearth contentious politics that may otherwise go unnoticed by a macro-level focus on the city as the unit of analysis. Centering on the criminal-victim dyad also enables us to compare features and change in criminal victimization across distinct territorial contexts, including the traditional rural-urban divide. This is particularly important given the understudied prevalence of different forms of crime, including criminal

12. Interview, informal vendor (IV_MDE_899), July 2016.

13. Focus group participants (MDE_FG8_1112), (MDE_FG7_101) and (MDE_FG7_1212), March 2017.

14. Interview, informal vendor (IV_MDE_911), July 2016.

extortion, across rural settings in Latin America and other parts of the developing world.

Conclusion

Subnational research in comparative politics builds on and extends the insights, concepts and theories developed through traditional cross-national comparisons. Cities offer generative spaces for studying diverse political issues within this subnational turn. Critical among these issues is the politics of crime. This essay used a case of resistance to criminal extortion in a major developing world city to generate insights into the segmentation of urban space through the imposition of invisible borders by criminal actors, the dynamics of criminal governance, and the surprisingly contentious nature of criminal victimization. ●

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BACK TO SUMMARY

THE CONTENTIOUS POLITICS OF URBANIZATION:
Insights from Africa

by Jeffrey W. Paller

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*Urbanization is a
contentious political
process where
population growth leads
to competing and often
conflicting claims on a
city.*

On January 21, 2020, residents of Tarkwa Bay in Lagos, Nigeria awoke to gunfire. The Nigerian Navy forcefully removed nearly 4,500 residents from their homes in the informal settlement along the waterfront, following an "order from above." The NGO Justice & Empowerment Initiatives estimate that more than 2.3 million Nigerians have been forcefully evicted from their homes in the past twenty years (Kazeem 2020). But residents are not passive bystanders: they protest the evictions, demand accountability from their political representatives, bargain with traditional authorities and landowners, and take governments to court. These political dynamics in African cities disrupt the national political landscape by instigating legal and policy reforms, pressuring government representatives to action, and emboldening opposition parties and other non-state actors.

This contentious political process is happening across Africa as rising urbanization places population pressure on cities and raises property values. The forms of contentious politics differ across distinct historical and institutional contexts, challenging dominant social science paradigms that treat urbanization as a linear process associated with economic modernization and bureaucratization. In this essay, I outline a framework to understand urbanization that sets relevant political factors in motion, treating cities and urban neighborhoods as receptacles of social interaction and "active sites of creation and change" (McAdam et al. 2003, 22).

My research contributes to a growing literature that applies political economy analysis to urban politics in the Global South. Groundbreaking books uncover the importance of ethnic demography and political participation in Ghana (Nathan 2019), the role of neighborhood organizations in demanding development in India (Auerbach 2019), and the calculations of political elites in Colombia and Peru (Holland 2017). These political economy approaches to urban development uncover the diversity of political forms both within and across cities in the Global South. My approach draws from these insights, but adds an overlooked dimension: the role of urban citizenship and claims to urban space.

I suggest treating urbanization as a contentious political process where population growth leads to competing and often conflicting claims on a city. Drawing from Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly's insights in *Dynamics of Contention,* contentious politics are "Episodic,

public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when a) at least one government is a claimant, and object of claims, or a party to the claims and b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants" (2003, 5). A focus on processes, episodes, and mobilization better captures the dynamic political struggle that urban growth entails, as well as the particular trajectory of urban political development that emerges. This follows in the tradition of other comparative politics scholarship that considers social and political processes like religious fundamentalism and foreign policy decision-making as nonlinear (e.g. Tabaar 2019; Hintz 2018). This switches the focus from a static cross-sectional approach to politics that treat actors, institutions, and interests as fixed and unchanging to one where resistance, bargaining, and participation can change the political landscape.

Africa provides a useful backdrop to uncover the set of interactive mechanisms that spur mobilization and episodes of contention during the process of urbanization. Unlike urbanization elsewhere, Africa is urbanizing without large-scale industrialization. Violent conflicts, faulty agricultural policies, failing state institutions, and centralized political development and economic investments spur African urbanization – not the pull of manufacturing jobs. It is also the last region to experience widespread urban growth. In 1970, only 18 percent of Africans lived in cities; this number increased to 40 percent by 2018. According to the United Nation's population division, 472 million Africans are now estimated to live in cities, with the number increasing each day. The region's 3.5 percent urbanization rate is the fastest in the world today with 21 of the 30 fastest growing cities in Africa. 74 urban agglomerations have more than 1 million people.

Throughout Africa's past, cities experienced skewed land allocation, invasions and squatting, immigrant and population expulsions, demolitions, exclusive urban planning and the formation of parallel governance structures (Klopp and Paller 2019). Migration and the growth of non-native populations in cities can contribute to new social conflict, either in the formation of new identities or the politicization of ethnic and indigenous identities. As urbanization continues, there is new pressure on land acquisition, leading to multiple claimants of property, which contributes to winners and losers. But Africa's urban history is also one of creativity, cooperation, bargaining, deliberation, and debate.

The essay proceeds as follows. First, I outline the relevant mechanisms that characterize the contentious politics of urbanization. Second, I compare four cities in Africa – Accra (Ghana), Cape Town (South Africa), Nairobi (Kenya), and Lagos (Nigeria). Third, I illustrate the contentious politics of urbanization in these four cases, using examples of forced evictions and demolitions to illustrate the argument. Finally, I conclude with the implications of this approach to the study of urbanization and urban politics.

Mechanisms of contentious urbanization

In *Dynamics of Contention*, McAdam et al. advance a theory of social movements based on collective political struggle and the dynamism of political action. By setting conventional theories of social movements in motion, the authors blur the lines between institutionalized and noninstitutionalized politics. They uncover important environmental, cognitive, and relational mechanisms that lead to transformations in society. This societal transformation is spurred by

a political process made up of episodes of contention, or "continuous streams of contention including collective claims making that bears on other parties' interests" (McAdam et al. 2003, 24).

Typically, urbanization is viewed as a static environmental mechanism that sets the political process in motion (Lipset 1959; Inglehart 1997). By contrast, I suggest that urbanization (defined as the shift from a rural to urban society) – through the movement of people from rural to urban areas, the designation of rural areas to urban, or natural population increase in cities – is a contentious political process involving new and competing claims to space and territory. While an environmental mechanism that is exogenous to demographic change might trigger the process, contentious politics unfolds through mechanisms including new attributions of threat and opportunity, the social appropriation of existing organizations, framing and reframing of identities, innovative forms of collective action, and brokerage. For example, urbanization can create speculative investment opportunities for the business and political elite but also spur the reemergence of nativist claims to urban space by traditional authorities and indigenous groups. Residents find innovative strategies to claim rights to the city by forming new alliances with NGOs and engaging in relationships with political patrons. By examining urbanization as a contentious political process, we gain a more empirically accurate picture of what urbanization entails, and how it manifests across time and space.

Table 1: Mechanisms of contentious urbanization		
New attributions of threat and opportunity	Threats to political control
	Threat of urban displacement
	Opportunities for land speculation
Social appropriation of existing organizations	Reemergence of ethnic associations
	Reemergence of traditional authorities
	Membership in human rights organizations
Framing and reframing of identities	Construction of insider-outsider; host-migrant; native-newcomer identities
	New entitlements to urban citizenship
Innovative forms of collective action	Protests
	Construction of slum dweller associations
	Land occupations
Brokerage	Political clientelism
	Diaspora connections
	NGO capture

Cases of African urbanization

Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa make good case comparisons because they vary along key dimensions that social scientists suggest should explain political outcomes: state capacity, extent of democracy, and degree of urbanization. Ghana and South Africa are two of the most urbanized countries in Africa, 56 percent and 66 percent respectively. Nigeria became 50 percent urban in 2018, with Kenya lagging far behind at 27 percent (these estimates are reported by country, and not standardized across countries). Ghana and South Africa score high on democracy, rule of law and governance indicators, with Kenya lagging behind. Nigeria falls toward the bottom on most indicators. Despite these varying degrees of state capacity and extent of democracy, all countries have notable episodes of contention that illustrate the urbanization process (see Table 2, below).

All four countries look to their major cities to drive the economy. Governments and planners desire to build "world class" cities, and aim to attract massive investment from foreign governments or multinational companies to build sports stadiums, modern central business districts, gated communities, and entirely new satellite cities. To make way for these high-end developments, cities engage in what some scholars have called "urban cleaning," where government forces including the police and military destroy "illegal" slum settlements (Raleigh 2015). Evictions and displacements have occurred in Zimbabwe (2005, 2007), Angola (2007), Kenya (2008, 2009, 2010), Nigeria (2000, 2009), Sudan (2005), South Africa (2010), Ethiopia (2011, 2017), Uganda (2011), and many other countries.

Forced evictions are also inherently political. For example, demolitions in Kenya were used to curb popular dissent, as well as a way to punish

Table 2:
Summary of cases and documented episodes of contention

	Ghana	South Africa	Kenya	Nigeria
Degree urbanization 2018	56% urban	66% urban	27% urban	50% urban
Fragile States Index 2019 (100=Most fragile)	65.9	71.1	93.5	98.5
Government Effectiveness 2018 (Worldwide Governance Indicators)	-.21	.34	-.41	-1.02
Rule of Law 2018 (Worldwide Governance Indicators)	.07	-.10	-.41	-.88
	Accra	**Cape Town**	**Nairobi**	**Lagos**
COHRE documented evictions (1995-2008)	5	3	12	18
AllAfrica episodes of contention 2018-2020	5	52	59	13

opponents and reward loyal followers (Klopp 2008). Urban construction provides politicians numerous opportunities to engage in corruption and rent seeking. Traditional authorities, especially those who claim ownership or custodianship of urban property, flex their muscles and profit from skyrocketing land prices. Governments justify evictions and demolitions as a way to curb public health outbreaks, fight criminality, and prevent flooding. The urban poor are forced to rely on innovative forms of collective action to confront evictions, demolitions, and removal.

I developed a media events database to identify "episodes of contention" in Accra, Nairobi, Lagos and Cape Town between 1995-2020. I defined episodes of contention as incidents of competing or conflicting claims to urban space that lead to the actual or threat of eviction, demolition, or forced displacement. These episodes also include the response from neighborhood residents, politicians, and municipal authorities. I drew from *AllAfrica.com* newspaper articles between 2018-2020 (a sub-section of the database) and the Center on Housing Rights and Evictions, a Geneva-based nongovernmental organization's Forced Eviction surveys 7-11 (1998-2008). While these sources did not document all episodes of contention that occur during this period, they offered a systematic accounting of episodes.

Progressive housing policies: Ghana and South Africa

Ghana and South Africa are both urbanized societies with high levels of democratic engagement and rule of law, which have contributed to progressive housing policies. But South Africa's history of socio-economic disparities

and protest contributes to far more episodes of contention today. South Africa is notable for its progressive constitution that includes the right to adequate housing and protects against unlawful eviction. The governing ANC claims to have built 3.2 million homes between 1994-2018. While Ghana does not have positive rights in place for housing in its constitution, it has devised a National Urban Plan, National Housing Policy, and National Spatial Development Plan, which include protections for the poor.

However, both countries struggle to overcome historical legacies of spatial inequalities due to colonial zoning policies and residential segregation. Cape Town has a long history of political and social exclusion dating back to the 17th century, which deepened during British and Afrikaans rule. Between the 1960s-1980s, the government used the Group Areas Act to remove blacks, coloureds, and Indians from the city. Accra grew from a small fishing village made up of the Ga ethnic group, to a heterogeneous city that is inhabited by people from dozens of different groups. Throughout colonial rule and independence, the integration of migrants into the city contributed to new disputes between insiders and outsiders. The importance of international organizations like the World Bank and aid organizations in urban planning shifts incentives on the ground, and provide new sources of funding for infrastructure upgrading.

Despite progressive legal policy and democratic politics, housing and urban space is limited in both cities, contributing to competing claims over land and housing. In the early 2000s, the City of Cape Town evicted shack dwellers from their homes to make way for a large housing project, a World Cup stadium, and a private development. In Ghana, the government ordered

30,000 people living in an informal settlement to vacate their land, evicted veterans from their homes, removed traders from a large market, and demolished structures to clear waterways.

In both cities, similar mechanisms are at work, including new attributions of threat and opportunity, social appropriation of existing organizations, framing and reframing of identities, and brokerage. For example, residents without land titles are framed as criminals and barriers to development. Developers then take advantage of these tenure insecurities and seek new opportunities for real estate development and land speculation. In Ghana, indigenous Ga organizations socially appropriated the chieftaincy institution to claim ownership and governance of neighborhoods, and framed migrants as squatters or "trespassers in the city." In response, non-profit organizations emerged to protect the urban poor, serving as brokers between municipal authorities and residents on the ground. Adding to the contention, major political parties like the ANC, New Patriotic Party, and National Democratic Congress politicized these relationships over time.

In the last two years, Accra has relatively few episodes of contention (5 in total). Various municipal authorities have demolished structures along waterways to curb the annual flooding that affects the city. Political parties continue to serve as important brokers and contribute to the persistence of informal settlement growth, which I document in *Democracy in Ghana: Everyday Politics in Urban Africa* (Paller 2019).

In contrast, episodes of contention are engrained in the fabric of Cape Town everyday life. I identified 52 episodes of contention in the last two years in the townships and suburbs of Cape Town. Most are shack demolitions, subsequent

rebuilds, service delivery protests, and gatherings at court when eviction notices are served. Residents frame their activity as "land occupations," and have support from the social movement organization Reclaim the City, as well as the news outlet *GroundUp.* In response, the City of Cape Town formed an Anti-Land Invasion Unit that in 2009 to stop people from illegally occupying land and is the city's biggest law enforcement operation.

The framing of identities is important in this struggle: the residents use the term occupiers, while the city uses invaders. Landlords hire "red-ants" – private security agents – to demolish shacks on private land. Most of these demolitions occur after court-ordered eviction letters are granted, though there are many disputes over the process. Organizations use innovative forms of collective action. For example, Reclaim the City partnered with the world-famous guerilla activists The Yes Men and staged a "zombie rally" after sending out a press release spoof stating that the city agreed to all of their demands (Wayland and Geffen 2019). Cape Town's population growth is part and parcel of a contentious political process that has its roots in a long history of racial segregation and exclusion.

Urban land regimes and authoritarian legacies: Kenya and Nigeria

Kenya and Nigeria have long histories of exploitation, marginalization, and segregation. These histories of authoritarianism shape violent government responses to urban growth and development today. Colonial authorities founded Nairobi in 1899 as a railway depot. British authorities settled in the "leafy" areas, while the black laboring poor settled informally in low-lying environs nearby employment opportunities. Landlord-tenant agreements developed into

entrenched patron-client relationships between politicians and residents, as well as ethnically defined residential patterns.

Lagos Island was originally inhabited by several villages of Yoruba people, who developed a growing trade network with other Africans, Portuguese, and freed slaves from Brazil. The legal system institutionalized the authority of indigenous landowners after independence, giving them considerable control over land. Kenya became a multi-party democracy in 2002, while Nigeria overcame its military government in 1999. The legacy of authoritarian rule in urban Nigeria and Kenya is still felt today. The number of COHRE-recorded episodes of contention between 1995-2010 is significantly higher than Ghana and South Africa, as both countries had weak legal protections. Lagos had 18 episodes, and Nairobi experienced 12. Dating back to 1996, Lagos State identified 11 slums for eviction, setting the stage for contention for years to come. They evicted fisher folk from waterfront communities, traders from markets, students from universities, and shack dwellers from at least eight informal settlements.

Informal settlements in both cities provide significant opportunities for land speculation. In Nigeria, most informal settlements are waterfront communities, making them some of the most valuable property in the city. Residents in Kenyan neighborhoods also face the threat of urban displacement, giving politicians more power to serve as a powerful voice and protector of their livelihoods. For example, Nairobi City County Governor Mike Sonko declared after one demolition, "I will be the first to die before you are evicted. We don't want that nonsense. God knows why you are living in slums. It is not your choice." (Ndonga 2019).

These eviction threats spur counter-mobilization: social appropriation of existing organizations and innovative forms of collective action. Slum dweller associations emerged with the help of the international alliance Slum/Shack Dwellers International. Muungano wa Wanavijiji in Nairobi and Justice & Empowerment Initiatives in Lagos became social movements and political actors in their own right, reframing slum dweller rights as human rights, with the support of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

Between 2018-2020, there were 59 episodes of contention in Nairobi. Many of these episodes took place in August 2018 and were the result of the National Environmental Management Authority's directive to demolish all "illegal structures" on riparian lands. Politicians quickly politicized these demolitions. In addition, government companies and agencies like Kenya Railways, Kenya Pipeline Company, and Kenya Urban Roads Authority evicted thousands of people, including 20,000 people in Kibera to make way for a highway. Many demolitions took place in the middle of the night – called "midnight demolitions" – and residents claim they did not receive proper notice, despite court orders.

Unlike Nairobi, Lagos did not engage in a large-scale demolition campaign. There were 13 notable episodes of contention that included demolishing buildings that were not up to code, removal of stalls from markets, and the demolition of homes to make way for a modern bus terminal. The most contentious demolition occurred in Tarkwa Bay, introduced in the beginning of this essay. The Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Federation led protests against these evictions. Nonetheless, broker-

age continues to play an important role in Lagos' development, as powerful traditional families like the Elegushi partner with politicians to grab land and displace slum dwellers; the diaspora invests in gated communities; and NGOs broker the relationship between poor communities and municipal government.

Implications for the study of urbanization

Recent studies demonstrate that community organizations and social movements devise strategies beyond protests and demonstrations to secure urban housing, protect tenure security, and implement pro-poor policies (Mitlin 2018; Donaghy 2018). But evidence from the media events database suggests that contentious politics in Africa's largest and most important cities still shapes the urbanization process and requires attention in the study of urbanization. These urban political dynamics have the potential to disrupt national politics across the continent, but this essay demonstrates how the outcomes will vary across contexts.

The comparative method sheds light on the political mechanisms underlying urbanization. In Nairobi, Cape Town, and Accra parties and politicians play important roles in protecting and representing the poor – but are also accused of engaging in corruption and land grabbing. Politicians are quick to paint certain groups as threats, while claiming to protect others from imminent eviction (Klaus 2020). In Lagos and Accra, indigenous landowners are important brokers in the urban development process. In all four cases, international organizations have reframed slum rights as human rights, drawing new attention to urban citizenship.

In addition, historical legacies of inequality – many of which are direct outcomes of colonialism and Apartheid – continue to shape public policy. Framing the urban poor as dirty and criminal is a political tool that has its roots in colonial-era urban planning, and is used to legitimize slum removal and renewal schemes. Finally, the politics of belonging underlies the contentious politics of urbanization, resulting in tension between host and migrant populations.

These insights from Africa extend far beyond the continent, demonstrating that urbanization across the world is a contentious process, contributing to episodes of competing claims, the assertion of urban citizenship, and the emergence of new and the reaffirmation of old political actors and identities. ●

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PROTEST IN SPACE, AMONG SOCIAL GROUPS AND IN TIME: Towards an Historically Informed Agenda of Studying Urban Discontent in Autocracies

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Urban protest has been a subject of burgeoning scholarship on regime vulnerabilities and resilience in autocracies (Onuch 2015, 2014; Lorentzen 2013; King et al. 2013; Rød and Weidmann 2015; Beissinger 2013; Little et al. 2013; Tucker 2007; Robertson 2011; Harris and Hern 2019; Plantan 2014; Frye and Borisova 2019). In this essay, I discuss how careful attention to historical legacies of social structure that are spatially varied, could further enrich the recent empirical and conceptual innovations in the study of protest. Specifically, I sketch out how and in what ways history matters for understanding present-day protest and *non*-protest; in what ways lack of sensitivity to historical legacies can hamper understanding of discontent in post-communist societies; and how my ongoing historically-grounded research contributes to this research agenda. Although the discussion largely concerns protest in Russia and other post-communist states, the arguments are applicable to a variety of settings. They sensitize us to broad patterns of historical conditioning of the political economy of sub-national urban spaces and social structures underpinning varieties and intensities of mobilization.

Recent contributions: Space, Issue Salience and Time

Before I outline how history matters for understanding urban street contention in post-communist states, I will highlight recent data innovations and contributions to the study of protest. I then proceed to illustrate how the rich data contributions could be fruitfully analysed in conjunction with historical source materials.

The global wave of high-profile colour revolutions has highlighted the significance of urban street contention to effect pivotal change in political institutions and regimes. These rare events, often limited to national capitals and a handful of metropolises, do not by themselves provide a window into the long-term dynamics of the germination of grievances, incentives and accumulation of tangible and intangible protest-supportive resources, processes that may or may not culminate in a successful uprising (Robertson 2013). Understanding the dynamics of the singular high-profile event requires unpacking the hidden inter-connected mechanisms structuring contention across issue areas, across space and in time (Lankina and Tertytchnaya 2019). Building on cross-

Spatial heterogeneity in mobilizational dynamics could be best understood with reference to the broader historical processes.

national data generation efforts (Banks 2011), researchers have begun to assemble sub-national over-time event data disaggregated by issue area, activist base and locality (Rød and Weidmann 2014; Weidmann and Rød 2019; Lankina 2018; Daxecker et al. 2019; Robertson 2011).[1] These data may be instrumental in revealing the patterned nature of the articulation of grievances in urban politics. These are intrinsic not only to types of issues and causes people care about, but also to locality-specific structures of patronage, clientelism, social control. In turn, theorizing into authoritarian resilience informs us that these sub-national political-institutional features of authoritarian regimes constitute bottom-up support structures for national incumbents (Hale 2015).

Furthermore, spatial variations in institutional-political landscapes within an autocracy may crucially affect not only citizen propensity to engage in civic and contentious street acts, but the type of activism that is "permitted," "safe" or tactically desirable from the point of view of protesters' goals. For instance, sub-national data for Russia reveal that even in the more politically liberal metropolitan urban conglomerates outside of the high-profile electoral protests or other intensely politicised mass contentious acts, the bulk of protest events will concern variants of post-material engagements. Some examples are protests against illegal construction, street activism concerning the destruction of parks, nature reserves, children leisure facilities (Lankina and Tertytchnaya 2019; Smyth 2020). These apparently harmless forms of discontent constitute however crucial channels of

engendering political constituencies for protest. Indeed, studies have shown that the same individuals assume leadership roles, are active in, and instrumental in the spurring of, politicised discontent when political opportunities change (Greene and Robertson 2019; Lankina 2015).

The Lankina Russian Protest-Event Dataset (LARuPED) (Lankina 2018) is sensitive to these inter-connected possibilities in that it distinguishes between civic, social, economic, political types of activism across space and in time. The data allow scholars to track shifting issue salience and its relevance for building authoritarian challenges in the long run. The data also show heterogeneity in the types of protest that citizens in the various localities habitually engage in. In some regions, strikes and labour activism around bread and butter issues are prevalent. Elsewhere, individuals routinely engage in protest around civic causes, something that facilitates political forms of contention when opportunities open up at the national level.

The focus in much of the literature has been on identifying temporally-proximate causal mechanisms related to the intricacies of immediate politics, tactics and resources of activists and political actors. Yet, I argue that spatial heterogeneity in mobilizational dynamics with crucial implications for national-level contention and authoritarian regime erosion could be best understood with reference to the broader historical processes of regional economic development shaping social structure, resources and incentives. Below I discuss how sensitivity to the historical underpinnings of regional political economies would help us develop a more fine-

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1. For an overview of the various datasets, see (Rød and Weidmann 2014).

grained and textured knowledge of spatial-temporal variations in protest.

The political economy of sub-national protest

Most scholars would concur that the economic dimension of citizen grievances, incentives and opportunities, is of pivotal importance for understanding spatial heterogeneity in urban protest in autocracies. Nevertheless, we need a better understanding of the mechanisms linking social rebellion or compliance to the broader, spatially varied political and economic legacies associated with distinct forms of economic development, urbanization and industrialization. In post-communist autocracies, significant chunks of the urban workforce remain corralled in state-owned or state-dependent enterprises—a legacy of state socialist planning. Economic dependencies and vulnerabilities also affect the conduct of public sector workforce employed in schools, medical facilities, tertiary institutions. Furthermore, historically "old" towns with a long history of pre-communist development ought to be distinguished from "new" monotowns built around one or a handful of industrial giants (Zubarevich 2011). In the latter-type of urban environment, a large proportion of citizens depend on one mega-employer. The social life of families and communities and services are also structured around employer-provided infrastructure and welfare. In such socialist-legacy industrial monotowns, dismissal from work is a harsh sentence, far more so than in historical towns with a much more plural, fluid and dynamic employment ecosystem. Even during nationally-prominent mobilizations challenging authoritarian rule, citizens in such towns may be less willing to join in the broad cross-territorial movement. This, in turn, consolidates the cleavage between the "sophisticated urbanites" in large metropolises and the equivalent of the communist rust-belt of left-behind towns. Workforce dependencies dis-incentivize salaried employees from challenging autocrats at the ballot box or in the streets. They also encourage patterns of complicity in actively undermining street activism—again, using the toolkit of worker, student, peer dismissals, harassment and shaming (Frye et al. 2014; Lankina and Libman 2019).

History also matters from the point of view of types of modernization and the contexts in which it has been pursued. In classic modernization theorizing (Lipset 1959), educated, urban white-collar workforce is often associated with "progressive" causes and, in autocracies, lower tolerance for regimes that trample on citizen rights. Rare revolutionary events may of course feature cross-class participation of a motley assemblage of citizens of varied political orientations, demographic cohorts and socio-economic status (Beissinger 2013). Nevertheless, whether considering politicised acts of dissent or more routine forms of civic protest, urban discontent is often a middle-class phenomenon. Yet, as Bryn Rosenfeld demonstrates, the "middle class" itself needs to be urgently unpacked in contexts where a large share is "incubated" within the confines of the autocracy's public sector (Rosenfeld 2017). Rosenfeld's work dovetails with earlier and more recent contributions problematizing the "bourgeoisie" or the middle class in iconic works on democratic origin and resilience. Not only may the middle class espouse economic or other incentives to support autocratic rule (Foa 2018; O'Donnell 1973; Slater 2010; Greene and Robertson 2019), but it may choose to "deliberately disengage" in the face of authoritarian manipulations and crackdowns (Croke et al. 2016).

The bigger question however - which has not been addressed prominently in recent studies of urban mobilization in autocracies - is the historical conditioning of the types of dependencies that Rosenfeld writes about. Neglect of this question risks skewing the explanatory framework towards the policies, employment and economic structures of present-day autocracies. In fact, as my analysis shows, these patterns may be rooted in developmental policies of a distinct, prior, regime type, or even several regimes. There is also the question of the likelihood of cross-class mobilization transcending social cleavages *within* the urban middle class. For toppling or effectively challenging autocrats may require wider alliances *between* the large metropolitan centres where much of the activism occurs and smaller towns or rural areas. The latter types of settlement however are often not only dormant when it comes to protest but constitute the backbone of authoritarian resilience building. Put simply, just as urgently as understanding incentives to join in, derived from immediate status in the employment arenas of an autocracy, we ought to unpack the *longue durée* aspects of the construction of the stratum broadly bracketed under the "bourgeoisie" or "middle class" umbrella.

Several decades ago, the Chicago economist Bert Hoselitz argued that an ideal-type of "autonomous" development is one where "all decisions affecting economic growth are made by individuals other than those holding political power" (1965: 97). Hoselitz contrasted those patterns with settings where "all economic growth… would be strictly induced, that is, provided for and planned by a central authority" (1965: 98). Following Hoselitz, Robert Dahl linked the more autonomous developmental patterns to processes of the maturation of a pro-democratic constituency, as distinct from the more hegemonic/ induced policies of an autocracy like the Soviet Union or China that fabricate the middle class as part of state-led industrialisation (Dahl 1971). These insights acquire added salience in the present time. Increasingly, scholars are turning toward explaining current global political regime trends with reference to legacies that may have survived over long periods of time and across distinct regime types (Simpser et al. 2018; Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2017; Lussier and LaPorte 2017).

Present-day studies of protest could benefit from incorporating these insights into analyses of the incentives, possibilities, values of distinct sets of urban constituencies. These may be shaped by legacies that are perpetuated within urban communities. Post-communist contexts, in particular, constitute fertile terrain for dissecting variations within the broad "middle class" stratum. Here, we see how a more "organic" process of the genesis of an entrepreneurial, professional, educated citizenry prior to communist rule may coexist with a new state-dependent intelligentsia rapidly engineered in an "induced" way. In analysing class in communist societies, the Hungarian sociologist Iván Szelényi presciently distinguished between economic autonomy and political authority (Szelényi 1988). Experience of navigating the market and high, intergenerationally transmitted human capital endowments, enhance citizen autonomy. These endowments also structure possibilities to gravitate away from state-dependent arenas of employment as "cadre" / "apparatchik." The latter status may bestow authority but not personal autonomy. In the post-communist period, inherited values and human capital may create broader possibilities for private entrepreneurship or high-status jobs less dependent on state

resources and sanction. Furthermore, broader historical cleavages among the distinct groups not only structure the types of activism they are willing to engage in, but cognitive orientations towards other groups (Smyth and Oates 2015; Greene and Robertson 2019).

The ongoing work of this author and collaborators illustrates the utility of going beyond conventional survey categories and incorporating those that are more attuned to the historical conditioning of values, structural opportunities, incentives. In a recent body of work, Lankina et al. sought to tease out the historical conditioning of attitudes towards protest among the middle class in Russia, a large post-communist autocracy, and in ways that transcended the conventional "urban-rural," demographic (age) and occupational survey categories (Lankina 2019; Lankina et al. 2019). We approached middle class formation from the point of view of its origin under distinct political regimes—pre-communist and communist. We also assumed that there will be inter-generational dependencies in the pathways of the post-communist middle class from the point of view of employment and career trajectories. Our intention was to gauge how the genesis of the middle class under a more "organic" versus a more "induced" order shapes oppositional attitudes—specifically when it comes to protest. One conceptual innovation that we injected into debates about the genesis of middle class in communist societies is to draw attention to pre-communist structure of estates.

In Russia, we identify the urban estates of *meshchane* and merchants in particular, as indeed the nobility and clergy as the educated urban proto-bourgeoisie. Preliminary analysis of the survey that we commissioned from Russia's leading polling agency, Levada, revealed in-triguing awareness of pre-Revolutionary estate among respondents. We also found co-variance between self-reported ancestry of belongingness to the proto-bourgeoisie and proclivities to support protest. One possible interpretation of these patterns that we offer is that middle class values are transmitted across generations within communities, neighbourhoods and families—a transmission channel analysed in a number of studies of communist societies (Wittenberg 2006; Peisakhin 2013; Charnysh 2019). Another interpretation is that the high human capital pre-communist strata were able to transmit educational advantage, professional and market orientations to the next generation (Lankina et al. 2019). These endowments and value orientations in turn enhance employment possibilities beyond the public sector, engendering personal autonomy, institutional pluralism and diversity in economic landscapes (McMann 2006).

History matters also if we consider another important question animating recent research into protest in autocracies. Notably, it is relevant from the point of view of the cognitive aspects of exposure to events that may have public order connotations. Recent analyses of protest have moved beyond exploring the drivers of mobilization to more systematically analysing what it is that episodes of intense, national, rebellions against autocrats achieve when it comes to public opinion (Frye and Borisova 2019; Tertytchnaya 2019; Greene and Robertson 2019). In these analyses, whether the ruler is dislodged or not becomes secondary to broader questions of how bystanders' incentives to join, opinions towards oppositional activism and broader political orientations may be shaped in the process of, and consequential to, exposure to dramatic and rare protest events. The shift

towards the public opinion moulding propensities of protest in autocracies is non-trivial for two reasons. One reason is the capacity of rulers to deploy modern forms of communication to manipulate information on discontent in ways that would not have been possible during historical revolutionary episodes in the past (Huang and Huang 2019; King et al. 2013; Koesel and Bunce 2013; Lorentzen 2014; Treisman and Guriev 2015; Plantan 2020; Chen and Xu 2015).

Another dimension is repression and violence (Daxecker et al. 2019). Again, given the modern communications toolkit, both autocrats and ordinary citizens are quick to disseminate information on violence. Autocrats could always shift the blame on protesters for inciting bloodshed. Additionally, ordinary people may either feel outrage or shy away from involvement, whether or not blame for inciting clashes is attributed to the regime or protesters (Lankina et al. 2020; Lorentzen 2013). Carefully studying how violence shifts public opinion thus allows for a sober assessment of not only the "tipping point" aspects of incentives to join in (Kuran 1995; Lohmann 1994), but also the possibility of turning off bystanders from engagement in activism that may have unpleasant public order connotations.

In autocracies like Russia or China, many citizens have been previously exposed to trauma, violence and dispossession associated with the 20th century communist experiment. Here the "bourgeoisie" has been targeted on grounds of ideology—and even slated for extermination as a class. Some studies have revealed that experience of incarceration in the notorious Gulag labour camps may have had positive effect on democratic values. One plausible causal channel is exposure of citizens to the worst crimes

of an ostensibly benign regime (Lankina and Libman 2017; Kapelko and Markevich 2014). At the same time, individuals with personal or family experience of trauma and violence may be particularly careful in endorsing contentious politics. Modern-day autocrats are skilful at manipulating public information on discontent as when pro-democracy protests are portrayed in the media as leading to cataclysmic upheaval, bloodshed and social dislocation associated with a Bolshevik Revolution-type event (Lankina et al. 2020; Lankina and Watanabe 2017).

Our own survey revealed that self-reported descendants of pre-communist bourgeoisie may in fact eschew supporting protest if it has connotations of violence and public disorder (Lankina et al. 2019). Specifically, we observe that those who report pre-Revolutionary ancestry which we bracket under the rubric of the "educated bourgeoisie" are significantly more likely to articulate support for protests, both events that are sanctioned and unsanctioned. These constituencies also tend to eschew a preference of voting for Putin if there were a Presidential election coming up. The survey also reveals nevertheless that when asked about *participation in unsanctioned, or violent protests*, self-reported descendants of the pre-Revolutionary bourgeoisie are significantly less likely to report that they endorse street contention. We attribute these responses to the legacies of Soviet repression and harassment targeting "bourgeois elements," "former people" and other "undesirables" in the context of post-Revolutionary witch-hunts. These legacies, we surmise, did not necessarily suppress latent pro-democracy attitudes. Rather, they engendered adaptation skills that may lead to a cautious attitude towards events that may be perceived as carrying safety risks.

Summary and agenda for future research

The tentative findings from recent research beg for a new, historically informed, agenda of study of the spatially and temporally heterogeneous social class dimension of urban protest attitudes, dynamics and outcomes in present-day autocracies. They warrant a shift in focus from the temporally-proximate interactive dynamics between autocrats and citizens as these respective sets of actors devise new toolkits to resist and subvert (Koesel and Bunce 2013; Ambrosio 2010). My research draws on innovations of other scholars. Following Rosenfeld (Rosenfeld 2020, 2017), my collaborators and I argue that our analysis ought to be sensitive to shades within the category that is most prominently associated with anti-authoritarian protest—namely, the urban middle class. Furthermore, as LAruPED (Lankina 2018) reveals, citizens across sub-national territories may engage in different types of protest.

Where I inject nuance into extant studies is to more forcefully bring into discussions the long historical process of socio-economic channelling of opportunities accounting for protest or non-protest depending on the legacies of industrial development, urbanization, central state planning. I also highlight the need to develop a better understanding of the historical- developmental underpinnings of citizen proclivities to engage in specific types of activism—from the more "bread and butter" type concerns that may vary between urban mono-towns versus economically more plural settings. Additionally, a more careful study of the historical conditioning of possibilities for cross-social, cross-class alliances among the various urban constituencies is warranted. The legacies of trauma, violence and repression against specific groups as inflicted by 20th century dictatorial regimes also matter. Finally, we need to better understand the historical conditioning of values, resources and opportunities of citizens conventionally bracketed under an "urban" or "middle class" umbrella. ●

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BACK TO SUMMARY

EXPLAINING URBAN PROTEST IN ILLIBERAL REGIMES: An Emphasis on Russia

by Regina Smyth

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For the past decade, the study of societal development contemporary autocracy has largely focused on two dynamics: the drivers of individual-level regime support and participation in large-scale protest events, or urban revolutions. These approaches overlook the near-universal rise in small-scale collective action—or urban movements—aimed at rectifying local government policy failures or providing public goods. This new work refocusing attention on building block or precursors of social organization and movement formation, constitutes a new and challenging focus of research in comparative politics. By ignoring these actions, political scientists are missing a key mechanism of societal change in illiberal or transitional regimes. Studying contemporary urban activism requires theoretical innovation and data collection. These efforts should link social movement theory, urban activism, and social theory across disciplines to explore how individuals who lack experience, language frames, or repertoires of action come to see politics as relevant for their everyday lives and identities.

In this essay, I consider urban activism in the post-Soviet space, although the framework is adaptable to local protest in small towns and villages. Defined as grassroots movements that are neither formalized nor institutionalized (Castells 1983), local and regional protests continue to increase across post-Communist states such as Poland, Romania, Kazakhstan and Russia, regardless of regime type. While much of the work on urban activism has developed with the confines of urban studies and ethnographic work in anthropology, geography and sociology, the challenge of explaining collective action in authoritarian urban contexts presents and interesting puzzle for political scientists (see Jacobsson 2015). These studies focus on what many participants call non-political activism: actions taken to redress concerns of everyday life without challenging existing structures or leaders. This distinction explains that the context and model of mobilization – and not the actions – often, but not always, deal with contesting locally defined grievances, resource allocations and economic, cultural, and political policies and decisions. Urban actions address suddenly imposed grievances that disrupt everyday life, social structures, or meanings, such as plans to revise local schools, close a beloved park, or allow infill construction in a neighborhood.

The goal of this essay is to highlight new theoretic innovation and data collection that define

a research program which explains the emergence of activism among disengaged or non-political citizens of illiberal states. Using simple game theoretic models of coordination, I distinguish between collective action (or political protest) where high costs of engagement make free-riding or non-engagement a dominant strategy, and coordination (non-political protest) in which the relatively low (or nonexistent) costs of participation and multiple equilibria provide a very different challenge to mobilization. These games provide some insight into patterns of activism, the effect of authoritarian responses, and the distinctions between political and non-political action.

Why Urban Mobilization?

The legacy of modernization theory concentrated attention on urban centers as engines for social, economic and political change. Urbanization, industrialization and wealth accumulation, together with education, provided a structural framework for the development of democracy and a shift in social values. The urban middle class provided ballast against the inequality desired by the wealthy and the redistribution demands of the poor to sustain democracy development. Urban citizens not only had greater resources, but they also a variety of grievances including construction and infill, land use, transport, service provision and historic preservation. These demands arose because of the level of services and complexity of everyday life that mark urban life. They also inevitably shaped expectations about regime responsiveness and effectiveness.

Interdisciplinary studies of urban activism catalogue the structural mechanisms that make large cities the likely centers of collective action

(Wallace 2013). In post-communist states, urban centers are the hub of neoliberal development creating new inequalities and grievances, and demands for services. Development also attracts educated, engaged, and resource-rich residents. Population density increases communication and information transmission. Finally, urban spaces are imbued with meaning and linked to personal histories and family narratives (Sun and Huang 2020, Tilly 2000). These spaces provide opportunity for repertoire innovation to gain popular and state attention.

In East-Central Europe and the Baltic states, urban movements focus on local actions designed to prioritize local preferences for housing, bike paths, historic and environmental protection over European Union imposed economic development (Ekiert and Kubik 2014). These actions, called non-political protest by those who engage in it, focus on solving collective problems within the context of everyday experience. These types of local action include recent Russian protests against toxic garbage incineration that began in the Moscow region. These micro-movements are rarely institutionalized, because they lack resources, hold narrow goals, or prefer to retain a more communitarian, informal focus (Aidukaite and Frolich 2015).

New data collection projects demonstrate that increasing activism poses a significant challenge to Russian leaders. Based on an initiative by the Institute of Collective Action, Kleman, Myrisova and Demidov (2010) showed the increase in grassroots movements, some of which were connected within cities and across the Federation. As discussed in her contribution to the *Newsletter,* Tomila Lankina (see also Lankina and Tertytchnaya 2020) refined and expanded a crowd sourcing data project,

Despite the prevalence of non-political urban actions, research and theory development has focused largely on political protest.

Namarsh (To the March), into the Lankina Russian Protest-Event Dataset (LAruPED). This dataset tracks urban protest between 2007 and 2016. In 2018, Andrei Semenov presented his Contentious Politics in Russia (CPR) dataset, documenting regional protest between 2012 and 2014 at the Indiana University Russian Studies Workshop. All of these sources illustrate the rise in both political and non-political protest in Russia between 2010 and 2019. This model is being replicated in other cases. Dustin Gamza and Pauline Jones have collected event count data of local and regional activism across the Central Asian states between 1991-2016 (except Turkmenistan).

Understanding Variation in Protest Events: Collective Action and Coordination in Autocratic Regimes

Despite the prevalence of non-political urban actions, research and theory development has focused largely on political protest and revolutionary regime change. In the comparative context of post-Communist regions, political protest is illustrated by the colored revolutions begun in Serbia in 2000 and repeated in Georgia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and – most recently – Armenia. In Russia, as in many authoritarian states, this distinction between the everyday actions and anti-regime protests provides a stark dividing line between social understandings of activism. Political activism demands political change: power shifts, institutional reform, or regime or leadership change.

To understand the distinction in political and non-political protest, I draw on simple game theoretic models that underscore different mobilization dilemmas and how they can be overcome. These models described in *Figure 1* underscore the differences in strategic context–uncertainty, costs and benefits, and –in which citizens make their decisions to join collective action.

The Collective Action game on the left maps the dilemma of political protest that challenges the nature of the regime. The solution to the game (or the obstacle to collection action) focuses on the relative value of costs and benefits, with the assumption that costs are extremely high and no one potential participant can secure the benefits. To forestall protest, authoritarian regimes continue to raise the costs of protest by engaging in a wide range of repressive acts, developing state proxies to carry out repression, and forging new militarized riot troops especially trained to quell protest. Authorities also signal costs through permitting systems that distinguish between acceptable action and illegal actions or to cordon protest actions into remote areas of the city. Because the popular response to repression is uncertain and costly,

Figure 1:
Cooperation Games:
Collective Action vs.
Coordination

	Collective Action Game				Pure Coordination Game	
	Cooperate	Defect			Cooperate 1	Cooperate 2
Cooperate	B – C B – C	– C B		Cooperate 1	B B	O O
Defect	B – C	O O		Cooperate 2	O O	B B

authoritarian regimes increasing rely on less violent means of repression and tools to induce self-censorship, including: counter-movements that express "majority" views, disinformation in the form of media reports that misrepresent protest as radical, and smart city technology such as facial recognition software.

These games have one dominant strategy, all defect, predicting limited collective action. As Bo Rothstein (2015) notes, many of the solutions to collective action rely on prior forms of collective action: existing institutions, hierarchies, norms, and even elements of social capital such as trust or reciprocity. For example, existing social and civic groups can promote collective action by applying social or solidary sanctions. History or repeated interaction can provide the information that transforms the interaction as expectations of future action provide incentives for cooperation. This focus on previous experience and structures underscores why large-scale collective action is more difficult in illiberal or transitional societies where these building blocks are underdeveloped and citizens lack experience with activism.

In contrast, the coordination game has two potential equilibria, both predicting cooperation. The dilemma in this game is to understand how potential participants coordinate on the same action. *Figure 2* unpacks this dilemma. A solution to coordination means resolving two types of uncertainty, an understanding of what the other will do when faced with two strategies or actions to take, and the efficacy of each of these actions. As *Figure 2* shows, potential participants need to understand which game they are playing, defined by the best strategy to achieve shared goals.

A good example of a similar dilemma is illustrated by a common challenge in rapidly changing post-Soviet cities. If a construction company has decided to tear down a historic building or develop a beloved park, communities members agree they should act. Yet, they are conflicted over how to act: should the community block the entrance of the potential construction site *(Game 1)* or petition political authorities to intervene and limit development *(Game 2)*. Importantly, the solutions common to collective action (such as iteration) may not work to solve coordination dilemmas. They also demonstrate the critical role that framing theory plays in generating coordination (Benford and Snow 2000). Trusted leaders can define the most efficacious action, prompting coordination on that strategy. Similarly, local ties can foster the creation of common knowledge that provides information about societal preferences and the expectations of other behaviors (Chwe 2013).

Figure 2:
Coordination and Uncertainty

	Game 1 (prob = p)			Game 2 (prob = 1 – p)	
	Cooperate 1	Cooperate 2		Cooperate 1	Cooperate 2
Cooperate 1	B B	0 0	Cooperate 1	0 0	0 0
Cooperate 2	0 0	0 0	Cooperate 2	0 0	B B

Figure 3:
Combined Coordination Game

	Cooperate 1	Cooperate 2
Cooperate 1	(p)B (p)B	0 0
Cooperate 2	0 0	(1-p)B (1-p)B

As I demonstrate below, this model is consistent with the nature of grassroots urban action in Russia where local ties, shared ideas and history, and everyday life disruptions can provide important information about social preferences.

Thinking about a factor (p) such as the information about strategies available to make claims on government defines the likelihood that urban residents will choose strategy 1 or 2. The choice is determined in part by shared agreement that the strategy will work. This possibility is illustrated in *Figure 3*.

Figure 4:
Uncertainty and Coordination

As the level of information about the efficacy of protest increases so does the probability of co-ordination on a single strategy. For the purposes of this analysis, we can think of p as a function of regime type. In democracies, open opportunity structures, potential partners, and well-defined paths for social input in government define strategies of engagement, although some uncertainty remains. In contrast, in illiberal contexts many factors obscure both the creation of common knowledge and the understanding of the efficacy of different strategies. The blurred boundaries between the regime and other elite actors, the prevalence of informality instead of institutions, and variation across different levels, branches, and regions, all obscure information about the range of possible strategies and their likelihood of success.

Figure 4 demonstrates this relationship. Complete uncertainty, defined as a .5 probability that either 1 or 2 is a winning strategy, diminishes the likelihood of protest. This situation describes hybrid and autocratic regimes with poorly defined formal institutions. It also demonstrates how regime signals, such as granting protest permissions or announcing their interests in social demands articulated at an action, can shape actions by pushing activists toward or away from particular strategies. Finally, state response to past actions provide a strong indication of future responses, illustrating the potential subsequent action.

While very simple, these theoretic constructs can define the challenges inherent in different collective action dilemmas. They also explain why some actions can emerge at the local level, even in the context of disengaged publics. Finally, the models provide insight into the potential reciprocal links between the two types of protest and how the boundaries between the
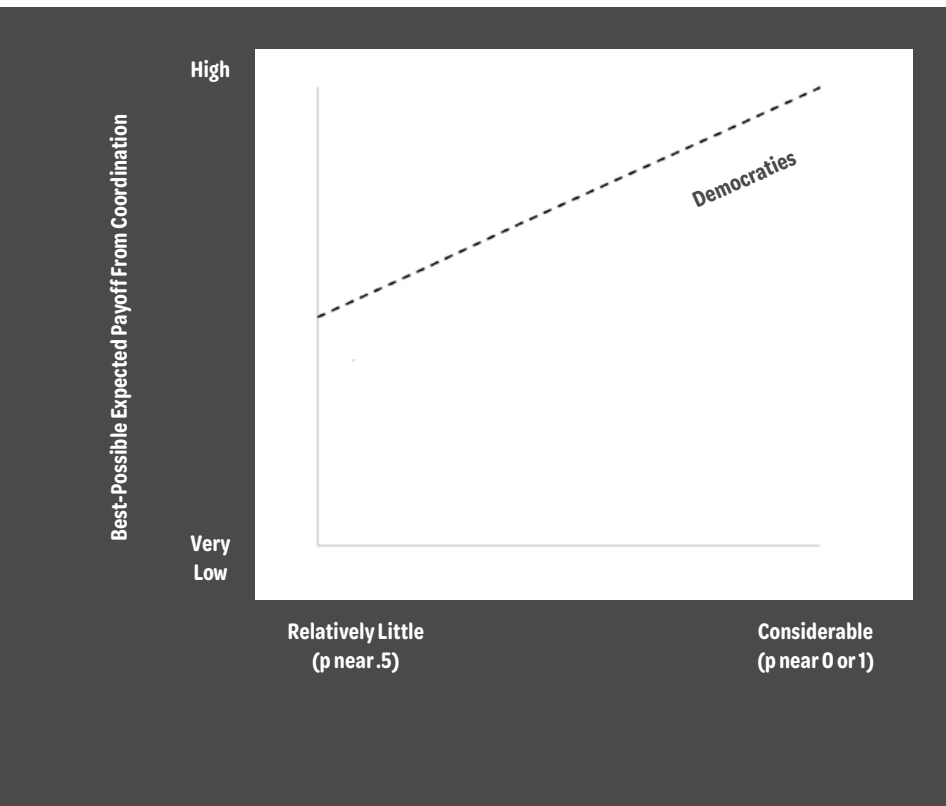
might be breached to cause seemingly spontaneous challenges to regime stability.

The Political Science Focus: Post-Election Protest and Regime Change

The study of Color Revolutions, Arab Spring, and Occupy Central Movement in Hong Kong reinvigorated the focus on individual-level mobilization in comparative politics. These types of large-scale protests aim to redress electoral falsification or governmental reforms that are thinly veiled attempts to maintain or consolidate political power. Both types of events are collective action problems, a class of political problem in which costly participation undermines the provision of the social good: a new election or a new policy framework, or even a new regime. Consistent with the social movement studies of mobilization this work largely stresses the role of organization, leadership, and other structural factors on individual participation.

The debate around the causes and consequences of political mobilization in the color revolutions has focused on the role of organization on the transformation individual-level beliefs and commitment to political change. Valerie Bunce and Sharon Wolchik (2010) explore the role of youth organization on campaign activity on popular expectations in electoral revolutions. By engaging Ukrainians through and electoral model of revolution that shapes popular expectations, activists can mobilize largely disengaged citizens. In Russia in 2011-2012, Semenov, Lobanova and Zavadskaya (2016) show that marginalized opposition parties can play a role in protest mobilization.

In contrast, Mark Beissinger (2013) concludes that the lack of permanent mobilizing structures – often found in peasant revolutions such as Vietnam – was absent in Ukraine's Orange Revolution. Individual-level analysis suggests that the nationalist, ethnic identity that sparked mobilization is best characterized as a distinct type of "urban revolution" and that this type of mobilization lacks the long-term organizational and ideational infrastructure to sustain political engagement and produce future activism. My own study of the linkages between participation in 2004 and 2014 suggest differentiation among the pathways to protest engagement and lessons learned from past activism. Using unique survey data, I find that some Orange Revolution participants did acquire activist or communitarian identities that prompted re-engagement in the 2014 Revolution of Dignity.

In the Russian FFE protests, much of the debate centered, not on the presence or absence of structure, but on the types of structure that prompted participation. Survey data provides evidence of micro-mobilization through factors such as personal networks, politicized internet networks, and campaign activity (Smyth and Oates 2016, Smyth forthcoming 2020). For some activists, these structures created direct contact and invitations to join the movement and provided different paths to activism—through new media, organizational affiliation or affinity, or personal networks of close friends, family, and co-workers. Each of these factors shape different pathways to action as protest becomes an accepted activity to redress concrete grievances.

Important new data collection strategies facilitate new studies of individual-level mobilization in illiberal contexts. During the 2004 Orange Revolution, innovative polling data drawn from the protest encampment by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology provided a means of testing individual theories of partici-

pation. Scholars and research centers replicated the methodology in Russia's 2011-2012 For Free Elections protest cycle (Smyth forthcoming 2020), in Ukraine during the 2014 Revolution of Dignity (Onuch 2014), and in numerous studies of the 2012 Occupy Central Movement and in 2019 protest in Hong Kong. My own (2018) survey of participants in the Revolution of Dignity events built on these studies, over-sampling participants using a screening question in order to ensure an adequate sample to analyze individual-level variation in participation decisions.

Studies based on these data provide significant insights into political mobilization. First, structure does shape mobilization for some, but not all participants and may well play auxiliary roles such as producing credible leadership, frames, and activist identities. Under some conditions, these factors can transform collective action into coordination. Joshua Tucker (2007) makes this argument in his characterization of post-election protest as a focal point designed to redress grievances. In an unpublished paper with John Hulsey (2009), I found that leadership, defined in terms of the trust differential could transform collective action into an assurance game. In this context, high trust in the opposition leader and low trust in the incumbent elevated the opposition leader, making him the guarantor in an assurance game, and resolving uncertainty about which strategy would be most efficacious. We confirmed the theory using individual-level KIIS data from the Orange Revolution.

What is missing in these analyses is the role of previous experiences in apolitical protest, or localized grassroots actions that redress the concerns of everyday life. A growing literature in Russia suggests that these informal actions, solved through coordination, provide a foundation to solve political collective action problems and spark national mobilization.

Mobilizing from Scratch: Non-Political Protest

The work on non-political mobilization, creating activists from scratch, begins with the observation of the apolitical nature of society in illiberal regimes. Importantly, studies show that apolitical is not the same as apathetic or uninterested. In fact, much – but not all – of what participants consider apolitical protest focuses on core political issues, such as the assertion of rights, redistribution, or policy change. As Nina Eliasoph (1997) argues, in the culture of political avoidance the concept of non-political action marks a difference in the scope of social demands. What *is* important is to understand the context in which residents come to experience and act on shared feelings of engagement. Zhuravlev, Savelyeva, and Erpyleva (2019) argue that apoliticism is a set of practices that facilitate collective action in everyday life, which also bounds its scope.

Karine Clément pioneered the study of urban activism in Russia, focusing on the transformation among disengaged citizens, the ordinary people, into activists. Her starting point focuses on the Soviet legacy and a social context in which urban residents have little experience or knowledge of how to engage. Kleman (Clément), Demidov and Mirysova (2010) (see also Clement 2009; 2015a; and 2015b) relied on Thévenot's (2013) concept of "regimes of engagement" to show how daily interactions within a community, through local micro-scale processes, transformed attitudes and action. In a similar vein, Gabowitsch (2016) identified everyday objects—

historic buildings, apartment-building courtyards, parks, and forests in which Russians hunt mushrooms—as part of a grammar of personal affinity around which individuals encounter and respond to state action. Building on these insights, Gladarev (2011) argues that agency occurs when the state intrudes in everyday life and disrupts a shared understanding of reality. In short, non-political action is based a shift in understandings given a violation of the familiar. Juxtaposed with the analysis of coordination games above demonstrates these studies suggest new comparative research to understand the context of non-political activism reduces uncertainty about who will protest and how they will do it.

From Apolitical To Political: A Model of Political Change?

The importance of non-political protest in Russia has fostered a growing literature on the reciprocal relationship between national protests and local actions (see Clément and Zhelnina 2019). In my own work, I demonstrate that growing experience with non-political actions generated activist identities, on- and offline networks, and shared grievances facilitated participation against election fraud in the FFE movement (Smyth 2020). Subsequently, FFE movement increased local actions. Based on impressive ethnographic work and interdisciplinary research frameworks, these studies show that the FFE mobilization transformed of citizens' understanding of electoral competition as a substantive concern in their daily lives

and an expression of community that fostered new actions (Bikbov 2012, Gabowitsch 2017).

Consistent with a foundational paper by McAdam and Tarrow (2010), both types of protest also influence other types of political participation. My work with Irina Soboleva (2016) on Alexei Navalny's 2013 Moscow mayoral campaign shows how the resources drawn from FFE —strategies, frames, and activists — transformed the contest. Similarly, Andrei Semenov (2020) explores three recent cases of collective action in Russia, concluding that these more recent actions are rely on more complex infrastructure including leadership, alliances with governmental and systemic actors, and clearly defined legal claims. Dollbaum, Semenov, and Sirotkina (2018) show that the organizational mobilization of young people within Alexei Navalny's presidential campaign did not succeed as an electoral vehicle but did create a new generation of regional activists.

These studies reveal a pattern of development that not only transforms society and builds capacity but also changes how the state responds to popular challenges (see Morris, Semenov, Smyth forthcoming 2021). Viewed in the context of theories of authoritarian responsiveness or patterns of resource distributions, this type of protest often politicizes participants, shifting their focus on the cost of autocratic rule. It may also suggest a different kind of evolutionary model in which social capacity to makes demands on government increases and creates pressure for state structures evolve to respond to citizens' demands. ●

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BACK TO SUMMARY

PROTEST AND PERSUASION IN ASPIRING GLOBAL CITIES

by Eleonora Pasotti

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Instead of relying on traditional political divisions, both city governments and protesters rely on the tenets of branding.

Branding is an essential and understudied feature of urban politics.[1] To see why, consider the theoretically generative comparison between political and commercial communication in the urban dimension. Over the course of time, and across spatial variation, both of these social interactions have adapted to changes in technology and contextual conditions. In much of the United States, for example, until the late 1980's the political activity of precinct workers naturally fit in with the rest of the door-to-door sale economy typical of the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's. In politics, as well as in business, people (rather than ads) were used to sell. In the political arena, candidates and mobilizing structures were tightly bound to the neighborhood through patronage, whereby clients could be rewarded with benefits such as public employment, or punished with exclusion when they failed to deliver political support.

In recent decades, both commercial and political communication have changed dramatically. Increased political autonomy, coupled with a weakening of traditional programmatic parties and fiscal retrenchment, enabled a more fluid electorate, leading large-city mayors to shift from patronage-based mobilization to new forms of persuasion for both political competition and governance. As I showed in *Political Branding in Cities* (Pasotti 2009), instead of relying on party ideology and voter patronage, these mayoral candidates attract voters by shaping values – they develop a personal *brand*, a term derived from management where it refers to a product "made distinctive by its positioning relative to the competition and by its personality, which comprises a unique combination of functional attributes and symbolic values" (Hankinson and Cowking 1993, 10). Technological innovations greatly facilitated branding by lowering costs and increasing the repertoire of mass communication.

A similar shift occurred in protest strategies. Instead of relying on traditional political divisions, both city governments and protesters rely on the tenets of branding and increasingly build their connection with citizens by providing them with narratives and values that satisfy psychological needs for belonging, self-worth, or legitimacy. A surprising similarity emerges in

1. This essay partially relies on excerpts from Pasotti (2009 2020).

how protestors and city governments compete to shape citizens' subjectivity, with both sides embracing branding to mobilize support.

We can therefore no longer grasp the strategic dimension of political communication without taking seriously the role of branding, and examining how political actors persuade supporters – not through material exchange, but rather with the provision of specific emotional experiences.

Branding is ubiquitous in shaping political communication among both institutions and civil society. This is especially visible in cities, because urban centers are critical sites of *both* power *and* contention, where the shift from door-to-door mobilization to mass messaging is most evident. Centers of economic growth are overwhelmingly in large cities, and urban redevelopment has become a widespread primary growth strategy for cities (Glaeser 2000; Sassen 1994). Yet, cities are also key sites of protest; one reason for this is that urban institutions shape how civil rights are actually distributed and regulated. As Miller and Nicholls remind us, for instance, a constitution might grant freedom of religion, but city officials can limit the exercise of that right by restricting the construction of worship sites with zoning regulations. Or, local zoning regulations for housing or transportation can be designed to sidestep equal-rights provisions devised by a national government. In this way, countless "governance practices make cities key arenas of struggle shaping how rights are distributed, implemented, and violated" (Miller & Nicholls 2013).

As the examples above indicate, and political science scholars have long argued, power in cities is predominantly expressed through land use and redevelopment, as cities compete to maximize their economic standing (Logan & Molotch 1987; Peterson 1981; Stone 1989). Coalitions composed of business, cultural, and governmental elites maximize rents and land values to capture the benefits of growth (as opposed to for example prioritizing neighborhood and environmental protections), resulting in empirically ubiquitous "development regimes" (Altshuler & Luberoff 2004; Logan & Crowder 2002). Over the past two decades, these political patterns have intensified as city governments worldwide have shifted from facilitators to initiators of systematic redevelopment (Smith 2002; Uitermark, Duyvendak, & Kleinhans 2007), to the extent that much scholarship considers "contemporary urban policy to be a form of state-led gentrification" (Lees 2003, 62).[2]

Therefore, redevelopment and its associated displacement provide an especially suitable theoretical and empirical area for the inquiry into the connection between branding and politics at the urban level. Not only is redevelopment the most common and influential policy expression of large city governments, its planning explicitly involves public and private actors. Further, planning choices are likely to reflect municipal priorities more reliably than other policy areas, making urban planning more amenable to international comparison.

The inquiry into branding as a key dimension of political communication is focused on aspiring global cities with regular and competitive elections because this arena most acutely expresses the politics of branding, and the tensions behind redevelopment and displacement. Aspiring global cities share an approach to urban political economy that is widespread

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2. Gentrification involves at least four key elements: (1) reinvestment of capital; (2) local social upgrading by incoming high-income groups; (3) landscape change; and (4) direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups (Lees, Slater, & Wyly 2008).

but not universal, and characterized by urban governments that prioritize economic competitiveness. Competitiveness involves a complex array of policies largely oriented toward attracting investment and high-skilled labor on international markets. No single or even handful of measures can entirely capture the phenomenon, but existing indexes can be used to identify aspiring global cities (in my research I combine GaWC [2012] and EUI [2012]). Leaders in these cities are integrated into circuits of international competition, ambitious to raise their global status, and under pressure to identify and pursue high rent-gap areas for redevelopment. These factors make aspiring global cities especially theoretically salient and greatly assist in establishing comparability, even with extreme cross-regional variation.

Mayors in aspiring global cities

Mayoral candidates adapted to new conditions by shifting from precinct-based patronage to broader messaging. Showing the power of the parallel between commercial and political persuasion, they emulate marketing mavericks. Marketers draw consumers – and mayors, voters – by associating their campaigns with experiences and values to which people aspire.

Brand management capitalizes on the fundamental role that emotions play in shaping political views, cognizant that the latter are driven more by emotional processing and intuitions than calculation and reflection. Successful brand politicians therefore engage the heart before the mind of their voters. They create associations between themselves, leadership, and good government that are so powerful they can mobilize support in previously untapped constituencies, as well as across cleavages, thereby weakening traditional organized opposition.

These emotional bonds allow political candidates to sidestep opposition promises based on material interest. To illustrate, Bogotá voters trusted mayor Antanas Mockus (1995-1997 and 2001-2003), to the point where nearly 70,000 met his invitation to pay 10 percent *more than owed* in taxes in order to support his policy implementation (Pasotti 2009).

While most cities continue to operate as growth machines, urban redevelopment recently tilted toward cultural and consumption-based strategies as governments increasingly focus on downtown recreation as the core of urban growth. The change reflects an identification of the knowledge economy as the main site of competition for global cities, which prescribes a shift from simply attracting investment to attracting and retaining a mobile population of highly skilled knowledge workers with amenities that this "creative class" prizes (Florida 2002). Florida's revolutionary growth prescription, quickly embraced worldwide, changed urban capitalism. Branding emerged as the key dimension, because politicians aimed to actually shape popular urban consumption. No longer just an illuminating parallel, commercial and political persuasion actually converged.

This growth strategy also launched a new wave of redevelopment because the promotion of creative industries required socio-spatial transformations to provide experiences and leisure facilities that cities could market as hip and vibrant. Brand mayors sought constituency support for transformative urban redevelopment through marketing operations that augmented their personal cachet in conjunction with the status of their cities. Mauricio Macri's government in Buenos Aires (2007-2015) offers a powerful illustration, as he imported brand management expertise from his previous stint

as chairman for Boca Juniors, an internationally recognized football team. Government and place branding overlapped and reinforced Macri's brand, down to the choice of golden yellow, Macri's signature color, for all government communication, buildings, vehicles, and venues. The brand invoked Buenos Aires as the cultural capital of Latin America, a message sustained by an explosion of city-sponsored cultural initiatives aimed to raise the city's international profile (often at the cost of local underprivileged cultural consumption).

On the other side of the world, Seoul mayor Lee Myungbak (2002-2006) provided a similarly striking example when he moved city branding from an ad-hoc approach to a longer-term strategy. Lee connected his multiple iconic environmental interventions and Seoul's natural and cultural heritage through the slogan "A Clean And Attractive Global City." The campaign raised the city's profile, dramatically increasing tourism and making Seoul the fifth city worldwide for convention visitors.

Despite the different contexts, Macri and Lee shared an emphasis on branding and urban redevelopment. Typical of brand mayors, they built support for projects by branding them as key to the city's future, thereby defining the legitimate urban experience, the legitimate land use, and the target consumer and worker. For example, working-class neighborhoods were re-proposed as sites for gourmet dining, contemporary art, or high-tech hubs. The effect was a rise in global city rankings and a bond with voters that catapulted both mayors to the presidency of their country - a glaring indication of the effectiveness of this political strategy.

Yet, these changes in urban governance have increasingly been matched by changes in re-

sistance. Governments seek support and legitimacy to pursue redevelopment plans, while protesters seek support and legitimacy to resist them. Governments and dissenters alike have reacted to the decline of traditional means of consensus building and mobilization by engaging in forms of persuasion that target the individual citizen and are less mediated by political institutions. Both use communication strategies that include post-political images and slogans and exclude conventional political messaging. Although these strategies have deep redistributive consequences, in rhetoric at least they often transcend previous cleavages of contention.

Protest in the political branding era

To understand this shift in protest strategies, we need to consider the deep and widespread political, social, and technological changes of recent decades. Mobilizing structures that supported social movements until the 1980s no longer offer the same ideological, material, and organizational resources. Unions have declined in membership and influence (Baccaro & Howell 2011; Murillo 2001). Programmatic mass parties of the left and far left have entered a protracted phase of deep crisis (Huber & Stephens 2001; Van Biezen, Mair, & Poguntke 2012). In some countries, austerity policies have given rise to new protest parties (Della Porta, Fernández, Kouki, & Mosca 2017). Yet the overall decline in references to class and labor facilitated a new, more individualized language in protests in line with fluid and atomized participation (Tarrow 2013). These dynamics introduced significant obstacles to mobilization. While distinct populations may suffer common grievances, they are fragmented because people lack and sometimes even reject membership in "integrative

structures" such as unions, parties, churches, or political groups that traditionally offer collective identities, resources, and organizational structures (Bennett and Segerberg 2012).

These tectonic shifts are evident in urban redevelopment struggles, where essential elements of contemporary capitalism, such as conflicts over consumption, cultural production, and spatial access, are revealed. Usually, communities facing redevelopment are too disadvantaged to mount organized protest. It is important to examine the cases in which residents *are* able to engage in resistance, especially among underprivileged communities, because they are both rare and theoretically unexpected.

In *Resisting Redevelopment* (Pasotti 2020), I show that protesters have adapted by deploying a set of instruments that I call "experiential tools." Parallel to the strategic shift observed with the embrace of personal branding by mayors, this addition to the repertoire of contention (Tilly 1976) includes a wide range of activities designed to attract supporters by offering experiences that their targeted participants will consider defining and transformative. Participants are attracted to action by the psychic benefits of participation, often unrelated to the political goals of the protest; and persuasion happens not through speeches but rather through experiences and self-discovery, in which emotions play a key role. Experiential tools can take many forms, but they are all instruments by which organizers seek to define and shape a community of participants. They often take the shape of neighborhood festivals or similar communal events with hedonistic elements, and are sometimes combined with squatting or encampments. These activities attract large and diverse audiences, displaying clout and legitimacy to opponents and allies alike. As experiential tools

have gained traction, artists have emerged as key economic and political actors due to their comparative advantage in creating seductive values and identities.

In cities where traditional mobilizing structures still offer notable support to protestors, experiential tools are less impactful. In Melbourne, unions have a tradition of joining protest actions at the request of and in support of resident groups, engaging in green and black bans that disrupt redevelopment. In Buenos Aires, unions are relatively strong, and organizations such as the Movement for Renters and Occupiers are actual union chapters – a linkage that provides renters and squatters with exceptional organizational and mobilization resources. However, in most cities, unions are either weak or likely to side with redevelopment. Here, experiential tools can be a critical protest tool.

Experiential tools do more than fill the gap left by union organizing, however. The shift from an industrial to service sector economy has important repercussions for contentious politics, because – especially in aspiring global cities - potential protest participants are more likely to be service providers. This means that they are inherently involved in the creation of experiences, whether for businesses (e.g. in financial services or infrastructural support) or for consumers (e.g. in entertainment or education). By the very nature of their jobs, service sector workers share a deep understanding of experience provision and therefore constitute an especially well-predisposed audience to be persuaded by experiential tools. Service sector workers and the creators of experiential tools, in a sense, speak the same language.

Experiential tools are not entirely new to social mobilization, but they are understudied, increasingly prominent, and remarkably effective

at providing residents with political influence over redevelopment. What sets experiential tools apart from conventional moments of celebration in protest campaigns is that they are not the *result* of campaigns, as scholars have observed in the past, but rather the first *tools* of mobilization, deployed to grow and shape the base of support.

Experiential tools are not by themselves sufficient for successful mobilization. They are most effective when combined with significant prior protest experience or dense organizational support networks – two variables long associated with mobilization. In over twenty-nine cases of protest in ten large cities across six continents, I find that the combination of experiential tools and either organizational networks or protest legacy emerges as necessary and sufficient for successful mobilization, even absent union support.

Experiential tools manifest in four specific categories. Organized events are the most prominent type, as successful groups set out calendars packed with occasions for residents across different social groups to come together. These typically light-hearted events, such as concerts, screenings of a documentary about the neighborhood, puppet shows, or communal meals, declare the appropriation of space by neighbors against the use intended by city government.

Grassroots archives are a second type of experiential tool. For example, in Santiago, residents came together in "memory workshops" to construct the history of the barrio and elaborate its cultural significance. The resulting "heritage registry" consisted of an archive of local family histories, combining architectural with emotional heritage – a critical linkage to legitimize, and thereby anchor, residents and small busi-

nesses in the neighborhood as they sought (and obtained) a heritage status declaration to stop redevelopment and displacement. The local archive included a barrio newspaper and other media, and culminated in the opening of a community museum. In a similar vein, protesters in Hamburg devised an Archive of Desire, composed of ballot boxes allowing residents to express their collective aspirations for a threatened public space. A public housing estate in Toronto illustrates experiential archives with a "memory wall," developed as part of their Heritage Plan, which was meant to identify and communicate key historic, cultural and social references in order to integrate them in the redevelopment of the estate.

Two final types of experiential tools are neighborhood tours and artistic performances. Both rely on the contribution of cultural producers and offer important platforms to attract media and institutional attention, as well as solidify mobilization. They often set the issue of redevelopment in an ironic context and offer a new way to talk about displacement, with a defamiliarization that stimulates awareness and criticism. Most of these interventions are not cast as explicit protest, yet they constitute protest because they represent a conscious opposition to city plans.

Protestors' experiential tools engaged with mayoral governance strategies in striking fashion. For example, in Hamburg cultural producers skillfully deployed the government's own branding discourse to acquire Gängeviertel, a large complex in a prime downtown area. The city had sold the lot for redevelopment – yet after protest, it purchased it back at a loss and gave it to protestors. Gängeviertel was gained through an occupation that was staged through an extremely smart experiential tool: an art

installation surprisingly turned, at the end of the evening's event, into an "art-squat." Police would have had to remove works of art rather than people, and this proved politically unsavory given the government's much-heralded embrace of culture-led growth. Protestors, based in the city's alternative artistic milieu, devised the catchy slogan "Komm in die Gänge", a play on words that means both "Come in the Alleys" and "Get Moving." Their campaign was connected to a slick counter-branding campaign called "Not In Our Name, Brand Hamburg" which reverberated nationally and internationally, and in which cultural producers stated their refusal to be pawns for the neoliberal culture-growth branding of the city.

Typical of experiential tools, organizers emphasized grassroots control and activities with broad appeal. Squatters provided workshops, laboratories, and open spaces with low rents. Amateurs and professional artists were invited to utilize space next to each other, to produce an interesting, animated, and functional cultural center. This inclusivity extended to children, youth, seniors, people with disabilities, students, and freelancers interested in the arts. Network activation went well beyond the anarchist artist scene, as the group began to collaborate with art institutions throughout Hamburg. The innovative strategy was summarized by a leading activist: "We are less militant. We occupy with paintings. We protect ourselves with art. We try to get through differently, without black masks, by gaining sympathy instead" (interview with Nicole Vrenegor, journalist and activist, Hamburg, July 29 2011).

This protest network launched several legislative initiatives, including rent caps, decriminalizing squatting, and eliminating discrimination against foreign-born applicants in public housing assignments. The campaign also influenced city electoral outcomes. Yet, developers also learned to appropriate experiential tools from activists, for example by plastering walls with posters that in aesthetics and language emulated the protestors' image-making. Passersby had to focus closely to recognize that the funky graphics and hip slogans in support of the project were sponsored by the developer's marketing campaign, and not by opposition activists.

A further example is found in the Mullae Artist Village in Seoul, a decaying metalwork hub that recently attracted a vibrant artist community. Redevelopment and displacement in this area were prevented by using experiential tools for an extensive public outreach that legitimized the artists' place in the neighborhood. As in Hamburg, the protestors' discourse was persuasive because it paralleled the city's own growth discourse. The narrative of revitalization through the convergence of industry and culture fit with an official position shared across the political spectrum. Both the leftist mayor Park Won-soon and the conservative president Park Chung-hee visited the Art Village in 2013, meeting with artists and ironworkers and praising the neighborhood as a model of an artist's haven and artist-led regeneration. Just as the city branded Seoul as a hybrid of tradition and modernity, the artists' narrative highlighted the ironworkers' endangered historical legacy, and revived it through their innovation.

Branding is indeed an essential feature of contemporary urban politics. City governments rely on branding to legitimize and build support for their initiatives. Opponents find that branding, and especially experiential tools, are critical to raising awareness, including building collective

place-based identities, fostering participants' commitment, publicizing concerns, and displaying political clout to allies and targets – all key steps in a struggle's mobilization and impact. Mobilization without the remarkable inventiveness and attractiveness of experiential tools faces obstacles that only significant institutional support can overcome. Thus, experiential tools are especially precious to groups that lack such institutional connection, or that are new to protest – characteristics that are common among vulnerable residents facing evictions. ●

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SHARING SPACES: SEGREGATION, INTEGRATION, AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS

by Chagai M. Weiss

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Economic development, migration, and urbanization, are transforming cities across the world, contributing to diversity along ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic lines. An array of social groups reside in cities like Berlin, Nairobi, Jerusalem, and Chicago. However urban segregation, conceptualized as "the extent to which individuals of different groups occupy or experience different social environments" (Reardon and O'Sullivan 2004), limits intergroup engagement.

In *figure 1,* I provide a descriptive account of residential segregation between migrants and European natives in Berlin, London, and Paris.[1] This figure demonstrates significant variation in the spatial distribution of groups within and across cities. Such variation in residential segregation has been shown to have important political, economic, and social consequences (Kasara 2013; Trounstine 2016; Nathan 2016; Ejdemyr, Kramon and Robinson 2018; Tajima, Samphantharak and Ostwald 2018).

Indeed, urban segregation significantly shapes the most central phenomena that interest po- litical scientists, including: voting behavior (Enos 2016), public goods provision (Tajima, Samphantharak and Ostwald 2018), political violence (Bhavnani et al. 2014), elite favoritism (Ejdemyr, Kramon and Robinson 2018), discrim- ination (Enos and Gidron 2016), and intergroup attitudes (Kasara, 2013). It follows that under- standing the social and political attitudes and behaviors of citizens and elites, requires paying close attention to the distribution of those citi- zens and elites across urban space (Enos 2017). Since physical and psychological barriers divide cities into neighborhoods and intensify social divisions, and since such social divisions impact multiple political and economic interactions, a first step towards understanding the multiple effects of segregation entails exploring its links with intergroup relations.

In this paper, I discuss the role of urban segrega- tion in shaping intergroup relations. As depicted in *Figure 2,* I emphasize the central theoretical and empirical focus on residential segregation as a *cause*, and intergroup contact as a *mech- anism* shaping intergroup relations (Kasara

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1. Specifically, I divide each city into 100x100 meter cells, and calculate a commonly used diversity score (entropy index) for each cell. Data for these maps was provided by the Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography, as well as the National Statistical Institutes DESTATIS (Germany), and INSEE (France). Replication materials can be accessed at: https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/YLLX8V

Figure 1:
Urban Residential Segregation of Natives and Migrants - The upper three panels map entropy scores for 100x100 meter grids in Berlin, London and Paris. Darker shades denote increased diversity, whereas lighter shades represent residentially segregated areas. The lower three panels plot the distribution of 100x100 cells from each city by their entropy score. Entropy scores closer to 0 represent residentially segregated cells. Entropy scores are calculated based on census data recording the origin of residents from different countries in each 100x100 meter grid using the diverse R package.

Berlin   London   Paris
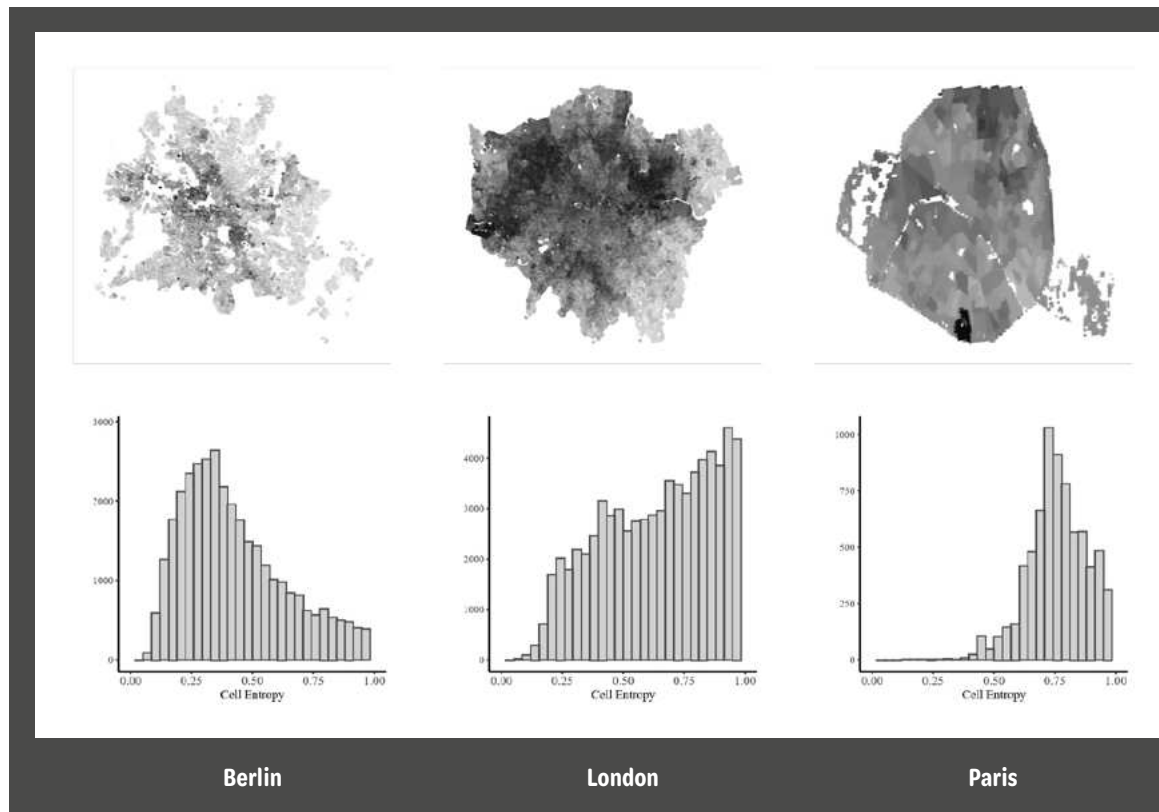
2013; Bhavnani et al. 2014; Eric Oliver and Wong 2003; Bazzi et al. 2019; Bowyer 2009; Sturgis et al. 2011).[2] In doing so, I review studies from American and comparative politics which consider *how*, *why*, and *under what conditions* does segregation affect intergroup relations.

Figure 2:
Theorized Relationship between Segregation, Contact and Prejudice

I then turn to critically evaluate our current understanding of the links between segregation, contact, and intergroup relations. I suggest that

an exciting avenue for future research on urban segregation entails unpacking the black-box of intergroup contact, which links residential patterns with intergroup relations. Specifically, I propose that scholars of urban segregation can draw on recent advances in the study of social contact (Scacco and Warren 2018; Mousa 2020; Rao 2019; Weiss 2020), and develop theoretical and empirical frameworks which pay closer attention to the *types of contact* yielded by residential patterns, and their diverging effects on intergroup relations.

What do we know about residential segregation and intergroup relations?

Social scientists have long considered the distribution of racial and ethnic groups across space

2. Segregation has been shown to affect intergroup attitudes through psychological mechanisms which are orthogonal to intergroup contact (Enos and Celaya 2018). However, in this short piece I focus on the role of direct interactions. For a rich psychological theory of geography and intergroup relations which considers mechanisms other than intergroup contact, see Enos (2017).

An exciting avenue for future research on urban segregation entails unpacking the black-box of intergroup contact, which links residential patterns with intergroup relations.

as a potent determinant of intergroup relations. These explorations are often linked to early theories of racial threat (Key 1949), and intergroup contact (Allport 1954). The racial threat framework suggests that whites' racial animosity increases with the share of Blacks in their population. The contact hypothesis suggests that under favorable conditions, direct engagement with out-groups can reduce prejudice. At times, these frameworks are pitted against each other as competing theories. However, it is important to acknowledge that to a great extent Key (1949) and Allport (1954) focus on different questions, causes, and mechanisms.

Building on these early frameworks, scholars of American politics have leveraged granular census files, geocoded surveys, and voting records, in order to empirically examine the relations between segregation and intergroup relations (Giles and Hertz 1994; Oliver and Mendelberg 2000; Enos 2017). There is evidence to suggest that residents of diverse neighborhoods develop more tolerant attitudes (Oliver and Wong 2003). However, recent studies of the second great migration in California, and the demolition of public housing in Chicago, suggest that proximity to minority communities may engender conservative political preferences, and support towards racially charged policies (Enos 2016; Reny and Newman 2020).

At first, data limitations hindered comparative explorations of segregation (Kasara 2013). Nonetheless, in recent years scholars overcame these challenges providing rigorous evidence regarding the links between residential patterns

and intergroup relations in many different contexts, including: Kenya, Iraq, Israel, Indonesia, and Turkey (Weidmann and Salehyan 2013; Bhavnani et al. 2014; Enos and Gidron 2016; Hjorth 2017; Robinson 2017; Bazzi et al. 2019; Livny 2020).

A groundbreaking analysis of segregation patterns in Kenya, finds that residents of segregated areas are less trusting towards members of other ethnic groups (Kasara 2013), and this in turn results in higher levels of intergroup violence (Kasara 2017). Similarly, analyses of cross- and sub-national survey data from Africa demonstrate that ethnic diversity paired with segregation results in lower levels of intergroup trust (Robinson 2017). In contrast, survey evidence from India demonstrates that residential proximity increases group based preferences for co-ethnic leaders, and does not promote more tolerant attitudes (Spater 2020). Similarly, analyses of public opinion data from Britain do not find evidence for a strong relationship between segregation and generalized trust. Lastly, empirically grounded agent based models of violence in Jerusalem, suggest that segregation may actually reduce intergroup conflict when social distance between groups is large (Bhavnani et al. 2014).

Taken together, the existing evidence regarding the effects of segregation on intergroup relations is somewhat mixed. More so, multiple contextual variables including socio-economic conditions (Oliver and Mendelberg 2000), the salience of national rhetoric (Hopkins 2010), social distance (Bhavnani et al. 2014), and group size (Enos and Gidron 2016), are thought to moderate the effects of segregation on intergroup relations.[3] Therefore, one interpretation

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3. However, it is important to acknowledge that socio-economic conditions and social distance may be a cause of segregation. Therefore, empirically identifying their moderating effects introduces challenges relating to posttreatment bias (Montgomery, Nyhan and Torres 2018).

of these conflicting findings may suggest that segregation has diverging effects across different contexts. In other words, the mere fact that members of different groups share spaces, does not alone determine the quality of intergroup relations. Consequentially, scholars ought to consider the nature of intergroup relations which emerge in the shadow of segregation and integration (Varshney 2003).

Residential patterns, types of contact, and intergroup relations

As demonstrated in *Figure 2,* political scientists often suggest that segregation affects intergroup relations through a mechanism of intergroup contact (Kasara 2013; Eric Oliver and Wong 2003; Bazzi et al. 2019; Bowyer 2009; Sturgis et al. 2011). The logic of this argument is as follows: Segregation limits intergroup contact; therefore, in-groups in segregated environments rarely get a chance to engage with out-groups and collect information and positive experiences which reduce prejudice. Despite its intuitiveness, several empirical patterns complicate this notion:

1. Residential patterns are one determinant of contact. However, their centrality may be attenuated in urban contexts, if mobility and shared institutions connect citizens from different backgrounds.

2. Different residential patterns, as well as other urban characteristics, may account for divergent types of intergroup contact.

3. Different types of contact likely have heterogeneous effects on intergroup relations.

4. These different effects vary in their magnitude and duration.

The limited theoretical and empirical consideration of contact as a complex mechanism which can either impair or improve intergroup relations is understandable. Indeed, until recently, evidence regarding the heterogeneous effects of different types of contact was rather limited. However, recent advances in the intergroup contact literature can help us make significant strides towards a robust understanding of the relations between segregation, contact, and prejudice.

Following calls to rigorously evaluate Allport's theoretical framework (Paluck and Green 2009; Paluck, Green and Green 2019), a recent wave of experimental studies has demonstrated the heterogeneous effects of different types of contact. Generally, we have evidence to suggest that collaborative intergroup contact reduces prejudice, whereas adversarial contact impairs intergroup relations (Lowe 2018). More specifically, engaging with out-groups as part of soccer leagues in Erbil and Qarqosh (Mousa 2020), or vocational programs in Kaduna (Scacco and Warren 2018), has been shown to promote more tolerant behavior. Similarly, diverse schools in Mumbai (Rao 2019), and Israeli medical clinics which facilitate intergroup contact between patients and doctors (Weiss 2020), contribute to favorable intergroup relations. These insights suggest that specific forms of engagement within urban space may promote positive intergroup relations.

However, interactions with out-groups are not a panacea for intergroup relations. Indeed, brief exposure to Hispanic workers in Boston train stations (Enos 2014), and casual contact with out-group daily laborers in Afghanistan (Condra and Linardi 2019) have been shown to impair in-

tergroup relations.[4] Clearly, not all types of contact improve intergroup relations, and absent meaningful engagement, diversity may enhance animosity between members of different groups.
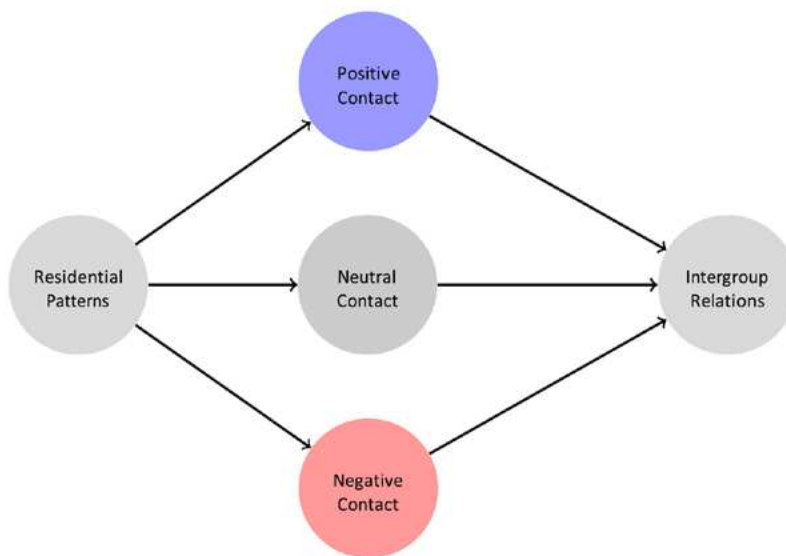
Unpacking the blackbox of intergroup contact

Building on recent patterns in the social contact literature, I suggest that scholars of segregation unpack the blackbox of contact, which links between segregation and intergroup relations. As depicted in *Figure 3,* residential patterns may lead to positive, negative, or neutral forms of intergroup engagement. These in turn will collectively shape intergroup relations in a complex fashion. By unpacking the blackbox of intergroup contact, researchers can get a richer understanding of the types of interactions that occur in different segregated and integrated urban spaces. Consequently, these understandings will provide insight not only to *whether* segregation shapes intergroup relations, but also to *why* and *under what conditions* does tolerance emerge.

Unpacking the blackbox of intergroup contact introduces a host of unexplored yet interesting questions for scholars of segregation:

1. Do different residential patterns lead to varying types of intergroup contact?

2. Can shared institutions (e.g. schools, associational organization, hospitals) increase the share of positive interactions in segregated urban spaces?

3. How do institutions which promote positive contact, moderate the general effects of segregation?

4. Do negative (or positive) experiences of intergroup contact increase (or decrease) social sorting and preferences for segregation and social distance?

Answering these questions in a rigorous manner is likely beyond the scope of any one individual study. Still, future research should aim to draw more explicit links between the empirical study of residential patterns, and the emerging social contact literature. Specifically, scholars of segregation can build on recent findings and ask, what types of engagement segregation promotes in the case(s) they are analyzing. Concurrently, scholars of intergroup contact may ask: how might micro-effects inform broader patterns of segregation (Humphreys and Scacco 2020). These efforts will likely promote a stronger understanding of the links between segregation, contact, and intergroup relations. ●

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4. In the immigration literature, recent studies demonstrate that brief exposure to migrants also promotes exclusionary attitudes and behaviors (Hangartner et al. 2019; Dinas et al. 2019).

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SAMPLING METHODS FOR INFORMAL URBAN POPULATIONS

by Hakeem Bishi and Shelby Grossman

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For comparativists interested in the determinants of political behavior and the consequences of politics on ordinary citizens, capturing the experiences of urban informal workers is critical. Informal workers encompass 62% of global employment and generate one-third of GDP, and more than half of the world's population lives in cities (Kok and Berrios, 2019; World Bank 2019). There are also important questions specific to this population: How are urban informal populations politically mobilized? Under what conditions will they shift to more formal work? How does politics shape their business environment?

However, conducting representative surveys of informal urban populations such as market traders, slum residents, or informal workers poses many challenges. The set of areas is not always obvious; identifying the universe of slums or markets can be difficult. Further, it is difficult to identify the population of interest, such as residents or traders or workers. For example, government agencies rarely keep lists of markets, let alone lists of traders. Private associations are common, but they closely guard their membership lists. Rapid population movement in and out of cities and within-city migration cause further challenges (Auerbach et al. 2018).

Quick solutions can damage survey representativeness. For example, one strategy sometimes used for trader surveys is a city block sampling strategy, where enumerators are instructed to stand at the corner of a city block, face in a specific direction, and approach the Nth shop on the right or left. This strategy imposes a level of order on urban areas that is not always realistic; many urban areas do not have a Manhattan grid-style structure to their streets. Some areas might have multi-story buildings, and it is not clear how this sampling strategy handles such idiosyncrasies. Importantly, the city block sampling strategy permits enumerator discretion. Enumerators could count in such a way that allows them to approach a friendly or less busy trader.

How can researchers define a target population and create a sample frame for informal urban populations? How can we select respondents from a sample frame in such a way that minimizes bias? Researchers commonly use a more sophisticated approach, what we term the "grid & random walk" approach. Here researchers use satellite imagery to impose a grid over an area, and sample cells from the grid (Auerbach 2017, Hummel 2017, Paller 2015). Enumerators then start from a randomly sampled point in the cell

and follow a random walk protocol. Variants on this include sampling buildings from cells using satellite imagery. This method can allow the researcher to cover larger geographic areas, but minimizing enumerator discretion in which individual is surveyed can be resource intensive.

Conducting representative surveys of informal urban populations poses many challenges.

In what follows we describe two strategies that we think are relatively new to simplify the process of reducing enumerator discretion. We have employed these strategies in eight surveys of 3,208 traders in Nigeria and Benin between 2015 and 2019. We term these the "full census" and "grid & partial census" approaches, and describe the conditions under which each is more suited. Last, we discuss how ignoring shop sharing (when two distinct businesses share the same shop) and traders owning multiple shops can bias samples.

Sampling strategies for informal populations

Full census

The first approach, the full census approach, involves creating complete listings for sampling units (like individuals or shops) in a sample frame, randomly sampling from these listings, and directing enumerators to specific respondents.[1] This method minimizes enumerator discretion, but the census itself can be resource intensive. If the population of interest covers a geographically large area, boundaries may need to be imposed to conduct the census, sacrificing some breadth of coverage. Put differently, there may be less overlap between the population of interest and the sample frame.

For one of our projects, the Lagos Trader Survey, the population of interest was in a dense commercial area, making the full census appropriate. The Lagos Trader Survey is a panel survey, now in its fourth round, focusing on wholesale traders of manufactured goods. We deemed a census of traders in plazas (small multi-story buildings) to be our best approximation of the population of interest. A common starting point for creating a sample frame of informal populations is to combine government data with qualitative on-the-ground research to identify the boundaries of slums or other types of communities, and we did just this. We started with a list of plazas from the Lagos Waste Management Authority. While using government data to create a sampling frame can be undesirable for studies of informal populations, in this case, because the agency collects trash from markets, and because the state government subsidizes the collection, its lists included even poorer markets. We then supplemented this list substantially with additional scouting trips around the city, having research assistants map out plazas not already in our listing. (See *Figure 1 f*or an example of what these maps looked like for a similar survey.) Next, a team of research assistants counted all shops in every building from the trash agency list and our newly mapped areas (N=52,830 shops). They also noted what type of product the shop sold. After excluding shops selling food, or providing services and office spaces, we had a listing of 24,159 shops.

The next step was more complicated. We could sample textile shop "number 2" on the third floor of a plaza, but "number 2" meant nothing, substantively. We only knew, for example, that that floor had two textile sellers. We wanted to direct the enumerator to a *specific* one to reduce

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1. For other examples of this approach see Aker (2010), Hardy and Mccasland (2019), and Thachil (2017).

enumerator discretion. But we could not provide additional information on the shop. We decided to randomly sample a number between 1 and the total number of textile shops on that floor, and then randomly sampled "left" or "right."

We then instructed enumerators to enter the third floor of the plaza, turn left, and approach the second textile shop. However, these instructions were imprecise; two enumerators could follow the instructions and end up at different shops if they arrived at the floor using different entrances. Nevertheless, this did not matter, as the goal was for the enumerators to *think* we had pre-selected a shop. When enumerators asked about the multiple entrance issue, we advised them to use the main entrance. Ultimately, however, we were indifferent to which entrance they used, as long as they thought we had a pre-selected shop.

For this reason, policing the sampling strategy was not simple. We had auditors assess whether the interviewed trader *could have been selected* by following the sampling strategy. Could this shop have *possibly* been the second textile shop from an entrance? This was not always straightforward. Sometimes shops are closed, and therefore it's not possible to determine what they are selling. An enumerator might thus identify what she perceives to be the second textile shop, while the auditor counts it as the fifth if more shops were open when she visited. We therefore asked auditors to be generous in their assessment. But if the shop did not sell textiles or was on the wrong floor, for example, that indicated a violation of the sampling protocol. Because the sample frame was in a relatively dense area, auditors could audit sampling for five surveys a day.

By reducing enumerator discretion, we are minimizing several data challenges. When enu-

merators approach traders who seem easier to interview, this could cause researchers to underestimate firm size, as less busy traders may have smaller businesses. Conversely, other forms of discretion could result in overestimating firm size: when sampling strategies do not account for buildings with multiple floors, enumerators may be more likely to survey traders on the ground floor, where rent is more expensive. In some contexts firm size may correlate with partisanship, biasing political data. Further, by listing out the full sample, we reduce the likelihood of two enumerators surveying the same respondent, which could be a challenge with random walk protocols.

Grid & partial census

While the full census approach made sense for a target population in such a dense area, we use a different strategy where the population of interest is more dispersed. One of these projects is an ongoing study of used clothing traders dispersed across Abeokuta and Ibadan, two southwestern Nigerian cities. For this survey, we use a grid & partial census approach.

We began with team members conducting scouting trips to each city, and in collaboration with locals who knew these cities well, identifying the commercial areas that had the used clothing businesses we aimed to cover. Using Google Maps, we then shaded the parts of the city with these businesses. From there, we imposed a grid over the entire city, and randomly sampled an equal proportion of cells from the mapped area with a high density of eligible businesses, and from the non-mapped areas. Cells from the latter category allowed us to capture businesses in residential neighborhoods. We diverged from existing strategies in avoiding the random walk strategy; rather we asked enumer-

OKRIKA TRADERS SURVEY (OTS)
YABA OKRIKA MARKET - CLUSTER MAP

KEY

1 - Okrika Plaza (Mixed Okrika Products)
2 - Okrika Bags Section
3 - Clothing Material & Sewing Cluster
4 - Main Popo Okrika Market Cluster (Shops & Warehouses)
5 - Yaba Traders Association Okrika Market (Yet to be Launched)
6 - Yaba Terminus Cluster (Mainly Used beddings & Curtains)
7 - Mixed New Products Line (Bags,Shoes,Curtains&Cosmetics)
8 - Railway Main Market (Mainly Curtains & Cosmetics)
9 - Ajiggy Shopping Plaza (Mixed Okrika Products)
10 - Railway Line Market (Okrika Umbrella Stands)

PROJECT LOCATION AND SIZE	CLIENT	PROJECT PLANNERS	LEGEND		SCALE
Yaba LGA, Lagos. 6° 30'32.21" N 3° 22'15.74" E Area: 215.71 Hectares	Lagos Traders Project (LTP)	TMG Consult Ltd Lagos, Nigeria Tel: +2348162612360 Email: tmgafrica@gmail.com	Buildings	Railway Line Roads	1:5000 DATE July, 2016

ators to conduct a census of shops in each cell, and then attempt to survey 100% of traders in that cell who met the criteria defining our target population.

These cell-level censuses aimed to minimize discretion that emerges with random walk protocols that lack strong auditing on the sampling procedure, within a sampling strategy designed to cover a broad geographic area. In the pilot for this survey, pairs of enumerators both conducted the census and conducted surveys in their cell. For the full survey, one team will conduct the census, and another will complete the surveys. This will further limit discretion by disincentivizing strategically leaving certain shops off the census. Additionally, we have clear protocols for handling literal edge cases, like a shop that is between a sampled and unsampled cell.

Contextual factors may force modifications to the ideal version of the grid & partial census approach. For example, having one team conduct a census and another conduct the surveys is relatively straightforward when traders are in plazas on particular floors where shops have distinct attributes. This was more complicated for a pilot survey we conducted in a Lagos used clothing market, where some traders were in nameless single-floor buildings, and others selling from permanent metal structures with roofs, but no door. It would be difficult for the census conductors to write out information that would lead an enumerator to one metal structure versus another. We experimented with using What3Words, an app that collects GIS coordinates, and transforms the coordinates into three words (like table.apple.blanket) that can be easily shared. But when enumerators attempted to find shops with What3Words, poor cellular networks, combined with What3Words' three-meter square bandwidth (and high mar-

ket density) made it difficult for enumerators to identify the unique business. In these types of markets, it may be necessary for enumerators to both conduct the census and the surveys to avoid these issues.

Without the full-cell census, enumerators may be tempted to survey traders available to be surveyed on the day they visit the area. This could lead researchers to underestimate firm size, as temporarily unavailable traders may be wealthy enough to travel within Nigeria, to other West African countries, or even to China or Dubai to purchase goods. Further, more marginalized traders may be more reluctant to be surveyed, and so to complete many surveys, enumerators may prefer to survey a different trader instead of following up with the reluctant trader later in the week. We mitigate these challenges by attempting to survey all eligible traders in each cell.

Addressing sampling obstacles due to shop sharing and owning multiple shops

In our surveying, we have identified two firm-specific obstacles that we have worked to address. First, there is a phenomenon in West Africa, and likely elsewhere, of shop sharing. To avoid taxes and stay profitable during economic downturns, two or more traders may share one physical space. One does not work for the other, and they are not co-owners; they have separate businesses in the same small shop. We addressed this by having questions in the survey about shop sharing, taking time to develop a protocol for what counts as shop sharing so that the enumerator could help the trader decide if they were a shop sharer. If a trader reports shop sharing, the enumerator creates a new tracking sheet for the second individual, and aims to survey that trader as well. Shop sharing is an extremely common phenomenon and it

is important for future surveys to capture this information: in surveys of used clothing traders in Lagos and Cotonou, 26% and 32% of traders respectively report shop sharing.

The second phenomenon is of traders having multiple shops, and we have observed that this is common as well: in a representative survey of traders in plazas across Lagos in 2018 we found that 26% of traders reported having at least one other shop. Among those with other shops, 75% had one other shop and 25% had more than one other shop. It is unclear how previous firm surveys have dealt with this. Our solution has been to ask traders if they have any other shops, and if they do, to request that they answer all questions (e.g. questions about revenue) for all of their shops together. This has proven a little tricky, as it is unclear if traders think in this way. We have also had to devise strategies to ensure that we do not survey what we think is a new business but is in fact a shop owned by a respondent who we already surveyed.

Asking about shop sharing and multiple shop ownership matters for correctly measuring firm size, an outcome of interest in many studies. In the absence of information about shop sharing, one could overestimate firm size; for example, researchers may use shop rent as a proxy for firm size, but two shop sharers may split the rent. In the absence of information about multiple shop ownership, researchers could under-estimate firm size if traders respond to questions about their business by only thinking about the shop they are currently in.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we believe that our surveys have highlighted innovative tactics for sampling informal urban populations. We believe our strategies can help to minimize enumerator discretion and more accurately measure firm size. We hope that by describing the practicalities of various sampling strategies researchers will be better able to design their own.

These sampling strategies have led to several important findings. In a *World Politics* article, we look at the determinants of private good governance in Lagos market associations (Grossman 2020). While existing research often suggests that private good governance should thrive when predatory state actors keep their hands out of group affairs, we find that under some conditions the threat of state intervention motivates private group leaders to conduct in-group policing and support trade. In the absence of these state threats, private group leaders may extort from their own traders. In another paper, Meredith Startz estimates the size of contracting frictions traders face when importing their products, and shows that there would be large welfare gains to policies that facilitate market integration (2018). ●

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APSA | COMPARATIVE POLITICS
THE ORGANIZED SECTION IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS
OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

BACK TO SUMMARY

LOCALLY EMBEDDED POLITICAL BEHAVIOR:
"My Town Is My Steeple."[1]

by Jennifer Fitzgerald

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How[1] do people think about, relate to, and experience their local communities? What implications do such personal processes have for individuals' political views and choices? These questions are relevant for analyses of urban political behavior as well as the study of those who call suburbs, towns and villages home. More broadly, these considerations should concern all students of political behavior and political outcomes, since a local lens can color the ways citizens perceive and engage in politics.

Recent explorations into the local dimensions of political behavior across a range of countries have yielded critical insights into phenomena such as economic voting (Larsen et al. 2019), party support (Patana 2018; Baker et al. 2020), views on inequality (Newman et al. 2018), perceptions of crime trends (Bessen and Fitzgerald 2019), political engagement (Nelson-Nuñez 2019), support for violence (Linke et al. 2018), and participation in forest restoration (Chang and Andersson 2019). As our locally-oriented knowledge of politics deepens, I propose that we stand to enhance our scholarly treatment of the subject in two main ways. First, we can devote careful attention to the political behavior of the "locally embedded individual," meaning that, in addition to studying contextual effects (as measured through community-level indicators of a variety of local features and conditions) on citizens' political behavior, we also consider the political implications of the ways individuals *relate to* their communities. Second, we can work to specify the conditions under which, and the processes through which, locally embedded individuals forge mental connections between their day-to-day local lives and the political arena.

In this essay, I draw on classic and contemporary literature, as well as fieldwork I conducted in rural France—corroborated by statistical analyses of data from multiple countries—to sketch out a set of locally-based concepts that matter for political behavior. In my own research, I find that these factors influence support for radical right parties in national elections (Fitzgerald and Lawrence 2011; Fitzgerald 2018) and shape citizen attitudes on immigration (Fitzgerald 2012; Bessen and Fitzgerald 2019). Yet the potential for these considerations to influence different aspects of political behavior, I suspect, are much more wide-ranging. I therefore aim to

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encourage comparative researchers to expand their thinking about individuals' ties to their local contexts and the resultant implications for myriad political outcomes across communities, across countries, and over time. By emphasizing the relatively general concept of the local, I invite scholars of urban politics to further explore the implications of embeddedness as it applies to residents of cities' constitutive neighborhoods and broader metro areas.

Affective and structural community ties

Decades of scholarship demonstrate that local contexts shape many forms of political behavior (e.g. Books and Prysby 1991; Huckfeldt et al. 1993; Dancygier 2010; Boulding 2014; Charnysh 2015).[2] Yet our understanding of how, when, and where individuals' *ties* to their communities matter for politics lags in comparison. One important distinction to make when attempting to unpack local ties is that feelings about a place or community differ from actual participation in it. This nuanced approach to studying local embeddedness has a distinguished intellectual pedigree, traceable back to LaPiere, who specified the attitude-behavior gap (1934): that one's feelings or viewpoints can be independent of, and possibly tension with, one's actions.[3]

Feeling connected to one's local community renders radical right parties more appealing.

Putnam (1966) details the importance of this gap for the study of electoral politics, putting Campbell's (1958) theorizing on the importance of community identification and perceptions of community norms for voter behavior into conversation with Berelson et al.'s (1954)

emphasis on the role of social engagement and interpersonal networks in influencing citizen vote choice. Putnam writes:

"Whereas Campbell's theory emphasizes a resident's psychological attachment to his community, the social interaction theory emphasizes the resident's social involvement in the community. Obviously, we would expect these two factors—psychological attachment and social involvement—to be related, but they are distinct, both logically and (it will turn out) empirically" (1966, 641).

Fresh insights into individuals' conceptualizations of their localities stem from Wong et al. (2020), who task research subjects with map-drawing and otherwise describing their communities, and Cramer's (2016) exploration into place-based identities and politics.

Similarly, my own research shows that the ways in which individuals relate to their local communities can have significant implications for their likelihood of supporting a radical right party in national elections (Fitzgerald 2018). But I also find that there are major differences in the political implications of distinct kinds of local ties. Feeling connected to one's local community (measured, for instance, as local belonging, local attachment, or local identity) renders radical right parties more appealing. In contrast, active engagement in one's local community diminishes the attractiveness of radical right parties. These insights further underscore the importance of distinguishing feelings about one's community from actual social and organizational engagement in it, offering a small-

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2. Maxwell (2019) contributes an important counter-point to the local context literature, arguing that compositional effects trump contextual ones with respect to attitudes about immigrants among urban versus rural populations.

3. Key works in comparative politics illustrate similar complexity through the study of public actions and their (debatable) links to people's privately held views (see Scott 1990; Wedeen 1999).

scale perspective on the notion of "imagined communities" (Anderson 2006 [1983]) that has divergent electoral effects when compared with in-person local interactions.

For methodological purposes, I advocate asking individuals how they feel about their communities and also detailing patterns of their engagement with others in their local lives. In these ways we can enrich our comprehension of local contextual effects by seeing communities through residents' own eyes. Statements elicited through just such an exercise conducted in France demonstrate the value of this approach. The quotations from my fieldwork that I supply in this essay come from small towns and villages with relatively high levels of Le Pen (National Front, now National Rally) voting. Yet my interview prompts were not specific to anything political; in this instance I asked about the nature of changes in the area in recent decades.

"We have 36,000 distinct communities in France. This is huge! We like our little communities. And we love our steeples. You know that we are a little regionally biased and we love our home... we are all very attached to our commune. Yes, a great deal. That's quite typical. In general, the French, it's 'my steeple.' There you have it." [4]

This villager professes his deep affection for the community he calls home, drawing attention to the profoundly impactful symbolism of the church steeple that serves as a landmark, a feature of distinction, and a source of pride.[5] To distinguish feelings for community from active engagement in it, this individual later returns to the subject of the village steeple.

"And I find this more and more. My town is my steeple. That's it – we're back to the steeple. People need a communal identity, even if they don't participate."

This is an astute observation about the ways the psychological and social dimensions of community engagement differ.[6] That people may feel tied to a community in which they spend and invest little time reminds us of the complex nature of local ties.

Neighboring

Local social networks in general and neighborly ties more specifically can affect various political orientations and actions (Bourdieu 1986; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; Mayer 1999). Just as affective and social ties to communities merit nuanced attention from researchers, local embeddedness involves similarly distinct aspects of neighborly relationships. Yet what political scientists have not done especially well is to separate out, conceptually and operationally, the political implications of how people feel about their neighbors as compared to the ways in which they are actively connected to them. Community psychologists pioneered this practice, differentiating affective from social dimen-

4. French communes are the lowest level of state administration, akin to municipalities elsewhere.

5. Astor's study of anti-Mosque movements in Spain unearths a similar sentiment in the Greater Barcelona metropolitan area: "Catalonia means my neighborhood, my park, my street – they are not as nice as those in the center, but those are not mine. So if you take this away from me, what do I have left?" (2016, 115).

6. A parallel conceptual distinction comes from Eulau and Rothberg, who offer an abstract depiction in the form of a series of progressively larger concentric circles to denote multiple, over-lapping life spheres in which an individual (the point at the circles' center) is situated. The authors separate out the notions of contexts and environments, clarifying that a context is "something that emerges out of interpersonal relations" (1986, 131). In contrast, they explicate that "environments are more remote, more stable, and less contingent on changes in personnel than is context" (1986: 131).

sions of neighboring in their research (Unger and Wandersman 1985). Sociology supplies similarly distinct concepts for latent versus manifest neighborliness. According to Mann,

"neighborliness is a twofold concept. On the one hand, there is what will be called 'manifest neighborliness.' This is characterized by overt forms of social relationships, such as mutual visiting in the home and going out for purposes of pleasure. On the other hand, there is what will be termed 'latent neighborliness,' which is characterized by favorable attitudes to neighbors" (1954, 164).

My research connects individuals' neighborly relations to support for radical right parties (Fitzgerald 2018). Most of the evidence I supply on this point comes from Swiss panel data, which measure four distinct dimensions of neighboring over time: expecting receipt of emotional aid from neighbors, expecting receipt of practical aid from neighbors, number of neighbors with whom the respondent is on friendly terms, and frequency of contact with neighbors. An index of these four measures in combination predicts invigorated support for the Swiss People's Party (SVP) from year to year.[7] Yet disaggregating the index shows that the positive feelings about neighbors (expecting emotional support and being friendly) drive SVP support. There is no discernible impact of interacting with neighbors or expecting practical support from them on far-right support.

In qualitative terms, my village interviews in France help to flesh out some aspects of neighboring that merit additional consideration. A relevant aspect of the local area is the spatial placement of homes. One participant observes:

"Because [our commune] perhaps is not representative of the villages of France, we don't really have a village center. We're very dispersed: many little hamlets, little neighborhoods...there you go...so, we don't meet up with each other...one doesn't see many people. They are dispersed. There are villages like that in France..."

Another respondent laments changes in neighboring patterns in their village over time:

"...there are fewer interpersonal relationships between residents than there used to be. Before, there was support when someone had difficulties. There was a neighbor, friends, who would come to help them."

This last statement illustrates how powerful social memories can be for shaping individuals' perceptions of their localities. Feelings of nostalgia for a more vibrant local environment can leave an impression that fuels affection for a place that is disconnected from the actual people who live there. As my research shows, positive feelings for the locality without active social engagement present the best-case scenario for radical right parties' electoral prospects. What other political outcomes might such a constellation help to explain?

Work

Generations of scholars have connected work to politics. One important stream of this research details how certain social dimensions of people's work lives shape their political behavior (Mutz and Mondak 2006). Directing attention to the theme of local embeddedness, certain dimensions of a person's job can structure the nature and extent of integration into

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7. The neighboring index has no statistically significant influence on adoption of support for other major Swiss parties.

her local community (Wikinson 1986; Cox and Mair 1988). Thus, an important consideration when studying local ties is whether an individual works within her community or whether she commutes outside the locality for her job. We know from research into community cohesion that high levels of commuting far from home for work fray the local fabric of communities (Putnam 2000; Mattisson et al. 2015).

In researching radical right support with panel survey data, Duncan Lawrence and I (2011) find that commuting relatively long distances is associated with lower levels of radical right support over time at the individual level. We also find aggregate evidence of this relationship (see also Fitzgerald 2018). When locals commute outside of their communities or neighborhoods of residence to work, we argue, they are less focused on life at "home" and this can have political implications. Field work in rural France provides further insight into local connections, or lack thereof, in areas with significant out-of-commune commuting populations. When I asked whether residents were well integrated into the locality, an interviewee explains:

"Some, but there are those if you will, it's like a dormitory town.[8] They work outside [the commune] and they come back later on: the weekend or in the evening. They arrive, it's 6 or 7 pm, they stay at home. They come to sleep here, but they don't have time [to engage in local life]."

Working and living in the same community can broaden and/or deepen local ties; commuting for work can undermine these processes. When exploring the ways in which individuals are locally embedded—either psychologically or sociologically or both—commuting patterns

and other aspects of daily work life merit careful attention.

Another work-related dimension of local embeddedness has to do with labor market participation, or rather, its inverse: unemployment. Research on the connection between unemployment and social exclusion underscores the importance of work for psychological and social dimensions of local belonging (see, for instance, Keiselbach 2003; Body-Gendrot 2009; Clarke 2012). The classic study by Lazarsfeld and his colleagues on community life in a 1930s Austrian town plagued with unemployment is illustrative here (Jahoda, Lazarsfeld, and Zeisel 2002[1933]). The flax factory that once dominated work life in the town was shuttered, gutting social and political life by causing deprivation, demoralization, and social isolation. Interviews with residents paint a stark picture of how local experiences had changed:

"Well, it used to be magnificent in Marienthal before, just going to the factory made a change. During the summer we used to go for walks, and all those dances! Now I don't feel like going out anymore." -Frau P. (Jahoda et al. 2002[1933], 36).

Similarly,

"I often used to go dancing with my wife. There was life in Marienthal then. Now the whole place is dead." –Herr E. (Jahoda et al. 2002[1933], 37).

Taking part in economic life can significantly influence the ways people behave in the political arena. What Lazarsfeld and his colleagues discovered in Marienthal was an unemployed population crippled by despair and disinterest (and

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8. Alternative translation: bedroom community.

not, as some theories might predict, imbued with radical political purpose). Community residents beat a sad retreat from local life; Marienthal's citizenry disconnected from each other. Attention to what work looks like for individuals can enlighten a poorly understood part of local life and citizen politics.

Politicization of local embeddedness

Under what conditions does local embeddedness—in its variety of forms—become relevant for politics? Surely, there is no obvious connection between links of various kinds to one's community and political views and behaviors. While there is not a single answer to questions about how such things become politicized, some evidence can help to frame future analyses.

In my own research I identified four factors that aid in connecting individuals' local feelings and experiences to the political—and in particular the electoral—realm (Fitzgerald 2018). The most straightforward of these is *elite rhetoric* that plays up themes of community, of belonging, of certain conceptualizations of society in terms of "we" that tap into people's feelings about their localities. Through exploration of party manifestos and other partisan platform statements, I find that where and when radical right leaders cue feelings of belonging and drive home themes of small-scale community and nostalgia their parties do best.

Second, I also find that *local authority levels* play a role in connecting community-based attachments to politics. Where and when municipal governments have significant levels of autonomy—relatively speaking—the link between community affect and electoral politics is strongest. Third, I find that where and when lo-

cal units have recently *lost governing authority*, local ties and considerations become more relevant for vote choice, as well, taking the form of a locally-rooted grievance. The fourth factor, or set of factors, has to do with the *nature and timing of local elections*: what people vote on (do they choose their own mayor, do they elect police officials? [9]) and how proximal the local vote is to a national election (are local and national elections held separately or simultaneously?). These kinds of politicizing factors and their attendant mechanisms can enhance the electoral relevance of individuals' local embeddedness.

Concluding comments

Scholars of localities big and small, bustling and sleepy, world-famous and inconspicuous can learn a great deal by analyzing the multidimensional nexus between individuals and their communities. Here, I advocate a comparative behavioral agenda that unifies and deepens inquiry into local dimensions of politics. This seems like a propitious moment for such an initiative for at least two reasons. First, a fresh wave of scholarship marks renewed interest in local context (as I outline above) and also into the ways rural-urban divides structure political debate, competition, and outcomes (see, for instance, Maxwell 2019; Harding and Michelitch 2019; Dahlum et al. 2019). Second, trends that enhance the political salience of local ties, such as devolution and municipal amalgamation, are ongoing across a range of countries with scant attention to their implications for citizens' political orientations. A focus on the locally embedded individual can bridge the divide between what we know about localities and their politics and what we know about citizens' political behavior. ●

9. See Bessen and Fitzgerald 2019.

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COVID-19 and Health Systems

Q&A with Ashley Fox, Assistant Professor of Public Administration and Policy, University at Albany, SUNY

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Are certain national level healthcare systems better prepared to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic? What makes them more effective than others?

In general, no health system can ever be prepared for the tremendous surge in need for hospitalizations stemming from an outbreak such as this. The goal is to have an emergency response plan and protocols in place that allows a health system to scale up its capacity rapidly in response to the threat. Health system "resilience" is the buzzword that everyone is trying to measure these days with several recent systematic reviews on the subject (e.g., Nuzzo et al, 2019; Turenne et al, 2019; Fridell et al, 2019), though the consensus seems to be that there is still no consensus on how to actually measure this construct.

That said, some health systems may have had better existing capacity both in terms of available hospital beds and coordination as well as emergency preparedness protocols. It is likely too soon for accurate lesson-drawing, but Korea stands out, for instance, for having a response plan in place to rapidly scale-up testing, tracing and treatment, at least in part due to its recent experience with MERs and investments in developing a unit specifically devoted to co-

ordinating the response to future outbreaks. also has a higher existing hospital bed capacity at 11.5 hospital beds per 1,000 people (as of 2015), which is relatively high compared with the OECD average of 3.81 in 2013 and the US's 2.90 beds per 1,000 in 2013. However, with an estimated 10% of COVID-19 cases requiring hospitalization, even this relatively higher bed capacity would quickly become overwhelmed without measures to control the spread of the disease and flatten the curve. Also, during an infectious disease pandemic where the disease is highly communicable, it is critical to separate parts of the health system designated for patients with the infectious disease while protecting the ordinary capacity. This was a lesson from the West African Ebola outbreak where mortality from "endemic" health conditions, including maternal mortality, ultimately exceeded mortality from Ebola since people were unable to access more routine health services (Powell & Faulkner, 2019).

However, health systems around the world have started shifting away from expensive, hospital-based in-patient care towards building more outpatient care with the result often being hospital closings and a reduction in hospital beds. Thus, being nimble (e.g., China's ability to construct 3 massive emergency hospitals

over a week), rather than having excess hospital capacity per se, is probably more important in terms of reducing the case-fatality rate.

The United States faces distinct challenges stemming from the particularities of both our fragmented public-private health system and our decentralized local public health infrastructure in terms of our ability to coordinate an effective response. Testing, surveillance and contact tracing is an integral part of the public health response and is critical for disease containment whereas health system capacity is critical to reducing disease-related mortality and mitigation efforts. The U.S. appears ineffective on both fronts, with difficulties sharing information and supplies in ways compatible with either containment or mitigation. The U.S. also stands out among high-income countries for the compounding effect of lack of universal health coverage with nearly 27 million people completely uninsured and reliance on employer-sponsored health coverage in the midst of a combined health and economic crisis. While the $2.2 trillion dollar stimulus package covers the cost of co-pays/deductibles associated with Coronavirus testing, out-of-pocket spending on treatment for complications from the Coronavirus may not be covered. For people without insurance, Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that the costs for a hospital stay for complications stemming from Coronavirus could be as much as $20,000. Even for people with insurance, treatment could add up to $1,300 in out-of-pocket costs. How this cost structure affects people's behaviors in seeking care, and feedback loops in attitudes towards government as health care bills roll in, remains to be seen.

Thus, emergency preparedness, organizational resilience and the ability to rapidly coordinate efforts are likely more important to how effective a pandemic response will be than existing health system capacity or type of health system/health system financing (e.g., National Health Service, National Health Insurance, Social Health Insurance, etc.).

Are our current conceptual tools for analyzing and explaining healthcare systems and policies adequate for understanding responses to and coping with the COVID-19 pandemic?

With many notable exceptions (e.g., Nathanson, 2009; Balwin, 2005), there is probably a dearth of comparative politics literature that focusses on explaining differences in *public health* systems and responses across countries as opposed to health care systems. Also, IR scholars have perhaps been more engaged in the literature on pandemics, owing to the notion that "diseases do not respect borders" and in their study of international institutions like the WHO. Yet, the study of comparative responses to other pandemics have revealed the critical importance of national political responses to epidemic control (e.g., Lieberman, 2009; Patterson, 2006; Price-Smith, 2009).

I think there is more room to better integrate the comparative political economy literature focused on economic policy differences across states with health responses as this pandemic has revealed the critical importance of safety-nets of all stripes in supporting an effective public health response. We cannot effectively socially distance without aligning systems that promote economic security with our health and public health systems. Past pandemics have shown the social, economic and political

effects of pandemics to be as profound as the health impacts themselves.

But in terms of conceptual tools, we have many in comparative politics to help us to understand state responses to disease pandemics. The literature on governance/state capacity/state strength, boundary institutions/ethnic fractionalization, federalism/ decentralization, electoral incentives and policy responsiveness seem promising as a first cut.

Which political factors affect health policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic?

There is already some good emerging scholarship starting to try to answer this question. Sofia Fenner has identified several factors in a Duck of Minerva blog post that appear useful in explaining some of the different national responses and how successful they have been in curbing the epidemic so far- regime type, leadership, state capacity, public buy-in. She argues that regime type on its own is too crude to predict the effectiveness of the response, but when combined with a proactive leadership response, state capacity and the degree of public buy-in, can explain some of the observed differences.

"Political commitment" is a loose term associated with leadership that is frequently invoked in the public health literature but that is under-theorized in comparative politics, that would likely benefit from greater conceptual attention (Fox et al, 2011). Fenner describes the reason for this inattention to leadership in the comparative politics literature as follows "[leadership] poses a problem for comparativists, who generally prefer to theorize the structural features of societies, states, and economies rather than the choices of individual leaders." Yet, idiosyncratic leadership choices have proven important in

explaining disease responses- for instance former President Mbeki's AIDS doubting policies- although these can possibly also be explained by electoral incentives as appealing to science doubting may resonate with certain constituencies (Fox, 2014).

Healthcare policies at which level—national or subnational—are more important for understanding responding to and coping with the pandemic?

I think this likely depends on the country, but certainly in the US context, our decentralized federal structure has not been an asset in this pandemic. In containing a pandemic, coordinated action is key and porous inter-state borders allows the virus to continue spreading. The differential timing of lock-downs and re-opening of the economy will allow the virus to continue to spread even when it has been contained in one locale, especially with the failure to bring testing to scale. Much of the pandemic response is being carried out by the 2,800 local health departments that implement public health policy across the country, many of which are underfunded and understaffed. More theorizing and research on the role of local public health departments in ensuring the public's health is likely warranted.

On the other hand, decentralized decision-making and implementation could mitigate the impacts of a poorly planned centralized response. More effective responses appear to have occurred in more centralized regimes with proactive leadership, though federalist Germany also stands out for its effective response to date.

Perhaps equally important, though separate, might be to consider how "hollowed out" the state is- both in terms of the outsourcing of

domestic production as well as contracting out to the private sector as a dimension of state strength/weakness. Countries that are captured by private interests (i.e., the US) seem less supple in being able to respond quickly to emerging threats compared with countries that can quickly mobilize the state apparatus.

How the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to affect healthcare policies and politics in the US and elsewhere in the short- and medium-terms?

This is the big question. Will we learn from this pandemic or will we be doomed to repeat the past neglect of pandemic preparedness? Following the 2014 West African Ebola outbreak, a bevy of articles came out calling for reform of the WHO and setting out a series of concrete recommendations that governments and the international community could implement, and yet the global community was unprepared and repeated many of the same mistakes. Certainly, the fate of WHO once again hangs in the balance.

One conceptual framework that I find particularly useful for thinking through this question is Price-Smith & Porreca's (2014) Fear-Apathy cycle, which describes the oscillation we seem to regularly observe between moments of panic in the midst of an outbreak, leading potentially to excessively draconian and undemocratic reactions, followed by long periods of total inaction thereby hampering preventive actions. This cycle repeats with frightening accuracy due to

cognitive biases that affect decision-making processes. Re-reading this and related articles written in the aftermath of the West African Ebola outbreak has proven the almost prophetic prescience of this literature as well as the many unheeded warnings.

However, in contrast with previous pandemics, Coronavirus has not remained confined to low- and middle-income countries, nor to low- and middle-income people, at least initially. By affecting centers of power and infecting powerful leaders, pandemics are no longer something that political elites can easily ignore. Most importantly, the potent and far reaching economic effects of this pandemic, which are not isolated to a particular world region gives me some hope that further investments in pandemic preparedness will be forthcoming. However, the exact nature of those investments and whether they will be adequate is an open question as well as whether this pandemic will elicit a retreat from globalization both in terms of production and travel.

In terms of healthcare politics in the US, many are asking whether the millions of people losing their jobs and their employer-sponsored health insurance coverage in the midst of a pandemic, will impact the political calculus over Medicare for All. I am presently designing a survey experiment to be fielded shortly to try answer this question. As of yet, it is hard to say. ●

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COVID-19 And the Lessons from Earlier Pandemics in Africa

Q&A with Kim Yi Dionne, Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of California, Riverside

What lessons from earlier pandemics – like AIDS and Ebola – should we be drawing for the COVID-19 pandemic?

There are two lessons that I think are really important. First, pandemics are particularly challenging for government response because they require the coordination of multiple actors across levels of governance (Benton and Dionne 2015; Dionne 2018). These actors represent the interests of multiple – often not overlapping – constituencies. Ultimately, the success of multi-tiered interventions like the global response to COVID-19 will rely on the decisions of ordinary people to change how they regularly go about their lives in order to stop the disease's spread.

On citizen behavior, the second lesson that we can learn from earlier pandemics is about citizen trust. Both the AIDS and Ebola pandemics in Africa have shown that citizens who do not trust their governments may be less likely to accept public health campaign messages and adopt the behavior change necessary to stop the spread of infection (Blair, Morse, and Tsai 2017; Arriola and Grossman *forthcoming*). To be effective at promoting behavior change, health interventions can employ agents that citizens trust, such as religious leaders and local leaders,

the latter including headmen, chiefs, or other traditional authorities (Seay 2013; Dionne 2018; Arriola and Grossman *forthcoming*).

Did previous pandemics influence African states' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic? In which ways?

While the average person might think of African states as under-resourced, African experiences navigating recent pandemics also meant there was some capacity to respond to COVID-19 that other, better-resourced states might not have.

Take the example of HIV/AIDS intervention in South Africa as preparation for COVID-19. It was on March 5, 2020 that the first COVID-19 case emerged in South Africa. The government implemented a 21-day national lockdown that commenced on March 27, 2020 – the same day South Africa recorded its first COVID-19 death. South Africa has employed mobile HIV testing (often coupled with tuberculosis screening) for over a decade. At the start of the national lockdown, South Africa's health ministry deployed community health workers and at least six mobile screening and testing vehicles in four of South Africa's nine provinces, with plans to deploy 20 more mobile units across all provinces in April. Comparing the South African case

to better-resourced states in the global north shows a much more rapid response and one that seemed to have greater capacity to coordinate community-level testing.

How have African states been working to insulate themselves from a pandemic that had at first predominantly affected other locations?

Many African states closed borders. For example, Uganda shut its borders to all but cargo (and only under certain conditions) after its first COVID-19 case emerged when a Ugandan national returned from Dubai with a fever.

Because COVID-19 cases first emerged in China, the initial response involved curtailing travel from China. However, as the pandemic spread, a greater threat to African states were travelers coming from Europe and North America. Benton (2020) points out how early in the outbreak many "African" cases of COVID-19 were visitors from the U.S. and Europe, who have great freedom of mobility across borders. As cases emerged on the continent, African states began curtailing travel from heavily-affected countries like the U.S., Italy, and the U.K.

Before closing borders and curtailing incoming flights, the relatively recent experience of travel-introduced Ebola infections prepared many major African airports – working with their respective ministries of health – to screen passengers arriving by air. Unlike in the U.S. for example, where government travel restrictions early in the COVID-19 pandemic led to overcrowding in airports absent rigorous medical screening, multiple African airports had health workers questioning and taking temperatures of inbound travelers.

Do you see any regional or regime type based patterns of response to the pandemic in Africa?

There are multiple disturbing reports of soldiers and police officers using deadly force to enforce national curfews and lockdown orders. In Kenya's capital city Nairobi in late March, residents of the Mathare neighborhood reported police officers fired tear gas, shot guns in the air, and beat people with canes to enforce a dusk-to-dawn curfew. By mid-April, a human rights commission had issued a report that more Nigerians had died from aggressive enforcement of COVID-19 lockdowns than from the coronavirus itself (National Human Rights Commission 2020).

African states that have engaged more regularly in violent repression may use the threat of COVID-19 to justify using deadly force, potentially targeting opposition or activist organizations. Just like states can draw on their previous experiences and relevant capacity to handle epidemics, states can also draw on their previous experiences and capacity to repress citizens in the name of health security.

The earlier scholarship on regime type and health (see e.g., Lake and Baum 2001) should lead us to expect citizens in democracies may get more or better health services during the COVID-19 pandemic than their counterparts in autocracies. To be sure, it is too early to speculate which regime type will be more effective at both curtailing COVID-19's spread and caring for those who become infected and ill. Comparing early responses to COVID-19 beyond Africa, however, suggests openness and transparency has worked better than coercion (Kavanagh 2020). Future research could examine in the current pandemic to what extent democracy and more specifically, levels and forms of democratization matter for public health in African states (Grépin and Dionne 2013). ●

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BACK TO SUMMARY

COVID-19 And the Media

Q&A with Elizabeth Pertner, PhD Can[...]ence, George Washington University

[...] does viewing COVID-19 through a [...]a lens shape our understanding of governmental and societal responses?

Thinking about COVID-19 through the frame of media raises questions such as state control of information and how today's emergency measures will impact future media conditions. These issues are intimately connected to public trust in leaders, media, expertise and science, institutions, and democracy. Across the world, government and media approaches to COVID-19 illustrate varying levels of public trust in experts. For example, in the United States, President Trump has directly contradicted and sidelined medical experts. In Turkey, where the purges of civil society and higher education following the 2016 coup attempt removed many academics and closed civil society organizations, religious authorities' directions for COVID-19 receive welcome media platforms. In countries with low levels of confidence in the government and media, such as Turkey, there is a danger of the public disregarding public health recommendations. This distrust can have particularly devastating effects in regions that are already experiencing economic, social, and/or political crises, such as in the Kurdish regions of Turkey and refugee camps throughout the region.

Does regime type impacts media responses to the pandemic? If yes, in which ways?

We have seen a wide variety of civil and political liberty restrictions in COVID-19 responses. Governments always face a tradeoff between the free flow of information and control over the narratives, and this is heightened during crises such as the current pandemic. With free media, governments can more effectively share vital public health information, such as symptoms, emergency assistance, and protection measures. Bureaucrats also have better access to information essential to emergency policymaking, such as economic indicators. A free flow of information also provides platforms for criticism and misleading or false information. Increasing state control over mainstream media can possibly prevent the spread of dangerous fake news and preempt social panic or fearmongering. Yet in societies with a long history of media control, audiences may already be distrusting of information shared by the government and more likely to discount government-authored content.

You are a scholar of Turkey. Is the US media handling of COVID-19 similar to or different from the Turkish media coverage? If yes, how do you explain these differences?

Leaders see the crisis as directly linked to their political futures, and especially their success in upcoming electoral challenges. Media do the same. In the U.S., media across the political spectrum weigh President Trump's actions against 2020 election predictions. The relatively positive coverage in Turkish media reflects the dominance of pro-government voices in mainstream outlets. The next election (presidential and parliamentary) is scheduled for 2023, leaving a small buffer between this year's COVID-19 and the next vote. Yet Turkey faces particularly damaging economic consequences as a result of the pandemic, which is already straining an economy weakened by the 2018 currency crisis and persistent unemployment problems.

COVID-19 threatens to further weaken Turkey's already embattled independent press. In the early weeks of March 2020, watchdog organizations reported a total of 9 journalists allegedly detained by police for reporting on the government's lack of transparency regarding the number of cases. The state broadcast regulator (RTÜK) has criticized several mainstream television channels for their COVID-19 reporting. The 47 journalists imprisoned as of March 2020 are increasingly concerned about the high possibility of an outbreak in prisons. The economic fallout of the pandemic will hit small media outlets, especially print media, particularly hard. An economic recession will likely force the closing of cash-strapped independent media outlets, which are often barred from lucrative public advertising revenue.

Does Turkey's regime type and the government's relations with the media help or hinder effective response to the pandemic? Are there any generalizable lessons and insights that can be applied to other semi-authoritarian/ hybrid regimes?

Media monitoring NGOs have documented threats to media during COVID-19 in Azerbaijan, China, Egypt, Honduras, Hungary, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Venezuela. Many of these restrictions have been justified as necessary in order to successfully respond to the crisis. China is already arguing that state control over information during the pandemic has been a key aspect of their response. Looking forward, the question is how these changes will impact media conditions in the future. Many of these governments are defending media restrictions by pointing to expanded executive powers under state of emergency declarations. Will leaders roll back these powers after the pandemic?

Leaders in countries with greater media freedom and leaders with wider censorship powers alike are turning to familiar tactics of blaming an external foe for the crisis. President Trump's insistence on referring to COVID-19 as the "China virus" seeks to clearly place the blame on China. This rhetoric directly contradicts WHO virus naming procedures, which name viruses based on their genetic makeup rather than geographic origin in an attempt to prevent discrimination against affected populations. China has responded by criticizing the US response to COVID-19 and launching a public relations campaign championing the Chinese response to the pandemic. Columnists in pro-government Turkish media have blamed COVID-19 disinformation, particularly accounts that cite a much

wider spread of the virus than the official data recognizes, on the Gülen movement, the PKK, and Western media.

History tells us this much about blaming someone else for an epidemic: such claims are often factually inaccurate. The 1918 flu epidemic, widely known as the Spanish flu, did not originate in Spain. The virus had already spread in the U.S. and France, both of which quickly used war powers to censor reporting of the growing epidemic in military and civilian populations. The Spanish press, operating without war censors, published the story and became the first association with the flu for many, and ultimately, the name for the pandemic. ●

COVID-19 And the Military

Q&A with Tanisha Fazal, Associate Pro_____ sity of Minnesota

____ e are constant co_____ ___ mobilization for the current fight _____ nst COVID-19. Is this the correct way to think about this? Why/why not?

My read is that the comparisons to wartime mobilization have to do with the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic requires a whole-of-society approach, and we (in the US at least) have few analogies to work with aside from war. But, I see at least three big issues with the wartime analogy. The first is that there is a strategic enemy in war; a virus does not strategize in the same way groups of people do. Using the wartime analogy suggests an enemy, which in this case has led to attacks against Asians (including, in the US, Asian-Americans) and heightened tension with China. In this sense, the wartime analogy can be counterproductive. Second, as Danielle Lupton and Jessica Blankshain argue, the language of war eases invocation of certain domestic rules and procedures that may be difficult to roll back. The third issue with the wartime analogy, at least in the US case, is that the US has not had to mobilize as a society for war since World War II. Our military is comprised of volunteers, and is significantly smaller (as a share of the population) than during the World Wars. By invoking the wartime analogy, there-

fore, it's not clear what we're invoking. Relatively few Americans today have any recollection of what civilian life was like during World War II. From a comparative perspective, it would be interesting to think through the aptness (or not) of the wartime metaphor for those countries that have experienced civil war. Aisha Ahmad's essay in the Chronicle suggests some interesting connections. But there are still important differences, especially along the lines of who has what kind of control over levels of exposure.

There has been extensive critique of the militarization of pandemic response. Would you be able to describe any efforts that you have seen that are only made possible by military organizations?

I think of the response more in terms of the securitization of health than of militarization. The military has an advantage in terms of its logistics capabilities, but not necessarily its medical capacity. What remains to be seen is whether the securitization of health will lead to more or less international cooperation, infringement on individual rights, and what the effect on democracy will be globally.

How have militaries' role in medical and scientific innovation contributed to the role that they are playing during the COVID-19 pandemic?

I don't know that we're seeing too much – yet – in terms of military contribution to the science around COVID-19, although there have certainly been efforts along these lines. But there are many precedents for military innovations under stress. War is a crucible for medicine. Advancements in war include everything from Henri Dunant's founding of the Red Cross to the use of whole blood for transfusions to the United States' Joint Trauma System.

How is the pandemic likely to affects militaries and military medicine in the US and elsewhere?

Militaries of advanced industrial countries have been increasingly attentive to medicine over time. As a result, we no longer see death by disease in the military outstripping battle deaths (at least in war time). In the US, there have been a number of efforts to decrease funding for military medicine. I wouldn't be surprised if these are rolled back. We're also seeing China becoming more involved in health diplomacy as a result of the pandemic. Some portion of Chinese health diplomacy over the past number of years has been carried out by the PLA, and I expect that the US military medical community will ramp up its efforts to engage in similar levels of health diplomacy. ●

COVID-19 And Europe

Q&A with Julia Lynch, Associate Professor, y of Pennsylvania

_____

explains the variation in the
member states' responses to the
demic?

This is indeed a puzzling question, and I suspect that comparativists will be grappling with this for a long time to come. With a relatively small number of member states, it's easy to devolve into speculative "theories" that are really just *ad hoc* explanations for individual cases. I think at this point it makes most sense to try to generate a list of possible explanations that we have good grounds to think MIGHT be related to state-level responses, and then evaluate their explanatory power jointly. A number of the "usual suspects"— type of public health or health care system, type of welfare regime, pre-pandemic fiscal capacity, partisanship of government, region of Europe— don't seem on their own to be explaining a lot of the variation. But we should also be thinking about levels of trust in government and in fellow citizens (both of which are like to affect how policy-makers think about what types of social distancing or quarantine policies are likely to be effective); the degree to which epidemiologists are integrated into policy-making circles; the openness of policy-making elites to European-level influences (e.g. from WHO Europe or the EU); state capacity; the influence of pharma-

ceutical and medical device manufacturing lobbies; etc.

How do pre-COVID-19 social, labor market and healthcare policies influence West European states' coping with the pandemic?

The timing of the arrival of the pandemic clearly had its own impact on how governments responded, with countries hit earlier taken by surprise and often faring worse. And at this point we really don't have reliable, cross-nationally comparable data on the health effects of the pandemic (see below). But based on what we know about how social policies generally impact population health, we can be pretty confident that pre-COVID-19 social policies have an impact on how many and who are exposed to the virus in a population, and how much they suffer conditional on that exposure.

Where social (and labor market) policies do more to protect people from job and income loss if they take time off from work; allow greater access to health care services; and make it easier to socially isolate (e.g. by providing social services to the elderly), the spread of the pandemic seems to be easier to contain. Social and labor market policies also mediate the effects of mar-

ket-generated inequality on health, and so they affect who is most likely to die conditional on exposure to the virus. Robust social policies tend to be associated with lower rates of the kinds of complicating conditions like asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and exposure to particulate air pollution that are otherwise concentrated among lower-status groups and that make death from COVID-19 more likely.

Health policies are also likely to shape the results of the pandemic at the country level. While the type of health care system (single- versus multi-payer, share of public versus social insurance financing, mainly public versus mainly private providers, etc.) probably doesn't matter all that much, health system capacity clearly does. Countries that experienced deep cuts to public hospitals during the 1980s-2010s, often under the guise of New Public Management and/or austerity philosophies, have had to scramble to come up with enough slack in their systems to accommodate a very rapid rise in the demand for public health surveillance, laboratory facilities, intensive care beds, and nursing staff.

Has Brexit affected the UK pandemic responses?

Dreams of Brexit do seem to have affected the British government's initial response to the pandemic in a few ways, though it's hard to be sure. Brexit thinking very likely affected the decision of Boris Johnson's government to opt out of joint EU arrangements to buy ventilators and PPE in bulk, even though it could have done so during the Brexit transition period. One of the companies that received a contract from the UK for its own supply of ventilators is run by James Dyson, a key advocate of Brexit – although I don't know if there is any significance other than symbolic to that fact. It also seems plausible that the government's reliance on a small

group of British scientists pushed them to adopt the controversial "herd immunity" strategy rather than enacting the social distancing measures that were taken up by most EU countries.

It's clear, though that Brexit will make it much harder to fight the pandemic. The departure of EU nationals working in the NHS will reduce the health care system's capacity, and the UK government has announced that it does not plan to maintain its membership in European health organizations that oversee surveillance of communicable diseases, new drug licensing, and clinical trials. This means UK patients will likely experience delays in getting access to new treatments, in addition to missing out on any European economic support packages for pandemic recovery.

Are our current conceptual tools for analyzing and explaining health system differences adequate for understanding responses to and coping with the COVID-19 pandemic across countries?

The main focus of scholarship on health in political science has always been health care systems, by which we usually mean systems of insurance and provision of curative medical services. Political science has not invested nearly as much in understanding variation in the functioning of public health systems in different settings, or in the determinants of population health. Both of these tendencies put us at a disadvantage as we try to understand why different countries respond differently to the crisis, and the ultimate effects on the well-being of populations in the face of the pandemic.

If I want to understand how governments are responding to this crisis, I'm going to want to know why their public health services look the way

they do, why they have the capacities and organizational cultures that they do, why they interact with other branches of government in the way they do – and there isn't to my knowledge much work in political science that examines the origins of or contemporaneous variation in public health care systems.

Lack of attention in political science scholarship to the social determinants of health, including how fundamental causes of health inequalities like socioeconomic inequality and racism are related to population health, also makes it harder for us to understand how public policy may affect the pandemic's outcomes for population health. The good news is that there is nothing to stop us from learning from other social scientists with expertise in this area, including social

epidemiologists, who have devoted considerable attention to just these kinds of questions.

At this point, however, I think the most important obstacle to analyzing cross-national variation in coping with the pandemic is the fact that we simply don't have good comparative data on either the incidence of the disease or the outcomes for e.g. mortality. Very significant cross-unit differences in testing and in how deaths are recorded, as well as the more common differences in the recording of relevant information about patients (e.g. sex, race/ethnicity, class or occupation), mean that it's not possible at this point to make any claims about cause and effect. It's likely that the data will never be truly comparable, so we will always need to be somewhat circumspect in the claims that we make. ●

COVID-19 And the Politics of Expertise

Q&A with Jeremy Shiffman, Bloomberg ... al Health Policy, Johns Hopkins University

... regime type been a major influence ... e effectiveness of national responses to the pandemic? Have countries with authoritarian political systems been able to mount stronger responses than those with democratic systems?

Regime type does not provide a strong explanation for divergence in the effectiveness of national responses. Some democratic countries have performed well: New Zealand, Taiwan and Korea, for instance. Others have performed poorly, including the United States and the United Kingdom. Some countries with more autocratic systems have performed well, at least initially: Singapore for instance. Preliminary evidence suggests Vietnam also has so far effectively contained the virus. By contrast, China's initial response was weak: its national leadership covered up the outbreak in Wuhan, thereby missing a potential opportunity to prevent the virus' global spread.

Prior preparation for pandemics, health systems capacity and respect by national leaders and citizens for epidemiological and medical expertise seem to be more influential factors than regime type in shaping the effectiveness of national responses. Another likely factor is historical precedent. Taiwan faced SARS in 2003. Korea faced MERS in 2015. These experiences prompted their governments to prepare for potential new outbreaks. Other countries that have not faced severe infectious disease outbreaks recently were not geared up to take threats as seriously.

How have claims to expertise shaped national responses to the pandemic?

The pandemic has given rise to interesting dynamics pertaining to the politics of expertise—the question of who knows, and who claims to know, what public policy responses are needed. People are coming out of the woodwork to speak up on what to do. I am not convinced this has been a good development, because it crowds out the space for the Anthony Fauci's of the world—the ones with the requisite expertise—to be heard. One of the most egregious examples of crowding out is Brazil, where President Bolsonaro has consistently downplayed the seriousness of the epidemic. He fired his popular health minister, Luiz Henrique Mandetta, who had called for sensible policies, including social distancing. Fortunately, many Brazilian state governors have defied Bolsonaro and are enacting policies that accord with guidance by epidemiologists. Another egregious example of

false claims to expertise, of course, is President Trump, who made the dangerous assertion that people might try drinking disinfectants to kill the virus, prompting several individuals to attempt to do so.

What are the implications of COVID-19 for future pandemic preparedness?

The world is stuck in a dangerous cycle of crisis and complacency with respect to pandemics. Many governments jump into action when pandemics arise, then neglect to prepare for the next pandemic. COVID-19 is not likely to be the last crisis of its kind: we need to be ready when the next pandemic hits. Doing so will require establishing better mechanisms for cross-national surveillance and collaboration, including shoring up the capacity of the World Health Organization, which is chronically underfunded.

Do you see any neglected lessons with respect to COVID-19?

The devastating public health and economic effects of the pandemic have led many people to lose sight of the fact that COVID-19 is hardly the only global health problem we face. Weak national health systems, mental illnesses, injuries, newborn mortality and antimicrobial resistance are among the many neglected health problems that cause enormous suffering and fail to get the attention they deserve. Moreover, COVID-19 has hampered our capacity to address these and other global health issues. For instance, in many countries routine immunization for vaccine-preventable diseases among children, such as measles and polio, has been disrupted. Even as we address COVID-19, we cannot neglect these other pressing global health problems. ●

COVID-19 And Health Data

Q&A with Kevin Croke, Assistant Profe versity

he existing data ods and tools adequate nalyzing and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic?

There are definitely big challenges on data collection for comparative politics work, which often has a strong fieldwork component. Not being able to travel obviously makes this difficult, and while interviews can still be done remotely, fieldwork is always better in person. On the quantitative side, I think there has been a lot innovation in quickly generating new sources of quantitative data on the COVID-10 pandemic and response, including various state and country policy and response trackers, mobility data for mobile phones, as well as researchers conducting mobile phone surveys to get quick snapshots of attitudes and responses at population level. I think in some ways the bigger challenge for research right now is that, in comparative politics, we want to understand variation in how well countries have dealt with the crisis, but we won't know what worked until the pandemic is over.

if not, how these deficiencies can be overcome in the short- and medium-terms?

On the fieldwork question, in the medium term, we will (I hope!) be able to travel again and work in other countries. In the short term, strong research partnerships with researchers and institutions on the ground in the countries where we work can definitely help.

What other, currently not collected or underutilized data should medical providers, public health professionals, and social scientists be requesting?

This is a tough one because a lot of the data that we really want would be from population surveys, and we cannot do in-person surveys right now. I am working with colleagues on a large RCT in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and we have retooled our survey plans for that project and are now trying to collect relevant data via mobile phone surveys, but mobile phone penetration (both phone ownership and network availability) is still low in large parts of rural DRC. Looking forward, at some point, large scale serological testing should be feasible, and when it is, I think social scientists will want these surveys to be large enough so that we will be able to say something about disease prevalence at

disaggregated levels, not just at national level, and to have social science-relevant variables collected in these questionnaires.

Are there any data collection challenges specific to the Global South/ developing countries?

I think there are two big challenges here for developing countries. The first is that for health research, you need to have accurate data about the health outcomes, and many developing countries don't have complete vital registration systems, so it is going to be hard to know the COVID-related mortality burden with any great precision. Second, administrative data in health systems (usually called the Health Management Information System, HMIS) is usually very incomplete in the lowest income countries. So the data that we would like to have on the fine-grained geographic and temporal variation in cases (which you would normally get from these sources) is likely to be lacking or else very incomplete.

How the pandemic is likely to affect future health data collection practices?

For developing countries, administrative data and early warning (surveillance) data has always been underinvested in, so ideally that would change. I think there is a good chance that we get some funding for surveillance systems of respiratory infections. The challenge is to make sure that it is done in a way that contributes to stronger institutions and stronger health systems, rather than being a siloed project just focused on respiratory disease. The next pandemic might not look like this one, so we should really think about strengthening health systems more broadly. ●

COVID-19 And the Middle East

Q&A with Melani Cammett, Clarence D[...] [...]fairs, Harvard Unive[...]

[...]re written before [...] [...]ical parties in the Middle East [...]ge in service provision. How is the COVID-19 pandemic likely to impact this phenomenon?

In some countries in the Middle East, South Asia and other regions, political parties are integral to welfare regimes as providers or as brokers for access to services. Some of my own work focuses on the case of Lebanon, where sectarian political parties and politicians are the key actors in and beneficiaries of a power-sharing system characterized by corruption and poor governance. The "October Revolution" in Lebanon, spurred deteriorating socioeconomic conditions, pins the blame for decades of government mismanagement on these parties, whose patronage networks are dwindling as a result of a severe economic crisis.

Although the public sector is notoriously under-resourced, the system as a whole has thus far managed to control the spread of the virus relatively effectively. On the one hand, government hospitals and Ministry of Public Health officials have proactively addressed the pandemic. On the other hand, the sectarian parties, whose welfare provision and brokerage activities have long fueled their patronage and

clientelist networks, have taken advantage of the pandemic. By rolling out their own efforts to control the spread of the disease and provide support to citizens, they have tried to showcase their "good governance" credentials. The shutdown of the country in response to the pandemic bought a temporary reprieve for the sectarian parties but protestors have returned to the streets to denounce corruption, the failure to provide adequate public services, and ongoing economic mismanagement.

Do you observe variation in how states in the Middle East deal with the pandemic? Are there any general patterns that you observe?

The spread of the Coronavirus has elicited normatively disturbing praise in some circles for the ability of authoritarian regimes to respond quickly and decisively to the pandemic. Renowned for its large concentration of authoritarian regimes, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region will enable us to explore this claim when we gather more information on country-level responses to the pandemic. Thus far, the efforts of MENA authoritarian governments to combat the disease confirm two widely cited trends: On the one hand, autocrats have taken advantage of their control over the media

to try to limit information on the spread of the disease or to manipulate coverage of their policy responses to their favor. (This is by no means unique to the region, as the cases of China, Russia and other countries attest.) For rulers who bank on "performance legitimacy," the crisis provides an opportunity to make the case for the superiority of strong man rule to face crises effectively. On the other hand, a defining feature of authoritarianism – coercion – arguably enables autocrats to enforce lockdown orders more effectively than regimes that place greater stock in safeguarding civic and political liberties.

Yet MENA regimes – including authoritarian regimes – vary in important ways, inviting us to unpack responses to the pandemic in more nuanced ways. Authoritarian regimes in the region deploy different levels and types of coercion, differ in the degree to which they aim to project a facade of political openness, and have divergent levels of fiscal and administrative capacity (in part shaped by different per capita resource endowments), among other factors. Their welfare regimes also feature different levels of regulatory capacity, social protection policies, and mixes of public, non-state and private actors involved in the financing and delivery of social services.

Since compliance with measures to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus involves both the supply of policies as well as citizen uptake of these policies, it is also important to examine variation in political and social trust. Mass willingness to comply with public health directives, such as stay-at-home orders or vaccination campaigns, requires trust in government. Furthermore, the scope and level of social trust shapes solidaristic sentiments, which in turn affect individual and communal willingness to make sacrifices for the greater good. In places

with more politicized ethnoreligious divisions, for example, it may be harder to elicit broad compliance on a voluntary basis. Both forms of trust vary across MENA states, inviting empirical investigation of how they shape citizen behavior in the face of the pandemic.

In short, a systematic analysis comparing MENA responses to the Coronavirus must account for these state and societal sources of variation.

How does the COVID-19 pandemic affect vulnerable populations in the region, especially refugees/displaced persons or people residing in conflict zones and the states' policies dealing with these populations?

The Middle East is a conflict-affected region, with ongoing war and violence in Libya, Syria, Yemen, parts of Iraq, and Palestine. War and resultant refugee crises affect responses to the pandemic. Violent conflict undercuts the capacity of states and other actors to address public health threats by reducing resources and destroying infrastructure. In addition, war often gives rise to distinct zones of governance, hindering coordination across political authorities to limit the spread of the virus. At the same time, refugee populations often reside in dense areas, with limited access to sanitation and hygienic supplies, hindering their ability to comply with measures to control the pandemic. The fact that refugees often face social stigma and marginalization in host countries may also limit their access to services and resources needed to meet their basic needs. However, some of my recent research on displaced Syrians suggests that, paradoxically, negative stereotypes depicting refugees as "vectors of disease" may increase local efforts to control the spread of disease among this population.

The militarization of the pandemic is particularly relevant for the Middle East. As we move forward, what do you think are the big trends in this realm that scholars should be studying?

As I noted above, autocrats generally have more leeway than their democratic counterparts to marshal coercive capacity to enforce lockdown orders, among other measures – a capacity that some cite as a potential "advantage" of authoritarianism in responding to public health crises. In many countries in the region, the army and security forces have been deployed on streets to ensure citizen compliance with public health guidelines. If citizens perceive that such measures were successful in controlling the pandemic, then trust in the coercive forces may increase. Indeed, populations in Egypt and other Arab countries expressed decreased trust in democracy and more support for strong-man rule in the wake of the Arab uprisings, which some associated with instability and economic decline. Autocrats are aware of the political utility of threats to deflect public attention away from governance failures and shore up their support. In this vein, the pandemic can benefit autocrats, at least in the short-term before their shortcomings in the economic realm and suppression of civil and political liberties return to the forefront of popular consciousness.

Widespread corruption has long affected the efficacy of Middle Eastern health systems. Are there ways that public health authorities are now working to overcome these issues? What variation is there between states?

This question underscores why political scientists need to engage with public health and vice versa. As in other regions, MENA health sectors are sites of corruption, whether in terms of macro-level expenditures and contracts or in more micro-level bribery and clientelist exchanges enabling access to health services and related resources. In virtually all countries in the region, private, for-profit providers are the fastest growing element of national health systems. Even if corruption is less endemic in the private sector (and that itself is an open question), for-profit providers are financially out of reach for most citizens, who instead rely on public sector facilities to meet their health care needs. In some places, such as Lebanon, non-state actors linked to political parties and politicians, religious organizations and NGOs, are integral to health care provision. Although it may vary across provider types, corruption comes in the form of preferential access to services and financial support for health care needs for co-partisans, as well as credit claiming for brokering access to de jure citizen entitlements on a discretionary basis.

Regardless of health system type, dedicated technocrats in health ministries and other government agencies are working within the constraints of their respective welfare regimes to improve the quality of services and expand access to services for needy segments of the population. The degree to which they are succeeding is an empirical question for political scientists, who are well equipped to analyze how politics and social inequalities affect both the functioning of welfare systems and access to services. But the key point is that there is only so much that technocrats can do if larger political structures perpetuating corruption and inequalities remain in place. ●

COVID-19 And Group Relations

Q&A with Prerna Singh, Mahatma Gandhi Professor of Political Science and International Studies, Brown University

What is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on intergroup relations?

From a biomedical perspective Covid-19 does not discriminate against different groups. But inter-group relations are of tremendous significance for the ongoing, as also for previous pandemics. On the one hand, because of our common vulnerability to them, pathogens such as the novel coronavirus remind us of our shared humanity. In a world of nation-states, microbial threats are, however, viewed through national lenses. Much like wars, contagious diseases are seen to pose a threat to the nation as a whole. Analogous to an invasion by an invading army, they invoke the idea that we must all rally together to counter this attack by a much stealthier, but potentially more deadly pathogenic enemy.

Outbreaks of infectious diseases thus hold the potential to blur subnational, including ethnic boundaries. Yet outbreaks of contagious diseases also bring up, reinforce and even create group boundaries. This has important implications for how states and societies respond to these outbreaks.

For one, group boundaries influence perceptions who is seen to be at risk, and conversely, who is to be protected. While pathogens do not explicitly target particular groups, membership in certain groups can increase or decrease one's vulnerability to a disease.

As compared to the young and healthy, for example, COVID-19 is likely to be more lethal in the elderly and in those with pre-existing conditions. In large part because of structural racism, ethnic minorities are likely to be overrepresented in this latter group. In a neoliberal economic system, these demographic, and medical, intertwined with ethnic, boundaries become quickly charged with the labels of 'productive' vs. 'unproductive'. As public health measures necessitated by the pandemic have ground the economy to a halt, questions have been raised about whether the lives of this 'unproductive' group are 'worth' the economic cost. In the US the Lieutenant

Governor of Texas Dan Patrick suggested that grandparents would be willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the economy.

Economic boundaries have also structured vulnerability to the consequences of COVID-19. Across the world economically marginalized groups have borne the brunt of the consequences of the ongoing pandemic. In India

hundreds of thousands of migrant workers were left stranded by the government's abrupt lockdown in late March. Many were forced to walk inhuman distances from the cities to their homes in the countryside. Others have been prevented from returning to their home states. The urban poor who often live in cramped, squalid conditions do not have the luxury of being able to socially distance, and are thus more vulnerable to infection. It is also the poor, and those employed in the informal economy, temporary, blue-collar jobs who are likely to face the most brutal financial consequences of the pandemic.

Is this impact similar to or different from that of past pandemics?

Similar dynamics of boundaries of risk intersecting with group boundaries and in turn effecting societal and state responses, have played out in previous pandemics. In his important book, *The Boundaries of Contagion*, Evan Lieberman argues that where the formal and informal institutions in a country make ethnic distinctions, and the boundaries between ethnic groups are consequently strong, the risk of infection from HIV is refracted in ethnic terms. The AIDS epidemic comes to be seen not as a shared problem for society as a whole, but as that of a particular ethnic group, usually a minority. Members of the ethnic majority come to see themselves as 'safe' from the disease and are unlikely to support public health policies that they think will protect a stigmatized ethnic minority that brought the disease onto themselves through their behavior. This contributes to a situation in which, despite the intensity of the AIDS epidemic, the state does not prioritize it.

There is emerging evidence that the pandemic has led to an increase in xenophobia. Is this new or different from past pandemics?

Group boundaries not only structure boundaries of vulnerability to, and protection from infectious disease. They also influence the boundaries of blame. This is evident with COVID-19 in the blaming and associated xenophobia against ethnic Chinese and those with Asian features. But this scapegoating of groups is sadly an ugly pattern as old as infectious diseases itself. During the deadly bubonic plague of the fourteenth century, Jewish communities across Europe were blamed and resultantly, became victims of often horrific violence. In the US Irish immigrants were blamed for outbreaks of cholera in the 1800s.

In the 1900s Italian immigrants bore the brunt of blame for the outbreaks of polio in New York City. Falling back on the racist trope of European colonizers' demonization of the colonies as heartlands of tropical disease and natives as 'unhygienic' 'dirty', the British media has, at times of public health scares, whether it was smallpox or tuberculosis, consistently depicted Indian and Pakistani immigrants as carriers of germs. More recently, Haitians and gay men were infamously held responsible for HIV-AIDS in the 1980s.

What is the role of politicians in promoting this increased xenophobia?

As the present situation is sadly bringing out, political leaders and the media play a key role in this dangerous finger-pointing against particular groups. Even prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 right-wing nationalist populist leaders across the world were blaming migrants for

bringing in diseases. During the Syrian refugee crisis European news outlets erupted with reports, including graphic photographs, of how Syrian refugees were bringing deadly diseases including a "flesh-eating disease" into Europe. According to the reports these diseases would infect populations across Europe and strain publicly-funded medical systems. So prominent was the fear that the WHO's Regional Office for Europe issued a statement clarifying that Europe has a long history and continues to experience a range of communicable diseases independent of the recent influx of refugees, that Leishmaniasis (the "flesh eating disease") is not transmitted from person to person and can be effectively treated, and that the risk for importation of exotic and rare infectious agents into Europe from the Middle East was very low. The Polish President Kaczynski declared that immigrants carry "parasites and protozoa." Trump infamously accused Mexicans of being responsible for "tremendous infectious disease … pouring across the border".

COVID-19 has been regularly described by President Trump and other political leaders as a 'Chinese virus'. Influential media outlets across the world have used terms such as "yellow peril" and "the sick man of Asia" in their coverage of COVID-19, bringing up at once a psycho-cultural perception of an existential danger from the East to the Western world, as well as a pejorative image of a weakened, ailing nation. This has unleashed a nasty rash of racism across the world against those with Mongoloid features. In the US the xenophobia against Asian Americans has shown how quickly the idea of a "model minority" can be turned on its head.

Ethnic minorities have also been singled out for irresponsibility in failing to heed public health advice and thereby contributing to the spread of COVID-19. In India, for example, a number of religious figures and gatherings have been associated with the spread of COVID-19 in the weeks immediately before, and leading into the lockdown. A Sikh preacher, who later tested positive and succumbed to Covid-19 attended a large festival ignoring post-travel quarantine requirements. Hindu temples and religious leaders encouraged devotees to attend festivals suggesting that their faith would protect them from the virus. And a large Muslim missionary gathering in Delhi congregated participants from multiple countries. Yet building on and further reinforcing the ruling Hindu nationalist regime's anti-Muslim ideology, it is Muslims who have been the blamed, by leaders, in the media and in social media campaigns, for the spread of the virus. In Sweden, a country that has adopted a provocatively relaxed approach to the pandemic, ex-chief epidemiologist Johan Giesecke pinned the failure to protect the elderly on immigrants who were unable to understand the public health directives. As countries across the world are instituting a range of punitive measures, from fines to arrests, to encourage compliance with public health directives, there is growing evidence that these punitive measures will target and disproportionately burden ethnic minorities and the poor. ●

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