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## **Class voting, spatial segregation and metropolitan context: Operators in pluralized urban contexts**

Carlos J. Vilalta y Perdomo\*

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Tecnológico de Monterrey, Campus Ciudad de México

\*EGAP, Calle del Puente 222, Col. Ejidos de Huipulco, 14380 Tlalpan, México, DF, MÉXICO  
E-mail: [carlos.vilalta@itesm.mx](mailto:carlos.vilalta@itesm.mx)

# **Class Voting, Spatial Segregation, and Metropolitan Context: Operators in Polarized Urban Contexts**

**Carlos J. Vilalta y Perdomo \***

**Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico City Campus**

## **Abstract**

**The theoretical argument behind class voting research is in an economically segregated society social class normally explains electoral preferences. This paper questions the class voting model using Mexico's 2000 presidential elections as a case study. The ensuing research shows evidence that (1) there is spatial segregation across social classes in the Metropolitan Area of Mexico City, (2) political parties increased their geographies of exclusion between the 1994 and the 2000 presidential elections, and (3) although political parties excluded each other spatially, both class voting and the voter local context played only a minimal role in determining electoral outcomes. Rather, the vote of rejection and the desire for political change were more important factors for the outcome of the election.**

\* Carlos J. Vilalta y Perdomo is director of the graduate program in Political Analysis and Media in the Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico City and visiting scholar in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Address: Calle del Puente 222, Col. Ejidos de Huipulco; 14380 Tlalpan, México D. F.

Email: [carlos.vilalta@itesm.mx](mailto:carlos.vilalta@itesm.mx)

## 1. Research questions

The theoretical interrelationship of (1) class voting, (2) social spatial segregation, and (3) the political effects of the metropolitan context, generates three main empirical questions. First of all, how much is the Mexico City Metropolitan Area (MCMA) socially and spatially segregated? Second, are electoral results associated to this spatial segregation? How and in what proportion? Finally, if the answers to the two previous questions are affirmative, the third question is: Are class voting and local contextual effects sufficient to win in an emerging democracy? To answer this question I analyze the data from the 1994 and 2000 presidential elections with the use of aggregate data and spatial statistics.

The MCMA shows sharp social contrasts.<sup>1</sup> Wealthy areas are located mostly in the south and west of the city, whereas the poorest areas stretch out from the center for kilometers to the north and to the east. All latin-american metropolitan areas suffer from poverty and social segregation, but perhaps the MCMA is the most extreme among them. Also, the political weight of the MCMA is phenomenal. Eighteen percent of the country's electorate lives here. For the 2000 elections, it had almost 11 million voters and 51 electoral districts (out of 300).

In terms of research, the good news is that since the mid 1980's studies of electoral behavior in Mexico have multiplied in number and sophistication. However, maybe the problem is that the urban electorate remains mostly unstudied nevertheless its importance for explaining the rise and development of multiparty competition in Mexico (Vilalta, 2004). The few studies that have focused on urban voters have studied

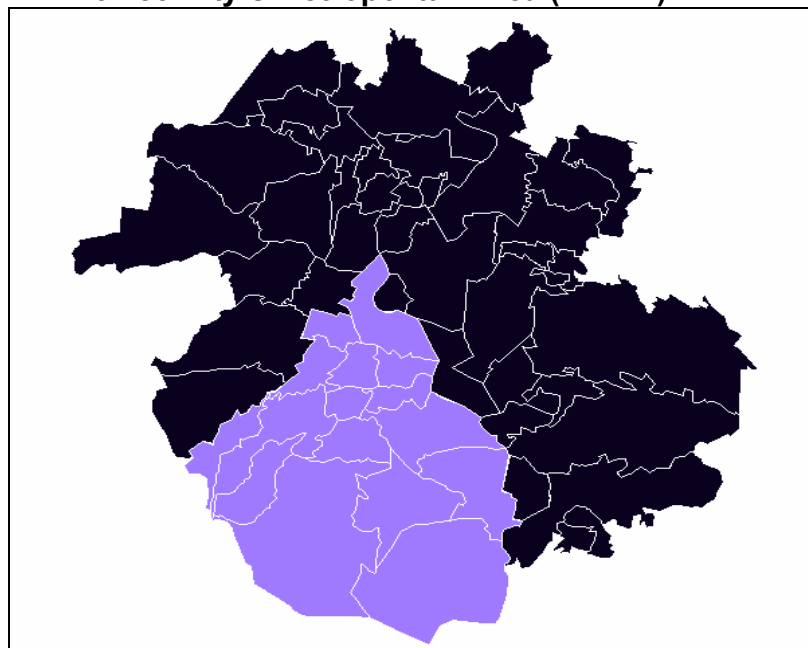
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<sup>1</sup> The Mexico City Metropolitan Area (MCMA) is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the world with a population of almost 19 million inhabitants. It is divided into the Federal District (FD) and the Conurbated Area (CA) of the State of Mexico (see map 1). Economically, MCMA dominates industry and commerce in the country (34% of the national GDP).

their behavior in the Federal District (FD) side of the MCMA, whereas the conurbated area (CA) has been poorly studied (see map 1). The reasons are simple: the FD has historically been the most politically active urban area in the country and home to majority of political analysts.

These well-structured and monothematic studies on the FD electorate have emphasized (1) increasing electoral participation and changing preferences as a result of late twentieth century political reform (Miron, 1998; Molinar and Weldon, 1990; Peschard 1988b; Davis and Coleman, 1982), (2) that political culture helps explain the features and changes in electoral behavior (Alvarez, 1998; Peschard, 1997), (3) that increasing numbers of loose voters define electoral swings (Gomez, 2000), and (4) the persistence of clientelistic or populist practices between PRI candidates and residents continue to determine the voting patterns of low-income residential complexes (Tejera, 2000).

**Map 1**  
**Mexico City's Metropolitan Area (MCMA)**



\* Note: The metropolitan area of Mexico city is composed of 56 municipalities; 39 in the state of Mexico, 1 in the state of Hidalgo and 16 in the federal district. For the analysis, I consider all the 40 municipalities (black) outside the federal district as the conurbated area.

Alternatively, recent national studies with findings applicable to the FD electorate have demonstrated (1) the importance of political participation in helping multiparty competition to rise (Klesner, 1987; Molinar, & Valdes, 1987), (2) the progressive development of partisan cleavages (Dominguez and McCann, 1995), and more recently (3) the increasing importance of the issues and the candidates for voters (Moreno, 2003). All of these studies either empirically or intuitively argue on behalf of the class voting standpoint.

As stated before, from a human ecology point of view the MCMA presents a notorious case of class and space segregation. In this sense, a theme not much studied in developing democracies -and totally missing in Mexican electoral studies- is the relationship between class and the spatial context within a metropolitan area. In fact, international refereed literature shows no studies directed to test if newly democratic capital cities differ in their political context from national trends, nor if local contexts are important enough as to influence local voters (Agnew, 1987).

As a result, the political significance of the location of the voter within the urban or metropolitan area (Mollenkopf and Swanstrom, 1999; Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom, 2004; Gainsborough, 2005) and its "political transformative effects" on voters (Sauerzopf and Swanstrom, 1999; p 88) has not been attended in studies of developing democracies. In fact, neither have the Mexican presidential elections been much studied (Gomez, 2000). Mexican local studies on the urban electorate have focused mostly on federal representative elections (Pacheco, 1997; Vilalta, 2004, 2005).

Briefly put, the combination of class voting, spatial segregation, and location of the voter, as three closely interrelated theoretical angles -and analyzed VIA spatial modeling- is not found in the developing democracy's scholarly literature despite its major theoretical significance. This work advances research in these respects.

After putting together into the same equation these three theoretical angles, the main finding is that even though (1) class-space segregation, (2) class voting, and (3) local contextual effects were all detected and quantified, the sum of the three variables -all being held constant and valid up to measurement error- were not influential enough to determine the final outcome of the 2000 presidential elections in the MCMA.

Instead, this ecological study suggests that parties attached to class voters in the MCMA were not capable of attracting the increasing numbers of loose voters (Gomez, 2000).<sup>2</sup> In addition, it was found that parties became increasingly spatially separated from each other. In consequence, what all this means by elimination, based on foreign theory, and empirical evidence from previous Mexican studies is that (1) national trends and issues, (2) candidate appeal, (3) the long history of local rejection, and more importantly (4) the vote of punishment against the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), notably helped the PAN-PVEM coalition to rise and to win, and the PRD-6 to remain somewhat stable as the third main force.<sup>3</sup> While class voting and location of the voter were existent, they were not crucial factors predetermining the outcome of the 2000 presidential elections.

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<sup>2</sup> Thus, a campaign strategy focusing on class conflict may have some effect but will not shape the final result

<sup>3</sup> For the 2000 elections, PAN became Alianza por el Cambio; Coalition of Partido Accion Nacional (PAN) and Partido Verde Ecologista de Mexico (PVEM). PRD became Alianza por Mexico (PRD-6); Coalition of Partido de la Revolucion Democratica (PRD), Partido del Trabajo (PT), Convergencia, Partido de la Sociedad Nacionalista (PSN), and Partido Accion Social (PAS). The three latter parties were created just before the 2000 elections. The PRI competed alone.

**Table 1**  
**Percentage of the total vote for each party in the 1994 and 2000 presidential elections in each area of the metropolitan area**

	1994	2000*	Δ 1994 - 2000
<b>PAN</b>			
Conurbated Area	28.1%	43.2%	15.1%
Federal District	26.1%	42.5%	16.4%
Total	27.5%	43.0%	15.5%
<b>PRI</b>			
Conurbated Area	44.9%	31.6%	-13.3%
Federal District	42.1%	24.4%	-17.7%
Total	44.1%	29.5%	-14.6%
<b>PRD</b>			
Conurbated Area	18.5%	19.6%	1.1%
Federal District	21.3%	26.8%	5.5%
Total	19.3%	21.7%	2.3%

Data source: Federal Electoral Institute, Mexico. Author's own calculations.

\* For the 2000 elections, PAN became Alianza por el Cambio; Coalition of Partido Accion Nacional (PAN) and Partido Verde Ecologista de Mexico (PVEM). PRD became Alianza por Mexico: Coalition of Partido de la Revolucion Democratica (PRD), Partido del Trabajo (PT), Convergencia, Partido de la Sociedad Nacionalista (PSN), and Partido Accion Social (PAS). The three latter parties were created just before the 2000 elections. The PRI competed on its own.

To respond to the research questions, this paper is divided into the following four sections: combining theories, methods and data, results, and discussion and conclusion.

## **2. Combining theories: Class politics and voting in old and new democracies, spatial segregation, and location of the voter in the metropolitan context**

In this section I first discuss simultaneously and straightforwardly the following three points: (1) the key arguments behind the class-voting theory, (2) where it applies, and (3) how. Afterwards, a brief review of the literature dealing with class-voting in Mexico is included. For theoretical clarity, the empirical link between social class and spatial segregation with location of the voter is concurrent throughout this section.

*i. Class voting in old and new democracies*

The concept of social class is a classic for political science. Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke and Rosseau (Mulgan, 1977; Martinich, 1992; Harris, 1994; Charvet, 1974) used social class as a framework to describe socioeconomic inequalities and political conflict between groups in society. Weber also utilized this concept to explain the political development of modern societies (McAll, 1990). However, the first and most influential political theorist promoting the class perspective was Marx. Briefly put, he believed that each mode of production created a distinct class society, in which relations between the dominant (bourgeoisie; capitalists) and the subject (proletariat) classes were antagonistic (Tucker, 1978). This opposition translated into a class struggle based on the conflict over the appropriation of the economic surplus;<sup>4</sup> consequently, class society bifurcated with opposing political views and electoral preferences.

In this sense, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) were among the first to suggest a connection between social class and voting behavior. This view has influenced electoral studies for several decades now. Interestingly, current electoral studies in developing democracies have used a Weberian rather than Marxian perspective, bounding social class to occupational categories such as entrepreneurial vs. working class, upper level education vs. no formal education, etc. (Domanski, 1999; Rehakova, 1999). Some surveys have essentially asked the individual to directly identify with a social class: i.e., working class or otherwise (Brooks & Manza, 1997).

As this section shows, recent scholarly literature exposes the ongoing debate on whether class voting happens or not, and in the affirmative case, how important it is to

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<sup>4</sup> Marx (1867) identified three major social classes: (1) landowners, or ground-rent individuals, (2) the bourgeoisie, or capitalist-profit-making middle class, and (3) the proletariat, or wage workers. He also distinguished a subclass: the lumpenproletariat, which consists of the poor and unemployable workers.



determine election results. These findings can be classified depending on the type of society and/or political system studied: developed versus developing economies, and new versus old democracies.

From the perspective of the type of society being studied, a major theoretical discrepancy can be found in the scholarly literature. There are two opposite arguments: First, academics that argue that classes are dissolving and that most advanced societies cannot be considered class societies any longer (Franklin, Mackie, and Valen, 1992; Pakulski and Waters, 1996). Their basic reasoning is that societies in developed economies are largely homogeneous in terms of income, education and professional occupations, thus social class theory can no longer apply to nations moving from an industrial to a postindustrial democracy (Crook, Pakulski and Waters, 1992). Hence, it follows that it is not reasonable to think in terms of class voting in such advanced industrial societies (Michal and Asher, 1999). However, this view is contended in that it does not apply in all places. In Japan's postindustrial economy and an advanced democracy, for instance, it is argued that social class is not disappearing as a factor in electoral competition (Miyano, 1998).

In Britain, it is contended that class voting has fallen in importance (Evans, Heath, and Payne, 1999), but "still persists to some degree" (Andersen and Heath, 2000, p. 3), and evidence is continuously offered in British electoral studies (Heath, A., Yang, M. and Goldstein 1996).

The second perspective is related to developing economies or new to multiparty competition. Recent scholarly literature points out the prevalence of class-consciousness as a determining factor in electoral processes in societies where

socioeconomic differences are vast and/or are new to multiparty electoral processes such as the new democracies in Eastern Europe (Cigehh, 1999; Domanski, 1999; Rehakova, 1999; Ozcan, 1998) and Latin America (Torcal and Mainwaring, 2003; Roberts, 1995). However, it is commented that class voting in Latin America has not been as strong as in Europe (Dix, 1989). Still, within this perspective there seems to be only one opinion: class voting is real.

*ii. Class voting and spatial segregation in Mexico*

Based on the previous views, it may be that theories of electoral behavior of the advanced developed western type democratic societies might not be completely applicable to the Mexican case.

Mexico City is a developing economy and new democracy; and class politics is a persistent factor. Democratic exercises such as multiparty competition are very recent; local elections for public officials are even much recent in Mexico City. First elections for the local congress date to 1988 and for governor of the city to 1997.<sup>5</sup>

My focus on class voting partially rests upon other previous Mexican studies that have analyzed voter preferences either using aggregate data (Ames, 1970; Molinar and Weldon, 1990; Klesner, 1993, 1997 and 1998; Pacheco, 1997; Gomez, 2000; Vilalta 2004), or individual-survey data and/or relied on qualitative methods (Davis and Coleman, 1982; Cornelius, 1987; Butler, Pick, and Jones 1991; Davis, 1989; Ward, 1990; Tarres, 1994; Crespo, 1996; Bruhn 1998; Moreno, 2000, 2003). Although all these studies present evidence of class-based voting, several moderate its importance (Molinar and Valdes, 1987; Dominguez and McCann, 1995; Peschard, 1997), at least

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<sup>5</sup> 1928 was the last year when the population of this city elected a mayor. After 1928, the President would appoint the Federal District "regent"

for some elections; however, none discusses its relevance and association to spatial segregation.

Among the most cited studies reporting class politics in the FD is Ward's 1990 analysis of the urban structure (and the politics) of Mexico City. This study affirms the FD to be a class polarized society where social control is the rule, and the local administration a PRI designed machine for the management of social unrest and the maintenance of the *status quo*<sup>6</sup>.

Another important study in the FD is Davis' (1994) analysis on political conflict and urban development. She documents historically grounded conflicts and alliances among the state and what she defines as class actors. Her argument is that these actors are central to understanding local struggles over urban growth and development. Especially important in her analysis is the middle class since it has been located in areas of the city where land usage and transport infrastructure were most contested. She also defined the working class in terms of wage laborers. In this respect, one insightful query investigates the early 1980's trend of the working class vote for the hegemonic, right-capitalist PRI. The explanation is twofold. First, non-PRI parties confronted difficulty in preventing defection in a time when party competition was restricted. Second, in respect to non-partisan blue collar workers, the unlikelihood of opposition parties in the 1980's of actually gaining power would probably have left this group of workers with two options: either to vote for the hegemonic party or to abstain. In the sample, a large number of nonpartisans did not cast ballots, and those who did, voted for the PRI.

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<sup>6</sup> A particular concern is that increasing social polarization and unrest might lead to violent behavior

Davis and Coleman (1982) however were the first to report a vote of rejection against the PRI and increasing party defection in favor of the PAN in the FD; a trend, according to them, since the mid 1950s. Later Molinar and Valdes (1987) found that non-PRI vote in the 1985 elections had been actually a protest against the PRI. They analyzed the FD electorate from a demographic standpoint, making emphasis on two dimensions of the vote: abstention and plurality. Among other things they found that the PRI was mostly supported by older vs. younger population, and also by women. Students showed a preference for non-PRI parties, especially those leaning to the left.

Klesner (1987, 1993, 1997 and 1998) has consistently found significant correlations of various types of income measurements with electoral results. With the use of aggregate data, for instance, he has found that low, middle and upper classes in urban areas have all tended to favor the PAN over the PRI; meanwhile, low-income rural populations, and those with little or no formal schooling have tended to support the PRI (Klesner, 1987, 1993, 1998).

In a similar type of study, Molinar and Weldon (1990) utilized aggregate data and were able to detect that in the 1988 national elections, voting preferences could be explained in terms of level of education and those speaking indigenous-only language's. Some of these findings had been already presented by Ames' in 1970, in one of the first electoral behavior analyses conducted in Mexico. However, Molinar and Weldon (1990) replicated and demonstrated that class voting was still happening twenty years later.

In 1995 Dominguez and McCann found that although class voting exists, it is not a crucial factor in election results. These authors analyzed two nationwide public

opinion polls developed weeks before the national elections of 1988 and 1991, and found that voting preferences were not strongly explained by social cleavages; rather, they discovered that electoral preferences were best explained in terms of the voter's judgment about the prospects of the ruling party and past party preferences.

Tarres (1996) changed focus and tested the class voting theory in the 1994 elections at the neighborhood level; she compared two socio-economically opposite neighborhoods. In agreement with previous studies at the national level, she found that residents in the lower-income neighborhood tended to vote for the left (PRD type) whereas the residents in the upper-income preferred to vote for the center-right PAN. However, it must be noted that this study also revealed that the decision to participate in the election was based on the support or rejection of the PRI.

With regards to the analysis of the electorate in two different presidential elections, Crespo (1996) analyzed the 1988 and 1994 elections and concluded that when presidential terms are ending and elections held, voters make a balance of the term and reward or punish the government with its vote; this is similar to what Molinar and Valdes (1987) had already detected. Therefore, class voting seems but a single facet amongst numerous factors of new multiparty competitions.

Another work in the FD is Peschard's 1997 analysis of three surveys developed in Mexico City two to three weeks before the federal elections of 1988, 1991 and 1994.<sup>7</sup> Again, the study concludes that class variables such as income, and education enable the identification of the electorate base for the PAN and the PRI; but not for the PRD. Peschard is the only scholar to date to have reported that the PRD support transcends over different classes. Despite this and in agreement with Molinar and Valdez (1987),

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<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, the author mentions neither the sample size nor the methodology

Dominguez and McCann (1995), Tarres (1996) and Crespo (1996), she concludes that class variables are insufficient to explain party or candidate selection.

In consequence, she advanced the idea of the development of a political culture in Mexico. Briefly, the thesis is that individuals with no democratic culture become progressively more aware of the political reality and start to develop a set of beliefs and opinions, which are later reflected in their vote. Thus, Peschard (1997) suggests political variables, in particular public opinion, are more accurate in explaining electoral outcomes.

In relation to the development of a political culture, it is important to mention that democratic discourse in Mexico City is clearly class-based. For instance, since 1997, the year when the PRD and its candidate Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas won the local governorship, it was expressly stated that the FD would be the space for social equality. Even the 1997 campaign slogan “*la ciudad de la esperanza*”—the city of hope—is still today present in the city’s official webpage and documents. In fact, at the time of writing in a speech against his impeachment, the governor of the FD, Lopez-Obrador, insisted in that “... *now, more than ever, we have to push for a transformation movement, capable to create... a new economy, a new political and social set of relationships, with less inequalities, more justice, and dignity*”.<sup>8</sup>

Good examples of class policies are the pension system for elderly residents and the public high school system that only attends to students residing in the poorest areas

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<sup>8</sup> Newspaper La Jornada, April 8, 2005. A speech against his impeachment process, offered in the Zocalo of the FD. He is being impeached for being found responsible of disobeying a judicial sentence related to the use of private property. Text available at: <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2005/abr05/050408/042n2cap.php>

of the FD; both policies implemented by the LOCAL PRD government, specifically during the Lopez-Obrador administration (2000-2005).<sup>9</sup>

As previously mentioned, there are few studies focusing strictly of urban voters (Pacheco, 1997; Vilalta 2004) and none examining the MCMA electorate. The small number of investigations have basically found that the urban electorate is far from being homogeneous in its preferences, as most parties have their regional clusters or strongholds; furthermore, voter volatility is increasing throughout many Mexican cities. With regards to class voting, it has been found that PAN tends to win in cities with larger proportions of upper income population and higher levels of education, the PRD in cities with lower levels of income, and high levels of manufacturing, education, and indigenous ethnic population, and the PRI in places with lower proportions of migrants and few catholics (Vilalta, 2004, 2005).

To sum up, previous studies show that (1) rejection of the PRI in the capital city dates back between 20 and 50 years, (2) voting behavior has been dependent on social class, but (3) the vote itself seems to have been mostly a vote of protest against the PRI.

### *iii. Putting ideas and evidence all together*

Contextually speaking, the victories of non-PRI parties in the FD make sense. It is the most politicized city, it has developed as a pivotal place for opposition parties (Molinar and Valdes, 1987; Peschard, 1997), a city of young electors, and the scene of important populist movements (Tarres, 1996; Butler, Pick, and Jones, 1991; Davis, 1989). It must be noted, however, that findings for the national electorate do not differ

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<sup>9</sup> Mexico city (FD) is the only case known of a city having created and implemented a pension policy entirely financed with public funds

significantly from findings for the FD electorate. Small variations in the previous research findings have depended on whether researchers used individual-survey data or aggregate data; individual versus ecological research.

In terms of methods, the previous literature shows that both qualitative and quantitative research, show no major disagreement in terms of findings; in other words, methods have not determined the results. Among the quantitative studies, descriptive statistics have been the norm and perhaps the goal; the few inferential techniques utilized have been correlation and linear regression.

In this respect, is important to comment that a few Mexican national electoral studies have tested for spatial effects (Fernández-Durán, Poiré y Rojas-Nandayapa, 2004; Vilalta, 2004 and 2005). In these studies it has been found that the local context is important for voters and for parties; specifically, the presence of urban clusters of electoral preferences and the spatiality and temporality of the vote (Vilalta, 2004). However, caution should be made about the results from these regression models since they can be affected by heteroscedasticity problems (Anselin, 1988; Vilalta, 2005).<sup>10</sup>

In summary, we find empirical evidence in favor of the class-based voting hypothesis, for the MCMA in the 2000 presidential elections; also the presence of contextual effects in voting behavior. However, class voting was not enough to modify the final electoral outcome.

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<sup>10</sup> The statistical implications of spatial data analysis have been commented extensively in other works; see Anselin, 1988.



#### 4. Methods and data

To spatially model class and voting behavior with the use of aggregate data presents one main challenge: geographical unit definition and the resultant aggregation bias. This bias can be overcome by means of reviewing previous studies looking for consistent significant variables across a number of elections. In this sense, a pool of the most consistent socioeconomic predictors was selected and tested for spatial autocorrelation based on the previous studies in Mexico and/or in Mexico City that have examined the relationship between social class and vote (Klesner, 1987 and 1998; Butler, Pick, and Jones, 1991, Tarres, 1996; Peschard, 1997; Vilalta, 2004).<sup>11</sup> The variables presented in Table 2 are the final selection of the spatially clustered and statistically significant variables correlated to the 2000 electoral results in the MCMA.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The electoral data analyzed in this work are available from the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) website.<sup>11</sup> The electoral data presented is the 1994 and 2000 presidential elections results. The socioeconomic data is Census 2000 and are also available from the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI) website in Mexico.

<sup>12</sup> Thus the selection of the variables was via SAM, or spatial autoregressive modeling

**Table 2**  
**Dependent and independent variables in the analysis**

<b>Dependent variable</b>	<b>Description</b>
Voting support	Vote for each party (PAN-PVEM, PRD-6, PRI) in the 2000 elections (percentage of the total vote)
<b>Independent variables</b>	<b>Description</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Type of housing and its conditions:</b> Owned Housing Units Rented Housing Units Drainage and electricity</li> <li>Walls made of carton and/or other materials</li> <li>• <b>Income:</b> Lower income wages Upper income wages</li> <li>• <b>Educational Background:</b> Incomplete basic school education Complete basic school education Graduate studies</li> <li>• <b>Local context and spatial effects:</b> Location of the voter Spatial effects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% of occupied housing units privately owned (2000)</li> <li>% of occupied housing units rented (2000)</li> <li>% of housing units with drainage and access to electricity (2000)</li> <li>% of housing units with carton walls and/or other rubbish materials (2000)</li> <li>% of occupied population that earn between 2 and 3 daily minimum wages (2000)</li> <li>% of occupied population that earn &gt; 10 daily minimum wages (2000)</li> <li>% of population aged &gt; 15 yrs. with less than 6 years of school education (2000)</li> <li>% of population aged &gt; 15 yrs. with at least 6 years of school education (2000)</li> <li>% of population aged &gt; 18 yrs. with at least 1 year of graduate education</li> <li>Dummy variable for two locations: Federal District and Conurbated Area of the MCMA</li> <li>Spatial lag of the VD</li> </ul>

The next step in this analysis was to conduct a Mann-Whitney test to search for significant differences in the vote by the zone of residence of the voters within the metropolitan area (federal district vs. conurbated area). Spatial concentration was later measured using Moran's spatial autocorrelation coefficients (Moran, 1950). After a non-random pattern of spatial concentration of electoral results was found for all parties, spatial autoregressive modeling (SAM) was used to calculate the magnitude and significance the relationships between electoral results and socioeconomic covariates; a

Moran test was also conducted on the regression residuals and spatial effects were calculated as well.<sup>13</sup>

Three separate SAM equations—one for each party—were calculated. Local contextual effects or location of the voter was considered expressly via a dummy variable indicating the location of each municipality either in the FD or the CA. Space effects were intended to be detected with a *rho* coefficient included in the equation. The *rho* coefficient is the average of the dependent variable in the neighboring areas. This coefficient is directed to measure the spatial autocorrelation present in the data set after socioeconomic predictors have been included in the equation. If significant, spatial effect and/or local contextual effects are considered operating in the area of study. If non significant, the equation returns to be of the OLS type.<sup>14</sup> The latter was the case as the next section shows.

## 5. Results

The loss of votes of the PRI in the 1994-2000 period in the MCMA shows to have been somewhat similar to its national average (see Table 3). On the other hand, the rise of the PRD nationwide is remarkable. Still, the PRD rise is less impressive than the PAN in both the MCMA and nationally.

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<sup>13</sup> OLS modeling with the SPSS software was utilized to check of variance inflation factors (VIF) and to conduct a Durbin Watson test on the residuals. In all cases, the models showed to be free of residual or nonlinearity problems.

<sup>14</sup> See Anselin (1988) for a detailed explanation

**Table 3**  
**Percentage of the total vote for each party in the 1994 and 2000 presidential elections in the metropolitan area of Mexico City (AMCM) and nationally**

	<b>1994</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Δ 1994 - 2000</b>
<b>PAN</b>			
MCMA	27.5%	43.0%	15.5%
National	25.8%	42.5%	16.7%
<b>PRI</b>			
MCMA	44.1%	29.5%	-14.6%
National	48.7%	36.1%	-12.6%
<b>PRD</b>			
MCMA	19.3%	21.7%	2.3%
National	5.9%	16.6%	10.7%

Data source: Federal Electoral Institute, Mexico. Author's own calculations.

Spatial differences in voting support were found for the PRI and the PRD within the metropolitan area (see Table 4). It is clear that the PAN was spatially homogeneous across the MCMA. On the other hand, the PRI is the most spatially distinctive. The PRI is stronger in the conurbated area whereas the PRD is stronger in the federal district; see Table 1.

**Table 4**  
**Z values of the Mann –Whitney test on differences in the percentage of the total vote for each party in the 1994 and 2000 presidential elections in the federal district and the conurbated area of the MCMA**

	<b>1994</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Δ 1994 - 2000</b>
<b>PAN</b>	-1.161	-.100	-1.025
<b>PRI</b>	-2.231*	-4.879**	-3.791**
<b>PRD</b>	-2.013*	-3.301**	-3.065**

\* Significant at a .05 level

\*\* Significant at a .01 level

Spatial autocorrelation coefficients show patterns of concentration for all parties in both 1994 and 2000 elections (see Table 5). Between 1994 and 2000 elections, the coefficients notably increased in magnitude, meaning that spatial exclusion increased among them; especially for the PRI which evidences its fast retrenchment towards the

east and northeast of the conurbated area. The change in the vote for the PRI is also the most spatially concentrated.

The PAN vote concentrated and competed with the PRI for the CA, while the PRD was the strongest in the FD. Also, the change in the vote between 1994 and 2000 was spatially autocorrelated; higher changes happened in neighboring areas to party strongholds. In this respect, the PRI vote in 2000 was the most dependent on 1994 results in nearby areas.

**Table 5**  
**Moran Spatial Autocorrelation Coefficients for the vote for each party in the 1994 and 2000 presidential elections in the MCMA**

	<b>1994</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Δ 1994-2000</b>
PAN	0.276***	0.405***	0.302***
PRD	0.121**	0.446***	0.268***
PRI	0.233***	0.503***	0.435***

\* Note: Calculated based on first-order neighborhood (contiguous units)  
 \*\* Significant at a .10 level (two-tailed test)  
 \*\*\* Significant at a .01 level (two-tailed test)

Besides the evidence of a geography of exclusion in voting behavior, spatial autocorrelation coefficients in Table 6 also provide evidence of a spatially class segregated population in the MCMA with a correlation to electoral preference. Particularly concentrated is the wealth, graduate education and higher incomes. Renters are concentrated in the FD—particularly in center of the MCMA—where properties are more expensive; home ownership is much cheaper in the CA. In all cases, social class has a markedly spatial pattern.

**Table 6**  
**Moran Spatial Autocorrelation Coefficients for socioeconomic predictors of the vote in the MCMA\***

	<b>Coefficient</b>
% of occupied rented housing units rented	0.706***
% of population aged > 18 yrs. with at least 1 year of graduate education	0.636***
% of occupied population that earn > 10 daily minimum wages	0.576***
% of housing units with drainage and access to electricity	0.571***
% of housing units with carton walls and/or other rubbish materials	0.269***
% of population aged > 15 yrs. with less than 6 years of school education	0.525***
% of occupied housing units privately owned	0.546***
% of population aged > 15 yrs. with at least 6 years of school education	0.451***
% of occupied population that earn between 2 and 3 daily minimum wages (2000)	0.229***

\* Note: Calculated based on first-order neighborhood (contiguous units)

\*\* Significant at a .05 level (two-tailed test)

\*\*\* Significant at a .01 level (two-tailed test)

Table 7 shows the results of the spatial linear regression. Some variables previously correlated to voting preferences and spatial concentration showed no significance after holding constant other variables, thus were considered not applicable to the final equations—in particular owner or renter status.<sup>15</sup> No model for any party presented problems of spatially autocorrelated residuals, meaning that social class predictors were sufficient to wash away the spatial autocorrelation present in the dependent variable (i.e. electoral results in 2000); see Table 5. In other words, electoral results and social class clusters matched spatially; both variables shared similar geographic areas.

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<sup>15</sup> Also, in the PAN and PRD equations there are a few interacting effects; graduate education with upper income. In this case, both direct effects and conditionality of class predictors were considered important as in spatial analysis different variables may share the same space and they may have simultaneous explanatory importance.

**Table 7**  
**Spatial lag regression results for PAN-PVEM coalition, PRI and PRD-6 coalition voting behavior (2000)**

	PAN	PRI	PRD
Constant	0.516***	0.225***	0.060
<b>Class Voting Variables:<sup>a</sup></b>			
% of population aged > 18 yrs. with at least 1 year of graduate education	-10.789**	n.a.	9.969**
% of occupied population that earn > 10 daily minimum wages	3.147***	n.a.	-3.272***
% of housing units with drainage and access to electricity	n.a.	-0.154**	0.355**
% of housing units with carton walls and/or other rubbish materials	n.a.	n.a.	3.940***
% of population aged > 15 yrs. with less than 6 years of school education	-1.199**	n.a.	1.485**
% of population aged > 15 yrs. with at least 6 years of school education	n.a.	0.531**	-1.725**
% of occupied population that earn between 2 and 3 daily minimum wages	n.a.	0.634***	n.a.
<b>Contextual Effects:</b>			
Spatial lag ( <i>Rho</i> )	0.017	0.029	0.034
Zone (CA or FD) <sup>b</sup>	-0.050*	-0.029**	0.042
<b>Test on Autocorrelated Residuals:</b>			
Moran I coefficient	0.000	0.008	-0.003

Note: Calculated based on first-order neighborhood (contiguous units). Unstandardized coefficients (n = 89). Acronym n.a. means not applicable for the model

<sup>a</sup> Ordered from the most to the least spatially concentrated

<sup>b</sup> Dummy variable: CA refers to the conurbated area and FD refers to the federal district. Negative values represent a better performance in the CA versus the FD

\*\*\* Significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed test)

\*\* Significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed test)

\* Significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed test)

However, the contextual variable “zone”, which is directed to measure a contextual effect based on the location of the voter -whether the voter is in the conurbated or in the federal district—showed statistical significance for the PAN and the PRI only. On the other hand, the *rho* coefficient did not show significance for any party. This finding means theoretically that there is a within-metropolitan area contextual effect operating for those two political parties. And methodologically that the spatial lag or *rho* coefficient is yet an insufficient indicator to detect the presence of significant spatial-contextual effects.

The model for the PAN shows that it performs well in areas of the city with high percentages of population with higher incomes ( $b = 3.147$ ,  $p < .01$ ), but very poorly in areas with higher numbers of graduate population ( $b = -10.789$ ,  $p < .05$ ), or in areas with the least years of school education ( $b = -1.999$ ,  $p < .05$ ). These last measures are the most important class variables for this party in the 2000 elections. Its spatial lag is not significant, meaning that the spatial clustering of its 2000 presidential votes can be explained by its social class predictors. However, there is evidence of a contextual effect operating for this party within the MCMA, even after the inclusion of the social class predictors and the spatially lagged DV or *rho* coefficient; subsequently, even though the effect is minimum, the PAN performs statistically better in the CA ( $b = -0.050$ ,  $p < .10$ ).

The model for the PRI includes three social class variables. It seems to perform moderately well in areas with lower incomes ( $b = 0.634$ ,  $p < .01$ ), with population that can read and write ( $b = 0.531$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and not well in areas with higher levels in the provision of public services such as drainage and electricity ( $b = -0.154$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The latter finding suggests that the PRI still benefits from the vote of the population in areas awaiting the provision of public services. Similarly to the PAN, the PRI spatial lag shows no statistical significance ( $rho = 0.029$ , n. s.) meaning that its vote can be explained mostly based on its social clusters. Yet, the location of the voter within the MCMA is significant; it does overperform in the conurbated area versus the FD, although the effect is also minimum ( $b = -0.029$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

The model for the PRD is perhaps the most interesting. It not only possesses the highest number of significant social class predictors, but it lacks any contextual effect.



Neither the spatial lag nor the location of the voter showed statistical significance after class predictors were considered. In other words, the geographical pattern of concentration of the PRD in the MCMA can be fully explained, statistically speaking, by social class spatial segregation.<sup>16</sup>

The PRD performs outstandingly well in areas with highly educated population ( $b = 9.969$ ,  $p < .05$ ); consider a one percent increase in the percentage of population aged > 18 years with at least one year of graduate education increases the vote for this party in almost 10%. Interestingly, it is also supported in the least educated areas ( $b = 1.485$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This party performs well in areas with poorly built housing units ( $b = 3.940$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and in areas with access to electricity and drainage ( $b = 0.355$ ,  $p < .05$ ); however, it does not do well in upper income areas ( $b = -3.272$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

A contrasting finding with previous studies is that PRD does not appear to be an interclass party as Peschard (1997) suggests for the case of the FD electorate. Rather, findings in this study detect a working class constituency, at least for the 2000 elections, and for the whole MCMA.

Finally, whether the areas had higher levels of either owned or rented housing units did not matter for any party. These variables are good indicators of spatial segregation in the MCMA. However, the property status did not show statistical significance for any party after other class predictors such as quality of the materials of the housing units, income, and education of the population were considered.

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<sup>16</sup> It must be said that zone contextual variable shows – low - statistical significance ( $p = .077$ ) if the *rho* coefficient is not included in the equation; i.e. if OLS regression versus SAM regression is utilized. Then, it follows that the two spatial effects included controlled for each other in the latter case.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

This study opened with three questions: first, is the metropolitan area of Mexico City socially and spatially segregated? The answer is affirmative. The spatial analysis shows higher levels of clustering (or segregation) for several social class indicators, especially for those representing economic affluence.<sup>17</sup> Second, are electoral results for the 2000 presidential elections related to this spatial segregation? The answer is affirmative again. Spatial regression analysis reveals this to be the case. For all parties, electoral results and the socioeconomic condition of the population in different areas of the MCMA were strongly and significantly associated. Finally, is class voting sufficient to win? The answer in this case is negative.

While supporting some of the findings in previous works, this study raises a number of distinct conclusions. The discrepancies are due to (1) the analysis of different zones (the whole metropolitan area vs. the federal district only), different (2) years in elections (2000 vs. others), (3) types of elections (presidential vs. federal or local representatives), (4) operationalizations of social class, and (5) methods and techniques (quantitative spatial analysis vs. OLS regression analysis, descriptive statistics, or qualitative research).

One main distinction is that the PRD does not seem to be a multiclass party; on the contrary, it is clearly geared toward the working class. Rather, it is the PAN that seems to have been appealing to a multi-class constituency in the 2000 elections. In this respect, there seems to be two reasons why the PAN won and the PRD and PRI lost. First, academic literature has recorded that the federal district has been a refuge for non-PRI parties since the 1960s (Peschard, 1988a; Davis and Coleman, 1982). In

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<sup>17</sup> This is evidence of "ghettos for the rich". The wealth then tends to concentrate in few individuals in space

fact, a vote of protest is argued to have been active since the mid 1950s (Davis and Coleman, 1982). As already advanced by Peschard (1997; 1988b; 1985), political reform and its effect on the development of a political culture might have been an important factor for voting behavior in this metropolitan area. Inevitably, the defeat of the PRI was already happening in the 1990's nationwide, and very quickly—particularly in urban areas (Vilalta, 2004).

But in this particular respect, why did metropolitan voters prefer the PAN over the PRD? Especially when we consider that the PRD was governing the FD in 2000. The reason is that the PAN candidate attracted a wide variety of constituents across the metropolitan area; not only class voters. Spatial statistics in this work show that the PAN was the most spatially concentrated party in the 1994 elections, and the least spatially concentrated in the 2000 elections. The PAN spatially spread over the MCMA due to its stronger popular candidate Vicente Fox. The MCMA electorate preferred the PAN candidate, since he was more charismatic than Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, the PRD candidate. In other words, the PAN did not just capitalize on social class; rather, it attracted a considerable number of voters in both sides of the metropolitan area. Although, it should be restated that it performed slightly but statistically better in the conurbated area.

On the other hand, the PRD attracted class voters from mainly working class areas. Under this perspective, it did not have all the electorate necessary to win in 2000. Locality was not an issue lower income residents are widely spread across the metropolitan area. Thus it really did not make any difference whether the voter was poor and/or a resident in the PRD's federal district or the PAN-PRI conurbated area.

The PRI showed to have attracted class voters as well. It found more support in low-middle income class areas, and between 1994 and 2000 it retrenched to the less urbanized areas of the northeast and east of the metropolitan area. The elections results confirmed that the class electorate in the conurbated area was not large enough to win.

Social class, spatial segregation and location of the voter findings in this study are informative but do not clarify everything about the PAN victory over the PRD and the PRI. To attain a better understanding, these findings should be linked to other theoretical angles that expands on the political and historical context of the MCMA— Particularly, the vote of protest.

In this respect, many believe that the abrupt decay of the PRI was fueled by the economic recession of 1995 and the generalized anger with structural corruption (Blum, 1997; Lawson, 1997). In 1994 the economy was working well and the public opinion of the PRI president, Salinas de Gortari, was somewhat acceptable; however, one year later Mexico lost almost 7% of its GDP, and the PRI support in the capital rapidly disintegrated.

This vote of protest against the PRI has already been mentioned in other studies (Crespo, 1996; Tarres, 1996; Molinar and Valdes, 1987). I agree with Knutsen and Scarbrough (1995) in that past political conflicts help create new political values; thus new electoral preferences. The 2000 presidential elections were critical in that they happened in a period of economic crisis and strong political dissatisfaction—against the PRI. I infer MCMA voter's judgment on the economic and political situation was crucial for the defeat of the PRI.

Still, class voting is a useful explanatory device since Mexico City is a city where the working class represents the vast majority of the electorate, spatial segregation is evident, and heated political confrontation exists; however, voters in 2000 behaved rejecting the PRI and supporting the most likely Non-PRI candidate; decisions which were not only class based (Key, 1955; Leithner, 1997). The PRI and the PRD were only capable to retain and attract based on social class; but again, this was not enough to win. It follows that political parties exploiting the idea of class confrontation not only play with fire but may not attract the necessary votes to win.

In conclusion, social class is a useful theoretical angle to understand electoral behavior in new democracies in polarized urban areas. Yet, it cannot fully predict electoral outcomes (Manza, Hout y Brooks, 1995). If electoral geography is to advance, new theoretical perspectives must either go beyond the idea of social class, look for new types of social divisions in our politically divided societies (Kriesi, 1998), or change our general expectation that classic socioeconomic and political variables will continue to correlate the way we used to theorize.

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