POLITICS AT HOME ABROAD: THE ENGAGEMENT OF MEXICAN MIGRANTS IN THEIR HOME TOWNS

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the impact that migration has on the political dynamics of sending municipalities. The project shows that at the local level, migrants engage socially and politically in their communities of origin and at times powerfully impact political dynamics there: both from abroad and upon their return. Instead of conducting a traditional comparison of nation-states, the focus is on subnational political change in communities that are dramatically shaped by the economic fluctuations and political idiosyncrasies of places across an increasingly fortified border. Thus, the project engages with some of the most enduring questions of comparative politics from a more bottom-up and transnational perspective.

The dissertation shows that migrant hometown political engagement results in a range of different political outcomes in migrant sending municipalities. To identify and explain this variation, the dissertation combines the ethnographic study of a dozen municipalities across Mexico with the statistical analysis of an original survey of municipal governments in Oaxaca and a Mexico-wide database measuring the geographic distribution of migrant collective remittance flows. Cases for qualitative analysis were selected in a diversity of cultural and political contexts within Mexico, including autonomous indigenous communities governed by customary law, as well as in states governed by each of the three major political parties in the country.

The findings challenge the arguments of those who claim that through contact with the US political system and culture, migrants develop more democratic attitudes and behaviors such that when
they engage politically back home, they bring democracy with them—not only do they remit dollars, they remit democracy. While migration experience does shape the identities and behaviors of migrant political actors, this experience is by no means monolithic. The economic and social importance of migration does often help migrant political actors to gain influence back home, and it can serve as a pathway to power for historically excluded social groups. However, it has proven much more difficult for this influence to translate into fundamental changes in the way that politics are done.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is often said that the best dissertation is a done dissertation. I am pleased I can finally say that about mine, though I never did heed the advice implied by those words. When I began working on my Ph.D. seven years ago my plan was to study indigenous politics throughout Latin America. During the summer after my first year, I had an opportunity to travel to Oaxaca as a research assistant to my advisor, Todd Eisenstadt, to collect data for his project on law and society in indigenous Oaxaca. While visiting a remote Mixtec indigenous municipality to study women’s participation in autonomous indigenous community assemblies, I was surprised to find that municipal politics was dominated by a group of migrants who had returned home after many years working in Northern Mexico and the United States. When I returned to American University after that summer, I was compelled to understand why this occurred, the extent to which this also occurred in other high-migration towns, and what difference it made. Since that first field research trip six years ago through the completion of this dissertation, the many debts I have accumulated are too many to adequately acknowledge. However, those who are deterred from trying by the likelihood of falling short of their goals, rarely complete dissertations in the first place. So shall it be with these acknowledgements.

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CHAPTER 1
ABROAD AT HOME: MIGRATION AND HOMETOWN POLITICS IN MEXICO

1. INTRODUCTION

We are in the midst of a new wave of world migration. The increasing interconnectedness of financial and commercial transactions across the globe that have contributed to a rapid increase in the flow of people as laborers across borders, often despite efforts by migrant-receiving countries to restrict and control these flows. Labor migrants travel from their homes, typically in developing countries, in search of better economic opportunities, or sometimes bare survival, in other developing countries of the “South” and to industrialized countries of the “North.”

Remittances from migration are a vital source of income for many communities in Latin America and in other migrant sending places around the world. The economic importance of migration at the nation-state level is significant, and it has been growing consistently over the past decade. Among all developing countries, remittances have increased by close to a factor of six since 1995. In Latin America, the increase has been slightly lower over this period, at a still striking factor of 4.4 (WB 2011, author calculations). The total value of remittances sent to families in Mexico increased from less than $4 billion in 1995 to a peak of $27 billion in 2007, before declining to about $21 billion in 2010 in the wake of the Great Recession and only slightly rebounding since then (see Figure 1.1).

In 2005, Mexican migrants organized in the US and their political allies in Mexico achieved the right to vote in presidential elections, and over the past two decades, migrants have receive increasing attention and support from the Mexican state (e.g., Ayón 2010; Smith and Bakker 2008). Despite high expectations of transnational migrant influence in Mexican national politics, however, Mexican immigrants living in the US participated at very low rates in the 2006 presidential election and the long expected and much hyped power of the emerging transnational migrant political class seemed to many
analysts to end in a fizzle with only 33,221 votes being cast (Ayón 2010, 245; IFE 2006). The migrant vote in 2012 was only slightly higher, at 40,714 (IFE 2012). There is reason to expect that migrant influence at the national level—where remittances make up less than 3 percent of GDP—would be relatively marginal. In several Mexican states, however, remittances make up more than 15% of gross state product, and variation in migration intensity is even greater at the municipal level. Based on this logic, this dissertation examines the political impact of migration at the subnational level.

The United States is the top immigrant-receiving country in the world, with close to 43 million immigrants, and Mexico is the top emigrant-sending country, with 11.9 million of its nationals living
abroad—97 percent of whom reside in the United States (WB 2011). Remittances sent by migrants to the families and communities they leave behind constitute a growing portion of global financial flows, exceeding foreign direct investment and official development aid for many developing countries. The $22.4 billion of remittances sent to Mexico in 2012, exceeded all sources of foreign exchange except for rents from petroleum (BANIXICO 2013). While many countries receive and send far greater portions of their populations, the US and Mexico constitute by far the world's most traveled immigration corridor. Even still, at 2.5% of GDP, remittances are of relatively marginal importance to the Mexican macro-economy. In the most remittance-dependent countries, such as Tajikistan and Nepal (35% and 28% of GDP, respectively), we would expect the nation-wide social and political impacts of migration to be considerably more pronounced, all else being equal (MPI 2011).

However, it may be that this migration wave, at least with respect to Mexico-US migration, has crested, as the net flow between the two countries has fallen to zero (Passel, D’Vera Cohn, and Ana 2012). In the wake of the Great Recession and the subsequent “Lesser Depression”,¹ the number of migrants returning to Mexico has grown to match the shrinking number of new migrants crossing into the US. This shift has likely been caused by a range of factors, a full accounting of which if beyond the scope of this project. However, it is likely that the estimated 1.4 million Mexican migrants who returned home from the US between 2005 and 2010 are having significant effects on the social and political dynamics of their home towns. The uniqueness of the period in which the field research for this project was conducted (2007-2010) makes it risky to generalize the findings—particularly with respect to the magnitude of the impacts of return migration—to more “normal” times. However, the coincidence of the data collection with the growing return migration flow to Mexico may provide one of the first opportunities to understand the impacts of these new dynamics.

¹ The latter was coined by Nobel Prize winning economist and New York Times op-ed columnist, Paul Krugman to refer to the long period of economic stagnation and high unemployment that has persisted well after the end of the recession of 2007-2008.
In some ways the current wave of world migration is qualitatively different from past waves. With improved communications technologies, increased ease of long-distance travel and other factors associated with globalization, migrants today are able to travel back and forth and can keep in touch with family and community members in their home towns with much greater ease and lower relative cost than their counterparts in the past. Some scholars, however, are skeptical of the qualitative newness of the current wave of international migration, particularly with respect to the question of whether patterns of international migration and social identity can be correctly described as transnational (see Glick-Schiller and Levitt 2006; Waldinger and FitzGerald 2004). All of this said, it is clear that, new or not, the proximity of migrant sending and receiving dyads like the US and Mexico, coupled with greater ease of international financial transactions (namely, the sending of remittances), cheaper travel, and improved communications technologies, have created new opportunities for migrants to send money to family members and communities of origin, to make return trips, and to continue to be engaged in the public life of their community with greater intensity than was possible 100 years ago.

The scope and scale of the present wave of global migration pose many challenges to both sending and receiving states and societies, and according to some significantly weakens state autonomy (see Smith and Guarnizo 1998). Some of these challenges and opportunities are similar to those faced by sending and receiving states in the past. During past centuries, as now, emigration often functioned as an outlet for potentially explosive social and economic pressure, as emigration provided an option for the “poor and huddled masses,” as well as persecuted political dissidents and religious minorities, to leave their countries rather than to stay and challenge the dominant political groups there (Délano 2011; FitzGerald 2009; Hirschman 1970). Furthermore, national elites have long emigrated to other countries for study, commerce or as political exiles, only to return as influential leaders of their home societies. Revolutionary and independence leaders from Ho Chi Minh and Pol Pot to Gandhi and José Martí were

\[\text{However, the increasingly fortified US-Mexico border and the resultant need for undocumented migrants to hire a person smuggler, or coyote, to get across the border arguably erase most of the benefits of improved transportation. Furthermore, the recent explosion of migrant kidnappings and violence across Mexico, particularly in the border states, has increased the non-financial costs of international migration even further.}\]
educated or spent considerable amounts of time outside of their countries of origin before returning home to lead their movements. Finally, many members of Latin America's neoliberal, technocratic elite that came to political power in the 1980s and 1990s were educated in the United States (Centeno 1994).

Hence, cross-border political activity at the elite level has consistently been a feature of the modern world. Even still, many scholars of migrant transnationalism argue that the current wave of migration is qualitatively or quantitatively unique, requiring a re-conceptualization of such classical social scientific categories as “citizenship” and “nationalism” (e.g., Glick-Shiller, Bash, and Szaton 1992; Levitt 1998; Smith 2006). Others retort, however, that for the most part, such intense trans-border relationships between emigrants and their home states and communities are not historically new, nor do they require new theoretical concepts (e.g., FitzGerald 2008; Waldinger and FitzGerald 2004). First, past waves of international migration, such as the transatlantic wave of the late 19th century and early 20th century, were often characterized by extensive state-diaspora relations (FitzGerald 2006a; Smith 2003). Second, there is no need to develop new “transnational” sociological concepts to effectively analyze what are perhaps the quintessential institutions highlighted in the current wave of Mexican migration to the US—hometown associations (HTAs) (FitzGerald 2008, 146).

An important exception to the rule that the post-1965 wave of Mexican migration to the US is not particularly unique is that the state has come to legally recognize dual-nationality and “emigrant citizenship,” particularly the “active promotion of dual nationality and dual nationalism” (FitzGerald 2006b, 98). An important feature of the official granting of rights to diaspora communities is the engagement with poor and middle income migrants, both while they are still abroad and upon their return home. The engagement and influence of “non-elite” migrants—as opposed to national elites—as social and political actors in their countries and communities of origin would seem to be both historically new and understudied by political scientists.  

3 However, as Fitzgerald (2008) points out with the Mexican case, though trans-border Mexican HTAs in places like Los Angeles and Chicago are a new and growing phenomenon, migrants have long organized HTAs with other members of their communities in domestic urban centers such as Guadalajara, León and Mexico City.
communities this dissertation improves our understanding of how “non-elite” migrants have become influential in their hometown politics, and what difference this has made.

2. CULTURAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF POLITICAL CHANGE

To paraphrase Guillermo O'Donnell, social theorists since Plato and Aristotle have argued that the type of political system a society has is influenced, if not determined, by its socioeconomic structure (O'Donnell 1973, 1). Accordingly, changes in socioeconomic structures, whether exogenously or endogenously driven, should lead to changes in political systems, all else being equal. Empirically oriented political and social analysts at least since Marx and Weber have constructed and tested theories about how the socioeconomic structure (e.g., Moore 1966; Wallerstein 1974), culture (e.g., Almond and Verba 1963; Inglehart and Baker 2000; Putnam 1994) and institutional factors (Huntington 1968; North 1981; Pierson 2002; Skocpol 1979) explain the direction and nature of political development, and to answer Lasswell's classic question of “who gets what, when, how?” (1958).

Most of these studies of political development have focused their attention on what happens at the level of national-states, but there is increasing focus among political scientists on subnational dynamics. At one level, social and political actors in the peripheral hinterlands of countries—far away from national and even state capitals—can have powerful causal effects on development at the level of national political systems. Furthermore, analyses of the political and social development of small communities can produce fruitful theoretical insights in their own right by permitting a comparative subnational analysis to

Hence, the question is begged: What makes these organizations different when they are formed in different countries?

4 Eisenstadt, for instance, argues that the groundwork for Mexico's transition to democracy “was laid locally”, where opposition political parties first successfully mobilized to carve out spaces of participation regionally (2004, 1-2).
understand how local political actors interact with each other and with external state and federal actors in response to exogenous socioeconomic and political evolutions, revolutions and other shocks.\(^5\)

The present study fits into the latter group. The dissertation addresses three separate interrelated questions with important implications for subnational democratization. First, why do migrants from some places organize in the US to engage collectively in the public life of their hometowns, while those from many other places do not? Having a high migration rate, though important, is not a sufficient to account for the observed variation. Second, do the backgrounds and pathways to power of migrant political actors differ from those of non-migrant political actors? Do migrant mayors win office with the support of distinct and autonomous bases of social power, or is their new social and economic status merely coopted by prevailing elite groups? Finally, I ask if migrant home town participation—both through contributions to public works, an increased civil society presence, and through direct political power—enhances political competition and democratic governance at the subnational level in Mexico.

This study adds to our understanding of the empirical realities surrounding migration and hometown politics by focusing on how municipal political systems in Mexico evolve in the face of the many challenges and opportunities posed by emigration and return migration. The approach used analyzes the agency and interaction of different actors—non-migrants, migrants who have returned home, and migrants who remain abroad—who at times directly or indirectly impact the politics of their home towns. Through a mixed-method examination of these three questions, this study adds to our understanding of the empirical realities surrounding migration and hometown politics by focusing on how municipal political systems in Mexico evolve in the face of the many challenges and opportunities posed by emigration. The agent-centered theoretical model developed in Chapter 3 considers how different actors within the municipal political space interact with each other when faced with the major social and economic changes brought about by migration, and how this interaction impacts the broader political system. It is hoped that this model might “travel” both geographically—to help explain how migration...

\(^5\) Scholars like Migdal (1988); Scott (1976) and, more recently, Snyder (2001) use this approach.
effects politics in other countries—as well as conceptually—to generate testable hypotheses concerning the impact of social and economic changes other than migration on local political systems. Before outlining the main currents of research to which this study contributes, summarizing the hypotheses, discussing the methodology and case selection, and outlining the plan of the dissertation, I will now briefly discuss the broader political and economic context in Mexico.

3. THE BROADER CONTEXT IN MEXICO

Mexico has undergone at least three profound changes over the past three decades. Economically, the country has shifted from a model of economic development characterized by a centralized, state-led import substitution model to a neoliberal model, characterized by an opening of the economy to trade and capital flows. As part of the neoliberal reforms inspired by the Washington Consensus, over the course of the 1990s, the distribution of federal funds was decentralized, with significant portions of revenues being channeled directly to municipal governments. Politically, the country has undergone a protracted process of democratization, including a significant devolution of power to subnational political entities. The latter has been characterized by a significant weakening of the institution of the presidency, and a concomitant strengthening of the national legislature and the concentration power in the hands of the governors, but has also included an increase of guaranteed funds to municipal governments (Hernández-Díaz and Juan Martínez 2007). Other important aspects of this political opening have included a true pluralization of political actors within and across states, with a gradual shift from the single-party hegemony of the PRI to a system of multi-party competition. Finally, a noteworthy increase in international migration rates coincided with these economic and political transitions, particularly over the course of the 1990s and the beginning of the new millennium. These three processes, neoliberal economic reforms, political opening,
and increased migration have not only roughly coincided temporally, but have arguably had mutual causal impacts on one another.

Among other causes, the increase of mass migration to the United States and the emergence of numerous new migrant-sending states, particularly in Mexico's indigenous south, was influenced by changes in the rural political economy brought about by neoliberal economic policies such as those included in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). For instance, the removal of economic supports to the countryside (which preceded NAFTA but accelerated after its passage) and the elimination of Article 127 of the Mexican Constitution in 1992 allowing for the privatization of ejido and communal lands, removed incentives for peasants to continue working in small scale and subsistence agriculture, or in many cases, made this economically untenable. More global economic phenomena, such as the fall in the price of coffee, have also been argued to be integrally related to the rapid increase of migration from rural Mexico—particularly in states such as Oaxaca, which has a relatively more recent history of high out migration (Fox and Rivera-Salgado 2004; Lewis and Runsten 2008).

Mexico's political democratization at the national level and the devolution of power to governors and mayors are other important contextual elements that must be considered when seeking to understand the impact of migration on sending community politics. Governors in post-democratic transition Mexico have been described as the new presidents—or the new monarchs, referring to the fact that national-level democratization does not necessarily imply greater political opening or democratic consolidation at the subnational level (Gibson 2005, 2013; Giraudy 2009). As Gibson has theorized, the subnational dynamics that emerge with political opening and democratization at the national level are not necessarily democratic, and under certain conditions we might expect to see persistent or increasing authoritarianism subnationally. This is because national leaders of new democracies have incentives to maintain a degree of political stability throughout the country, and may be willing to tolerate authoritarian practices and re-

6 Indeed, rural population growth has led to significant pressure on limited tracts of communal land, which generation after generation were unable to provide sufficient produce to support small scale, subsistence-based livelihoods (see Lewis 2002).
centralizations of power at the state or municipal level. Moreover, we would be wise not to assume liberal
democratic motivations of Mexico's (or any country's) national political leadership. Simply because a
group of political actors come to power through a democratic transition, and democracy is generally
accepted as the “only game in town” at the national level (Linz and Stepan 1996), it does not follow that
the same leaders would expend political capital to promote greater democracy at state or municipal levels
unless they find it to be politically expedient.

The weakening power of the Mexican central government, and particularly of the PRI-corporatist
state, has opened up space at the subnational level for the emergence of new modes of interest
aggregation and articulation. Studies have focused on the new institutions and organizations that have
emerged in Mexico to fill the vacuum left by the partial dismantling of the traditional corporatist system
of interest articulation and aggregation. There is much debate about what the results of neoliberal
economic reforms and increased globalization have been for political opening (Centeno 1994; Eisenstadt

Eisenstadt's work demonstrates how the weakening of the centralized control of the PRI over
local political contests allowed for a gradual strengthening of opposition parties, while further
undercutting the centralized control of the President over the country and over his own party members at
the state level, all of which help to explain the historic victory of the opposition PAN candidate, Vicente
Fox Quesada, in the 2000 election. The upshot, for Mexican politics generally, and the opposition to the
PRI specifically, has been that the weakened central authority of the presidency, and of federal political
institutions generally, has undercut the governing efficacy of two successive PAN presidents. The advent
of multiparty competition in Mexico has, among other things, allowed the country's federalist political
structure and its separation of powers system to become truly manifest.

Faced with a weakening of the center, and increased party competition, governors and mayors
have been presented with the challenge of finding new ways to represent their constituencies to gain and

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7 Similarly, nobles and landed gentry in early modern England that came to form the foundation of parliamentary
democracy in that country were motivated by economic and class interests, not democratic ideals (Moore 1966).
preserve political support and legitimacy. Snyder (2001) develops a typology of the different forms of state-level re-regulation of the coffee sector after neoliberal-inspired privatization and deregulation at the national level (2001, 43). As he finds, the withdrawal of the dominant PRI-state run coffee company, INMECAFE, spurred the development of a variety of strategies of re-regulation of the coffee sector by state governors and political entrepreneurs. The model presented by Snyder outlines different modes of state-society relations that have emerged in the coffee sector, but the study has implications for various aspects of state-society relations, the different ways in which state political actors respond to the demands of civil society, how citizens manage to organize to get their interests represented by state actors and, importantly, how these dynamics all vary subnationally.

This dissertation engages with all-important questions concerning the nature of the response of subnational state actors to respond to the emergence of migrants as an organized social group and political constituency. I seek to understand how the interests of these emergent migrant actors find representation in the context of the decline of PRI-dominated corporatism. In what places and under what conditions have migrant interest been aggregated in autonomous, pluralistic organizations, what Snyder calls “participatory policy frameworks”? That is, when and where has national-level democratization led to the emergence of autonomous and organized civil society organizations and other pluralistic mechanisms to improve the accountability of elected and appointed officials? When have state-led neocorporatist arrangements emerged, and when have new state or local-level exclusionary clientelistic and elite-driven networks of patronage-based representation emerged? Finally, what explains variation in the ways in which new organized migrant social and political actors are relating to state-governments? These questions about the types of new institutional mechanisms of interest aggregation and articulation that have emerged as a result of increased political competition touch on enduring questions of democratic consolidation. In the terms of North and his colleagues (2009), I consider the degree to which the migrants have “limited” or “open” access to state institutions, identify what factors explain observed variations, and assess how the type of access affects municipal political structures.
An enduring feature of local politics in Mexico is a tendency toward personalistic, discretionary rule by relatively closed groups of local elites and strong-men (and in rare cases women). Such local and regional leaders are often referred to as *caciques*, *caudillos*, or, in sub-Saharan Africa, as big men (Knight and Pansters 2005). In post-Revolutionary Mexico, regional *caciques* were often successfully incorporated into the structure of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), though some argue that local fiefdoms retained significant autonomy from the party bosses, while certainly making use of their party connections (and of the party's dependency on them to mobilize votes) to retain political control in their local areas of influence (see Quintana 2010). Despite its internal personalism—for example, the centrality of *camarillas*—in determining the success or failure of an individual's political career—the PRI was hugely successful in institutionalizing political competition and representation, albeit for a relatively constrained group of party faithful.

One of the upshots of democratization, decentralization of state power, and increased party competition, has been an increase in party switching, known as chaquetismo, or *jacket-ism*, as politicians increasingly “change” the color of their jackets. This phenomenon seems to have been particularly intense at the local level, where the institutionalization of political competition and governance have been weaker and politics is more personalistic. The breaking of the PRI hegemonic party system may have blown the lid off of the country's long-prevalent tendency towards personalistic politics, and despite two decades of intense political competition, the institutionalized dominant-party system of the PRI has yet to be replaced by a stable, programmatic multiparty system (see Kitschelt et al. 2010; Mainwaring and Scully 1995, on the topic of party system institutionalization).

These general trends in Mexican politics are present in the municipal cases examined in this study. Importantly, however, there is great variation across the country and within states in terms of the degree and nature of political competition and the way in which this competition is (and has been) channeled through political institutions at the state and local level. This dissertation sheds light on the

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8 Hierarchically stratified, personalistic political networks.
broader topic of Mexico's uneven democratic transition by explaining the variety of ways in which migrants have been incorporated as social and political actors in their municipalities and states of origin upon their return and from abroad.

4. MIGRATION AND SENDING COMMUNITIES

Policy debates surrounding immigration in receiving countries like the United States are ideologically charged and often divisive. The demographic and cultural changes associated with immigration place new demands on the political systems of receiving places, particularly at the local level where the impacts are most intense (see Varsanyi 2010). Questions about the impacts on local political and social systems of the places left behind by migrants have received less attention, particularly in the political science literature. Large scale and historic out-migrations constitute striking sociological and economic changes for sending communities around the world, and accordingly have the potential to generate a range of new political dynamics. The local political actors who stay behind confront new challenges and take advantage of new political opportunities presented by changing economic and social realities. Emigration puts immense stress on local social systems, particularly the family. At the same time, however, many communities would effectively cease to exist if not for the remittances sent home by migrants.

On the political level, powerful groups might be benefited when emigration reduces destabilizing underemployment or overpopulation, or when potential political rivals and potential rebels are the ones who choose to (or are forced to) emigrate. On the other hand, however, if migrants gain financial, social and political capital and become politically active when abroad, they might present a greater challenge to prevailing authorities in their home towns than if they had never left in the first place. Although this is a
theoretical possibility, sometimes prevailing political groups mobilize or co-opt emerging migrant political and social leaders to help shore up their own legitimacy.

Much research has sought to answer questions about the relative social and economic costs and benefits of migration on origin communities, though no scholarly consensus has been reached (see Binford 2003; Cohen 2004; Díaz-Briquets 1991). The debate between those who view migration as dependency-generating and those who view it as development-enhancing may be edified by also considering how migration impacts institutional and political development. As suggested by some researchers who have engaged with this debate (such as VanWey, Tucker, and McConnell 2005), variations in the development-enhancing impact of migrant remittances might be explained by the quality of local institutions to channel remittances to collectively beneficial and productive ends.

Without directly addressing the dependency – development debate, a growing body of research among sociologists and political scientists has begun to ask how remittance flows, migrant civil society organizations, individual migrant political actors and, generally, processes of “transnationalism from below,” affect political institutions and the quality of governance in sending communities (e.g., Burgess 2010, 2012; Castro Neira 2009; Duquette 2011; Fox 2007a; Fox and Bada 2008; Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller 2003; Jiménez 2008; Kearney 1996; Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow 2010; Pfutze 2012; Portes, Escobar, and Walton Radford 2007; Smith and Bakker 2008; Smith 2006). Important comparative research has also been done on the absentee voting of U.S.-based migrants in national elections (e.g., Lieber 2010; Suro and Escobar 2006) and the process through which national-states have incorporated and institutionalized their relationships with their diaspora communities (e.g., Délano 2011; FitzGerald 2009; Iskander 2010). In addition, an abundance of research has been conducted on the growth of migrant civil society, the limits and potential of collective remittances and the emergence of transnational migrants as rights-demanding political subjects at the state and national level in Mexico (see Garcia-Zamora, Moctezuma Longoria, and others at the Academic Unit on Development Studies at the Autonomous University of Zacatecas, and its journal Migracion y Desarrollo).
Much of the research that has explicitly focused on the impacts of transnational migrant organizations on home community politics in Mexico has consisted of “thick descriptions” of a limited number of cases (e.g., Castro Neira 2009; Cohen 1999; Smith and Bakker 2008; Smith 2006; Stuart and Kearney 1981). The contextual empirical detail of much of this scholarship is impressive and of great value. It has elucidated important cases where transnational migrants and their organizations have had powerful impacts on local politics in high migration communities in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America (Bakker and Smith 2003; Besserer 1999, 2003; Orozco 2007; Ramírez Romero 2003; Smith and Bakker 2005, 2008). By focusing research on well-organized and mobilized transnational organizations and the communities where such organizations are involved in local public affairs, one lacks the comparative leverage necessary to account for the emergence of mobilized and engaged migrants. By selecting cases on the dependent variable of high migrant influence, one cannot definitively conclude that the changes would not have occurred in the absence of mobilized migrants (see Geddes 2003). It may be that opportunities for the emergence and empowerment of civil society and organized opposition groups have increased in general, and, accordingly, any observed increase in civil society activity or political competition may not be causally related to migration.

Goodman and Hiskey (2008) critique much of the literature on migrant sending community politics because of the problems of selection bias and the inherent limits of single case studies and other small-N analyses. Contrary to suggestions of many scholars of migrant civil society, they find that citizens left behind in high-migration communities in Mexico are less engaged in national politics than those in low-migration locales. This finding is consistent with scholarship that has theorized that emigration functions as a safety valve, releasing population pressure and helping authoritarian elites guard against popular and peasant revolts, and that it can accordingly weaken democracy (see Ahmed 2012; FitzGerald 2009; Hirschman 1970; Wright 2009).

Similar to Goodman and Hiskey, I move beyond the sole focus on political dynamics in places with highly participatory individual or organized migrants. The quantitative portions of the dissertation include representative samples of municipal cases across the country and of municipal governments in the
state of Oaxaca to identify the causes of migrant political power and compare migrant mayors to their non-migrant counterparts. The cases examined for the qualitative portions of the study focus attention on the more constrained universe of high migration places, but vary considerably in terms of their level and type of migrant engagement and the impacts of this engagement on local political systems.

This study complements the historical accounts of how federal, state and municipal governments manage migration (e.g., Délano 2011; FitzGerald 2009; Iskander 2010) by analyzing a cross-section of cases to determine the ways in which prevailing political actors and institutions respond to migration, generally, and organized transnational and return migrant actors, specifically. By focusing squarely on the interactions between different political actors—migrant and non-migrant and at the federal, state and local levels—I am able to develop and test a range of theoretical hypotheses about the causes and consequences of migrant hometown engagement. To fully understand how and why migrants become involved in hometown public affairs—as philanthropists, as politicians, as social movement leaders—it is necessary to consider how agents of federal and state-governments support, coopt and/or suppress the activities of migrant-based groups and municipal governments.

To analyze the processes through which migrants become political and social actors in their home towns—and particularly to answer questions as to if and how migration experience constitutes a pathway to local political power in Mexico—I look to classic literatures on interest aggregation and articulation as well as elite theory. I examine the research questions of the dissertation in the wake of Mexico's economic and political transitions, including decentralization, neoliberal economic reforms, and a considerable weakening of federal-level state corporatism. Combined with other factors, I find that the type of state-government engagement with migrants helps to explain the intensity of migrant civil society participation from abroad, the likelihood of migrant political success upon return, and the nature of migrant influence on municipal political structures.

As discussed above, this dissertation contributes to a growing scholarly debate about whether migration generally—and migrant political and social actors specifically—improve the quality of democracy in sending places. Much of the research that has asked about the democratizing or justice-
enhancing impact of migrants on the politics of sending places in Mexico has drawn optimistic conclusions (e.g., Burgess 2010, 2012; Jiménez 2008; Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow 2010). Fox and Bada's article (2008) in some sense finds the same thing, but is much less celebratory about the results. That said, even if one is confident that migrants have been a catalyst for political change in these paradigmatic cases, it is valuable to also consider communities where high migration rates do not lead to the development of an engaged migrant civil society and in which return or transnational migrants have little direct impact on their home communities. This is particularly important to test the Hirschmanian theory that migration can indirectly weaken local-level democracy by releasing social and political pressure and making it easier for authoritarian groups to retain social control. Following Hirschman (1970), when a migration option exists (and this option becomes more likely the longer people from a given community have been migrating—see Massey 2005), people can demonstrate their disapproval of the current power structure of the polity by “voting with their feet.” This may tend to have a democracy-weakening impact simply because, if these people are voting with their feet, that means they are not voting at the ballot box. Analogous to 'brain drain', this draining of potentially motivated and energetic groups and individuals, who might otherwise have challenged the hegemony of dominant political groups in a community, is expected to have negative consequences for democratic political development.

5. WHY DO MIGRANTS ORGANIZE, HOW DO THEY COME TO POWER AND WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

In this section I briefly outline the key hypotheses and findings with respect to each of the three research questions empirically examined in this dissertation. First, why do migrants from some places form organizations and contribute money to public works in their hometowns, while those from many other places do not? Second, how do migrants gain elected office locally and become influential political
actors back home? Finally, how does the engagement of migrant political actors impact the political structure of sending communities?

5.1. Why Do Migrants Organize Clubs and Why Do They Contribute to Public Works Back Home?

This question is examined in Chapter 4 of the dissertation. In this chapter I identify the correlates of migrant collective contributions to public good in their home communities through the Mexican government's 3x1 Program for Migrants. There are several broad hypotheses derived from the literature that I develop and test using multivariate statistical analysis of a municipal-level, nation-wide database. The hypotheses are discussed in detail in the chapter, but I briefly outline them here.

In general, I argue that migrant collective remittances—and their distribution across Mexican municipalities—are influenced by the financial and organizational capacity of migrants in the US and sending municipalities to support projects and the motivation of migrants to support their communities from abroad. Previous research suggests that migrant associations tend to be formed by migrants from rural locales, from states with longer migration histories, and by members of communities that are more settled and integrated into the US. In addition, as Alarcón (2002) argues, the engagement of state governments and the Mexican consulates in the US with migrant communities are often key factors explaining the emergence of migrant associations.

My analysis shows that migrant collective contributions to public works are less likely in municipalities with high-poverty, but less likely in municipalities with high per-capita incomes. Municipalities located in states with more federations of hometown associations (HTAs) established in the US, and those in states and municipalities with deeper historical roots as exporters of migrants were also more likely to benefit from projects, as were more Catholic municipalities. On the political level, I find that municipalities and municipalities in states where the National Action Party (PAN) was stronger were more likely to benefit, as were those whose mayors were in the same party as the governors of their states.
While the aggregate nature of the data analyzed in Chapter 4 limits some of the inferences that can be drawn about individual-level determinants of migrant trans-border collective action, due to the dangers of ecological fallacy, the chief contributions of the analysis lie in the comprehensive empirical picture of the political and economic geography of migrant hometown participation that they provide. Subsequent chapters focus on the agency of individual actors to identify the causal processes at play and to account for variations in the modes of transnational and return migrant engagement and the range of impacts of this engagement has on sending-municipality politics.

5.2. Political Trajectories of Migrant Mayors in Oaxaca

The broad theoretical motivation of this project, as alluded to above, is to examine how the socioeconomic phenomenon of mass migration affects municipal political systems. Structuralist theories expect that institutional political power roughly mirrors socioeconomic power, as the dominant class is able to translate its economic power more or less directly into political power. Accordingly, one would expect return migrants—as well as migrant households and social groups who have successfully forged alliances with migrant-based organizations—to hold a disproportionate share of municipal political power in places with more migration and with greater economic dependency on migrant remittances.

However, I argue that socioeconomic factors are not sufficient to account for variation in migrant political power. In Chapter 5 I seek to account for the mechanisms through which migrant economic weight might is translated into political power, something that is particularly important to identify in cases like those studied here in which the emergent social actors of interest do not have the luxury of living continuously in the polity they seek to influence. I hypothesize that migrants are able to bridge this gap through their participation in trans-border migrant civil society organizations and other MBOs, but surprisingly find that the migrants are not more likely to be mayors in municipalities with associated migrant civil society groups. Coupled with a counterintuitive finding that migrants are less likely to be mayors where migrants as a group have retained some voting rights after migrating, the evidence suggests
that prevailing political authorities have been just as successful at securing the support of organized migrants as have migrants.

Another mechanism through which migrant actors—individual and collective—might transfer their economic power into political power is through alliances with government or opposition political actors in their home communities or states. Indeed, there are cases where prevailing political elites have managed to retain power in the face of the major social and economic changes brought by migration by incorporating migrant leaders into their governing coalitions. Though potentially destabilizing to individuals and groups that dominate local politics in rural Mexico, some politicians find ways to take advantage of the social status and economic power of migrants to shore up their own grip on power. I find some evidence that migrant mayors are elected in less PRI-friendly municipalities, consistent with findings that the PRI is much less likely to benefit from the 3x1 program, though with democracy-enhancing implications in a state dominated by the PRI for 81 years.

Finally, I ask whether the election of migrant mayors opens access to non-elite social groups that have traditionally been excluded from political representation. I find that migrants who come to power in Oaxaca improve the descriptive representation of often excluded socioeconomic groups, specifically peasants and the less educated.

Thus, on the one hand, the fact that migration experience seems to facilitate the empowerment of an underrepresented social group within the municipal social field, at the level of descriptive political representation the success of migrant political actors is democratizing. At the same time, however, the quantitative evidence in Oaxaca suggests that migrant political actors are no more likely to support the political opposition and that prevailing political groups may have succeeded in limiting the politicization of potentially adversarial migrants by protecting their rights, such as voting.

This finding is particularly noteworthy given the fact that much of the qualitative research on migrant hometown political engagement (e.g., Besserer 1999, 2003; Castro Neira 2009; Ramirez Romero 2003; Smith 2006)—including my own presented in Chapter 6—suggests that migrants are a natural constituency of the political opposition, and democratize their home communities by displacing long-
dominant caciques. Though such cases are noteworthy, and their study is instructive, this analysis demonstrates that migrants are being incorporated as political actors in their home towns via oficialista as well as oppositional pathways, limiting the extent to which their empowerment alters the basic structure of politics in their municipalities of origin on average.

5.3. Does Migrant Influence Democratize Hometown Political Systems?

The culminating question of the dissertation simply asks if migrant social and political engagement democratizes sending-community politics. Do migrants act as agents of democratization? Contrarily, when does their participation as transnational or return actors (or their “exit”) function to shore-up prevailing authoritarian politicians? Do return migrant political actors tend to unseat dominant politicians only to become authoritarian politicians themselves? Do transnational migrant political actors—particularly those who make financial contributions to community public works—help boost the legitimacy of dominant political forces, or do they form autonomous poles of civil society power or strengthen the hand of the political opposition locally? Whereas questions of migrant civil society engagement and migrant political power have important implications for local democracy, this final question is the one that most squarely engages the migrant democratization thesis. The evidence examined in this dissertation reveals several mechanisms through which migrants can become agents of political change and suggests hypotheses about how the entrance of migrants into local politics can have either democracy-enhancing and democracy-weakening impacts.

There is no a priori reason to expect all migrant actors to have the same type of influence. One migrant individual or organization might enter the political fray as an autonomous and accountability-enhancing civil society member, while another might be tightly controlled or coopted by the dominant powers. One organization might intend to simply improve some aspect of the home community's infrastructure, but end up legitimizing the authoritarian rule of the dominant political group that manages to take over project implementation to benefit itself. Moreover, migrant actors might increase political
competition when first engaging with municipal politics, but due to their interactions with other local political actors, the ultimate outcome at the level of the municipal political system might weaken stable democratic institutions, or fragment the opposition to a historically dominant political group.

In general, I find that increased participation by migrant political actors often leads to greater pluralism in municipal politics. However, the increased pluralism associated with migrant participation does not tend to be accompanied by a deeper institutionalization of municipal political competition. I also find that, when migrants come to influence hometown politics—whether as individual political entrepreneurs or as leaders of migrant-based organizations—they tend to do so by allying themselves with powerful state or local-level political actors. In cases where such extra-migrant alliances are absent, oppositional migrant-based political groups appear to be more susceptible to repression and cooptation by dominant political groups. Before outlining the plan of the dissertation, I now discuss the research design and methods used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses.

6. METHODS: DATA AND CASE SELECTION

I use a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods to answer each of the three questions of the dissertation and to test the hypotheses outlined above. Specifically, I combine subnational comparative case studies with cross-sectional statistical analysis. Focusing at the municipal level, I conduct comparative case studies based on ethnographic data gathered during a total of 14 months of field research in a dozen municipalities in three Mexican states and in migrant-receiving locales in three US states. I complement the comparative case studies with statistical analysis of two different databases.

In Chapter 2 I review the literature on the political impact of migrants on sending country politics and identify competing mechanisms through which migrant engagement can either enhance or weaken the strength of local democracy. Chapter 3 develops the general theoretical models and the analytic
I begin the empirical section of the dissertation (Chapter 4) by analyzing a comprehensive data set which includes comprehensive data on financial contributions by migrant organizations for public works projects in their home towns through the Mexican government's 3x1 Program for Migrants. This analysis sets the empirical stage for much of the rest of the dissertation by determining the factors beyond migration intensity that explain the wide variation in the number and total value of 3x1 projects received by each municipality, as well as the characteristics of the places the benefit from the program.

The second quantitative data set analyzed in the dissertation was generated from a survey of municipal authorities in the Mexican state of Oaxaca. The survey captures a comprehensive range of topics related to the political behavior of populations and members of the municipal government and the structure of local social and political institutions. These data are analyzed to test hypotheses about the determinants of migrant political power (Chapter 5). I estimate multivariate models using these data to explain the correlates of return migrant political power (as indicated by measures of the migration experience of current municipal authorities) and to demonstrate the ways in which migrant mayors differ from their non-migrant counterparts.

It is challenging to directly measure changes in the political structure of municipalities with the cross-sectional data available. For this reason, I complement the multivariate statistical analyses of municipalities in Oaxaca, Mexico with a comparative, small-N analysis of continuity and change in a dozen strategically selected municipalities in Oaxaca, Guanajuato and Zacatecas, Mexico. This method of analysis allows me to draw conclusions beyond the Oaxaca case while at the same time making possible much more thick and contextualized descriptions of the selected municipal cases. All municipalities selected are relatively rural and have high rates of migration and remittance dependency, allowing me to isolate the determinants of my dependent variables while controlling for migration-dependency and other intervening factors. Municipal cases selected vary on a number of theoretically important independent variables, including the activity of migrant-based organizations, whether the municipal government is in
alliance with or in opposition to the party in power at the state level, and the degree to which the state
government has institutionalized its relationship with its migrant community based in the US.

I selected municipalities in three states to ensure variation on key state-level factors, while
holding others constant. I chose Oaxaca for several reasons. First, it is one of Latin America’s most
authoritarian subnational bastions (Danielson and Eisenstadt 2009; Gibson 2005; Giraudy 2009), where
the PRI (or one of its predecessor parties) governed uninterrupted for 81 years (before losing
gubernatorial elections for the first time in 2010). Second, Oaxaca is unique in that it has the largest
number and percentage of indigenous language speakers in Mexico and 418 out of the state’s 570
municipalities are governed under internally-defined and non-partisan systems of customary law.
Accordingly, by selecting municipal cases in Oaxaca, I am able to test hypotheses about the impact of
indigenous ethnicity and customary law institutions on the dependent variables. These hypotheses are also
tested using the multivariate analysis discussed above, but the depth of historical case detail from the case
studies is complementary. Third, Oaxaca is a relatively high migration state in which many municipalities
are very dependent upon remittance income, but rates have grown significantly in recent decades.
Accordingly, Oaxacan migrant-sending communities, and their members living in the U.S. have had less
time to establish strong roots in their places of destination, are relatively less likely to have been in the
United States to gain legal status upon the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of
1986. Though there has been significant growth in the engagement of the Oaxaca state government with
migrant communities and organizations in the United States—including some participation in the 3x1
program—this engagement has not been nearly as intense and it does not have the same historical roots as
in traditional sending states of central Mexico.

Guanajuato, on the other hand, is one of Mexico's traditional migrant sending-states, and migrants
have traveled from rural communities in this state in large numbers for more than a century. The state also
has many rural municipalities, like Oaxaca; however it has virtually no indigenous-language speaking
residents. The state's long history of migration may have contributed to the large number of well-
established and institutionalized HTAs based in the US. Furthermore, municipal governments and the
state government of Guanajuato have established close ties with HTAs and actively sought to promote their formation, and to institutionalize their relationship. Guanajuato was also selected to achieve variation on the political party in control of the governor's office across municipal cases. The National Action Party (PAN) controls the governorship and was among the first states where opposition to PRI hegemony was successful at the municipal and gubernatorial level (Eisenstadt and Rionda Ramírez 2001; Shirk 1999). Though the relationships between municipal and state governments are important, the political and ideological orientation of the dominant party in the state government is important in its own right in determining the nature and the impact of migrant political activity.

The third state selected for study was Zacatecas, where the PRD controlled the governor's office for 12 years, before losing to the PRI in the 2010 elections. This design, then, permits me to account for differential state-level partisan effects on the local political processes studied. Second, similar to Guanajuato, Zacatecas is an historical migrant-sending state from central Mexico's “traditional heartland for migration to the United States” (Durand and Massey 2004, 9). International migrant communities build more social capital over time, through successive waves of migration (Durand and Massey 2004). Accordingly, the focus on states like Zacatecas and Guanajuato made it possible to select municipalities with deep and institutionalized migrant organizations and strong state-based federations of organizations (particularly institutionalized among Zacatecas migrant communities). On the other side, long histories of migration, and well developed migrant civil society, has meant that governments in these states have been more highly engaged with migrant communities, which helps to explain variations in politics and migrant civil society-impact at the municipal level.
7. OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

In the next chapter I review the literature that has sought to account for the relationship between migration and democracy and explain how my research contributes to this scholarship. The chapter maps out the hypothesized processes through with the underlying social change represented by mass migration is processed by local political systems, and thus begins to lay the theoretical groundwork that connects the three research questions of the dissertation.

Chapter 3 formally develops a series of agent-centered theoretical models to explain the interactions between migrant and home community actors, and to derive testable hypotheses about how these interactions are expected to impact municipal-level political systems. Based on these models, I develop an analytic framework that outlines the interactions between migrants and home-community politicians over a series of junctures, which ultimately lead to different outcomes in municipal political structure. The first juncture begins with the assumption that a municipality has experienced mass migration and come to rely economically on migrant remittances. From there a municipality can take different paths depending on whether engaged migrants are autonomous of state-actors, whether they are organized in opposition to state actors, and the ways in which municipal officials engage with them (alliance, cooptation, cooperation, exclusion, repression). The sequenced interactions between sending-municipality political actors and migrant political actors can help us to classify the paths that lead to several key outcomes in terms of municipal political structure, thus helping to identify the conditions under which migration can have democracy-enhancing impacts on municipalities.

The next three chapters focus on the different modes of migrant hometown engagement. Chapter 4 analyzes the first juncture mentioned above, aiming to account empirically for the contribution of collective remittances to home-community public works by migrant civil society organizations. Chapter 5 seeks to account for the causes of migrant political power at the municipal level in Oaxaca. It analyzes an original database generated from comprehensive biographical surveys of mayors and city council members in both customary law- and party-system-governed municipalities in the state. Chapter 6 is
based on ethnographic data from over a year of field research in three Mexican states. Using a sub-national comparative method, I analyze the pathways to power and the modes of engagement of ten migrant political actors in eight high-migration municipalities. I find that the type of experiences migrants have when abroad powerfully shape their political identities and help explain variation in their mode of engagement in hometown politics. Further, I find that where emergent social groups like migrants are not incorporated politically, as in Oaxaca, radical opposition to prevailing authorities becomes more likely.

Chapter 7 presents the result of the comparative subnational study of 12 high-migration municipalities, and engages most directly in the third question of the dissertation: how do migrants affect the political structure of their municipalities of origin? The analysis focuses on the different ways in which dominant political groups in migrant-sending communities deal with the emergence of migrants as an influential social and political group. I argue that the ways in which migrants become engaged in their home towns (the dependent variable in Chapter 6), coupled with the ways in which prevailing authorities react to their emergence as new actors determines political system-outcome. I demonstrate that migrants' growing social and political power can be effectively captured by both incumbent and opposition groups in sending polities, and can thus potentially result in more political competition. However, migrants lack the capacity and wherewithal to become autonomous political actors and to fundamentally change the way that politics are done back home. Finally, Chapter 8 summarizes the theoretical argument, reiterates the connection between the three empirical questions analyzed in the dissertation, and synthesizes the theoretical and empirical contributions of the study.
CHAPTER 2.
WHY WOULD MIGRANTS BE DEMOCRATIZING … AND WHY NOT?

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I review the literature on the relationship between migration and democracy and explain how my research contributes to this scholarship. This chapter lays the theoretical groundwork that connects the three research questions of the dissertation, and provides the background necessary to outline the ways in which the fundamental social and economic changes represented by mass migration are processed through the political systems of sending communities. The key causal factors examined are related to the socioeconomic phenomenon of migration. This set of causal factors includes such phenomena as return migration, remittance flows, and the diffusion of new cultural influences. The framework, specified in detail in Chapter 3, draws on comparative political theories of the impact of socioeconomic change generally on political development, and the political incorporation of new social groups (Collier and Collier 1991; Huntington 1968; O'Donnell 1973; Stinchcombe 1968, 173-180), and modifies them to make them applicable to the more specific socioeconomic change of migration in a subnational context.

Whereas classical research in modernization theory (and its critics) and more recent research on the causes of democratic transitions and consolidation consider the impacts of the socioeconomic factors associated with economic development, industrialization, and urbanization on national political development, I seek to isolate the impact of one specific socioeconomic phenomenon, migration, on the political development of municipal systems. Thus, the dissertation engages with a fundamental question of social theory—which goes back to Plato and Aristotle, and is prominently featured in Weber and Marx—of the political impacts of socioeconomic changes. Specifically, I examine and apply these
classical questions of social theory with a focus on the transnational dynamics associated with migration, and make the analysis more concrete by focusing on the micro-politics of migrant-sending communities.

The correlation between economic development and democracy as measured at the nation-state level of aggregation is one of the most well established empirical relationships in comparative politics (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Geddes 1999). Increasingly, scholars are unpacking the mid-level mechanisms that account for this correlation, and there have been numerous calls to break the broad concepts of study—such as democracy—into more manageable pieces (e.g., Coppedge, Gerring, and Lindberg 2012; Geddes 2003) and to address them at the subnational level (Armony and Schamis 2005; Gibson 2005, 2013). Although the proposition that socioeconomic change is likely to lead to political change is eminently plausible, it is significantly more difficult to theorize the specific nature of the impacts and the causal mechanisms that are at work. Specifying and refining a set of theoretical expectations regarding migration-driven political change is the main goal of this chapter.

The three central research questions examined in this project address different aspects of the multifaceted outcome of interest: subnational democracy. The first question focuses on migrant civil society—with an empirical emphasis on collective remittances sent through the 3x1 Program for Migrants. As civil society thickening is often included as an important dimension of democracy, migrant civil society development is expected to be democracy-enhancing (e.g., Putnam 1994). Furthermore, the emergence of migrant-based civil society organizations may contribute to the thickening of civil society more broadly and strengthen other components of democracy, such as accountability and political competition. However, understanding the distribution of 3x1 projects, and the characteristics of communities that benefit from them, also helps us to assess the degree to which migrant collective action—and government response—impacts the distribution of public works. However, as the analysis in Chapter 4 shows, municipalities in which mayors tend to be in the same party as the governors, and more generally, where the PAN is in power, disproportionately benefit from the program. Furthermore, despite

9 Indeed, a hypothesis for further exploration, but that is not addressed in this project, is whether or not the development of migrant-based civil society stimulated the thickening of civil society more generally.
the primary goal of the program to reduce poverty in high-migration municipalities, I find that less poor
municipalities are more likely than poor municipalities to benefit from the program. Since the
communities of origin of migrants—and the migrants themselves—are of a higher than average
socioeconomic status, the leveraging of their collective remittances with federal, state and municipal
monies causes public funds to be distributed to places that do not have the most acute needs.

The second question of the dissertation focuses on the backgrounds and political successes of
return migrants. By studying the pathways to power of local political actors, this section of the analysis
touches on issues of representation. When migration experience opens the door to new political actors,
and accordingly breaks down the often closed systems of political elite recruitment, its impact enhances
democracy. This is also an empirical question, however, and requires detailed examination of the
background characteristics of individuals with considerable migration experience who reach positions of
local political power, how they differ from non-migrants in positions of power. The democracy-enhancing
impact of return migrant political success is considered to be determined by the degree to which their
power and influence truly constitutes the opening up of spaces for the representation of new interests and
new voices, or if more fundamental social cleavages (other than migration) continue to determine who
gains access to political institutions. Stated differently, where migrant political actors gain access to
political power through the same elite channels that dominate local politics, their apparent empowerment
does not constitute fundamental shifts in local political structures, despite increasing the descriptive
representation of migrants. This question is examined empirically in chapters 5 and 6.

This question leads directly to the final question of the dissertation: How does migration affect
political competition? This section of the analysis asks not only whether migrant political actors, migrant
civil society, and other migration-related factors increase the levels of political competition in sending
municipalities, but also whether this competition is effectively institutionalized in local party systems.
Whereas the second question focuses on the background of those in power and how they got there, the
final question of the dissertation focuses most squarely on the political system, asking whether migrant
empowerment serves to shore up the power of traditional elites, whether new elites emerge to displace the
old elites, and, crucially, whether migrant-led political projects enhance the political and social equality of sending-communities. This question is examined most directly in Chapter 7.

In the present chapter, my goal is to conduct a comprehensive review of the literature focusing on the relationship between migration and democracy in migrant-sending places, and to situate my research within that literature. In Chapter 3 below, I formally specify an agent-based model of politics in high-migration municipalities and outline an aggregate, municipal-level framework for analyzing the process through which migration impacts political systems.

2. MIGRATION AND DEMOCRATIZATION: MECHANISMS OF INFLUENCE

In this section, I discuss recent literature on the relationship between migration and democratization with the objective of summarizing the empirical findings and the theorized channels through which migration impacts the politics of sending communities. Focusing on the Indian case, Kapur (2010, Chapter 2) outlines four channels through which migration can influence home country politics. Two of these channels are direct and two are indirect. I define a channel as direct when migrants, as individuals or as members of migrant-based organizations (MBO), become political actors in their communities of origin. Indirect channels through which migration can impact the political systems of migrant-sending places include demographic, social, cultural and economic changes brought about by migration, that have ensuing political effects.

2.1. Indirect Channels of Influence

First, migration can indirectly influence politics in sending places by altering the behavior of those who do not migrate. According to Kapur's “prospect channel,” the population in places with higher levels of migration is more likely to contain individuals who plan to emigrate (e.g., to reunite with family
members abroad, or simply because their community has developed a “culture of migration”—Cohen 2004; Cohen and Sirkeci 2011), and accordingly disengage from local political affairs (as argued by Goodman and Hiskey 2008). The second indirect mechanism through which migration might influence the politics of a sending place is referred to as the “absence channel.” Inspired by A. O. Hirschman's Exit, Voice and Loyalty (1970), migration is expected to have an impact insofar as it alters the social (and political) composition of sending places. In these cases, emigration may amount to voluntary or forced exile and, accordingly, function to remove opponents to the local “regime.” In general, the degree to which the existence of a reasonable exit option is viewed as favorable is a function of the relative autonomy or dependency of the municipal regime. That is, the political elites of a particular community need to retain some level of population in order to thrive, but would prefer not to be challenged by opposition voices.

When a community experiences significant out migration—whether it is permanent emigration, seasonal circular migration or some combination of the two—the ensuing economic and demographic effects are expected to lead to a number of different indirect impacts on local political systems. This is what Kapur (2010) calls the absence channel. Migrants are a self-selecting group, and accordingly are not representative of the general population of their home communities. Accordingly, mass migration not only alters the size of sending places, but also the social makeup. In high migration places in Mexico, for example, it is commonplace for people to refer to towns as consisting of only children, women and the elderly. It is well established that Mexican migrants are most likely to be working aged men, though women are increasingly likely to migrate, and those who migrate are not among the poorest and are not from the poorest communities.

Theoretically, the nature of the impact of the change in the social make-up caused by migration can potentially have democracy-enhancing and democracy weakening potential. The expected effect of the “absence” channel on local political systems depends on the types of people who leave and the types that stay behind. As theorized by Hirschman (1970), those who “exit” an organization, community or firm, tend to be those who would have otherwise exercised the most powerful “voice,” and who would
have accordingly put pressure on prevailing authorities to make changes. Arguing against much of the economic literature prevalent at the time, Hirschman's theory showed that, under certain circumstances, monopolies can lead to more socially optimal outcomes than open competition. When consumers of a product or members of an organization are dissatisfied but lack the option to “exit,” they must attempt to bring change from within by using their power of “voice.” Similarly, when the local political and economic systems do not provide sufficient opportunities for personal and collective advancement, and migration is a relatively easy option, those who leave are often the individuals who would have exerted social and political pressure to reform the political and economic systems. Their absence, then, is expected to reduce the pressure on prevailing political authorities to reform the political system and accordingly is expected to be democracy-weakening.

Focusing on the causal effect of economic crises on the breakdown of authoritarian regimes and democratization, Wright (2009) puts forth a Hirschmaninan argument, suggesting that when a relatively easy exit option exists—i.e., migration to a relatively wealthy neighbor—economic crisis can have the counter-intuitive impact of strengthening authoritarian regimes. Based on a cross-national, longitudinal study of 122 authoritarian regimes, Wright finds evidence that dictators are insulated from “the liberalizing effects of economic crisis” where greater “exit mobility” exists (Wright 2009, 27). Similarly Ahmed (2012) conducts a cross-national comparative analysis, finding that high levels of “unearned foreign income”—including migrant remittances—are strategically channeled by autocratic governments to perpetuate their rule.

Though Hirschman's theory tends to imply expectations of weakening political competition, following the basic theoretical logic laid out, it is possible to derive at least two counter-hypotheses according to which migration could increase the likelihood of indirect, democracy-enhancing outcomes. The nature of the social change to a polity brought about by the “exit” of a significant portion of the population should be determined by the characteristics of those who leave as compared to those who are left behind (Kapur 2010). When those most likely to migrate are young and middle aged men, there is a feminization of communities. With respect to migration, but also post-conflict communities, at times, the
absence of men (due to emigration, war, etc.) creates the necessity and/or opportunity for women to enter into the public sphere. Indeed, in a recent study by the author (Danielson and Eisenstadt 2009), it was found that women's likelihood of electoral participation was higher in places with higher rates of migration, particularly where female-headed households were more common. Similarly, Silber and Viterna (2009, 332) point out that some scholars have accounted for the high levels of women's participation in politics in 1970s and 1980s El Salvador—including in guerrilla struggles against the regime—by pointing to a previous increase in female headed households as a result of the urban migration of men, the latter having been spurred by an industrialization of agriculture. Following a similar mechanism, though in quite a different context, in situations where many men of a generation are killed in war, the women who survive have come to take on more powerful and influential roles in local public life. Though greater women's participation is not equivalent to democratization, it is certainly democracy enhancing, all else being equal.

On the other hand, Goodman and Hiskey (2008) find that higher municipal migration rates are associated with lower levels of political participation. Alluding to Hirschman, the authors suggest that participation rates of those left behind are low because family members of migrants have “exited without leaving.” This lower engagement in politics in high-migration municipalities may be explained by the fact that people in such places are more likely to have plans to migrate in the future—Kapur's “prospect” channel. Consistent with Kapur's absence channel, lower participation in high-migration municipalities is attributed to the fact that those who would have most likely participated in politics in a polity (their somewhat limited indicator is voting in federal elections) are the same who are most likely to migrate. Another explanation for the relationship the authors find is that members of households with migrants living in the US, particularly those receiving remittances, are less engaged with politics because of the simple fact that their economic well-being, as remittance recipients, is tied to the economies of distant places, making national and local political questions seem less relevant.

Goodman and Hiskey's research represented an important empirical advancement for the study of the relationship between migration and democracy. In the transnational migration literature that focuses
on sending community politics, there is a tendency to select on the key dependent variable of high migrant impact on local politics and to focus on places with either highly mobilized and organized migrant-based groups or powerful and charismatic individual migrant actors. Goodman and Hiskey aim to overcome this selection bias by conducting a nation-wide, multivariate statistical analysis of Mexican municipalities, including communities with very little or no migration as well as high migration communities without mobilized migrant civil society actors. As might be expected, including a representative (indeed, exhaustive) set of municipal cases in the analysis led to drastically different conclusions about the impact of migration on politics, in their case, an aggregate measure of political behavior. Although their dependent variable, political participation in federal elections, is not a measure of democracy as such, their findings are consistent with more traditional interpretations that have viewed emigration as a safety valve releasing population pressure and helping authoritarian elites guard against popular and peasant revolts (see FitzGerald 2009; Hirschman 1970).

Nevertheless, Goodman and Hiskey do find that people in high-migration municipalities participate at higher rates in community organizations, suggesting that despite their demonstrated disengagement from national-level politics, citizens of migrant sending communities might in fact be engaging instead in local or transnational political and social fields. This caveat suggests that conclusions drawn about the democratizing impact of migration may be sensitive to the specific indicators of democracy chosen and the level of politics on which one chooses to focus. One can also focus on indicators of party competition, alternation of party control of municipal governments, good governance, and administrative accountability. Furthermore, many of these scholars are also considering the direct impact of return and transnational migrant political actors.

Before discussing the research on direct mechanisms through which migration can alter local political systems, I briefly consider two potentially-democratizing indirect mechanisms. Contrary to expectations of Hirschman's theory, insofar as migration and remittance flows from migrants to their communities of origin alter the balance of economic power in a polity, a neoclassical political economy perspective might lead us to predict the emergence and empowerment of new sets of local political actors.
In El Salvador, for example, massive migration and remittance dependency shifted the balance of power in that country from the old rural agrarian oligarchy to a new urban financial elite that benefited from the massive inflow of remittances (see Wood 2000). Although, a shift from the political dominance of one economic elite to another is by no means necessarily democratizing, the displacing of an agrarian elite has the potential to shake up the balance of the political system in ways that lead to a general political opening—even if social and economic stratification remain more difficult to overcome. Indeed, this is consistent with Acemoglu and Robinson's (2006) argument that agrarian elites will be more resistant to democratization than urban industrial elites because they have less to lose from mass political participation.

One of the most enduring impediments to democracy in poor communities in places like Mexico is that citizens find political representation through clientelistic relationships. The “difficult transition from clientelism to citizenship” (Fox 1994) might be eased insofar as the families of migrants who remain in the home community, due to remittance receipt, become less dependent upon the hierarchical relationship of dependency with local political bosses. Pfutze (2012) tests this theory in Mexico, finding evidence that municipalities with high levels of migration are more likely to have experienced a democratic transition—measured as an alternation of political parties at the municipal level. Seemingly contradicting the finding that people in high-migration locales vote less (Goodman and Hiskey 2008), Pfutze argues that remittance receipt may weaken clientelistic networks by making poor families less susceptible to the temptations of patronage and vote buying, thus weakening the grip of the dominant PRI.

Following the logic of this argument, we might re-interpret Goodman and Hiskey's findings in a decidedly different fashion. Although political participation and voting are viewed as normatively positive in standard democratic theory, clientelistic political party machines often effectively mobilize voters by providing them with cash, building materials, or promises of patronage once in office. Though hardly conforming to participatory democratic ideals, it is worth exploring the degree to which low
participation is related to a weakening of clientelistic mobilization.\(^{10}\) Following the logic outlined above, if migration weakens the leverage of clientelistic organizations and leaders due to the increased economic importance of remittances (and the concomitant decreased importance of clientelistic patronage), lower participation might not necessarily indicate weakening democracy and, perhaps more importantly, high participation is not necessarily an indicator of democracy.

### 2.2. Direct Channels of Migrant Influence

The two direct mechanisms in Kapur's typology are the return channel and the diaspora channel. The return channel operates when a migrant, after spending a significant period of time abroad,\(^{11}\) returns to her or his community of origin and becomes an influential actor—such as mayor or political boss of the town. Return migrant political actors primarily reside and exercise influence from their hometown. Accordingly, they can be conceived of in much the same way as any local political actor, as the nature of their political behavior is the same. The theoretically relevant differences between the return migrant political actor and other local political actors have to do with the potential importance of the migrants' experiences before holding office. The formation of her political identity, social and political networks forged abroad, personal wealth and human capital might all affect the way she will gain and exercise power and the goals she will try to achieve with it.

In contrast, the very nature of political participation of diaspora (or transnational) migrant actors is different, as it occurs through a combination of remote communications, return visits, meetings and

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\(^{10}\) Holzner's research (2010) on political participation among the poor finds that political participation declined during the period of democratic transition in Mexico between 1990 and 2000, and that the gap in participation between low- and high-income individuals widened. He further notes that in subnational authoritarian enclaves, “citizens (unless captured by clientelistic organizations) often see little reason to become politically involved” (p. 4).

\(^{11}\) Operationalization of this factor has the potential to have important impacts on the hypothesized effects of return migrant political actors. Generally speaking, it would be expected that the longer a migrant has spent outside of her/his municipality of origin, the greater an impact s/he is likely to have as a return migrant political actor. The nature of the experience abroad, among other factors, is expected to explain the specific nature of this impact.
negotiations with elected authorities in *migrant-receiving places* (it is increasingly common for mayors to visit migrant leaders and communities from their municipalities where they are concentrated in the United States and elsewhere), and through the transfer of financial or in kind resources for the community. Transnational migrant actors can influence their home towns and countries by funding public works projects back home, influencing the political beliefs and behavior of their family members and friends who stayed behind (this influence is understood to be all the more powerful due to the remittances sent home), funding political campaigns, diffusing cultural influences from abroad, or even by manning phone banks to call households in Mexico on behalf of candidates for public office. Among the most prominent recent examples of transnational migrant impact, especially in Mexico, is through the formation of migrant civil society organizations, which are associations formed in the receiving community by members of the same sending community. These groups, which include hometown associations (HTAs) or clubs, migrant based civil society and social movement organizations, and state-level federations of HTAs, typically organize with the objective of supporting their community of origin in some way. For example, it has become relatively common—and increasingly institutionalized, with national initiatives such as Mexico's 3x1 program—for these clubs to pool resources of their compatriots also living in the US to support public works projects, business investment, education scholarships and other quasi-public goods back home. Also, the federal government and some state governments (particularly Guanajuato) are increasingly promoting migrant entrepreneurship, and have a new business investment program (under the umbrella of the 3x1 Program, in the Secretariat of Social Development, SEDESOL in Spanish) through which migrant investments are matched one-to-one by federal government funds.

However, knowing the channel through which migrants become influential does not necessarily tell us what the nature of their influence is likely to be. In the following sub-section, I discuss the most relevant research that finds migrants to be agents of democratization and that argues that they are not.

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12 According to Mauro Hernández, President of the Los Angeles-based Organización Regional de Oaxaca (ORO, Oaxacan Regional Organization), members of his and other migrant-based groups in Los Angeles organized to make phone calls to lists of voters in Oaxaca in support of gubernatorial candidate Gabino Cue Monteagudo, who was elected in July 2010 (interview 2011b).
3. MIGRATION AND DEMOCRATIZATION: SKEPTICS AND BELIEVERS

Scholars who have studied the impact of migration on home towns can be divided between studies that focus on the political behavior of general populations (e.g., Jiménez 2008; Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow 2010) and those that focus on migrants (or migrant based organizations) who become influential actors locally (e.g., Besserer 1999, 2003; Burgess 2005, 2010, 2012; Castro Neira 2009; Fox 2007a; Ramírez Romero 2003). Although my central interest is in understanding the impacts of “elite” migrant actors, some of the hypothesized mechanisms through which non-elite migrants who return home or exercise influence on their families and friends who stayed behind are testable for political elites as well.\(^{13}\)

Jiménez (2008) argues that both return migrants and people who receive remittances (a proxy indicator of people who are influenced by migrants abroad) are more likely to participate in elections, have higher political efficacy, and hold more negative attitudes toward corruption as compared to non-migrants and non-remittance receivers (Jiménez 2008, 18). Jiménez analyzes aggregate municipal electoral data and finds that people in high-migration communities participate at higher rates in municipal elections than those in lower migration places. This contradicts the findings of Goodman and Hiskey (2008), who argue that migration is associated with less participation, though they measure participation in federal elections.

With the exception of the dependent variable operationalization, their models are empirically quite similar. However, there are important theoretical distinctions between the two arguments. Jiménez

\(^{13}\) Although I refer to these political actors as “elites”, this should be understood in relative terms. Within the sphere of small-town rural politics, a person—here a return migrant—might become quite influential, whether as a mayor or with more informal power. The reach of this power might, however be quite limited and she might remain relatively poor and completely dependent upon the support or subject to the repression of external state-level actors or local economic elites.
suggests that places with more return migrants (who he expects to be more democratic than non-migrants) and with more people being influenced by migrants (via transnational transfers of attitudes and behaviors—social remittances) should vote at higher rates in municipal elections. Goodman and Hiskey (2008), on the other hand, argue that the absence of highly motivated citizens (higher in high-migration places) and the disengagement from local politics of remittance-recipients (e.g., due to prospects of emigrating) should lead to lower levels of participation in federal elections. This is an illustrative example of the challenges of operationalization, as the indicators of political participation chosen in each of these studies have a determinative impact on the conclusions drawn. Similar to Jiménez (2008), Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow (2010) find that migrants are “agents of democratic diffusion” transmitting values and behaviors to their countries of origin by returning home (Kapur's return channel), by communicating with their friends and families who stayed behind, and through transnational social networks. Interestingly, Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow (2010) find that democratic values and behaviors are most effectively diffused to sending countries from abroad (the diaspora channel) than by return migrants (the return channel).

Whether focusing on elites or mass attitudes and behavior, and with important exceptions (e.g., Ahmed 2012; Goodman and Hiskey 2008; Hirschman 1970; Wright 2009), most research examining the “migrant democratization hypothesis” has viewed transnational and return migrants as having normatively positive impacts in their home towns. As Fitzgerald (2000) states, early scholars of transnational migration and transnational practices (such as Glick-Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton 1992; Glick-Schiller and Fouron 1999) tend to celebrate transnational migrant practices, and “are hopeful that 'transmigrants' will use their transnationality to challenge the hegemony of global capitalism” (FitzGerald 2000, 8). Transnationalism from-below—in contrast to the transnationalism from above of corporation-led globalization—is considered to be, wishfully perhaps, a potential source of bottom-up popular power.

Several scholars focusing on cases in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca have demonstrated how indigenous migrants, despite their subjugated position in regional and global labor markets—often in
abusive and poorly paid industrial agricultural in Northern Mexico and the United States (Rivera-Salgado 1999)—have succeeded in forming influential transnational organizations and returning to their communities of origin to unseat or challenge the hegemony of prevailing powers (Besserer 1999, 2003; Castro Neira 2009; Ramírez Romero 2003; Rivera-Salgado 1999). These scholars all focus on high-migration indigenous communities. Somewhat distinct from studies of high migration parts of Mexico—such as Guanajuato, Zacatecas and other states of the country's traditional migrant-sending Center-West region—indigenous migrant organizations studied by Besserer and Castro Neira (the International Indigenous Network of Oaxaca, RIIO in Spanish) and by Rivera-Salgado and Ramírez Romero (the Indigenous Front of Bi-national Organizations, FIOB in Spanish) are overtly political and oppositional. Migrant leaders and hometown allies of these organizations, both based in the Mixtec region of Oaxaca, returned to their regions and municipalities of origin to challenge and unseat the prevailing political forces there. The activities of these transnational indigenous migrant organizations are seen as innovative in their geographic scope and uniquely political and vibrant as compared to organizations formed by migrants from historical migrant-sending states (Rivera-Salgado 1999, 1440). Specifically, Rivera-Salgado argues that the ability of Mixtec migrants to “adapt to transnational migration”—such as through the formation of strong bi-national organizations—is related to the high levels of local autonomy these communities have exercised for hundreds of years (1452). This historically forged political and social capital, then, may help to explain why (in Rivera-Salgado's assessment) indigenous migrant organizations have been more successful in mobilizing to defend political and economic rights in the US and Mexico (1440). Furthermore, for Rivera-Salgado, processes of transnational migration have actually strengthened communities and ethnic identities and practices in sending communities, adding to their political autonomy vis à vis the state and federal government.

Others who have examined the question of direct migrant impact on local politics in Mexico, such as Smith (2006) in Puebla and Smith and Bakker (2008) in Guanajuato and Zacatecas have argued that migrant empowerment in home communities can improve local accountability and has the potential to be anti-authoritarian and democratizing, but that actual outcomes are multifaceted and do not necessarily

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allow for simple classification. In examining a famous case of the mayoral candidacy of transnational migrant Andrés Bermudez—the “Tomato King”—in Jeréz, Zacatecas, Bakker and Smith (2003) conceptualize two hypotheses relevant to the current discussion. First, the “transnational elite” perspective (put forth by scholars like Guarnizo 1997; Itzigsohn 2000) argues that the participation in home-town and home-state associations is dominated by a minority of men who are more wealthy and well-educated than the average citizen or migrant, and who are motivated primarily by “… a desire to be incorporated into elite strata in both the sending and receiving countries rather than from an interest in challenging the unequal power relations…” (Bakker and Smith 2003, 60). That is, rather than trying to challenge and democratize the established order, transnational and return migrant actors may seek to become part of the established order.14 Second, the “transnational democracy” perspective (highlighted by scholars like Laguerre 1999; Portes 1999, , among others) views “migrant political transnationalism” as potentially democratizing, as migrants return with more economic power, independence from state-clientelism, and “positive experiences with democracy in the receiving countries” (Bakker and Smith 2003, 60).15

Smith's (2006) study of the transnational politics of a Puebla, Mexico municipality and its highly influential and organized Committee in New York provides a nuanced account of transnational and return migrant impacts on home towns. Among other insights, Smith's case study reveals yet another level at which migrant actors can be a democratizing force locally, or at least how they might benefit from broader democratization processes that have been occurring in Mexico over the past twenty years. In this case, a migrant (and migrant organization-supported) candidate for mayor competed in and won the

14 In other parts of this project, I more directly address questions about if and how migration experience constitutes a new pathway to local political power in Mexico.

15 The latter expectation of democratic learning due to positive experiences in the receiving country is a common hypothesis among scholars, as well as many people with whom the author has informally discussed this topic at cocktail parties and barbeques. It should be briefly noted, however, that there is no clear reason why one should expect the experiences migrants have with American democracy to be positive, as the state of Arizona's recent anti-immigrant HR 1070, a rash of anti-immigrant local ordinances across the country over the past five years, and increasingly virulent, militant, and politically influential vigilante groups such as the Minutemen Civil Defense Corps demonstrate. That said, the broader point that migrant experiences with the political and social systems away from their home communities are likely to impact the ways in which they later engage in hometown politics is worth exploring. There is no reason, however, why one should a priori expect this ideological influence to be democracy-enhancing.
primary of the dominant Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). The open primary was introduced by the PRI in local elections in Puebla during the 1990s due to increased pressure in the state and nationally from opposition political parties. This increased competition made it more and more important for candidates to have local support, and not just the support of the national party and the president (traditionally, legislative, gubernatorial, and mayoral candidates were selected by the president through the informal but extremely stable institution known as the 'dedazo').

This case reveals some of the ambiguity in classifying what should be seen as democratizing. In some ways, the opening up of the candidate selection process of an authoritarian party is democratizing. On the other hand, insofar as such internal opening allows for the perpetuation of the dominance of a single party—as it did in Puebla until the PRI finally lost the governorship in 2010—it may be that internally democratizing practices actually lead to weaker democracy generally due to increased government legitimacy at the state and municipal levels.\(^\text{16}\)

Yet another hypothesized reason for how migrants might democratize sending-communities is through their role in strengthening civil society. Scholars like Fox and Bada (2008) and Burgess (2005, 2010, 2012) examine how migrant civil society groups are exercising voice after migrating. This “voice after exit” can be exercised either by return migrants who gain positions of power in local governments or from abroad—through the mobilization of migrant civil society and collective remittances. One reason why hometown associations (HTAs) might encourage democratization relates to their sending of collective remittances for public works projects. Insofar as sending money home constitutes self-taxation, it stands to reason that members of HTAs and others who continue to financially support their community after leaving might demand a voice there. The growth of migrant-civil society, with the constitution and emerging self-consciousness of a new migrant social group with new ideas and new sets of interests, provides a useful mechanism through which migrants might be represented and how their economic

\(^{16}\) Even still, as Eisenstadt (2004) shows, the PRI's policy of “changing everything” (i.e., permitting certain institutional reforms) “so that nothing changes,” ultimately opened the door for a protracted transition to democratic competition.
importance might be translated into political influence. As Fox and Bada succinctly put it, “collective remittances are possible thanks to migrants’ exit, they exist because of their loyalty, and they then tend to encourage the exercise of voice” (Fox and Bada 2008, 447).

Thus, insofar as new migrant civil society actors are autonomous of municipal and state governments, their emergence as home town political actors is a step in the direction of democratization due to its pluralizing effect on local politics. Even if HTAs internally or in their external effects are quite hierarchical and undemocratic, their entrance into the political fray in often politically monopolized rural Mexico constitutes a potential step toward political opening. Viewed from another perspective, however, migrant organizations are sometimes creations of dominant political groups, or later coopted by them, and accordingly function to weaken pluralism. When dominant political groups succeed in mobilizing migrant resources and civil society in support of their regimes, the oficialista incorporation of migrants can serve to strengthen and legitimize the status quo, as well as provide the governing party with additional resources.

Another metric of democratization, and pluralism, considered by Fox and Bada (2008) and foreshadowed in Fox's other work (2007b), focuses on the fact that 3x1 resources are more likely to go to historically marginalized submunicipal communities than to dominant municipal seats. Thus, the empowerment of migrants, who tend to hail from these rural submunicipal communities, might be expected to improve the distribution of power within their municipalities of origin. However, high-migration municipalities and, among those, municipalities with well-organized migrant civil society groups, are not among the poorest in Mexico. Accordingly, although migrant community development projects are concentrated in the most under-served areas of the municipalities with projects, the municipalities that get projects may not be those most in need of additional public support.17

17 Fox also notes that, a sole focus on 3x1 expenditures—a small fraction of municipal budgets—is not the best indicator if one is interested in examining the broader impact of migrant civil society on democracy and development (personal communication, May 14, 2011).
Another reason to have guarded optimism about the substantively democratizing impacts of migrant participation in hometown public life—in this example, through philanthropic giving—concerns the balance of interest representation between powerful migrant civil society groups and the communities that stay behind. That is, HTAs and the members they represent are often more interested in paving roads, improving town squares, and renovating churches—all things that will increase their enjoyment when they return home for a few weeks every year for holidays—and are less interested in ensuring that all members of the community have access to potable water, sewer systems, and productive employment (Fox and Bada 2008, 449). To paraphrase E. E. Schattschneider (1975), it may be that the chorus of migrant civil society sings with an upper class (or perhaps gringo) accent.

Also focusing on collective remittances, specifically the 3x1 program, Burgess (2005, 2010, 2012) argues, with some caveats, that migrant civil society organizations can act as agents of accountability in their home towns, improving local governance (Burgess 2010, 2). Burgess argues that HTAs have unique attributes that may make them more likely to autonomously enforce local government accountability than home community based civil society organizations (Burgess 2010, 7). Specifically, providing financial resources gives them extra bargaining power with municipal governments, the fact that they do not live in the community should make them less vulnerable to capture and clientelistic manipulation, and their residence in the US—a polity “with stronger mechanisms of accountability” might make them “more inclined to pressure public officials back home to meet their obligations and manage resources transparently” (Burgess 2010, 8).

4. HYPOTHESESIZED IMPACTS OF MIGRANTS ON HOMETOWN POLITICS

As the above review reflects, many of the scholars focusing on the direct impacts of migration on home town politics view migrants as agents of democratization. The democracy-weakening outcomes of
migration, following Hirschman, are generally theorized to be due to the absence of potentially politically active (and oppositional) individuals, the disengagement from local politics of those whose family members have migrated or of those who themselves expect to migrate in the future. Hypotheses for why migrants are likely (or not) to have democratizing impacts can be categorized into at least four groups, which are described below and outlined in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Mechanisms of Migrant Impact: Competing Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Incorporation</th>
<th>Democracy-Enhancing Examples</th>
<th>Democracy-Weakening Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oppositional or Autonomous: Allied with political opposition or as new autonomous civil society actors</td>
<td>Officialista: mobilized by, connected to or co-opted by dominant local political groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the institutionalized democratic political system of the US; exposure to political movements, formation of indigenous or class consciousness in opposition to dominant system.</td>
<td>Exposure to the US political system economic success, experience as a business owner (and boss) might mean some migrant political actors develop authoritarian practices, arrogant attitudes and disparaging views about the backwardness of their home town (that they must modernize—or agringar).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrants represent interests of the poor, marginalized and other underrepresented groups. Migration experience helps people from underrepresented social classes to gain power.</td>
<td>Migrants use their influence to represent narrow, elite interests of the traditionally dominant political group, of an elite transnational migrant class, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant actors mobilized by prevailing authorities to shore up their legitimacy (or raise funds) might slip out of their control, and emerge as autonomous and/or oppositional political or civil society actors.</td>
<td>Increased political competition brought by new migrant actors might increase factionalism and divide the opposition to the benefit of the previously dominant political group.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1. The Mode of Migrant Engagement into Home Town Politics

First, the democratizing impact of migrants depends directly on the mode of engagement in home town politics. If migrants as individuals or through organizations are incorporated into local politics by allying with the dominant political group, their impact, ceteris paribus, is classified as democracy
weakening (or at best, neutral). On the other hand, migrants who retain significant autonomy from the dominant political group locally, either alone or allying with opposition political groups locally, enhance pluralism and political competition and are accordingly democratizing.

4.2. The Effect of Migration Experience of Attitudes and Political Ideology

Hypotheses regarding the nature of migrant influence on home town politics can also be based on the ways in which migration experience changes their political attitudes, behaviors and ideological orientations. The literature (such as Jiménez 2008; Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow 2010) expects migrants to remit democracy to their home towns because of their exposure to the democratic institutions and political culture of the United States. On the other hand, individuals might develop a range of ideologies and political attitudes during their experience as migrants, some which might not be democratizing.

4.3. Representation

Migrants who have gained political power in their home towns impact the political structure there differently depending on whose interests they help to represent. As suggested by Fox and Bada (2008), migrants might use their new power (or gain it) by representing and mobilizing individuals from rural submunicipal communities that are historically marginalized from the decisions made in the municipal seat. If migrants use their new found influence to represent their own interests or those of their families left behind, the impact might be expected to be either democracy-enhancing or -weakening. On the one hand, insofar as migrants, and particularly organized migrants, are better-off than the average resident of their municipality, the amplification of their voice might be viewed as weakening democratic equality. On the other hand, though migrants are not among the poorest, they do not tend to be among the richest and most powerful social groups locally, either. Accordingly, their increased political influence, though

18 This argument draws on Levitt’s concept of “social remittances” (1998).
not empowering to the poorest and most marginalized, may constitute the development of a new political class that rivals the traditionally dominant group. With respect to descriptive representation, if migration experience helps individuals from underrepresented social classes, such as the less well educated and the poor, migration can be seen as democratizing.

4.4. Upshot Mechanisms (or Unintended Consequences)

Finally, independently of the alliances migrant political actors make (oficialista or oppositional), the ideologies and attitudes they develop while away from home, and the interests they use their power to represent, the empowerment of migrant political actors can have a range of unintended consequences. Depending on the reactions of other local political actors to new migrant actors, and the interactions with prevailing state and local political systems, the upshot of migrant-empowerment can be democracy-enhancing or democracy-weakening. First, though prevailing authorities may seek to mobilize migrant organizational and financial resources to benefit their own governments and their political popularity and legitimacy, once mobilized, these migrant groups may develop autonomous and oppositional bases of power. On the other hand, migrant political actors may enter the political fray as oppositional actors, but due to factors such as institutional weakness, this increased competition might easily morph into factionalistic conflict. In the Mexican case in particular, factionalism and personalistic politics have weakened the long-dominant PRI. At the same time, this tendency towards the formation of personalistic factions can easily result in internally divided and personalistic opposition groups and the ultimate return to power of relatively more institutionalized (though not democratic) parties like the PRI. A democracy-strengthening upshot of the insertion of migrant based organizations into home town public affairs spills over to influence the development of other civil society groups, or more civically engaged individuals, to hold municipal governments accountable.
4.5. Summary

In summary, there is no *a priori* reason to expect all migrant actors to have the same type of influence. One migrant individual or organization might enter the political fray as an autonomous and accountability-enhancing civil society member, while another might be tightly controlled or coopted by the dominant powers. One organization might intend to simply improve some aspect of the home community's infrastructure, but end up legitimizing the authoritarian rule of the dominant political group that manages to take over project implementation to benefit itself. Moreover, migrant actors might increase political competition when first engaging with municipal politics, but due to their interactions with other local political actors, the ultimate outcome at the level of the municipal political system might weaken stable democratic institutions, or shore up the power of a historically dominant political party.

5. IDENTIFYING THE DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN “SKEPTICS” AND “BELIEVERS”

The central theoretical and empirical debate with which I am engaging is that between those who generally view migration as a democracy-enhancing process (Burgess 2005, 2010, 2012; Jiménez 2008; Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow 2010; Pfutze 2012) and those who generally view it as democracy-weakening (Ahmed 2012; Goodman and Hiskey 2008; Hirschman 1970; Wright 2009). As is well documented in the sub-field of cross-national comparative democratization scholarship, democracy is a multifaceted concept. For instance, the “Varieties of Democracy” project identifies seven high-level components of democracy (electoral, liberal, participatory, majoritarian, consensual, deliberative, and egalitarian), which it desegregates into dozens of lower-level components (e.g., regular elections, judicial independence, direct democracy, and gender equality) (Coppedge, Gerring, and Lindberg 2012). Attempts to operationalize this multifaceted concept in a single democracy score (e.g., Freedom House, Polity IV) have been criticized for significant conceptual stretching, a proliferation of qualifying
adjectives and a logically flawed “Babel” (Armony and Schamis 2005). Among other recommendations, Armony and Schamis suggest that the comparative study of democratization might be fruitfully advanced by a focus on the significant subnational variation that is present within countries that are democratic at the national level of politics. The literature on the migrant democratization hypothesis does not tend to suffer from conceptual stretching (Collier and Levitsky 1997; Sartori 1984). Empirical research on the impact of migration of the politics of sending places has focused on a range of different indicators of democracy, suggesting that some of the disagreements between the “skeptics” and the “believers” might be related to the fact that different phenomena related to an under-theorized, catch-all concept of democracy are being examined.

For example, “skeptics” who view migration as democracy-weakening, such as Goodman and Hiskey (2008), measure the impact of high levels of migration on voter participation. “Believers” who argue that migration has democracy-enhancing impacts focus on such indicators as civil society development, accountability and good governance (Burgess 2010, 2012), and attitudes of the public (Jiménez 2008; Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow 2010). Others still (e.g., Fox and Bada 2008) place more focus on whether government-matched migrant collective remittances (i.e., through Mexico's 3x1 Program) improve the distribution of public goods to poorer areas, or rather, if they exacerbate inequalities (a question addressed in Chapter 4). Finally, a considerable body of case study research, particularly that focusing on Oaxaca, finds that return migrants and migrant-based social movement actors have succeeded in displacing entrenched authoritarian political bosses (e.g., Besserer 1999, 2003; Castro Neira 2009). Civil society thickening, the distribution of public expenditures, citizen attitudes, political participation, and party competition are all important aspects of democratic political development, and it is important to understand how they are impacted by migration-related factors.

Thus, at least some of the apparent disagreement may stem from the different conceptualizations and operationalizations of the dependent variable. Secondly, there are different conceptualizations and operationalizations of the key causal variable of migration. Some scholars—particularly (though not exclusively) the “skeptics”—focus on the indirect impact of migration on the demographics of a
community or country as the key causal factor. Others—most typically the “believers”—focus on migrants as direct social or political actors engaging with their communities from the diaspora or upon their return home.

6. MY CONTRIBUTION

In this dissertation I address these and other aspects of subnational democracy together, select cases where migrant actors are present and where they are not, seek to make more explicit the true parameters of the debate, and contribute to the development of a more theoretically grounded empirical understanding of the multifaceted relationship between migration and sending-municipality politics. The growing body of research reviewed in this chapter has begun to fill this gap, but is lacking in theoretical clarity and empirical breadth. Theoretically I aim to advance this scholarship by formulating a theory of municipal politics that is based on a modification of established political and social theories to the subnational level. Instead of conducting a traditional comparison of nation-states, the focus is on subnational political change in communities that are powerfully impacted by the economic fluctuations and political idiosyncrasies of places across a heavily fortified border. Thus, I engage with some of the most enduring questions of comparative politics from a more bottom-up and transnational perspective.

Empirically, I advance this scholarship by employing a methodologically ambitious research strategy that combines the ethnographic study of municipal cases with statistical analysis of two different databases. This mixed method and multi-sited research strategy makes it possible to draw more general conclusions than has been possible with the single-case and small-N studies common in this line of research while also facilitating the identification of underlying causal mechanisms behind the observed statistical correlations.
Building on the literature reviewed in this chapter, my research confirms that migrants impact the politics of their home municipalities in a variety of ways: from abroad and upon their return, in support of and in fierce opposition to dominant political parties and factions. By using both qualitative and quantitative methods, and selecting cases for study in a wide variety of contexts, I am able to account for variation in the impact of migrants on the politics of their home towns. That is, to an extent, my research suggests that the question as to whether migrants are democratizing or not is less important. What is more essential than simply identifying the impact of migration on the politics of the average community is to explain why migrants sometimes act as a democratizing force and sometimes do not, and in what ways.

With respect to questions of political representation, I find that the empowerment of migrants has meant an improvement of descriptive representation for traditionally excluded popular sectors of the population in Oaxaca. More generally, I show that the way in which migrants engage in the politics of their hometowns varies depending on their experiences as migrants, the reaction of prevailing authorities to their engagement, and to the facilitating role of state-level actors in organizing and institutionalizing the migrant-state relationship. When migrants come to influence hometown politics—whether as individual political entrepreneurs or as leaders of migrant-based organizations or social movements—they tend to do so by allying themselves with powerful state or local-level political actors. In cases where such extra-migrant alliances are absent, oppositional migrant-based political groups appear to be more susceptible to repression and cooptation by dominant political groups.

Establishing the general relationships between migration, migrant hometown engagement, and subnational political change is only an important first step. To paraphrase Geertz (1973, 26), the ultimate goal is not to establish “bloodless universals” about the relationship between migration and subnational democracy. What is much more interesting, rather, is to understanding the concrete ways in which individuals—migrant and non-migrant—interact with one another in particular contexts in the ongoing process of constructing their communities, and as Geertz wrote, “... to draw large conclusions from small, but very densely textured facts...” (28). In the next chapter I theorize these interactions. In the remainder of the dissertation, I empirically identify both the systematic statistical patterns related to migrant
engagement and sending-municipality political systems, and trace the processes through which migration and migrant actors have transformed the concrete political histories of their home towns.
CHAPTER 3
A THEORY OF MIGRATION AND MUNICIPAL POLITICS IN MEXICO

1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reviewed the most significant literature focusing on the relationship between migration, migrants and sending community and country political change. This review demonstrates that there are generally two currents within this subfield—the skeptics and the believers. This literature, however, includes a wide variety of implicit and explicit theories to explain the relationship between migration and politics back home. Furthermore, though generally concerned with how migration impacts democracy, scholars working on this question have studied a wide range of variables associated with democracy, including political competition, civil society thickening, and political participation, to reiterate just a few. As discussed in Chapter 2, even when we disaggregate the question of the democratizing potential of migrants into different hypothesized channels of influence, it is difficult to generate clear theoretical hypotheses. As summarized in Table 2.1, each category of hypothesized causes of migrant influence on home town politics—“Mode of Engagement”, “Attitudes and Ideologies Learned,” “Representation,” and “Unintended Consequences”—can have both democracy-enhancing and democracy-weakening outcomes.

Parting from the review of what we know about the relationship between migration and hometown democracy, in this chapter I present my general theoretical argument about how prevailing municipal political systems manage to incorporate an emergent migrant social group. This is an essential step as it provides a framework to analyze how multiple migration-related factors impact the politics of migrant-sending municipalities. To develop this framework, I begin by summarizing my general approach (Sartori 1984, 73). Second, I formally specify a series of agent-centered models of politics in high-
migration municipalities. These models help to explain how migration alters sending community political dynamics, how migrants become engaged, gain influence, and alter the balance of local power, and how dominant political groups are sometimes able to repress or co-opt emerging migrant political power to preserve the status quo. Finally, based on the agent-centered models, I outline an aggregate, municipal-level framework for analyzing the process through which migration impacts political systems.

2. GENERAL THEORETICAL APPROACH

My approach to the questions orienting this dissertation is characterized by concrete, actor-centered interpretation and analysis of municipal-level political elites—absent and present, migrant and non-migrant—in various Mexican locales. To approach a theory of municipal politics, I begin by considering scholarship on rulers and states as theorized by North (1981) and Levi (1988) and apply it at the municipal level of analysis. I suggest that North and Levi's rulers can be powerfully read as metaphors for political actors at the subnational level. North's “neoclassical theory of the state” (1981) and Levi's “theory of predatory rule” (1988) focus on the basic constraints faced by rulers and view rulers as discriminating monopolists who aim to maximize state revenue. Levi moves somewhat beyond North's theory, though, by considering the ruler's constraints “vis à vis agents and constituents, their transaction costs, and their discount rates” (Levi 1988, 10). The focus on the concept of the ruler's discount rate, that is, how much s/he values the present compared to the future, is a particularly important addition to North's theory and is useful in understanding the behavior of rural elites in Mexico. Though ideology, identity and the idiosyncratic attributes of particular elites are indeed important factors in determining their choices, it is first necessary to establish the structural constraints they face. Even the most shrewd and

19 Here and throughout this dissertation, I use the term “elites” somewhat loosely. Although I am referring to the minority of individuals who dominate decision making and discourse within a given political space, that political space is small, and often powerless in the broader political landscape.
forward-looking mayors, who fully recognize the potential future damage to their local dominance, might still opt to empower migrant-based organizations today to forestall present challenges to their legitimacy and local governability. The concept of the political discount rate helps to theorize elite behavior in complex environments with multiple interacting agents. If the political—or physical—survival of an elite is at risk in the present time, he will do almost anything, according to this formulation, to hold on to power, even if this may inadvertently empower future rivals (here, those connected with migrant-based organizations or migrant leaders).  

In addition to conceptualizing the discount rate of the ruler, Levi also moves beyond the assumption from neoclassical economic theory of the equality of parties of a contract. In so doing, she argues that “rulers can use the same state organization as both a productive enterprise and a protection racket” (12). Sometimes constituents are so weak that they wholly lack the capacity to enter into a contractual relationship with the state, such that we can conceptualize their relationship as an exchange of tax revenue for the service of protection. The limiting case is that in which a constituent, relatively powerless vis à vis the ruler, pays a tax to ensure his protection from the ruler and his agents in the state apparatus themselves. This theoretical perspective parallels closely Charles Tilly's (1985) thesis that the state functions in the same way as a protection racket or organized crime syndicate. In some cases for Levi, though, the state does enter into voluntary contractual relationships with constituents, specifically those who have some power, or a lot of power. The logic of the theory can be carried forward to understand situations in which the tables are turned, and the ruler is the less powerful party in an interaction. A defining case of the latter is that leader whose immediate political survival turns on his securing resources and support against internal or external rivals. Those subnational “sovereigns” faced with this situation become particularly vulnerable to capture by those who might help secure their immediate survival, as well as their future success. Indeed, this echoes the classical Marxian theory of the

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20 To be sure, this formulation does not assume that all elites are maximally shrewd and Machiavellian. Indeed, in many cases, elites may sow the seeds of their own future destruction due primarily to their own greed, hubris, stubbornness or myopia.
capitalist state as the executive committee of the bourgeoisie. For Marx, and many neo-Marxist state theorists, the state is at times considered to be an instrument of the dominant social class (see Jessop 1989, for a summary of this literature). Here I am analyzing subnational political units, but the core logic is quite similar.

Well organized, well-funded and well-respected migrant organizations and leaders are one type of potential social actor that might offer help to a mayor facing great difficulty, or the more mundane fiscal challenge of securing enough external funding to run the municipality. On the other hand, mayors in rural Mexico—particularly the more despotic—may use their institutional and personal power to extract revenue from community residents, migrants, and others to the benefit of their own short- and medium-term political gain, or that of other influential interest groups. Even more democratic leaders may use their legitimate authority to “tax” the community to provide local public goods and services. Indeed, it is not necessary for a mayor to be faced by an acute crisis of legitimacy to seek the support of migrants. Probably the most common and mundane daily challenge faced by mayors across Mexico is how to secure enough external (state, federal, migrant) funds to run an effective government. Mobilizing migrant resources, and leveraging them to secure additional state and federal monies, is but one among many strategies that mayors can employ to secure the resources needed to have a successful term in office, of fundamental importance for a successful political career.

The alliances made by modernizing European kings with the bourgeoisie against the nobility are said to have solved the immediate problem of raising revenue to fend off aristocratic and external rivals (North and Weingast 1989). As a byproduct of these alliances was the creation of accountability-enhancing institutions that made it possible for the bourgeoisie to monitor the king, who had “borrowed” much of their wealth to wage wars. The upshot was that these bourgeoisie-monarchy alliances strengthened the ascendant bourgeoisie such that it could ultimately decapitate the Crown (Huntington 1968). Similarly, by extracting resources from migrants or compelling them to return from abroad to serve the community, municipal leaders in rural Mexico may be forcing migrants to be kept comparatively more bound to their hometowns than they otherwise would be. As Cohen (1999, 2004) and
Mountz and Wright (1996) have suggested, migrant contributions increase the status of migrants and their families locally. It follows, then, that in compelling or mobilizing migrants to contribute to municipal projects and to the cultural life of the community, authorities may inadvertently strengthen the potential power of the migrants; power which those migrants could use against local elites should they return to seek positions of authority themselves. Nevertheless, there is considerable empirical evidence that prevailing authorities are sometimes successful in incorporating return and transnational migrant leaders into their coalitions. When this happens, migrant empowerment can serve to shore up the legitimacy of the status quo rather than undercut it.

I argue that the best way to understand continuity and change of municipal political systems is to focus on how prevailing political actors respond to the emergence of migrant elites and constituencies, and how these in turn react. The outcomes of the strategic interaction between these sets of political actors—migrant and non-migrant political elites and the publics whose support they seek—are theorized to range from the preservation of the prevailing balance of political power, on one side, to fundamental changes leading to a new democratic political equilibrium. In the former set of cases, the socioeconomic changes represented by migration—and the challenge of incorporating migrants and migrant-connected constituents—are processed through prevailing local political institutions without leading to fundamental changes in their structure. Stated differently, sometimes the social energy of migrants is effectively coopted by prevailing authorities, as discussed above. On the other side of this continuum, the socioeconomic changes brought by migration—particularly the political influence of migrant actors—emerges independently of the prevailing power structure and ultimately displaces it or fundamentally alters the dynamics of local political competition.

Following Knight (1992), I assume that different municipal political system outcomes (see Figure 3.2 below) are a product of a fundamentally distributional conflict between individuals that represent competing social groups, and that the relative unity or fragmentation of a community is a function of the behavior of its members. This approach recognizes that the institutional and policy equilibria reached in a polity tend to be most powerfully influenced by the same people who most benefit from their design.
(Knight 1992, 1995; Moe 2006; Stinchcombe 1968). The existence of an organized group that advocates powerfully for a shared interest, such as a democratized political structure, is not a sufficient condition to bring about the desired change due to the path-dependency of cultural norms and political institutions (Knight 1995; North 1995).

I cite many theorists from the rational choice tradition in large part because this is the most developed area of micro-level choice-theoretical modeling. Furthermore, beginning from a simple, deductive model establishes a good theoretical baseline for the analysis. That said, I fully recognize that the assumptions necessary for this simplification are unrealistic and often empirically dubious (Abrami and Woodruff 2004). The standard for judgment, however, is the degree to which models—however simplistic they may seem—improve upon our ability to explain political phenomena. As George Box and Norman Draper write: “All models are wrong, but some are useful” (cited in Mitchell 2009, 222). In complement to the basis in rational choice and game theory, my approach is informed by research in complexity theory (Mitchell 2009; Waldrop 1992), concrete theory (Lane 1997), and by the social theory of Pierre Bourdieu—most particularly his notion of the “habitus” as presented in The Logic of Practice (1990). Rather than being conceived as exogenous and based on a universal utility-maximizing rationality, Bourdieu's theory of action considers the social process of preference formation. The habitus is a set of principles of practical action which is the product of an iterative interaction between external social and economic constraints “which leave a very variable margin of choice” and “the system of dispositions” (50). Many reasonable actions are not the “product of a reasoned design, still less of rational calculation”—namely those choices made on the basis of habits of behavior that have developed over time through the practical, lived experience of the possibilities and impossibilities that have presented themselves in daily life (50-1). That is, although the behavior of prevailing political elites and emergent migrant actors can be understood in terms of the interests that they as individuals have, in practical

21 Some varieties of rational choice theory, including the rational choice theorists, such as North, Weingast, Moe, Levi and Knight, do theorize the institutional constraints of possible choices as well as the limits to information available and calculable by actors.
reality, their reasonable choices are constrained not only by the rigidity of prevailing institutional and social structures, but by the very habits of behavior that they have developed over time in response to these structures.

The approach here echoes Migdal's model of state-society relations (1988, 24-33), in which he conceives of human behavior, first, as being driven by the necessity to solve the “mundane needs for food, housing, and the like” which people seek to fulfill through the creation of “strategies of survival—blueprints for action and belief in a world that hovers on the brink of a Hobbesian state of nature” (27). These survival strategies—which can be used to model the action of poor peasants, warlords, and presidents—are “severely constrained by available resources, ideas, and organizational means” (27). In this way, Migdal's model seeks to integrate rational action of individuals to instrumentally meet their material needs with the symbolic, ideological and moral principles and habits that give meaning and purpose to peoples' lives. Migdal's so-called “mélange” theory focuses our attention on the embeddedness of political actors within a mélange of social and political organizations, and the resultant necessity for them to devise their strategies of survival in the face of competing rewards and sanctions offered by representatives of the state (which are not monolithic themselves) and centers of social power—including ethnic groups, migrant-organizations or local strong-men. Indeed, as alluded to above, the model is useful to analyze the choices and possibilities of the strong-men themselves, of mayors, and of migrant leaders as well as the poor villager or peasant who must figure out how to eke out an existence in the face of competing centers of local power.

Before turning to a presentation of a municipal-level process model of how the social and economic changes brought by migration can lead to different political outcomes, I specify a series of formal, agent-based models of municipal politics in high-migration places. These deductive theoretical models are used to generate hypotheses about how the emergence of migrant political actors can result in the variety of aggregate, municipal-level outcomes that I seek to explain.
As discussed in the previous section, my approach is characterized by a concrete, agent-centered analysis of municipal-level political actors in high-migration Mexican locales. In this section, I develop a concrete model of migration and municipal politics in Mexico. The model begins by outlining some basic assumptions about who the key sets of actors are in a stylized municipal space based on the prevailing social and political balance of power. The underlying change being theorized is the emergence of a new social actor in the municipal space, migrants. After establishing this context, the second step is to consider the goals of different types of actors, the different types of resources (internal and external) that they are able to bring to bear, and a general conclusion based on these assumptions.

This theory of migrant incorporation into municipal politics in Mexico is inspired by and in large part based upon Lane's formal re-writing (1997, 76-7) of Huntington's theory of political development from his classic *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968). His concern is with understanding the conditions under which the traditional monarch will modernize his or her nation in the face of new social interests, and when they will modernize for him (i.e., by overthrowing him). The purpose of my model is to establish the general context of municipal politics in rural Mexico before and after the emergence of migrants as a new social actor.

**Assumption 1:** Actors are individuals within the municipal political space (leaders, migrant and non-migrant, with and without institutional positions in local government) and groups (here, principally migrants as social group/interest, potential or actual, as well as traditional organized social interests).
Postulates: At time “t,” the key groups in a municipality may include:

1. The cacique(s)\(^{22}\) and his/their cohorts (based mainly on personalistic connections of kinship, and fictive kin);
2. The town elders (tios, principal citizens, council of elders);
3. The agrarian authorities (ejido or communal, may be connected with PRI, opposition, or be relatively autonomous);
4. Municipal administrative authorities (those holding institutional power in the local government);\(^{23}\)
5. Businesspeople (transit companies/taxi owners; store owners; builders; gas station owners; water bottlers; etc.);
6. Teachers (others these may be “oficialista,” connected to the PRI, or affiliated and empowered by the autonomous teacher's union [e.g., Sección XXII in Oaxaca]);
7. Submunicipal communities (these often become key actors at time t+1, as relatively more rural submunicipal communities are generally more dependent upon migration, and can thus be ripe for mobilization by emergent migrant political actors).
8. Religious groups and authorities (these need not be, and often are not, priests and other members of the Church, but can also be the community-organized systems of maintaining the Catholic temple, and organizing the principal religious festivals celebrated in the community).
9. Local representatives of political parties.

\(^{22}\) I use the somewhat controversial term cacique here because, to a greater or lesser extent, the model of personalistic, “strong-man” politics still does a good job of explaining what happens in Mexico, even within established institutions and organizations (such as political parties, labor unions, etc.) (see Knight and Pansters 2005).

\(^{23}\) This includes but is not limited to the mayor. Note, the mayor may be the effective cacique, but the cacique might instead serve as a “kingmaker” who decides which of his constituents will compete for and win the office of mayor, with all of its benefits.
At time “t+1,” the above groups remain important, but migrants become a potentially important new group. Depending on the specific context, the emergence of migrants as an important social group might occur at the same time as the emergence of other groups, such as opposition political parties in a context of national democratization, new economic sectors related to globalization, and so forth. Finally, there is always the possibility that previously important sectors have completely or nearly disappeared, such as with the shutting down of a mine, or the collapse of coffee-growing.

Assumption 2: Each actor has different goals. Different actors (between groups, within the same case and within groups across cases) have different cognitive, normative and cultural orientations. This assumption is inspired in part by Huntington's memorable passage: “The wealthy bribe; students riot; workers strike; mobs demonstrate; and the military coup” (Huntington 1968, 196).

The goals of different actors

The cacique's goals are to stay in power (if not in office, to be the king-maker for the municipal government). These actors are motivated to incorporate migrants as necessary to preempt challenge or broader discontent. As distinct from the modernizing monarchs, as theorized by Huntington, some members of the prevailing elite—including mayors and other elected local politicians—seek to gain/retain status in the community, to position themselves to achieve higher office (local deputy, a good job in the state bureaucracy, etc.) to enrich themselves personally, and/or to have a chance at reelection in the future. To do this they must ensure that their constituents are mobilized to support him (and that

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24 For the sake of simplicity, this stylized model assumes that migrants as a sociopolitical actor emerge at a single moment and without coinciding with the emergence of other new actors. This is not necessarily historically accurate—as discussed in the introduction to this dissertation—as migrant political actors emerged at generally the same time as the political opposition in Mexico strengthened, as indigenous movements strengthened, etc. The simplification is useful for clarity here. In later chapters where the case studies are examined in detail, the variety of contextual factors present in each municipality studied are fully examined and fleshed out.

25 This factor is particularly important in Mexico, where there is no consecutive reelection. As such, there is a dynamic of reverse accountability in which elected politicians are accountable to the higher-level party leaders who are in a position to help them secure their next job once their term in office is over. From a purely
opponents or potential opponents are demobilized, divided, or both). To gain this “legitimacy” and build sufficiently broad public support, their groups must provide material (rewards and sanctions) and symbolic (moral and spiritual) benefits to core supporters while not alienating or repressing less core supporters or the opposition enough to inspire counter-mobilization.

*The town elders*, not present in every community, are inclined to reject changes to traditional forms of community social and political organization.

*The agrarian authorities* may have broader political ambitions, but in their capacity as *campesinos* their goals are simply to preserve the rights to their lands, and their collective rights to communal resources vis-à-vis privatization, encroachment and poaching by neighboring communities or private land-owners, and so forth.

*The teachers* as a social group, more important in some communities than in others, might have different interests, depending principally on their external associations. As a general rule though, and regardless of whether they are allied with the PRI or with the opposition, the teachers are often in tension with the elders and other traditionalist factions. Teachers also have important human capital resources, including bilingualism (particularly in indigenous municipalities).

*Business sectors* are not monolithic in terms of political affiliation. That said, those individuals with some economic weight, including the ability to offer jobs, are often able to translate this into real political power. For example, those with sufficient external connections with the state government to secure taxi
licensees (and enough wealth to purchase cars) are often able to secure the political support of those families to whom they can offer lucrative jobs as taxi drivers. Transit workers, then, are loyal to their guild leaders, who are the ones who secure their licenses, and sometimes help to finance their cars. Similarly, in one of the municipalities studied, the local cacique was the owner of the local gas station.

Cooperative agriculture and other productive businesses often are organized independently of the state, and accordingly are autonomous and potentially poles of opposition support or solidarity with opposition groups. Additionally, as in some cases in Oaxaca's Northern Sierra Region (e.g., Los Pueblos Mancomunados), productive cooperatives that bottle water, produce furniture, or cultivate and market coffee are often organized under the auspices of the communal lands and by its authorities and membership. This can, then, place agrarian authorities (particularly communal resources commissions) as natural members of the opposition. Small businesses, particularly in state-sponsored stores, are dependent upon the government, and accordingly less likely to oppose the state-government.

**The members of submunicipal communities** might have a range of political orientations vis à vis the state government, their goals most consistently are to secure sufficient fiscal support from the municipal government to provide basic infrastructure. The leaders of submunicipal communities might be conceived as analogous to the aristocrats in Huntington’s example, with the cacique and the central power structure of the municipal seat being the monarch. In Huntington’s example, the aristocrats are interested in protecting their interests against the king. Here, the submunicipal leadership wants to do the same vis à vis the mayor, the cacique, or whatever group dominates politics in the municipal seat. Like the aristocrats, the submunicipal leadership might prove relatively easy for the mayor to coopt through the distribution of resources or other benefits. However, when submunicipal communities are excluded and do not feel they receive a reasonable share of resources from the municipal government, as noted, they may be the most ripe for mobilization against the center (for instance, by adversarial migrant-based organizations).
Migrants have a particular set of interests and goals, which are in part tied to those of their family members who remain in the community, and are in part related to their unique social position as migrants. The latter include, most importantly, the protection of their rights as members of the community, including their lands, property, and access to public utilities. Goals sometimes relate to the uses they make of the community, such as when they return to visit during religious festivities. Thus, they may prioritize having a nice central plazas or a renovated church to more fully enjoy their visits home and reinforce the affective and cultural ties to their community (this is often an important goal that emerges out of the feelings of alienation of the immigrant who lives in a strange land). Like the masses, however, the primary goal is to survive and earn a living (abroad and at home).

Migrant elites/leaders seek to represent migrants, and the community in a more general sense, and sometimes to win institutional power with the goals of protecting their unique sets of rights, advancing ideological goals, a policy agenda (sometimes based on their experiences as migrants, sometimes based on their pre-migration backgrounds), or both.

Assumption 3: The groups in municipalities, and accordingly their social bases of political power, have internal and external resources. Internal resources are derived from such things as kinship connections, personal charisma, prestige and legitimacy (social status), physical presence and power, institutional power (e.g., holding office in the municipal government), access to key resources (including land and/or decision-making power over its usage, jobs, etc.), and alliances with local social groups and submunicipal communities. External resources include connections with state and federal government officials, as well as social and political organizations based outside of the municipality (including unions, political parties, social movements, state-level migrant-civil society groups such as state-federations of migrant hometown associations).
In general: Actors of all kinds are concerned with securing their present and future survival. Political actors want to build their careers. The “masses”—be they small, landholding peasants, laborers, small agrarian workers, or migrant workers (regionally, nationally or internationally) have the goal of material survival—spend the bulk of their time and energy figuring out how to provide for the basic needs of their material existence.

Postulate: Prevailing political authorities—caciques and mayors alike—need to secure resources from external sources in order to govern their municipalities successfully and achieve the goals of advancing their political careers. Thus, they each individually may be motivated to “mobilize” migrant civil society groups—particularly with the objective of using them to secure federal and state matching resources through 3x1, or sometimes just for the migrant resources alone (as in many Oaxaca cases). If such migrant civil society groups are already mobilized, they may seek to tap into these groups and coopt their social energy, or alternatively, they may actively mobilize other migrant organizations to rival those already organized, to lend themselves the legitimacy of being a “friend to the migrant,” to raise funds through the 3x1 program, or some combination of these objectives. This cooptation of already mobilized migrants or the top-down mobilization of migrants to be allies, particularly the former, might be expected to be coupled with some level of representation of “migrant” interests, including the extension or recognition of some rights (e.g., voting), but without allowing for a full extension of political rights or status as an autonomous organ of civil or political society. On the other hand, however, it might simply result in the empowerment—and admission to the municipal elite—of a particular migrant individual or group of organized migrant leaders, rather than being broadly representative of migrants generally.

This clearly connects back to the big question of the dissertation: what are the pathways through which migrants act as agents of democratization and political opening? When cooptation or oficialista mobilization happens, migrants are not agents of democratization, but rather shore up the power and legitimacy of the prevailing political groups. That said, even when migrant political actors and civil society groups begin by lending legitimacy (and resources) to those currently holding power, per what I
termed the “upshot mechanism” in Table 2.1 in the previous chapter, mobilized oficialista migrants can slip out of the control of the dominant groups, and emerge as autonomous or even oppositional political or civil society actors.

**Postulate:** Migrants who give money, or spend time and energy to organize with their paisanos around hometown issues and to support hometown projects will be more likely to seek voice in that community. The general rule is that as migrants retain a greater degree of connection to their home town, they will be more likely to demand voice there. The nature of their connection will help to determine their interest vis-à-vis municipal policy and, accordingly, the way in which they engage with local authorities. For instance, those who plan to retire in the community will do what is necessary to retain good standing there, but will also demand the protection of their rights to do so. Their raw material interest is understood to be tempered, however, by culturally conditioned conceptions of what is just. For instance, many migrants interviewed do not expect to have the right to have a say in what happens in the community from abroad, because they recognize that they do not live there, and maybe do not understand what is needed in the community. Moreover, if they have not contributed their time to fulfill their obligations as community citizens (under what is broadly known as the cargo system) it may seem just that they do not have the right to vote in community assemblies or to gain access to collective forest resources, at least until they have reestablished themselves as community citizens in good standing. However, in high migration communities in Oaxaca, it is increasingly likely for authorities to demand the remote participation of migrants to fulfill community obligations by making financial contributions, paying for a replacement, or returning from abroad to serve. Demands placed on migrants to fulfill obligations, have been interpreted by migrants in places like Santa Ana del Valle, Oaxaca to mean that they should retain their full rights as community citizens, despite their absence (see Juan Martínez 2013). Similar to Scott's concept of “moral economies” (1976), the general rule that this demonstrates is that migrants will expect to gain or retain the rights of community citizenship only after prevailing authorities have demanded a certain amount from them or after they have retained a certain level of continued engagement in the
community from abroad. Self-interest alone is likely insufficient to explain this. Rather, culturally conditioned norms of justice and community citizenship are essential to determine the threshold beyond which migrants are likely to demand a voice in their communities, despite being absent from them for long periods of time.

**General conclusion:** The outcome depends on how many resources each actor has, the alliances it is able to make with other actors, and mass publics it is able to mobilize on its behalf.

4. EXPRESSING THE MODEL AS A DYNAMIC ALGORITHM

In order to generate more concrete hypotheses from this general theory, I now reformulate it as an algorithmic model based on Lane's politics model (1997, 80-1). To achieve this, I theorize the interactions of the two key actors in the municipal space—migrants and caciques. As the theory outlined in the previous section demonstrates, there are many potentially important actors in each municipality. By simplifying the model to focus on migrants and caciques I do not intend to downplay the importance of these other actors. This simplification, rather, allows me to focus on the core interaction that is being studied. Indeed, when discussing the implications of the theory, and particularly when applying it to concrete cases of municipal politics in chapters 6 and 7, it will become clear that the relative strength of migrants and caciques and the outcomes of their interactions is fundamentally conditioned by their success at marshaling resources and alliances from the other key actors within the municipality. This is also a simplification in that it assumes that “migrants” are a single group, and that there is but one cacique. In practical fact, it is not necessary that there be only one migrant leader or interest group, and some municipalities have competing caciques that lead rival factions.
The interaction between migrants and caciques can be summarized as follows:

1. Migrants decide to engage or not engage in the public life of their home towns.  
2. Once there is a decision to engage, each actor chooses to conform or to fight. 
3. If everyone conforms, the status quo equilibrium remains unchanged. 
4. When one fights, and the other conforms, the fighter wins. 
5. When both fight, the stronger wins. 
6. The loop continues.

4.1. Definitions

*Conform:* For migrants, to conform means to ally with or support the prevailing political group, rather than to seek to unseat it. This means, in more general terms, an acceptance of the status quo opportunities and resources available under the prevailing system. It also includes the acceptance by migrants who are making contributions to their communities—in kind or financial—to continue to do so and to view this as an obligation, without demanding corresponding rights to voice. In Hirschmanian terms, they are choosing loyalty. For the cacique, to conform is to accept migrant demands (if migrants choose to fight) or to accept social or political alliance with migrants (if migrants conform).

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26 This decision can be motivated “from-below” by migrants themselves, or “from-above” by municipal or state political actors.

27 In reality, the decision to engage and the decision to fight (or conform) might occur simultaneously, but it is useful to draw the conceptual distinction for the sake of clarity.

28 Within the “conform” category, we might place those migrants and organizations that seek to retain their autonomy without becoming political or seeking home grown allies at the local, state or federal levels. If they reject home-country social and political alliances, it is likely that they will be effectively absorbed into the prevailing institutional power structure, meaning that they are effectively conforming even if this is not their conscious intention.

29 This demonstrates the degree to which in the cases studied here, Hirschman's categories of exit, voice and loyalty are not mutually exclusive. Migrants can remain loyal after exiting.
**Fight**: For migrants, to fight is to openly oppose the dominant political leadership either by supporting and allying with opposition political parties and movements, or by seeking office oneself without oficialista alliances. Implicit in this is that one rejects the status quo opportunities because one's goals of power and influence over existing institutions (understood broadly as the distribution of social goods and bads) is expected to be more likely to be achieved by fighting against the established order. For the cacique, to fight is to enter into conflict with migrants when they fight (i.e., to reject their demands for voice) or to exploit migrants (to demand they fulfill certain obligations—such as financial contributions—without offering corresponding rights).

4.2. Discussion

First, migrants, individually or collectively choose to engage in the public life of their hometowns. This might be driven by their own bottom-up initiative and a desire to improve the quality of life for those still living in the community of origin, as with migrant hometown philanthropy. Migrants might also be recruited and mobilized from the top-down by prevailing authorities. The question of migrant mobilization to support public goods projects is empirically examined in Chapter 4. Migrants, however, are also mobilized (from the bottom-up and the top-down) to be direct political actors, such as candidates for office. The subsequent choice, highly related to the choice to be involved in hometown public affairs (e.g., as a philanthropist, as a politician), is the decision to conform or fight (see Lane 1997, 81).

In cases where the migrants and the cacique both choose to conform, the result is the stable integration of migrants into the prevailing political system. The degree to which the new migrant social group is authentically represented and given a voice in the municipal political system can vary considerably. In cases where the quality of representation of migrants is lower, and their integration amounts to cooptation rather than representation, the likelihood that they will choose to fight at a later

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30 Note: the political system at “t” may theoretically be one of open democratic competition, in which case, conforming means not trying anything revolutionary or reactionary.
iteration of the process increases. From the perspective of the cacique, one of the main challenges, according to this formulation, is to *sufficiently* represent the wishes and interests of a migrant group insofar as they are a potential rival for power. In cases where migrants have become a clearly identified constituency, politicians may seek them out as supporters, lest their rivals do so first. With respect to the fiscal needs of mayors, migrants and their collective remittances will be sought as a strategy to fund public expenditures and achieve governing goals for their terms in office, to help future political ambitions, to seek personal enrichment, or some combination of these.

As in Lane's formulation, “[w]here one decides to fight and the rest conform, the fighter wins” (81). In my model, if the mobilized migrant individual or group chooses to fight the authorities, either by seeking power directly or supporting the opposition, and the authorities “conform,” then the migrants have their demands met. It is logically possible, if not particularly likely, for the cacique to fully conform, in the sense of stepping aside and giving up power. If caciques fight the migrants, for instance by taxing them (requiring “voluntary” contributions of time or money), restricting their rights as members of the community, exiling them, or otherwise repressing them (or their families still living in the community), and the migrants conform (i.e., accept their status as second class, or non-citizens), the authorities will win. However, as noted above, this course of action on the part of authorities can be risky insofar as excluding, repressing, or limiting the rights of this emerging and economically important social group might serve to subvert the influence of the dominant group in the long run. If little or nothing is demanded of migrants or contributed by migrants to the municipality of origin, they are less likely to seek voice there. The more that migrants give, and certainly the more that is taken from them, the more likely they are to feel that they have a right to have a voice.

When both the migrants and the prevailing authorities decide to fight, the “stronger” wins (Lane 1997, 81). An actor's strength (whether collective or individual) is a function of her internal and external

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31 Thus, strictly speaking, this is the status quo in which the new migrant social group is effectively excluded or exiled. The conformity status quo (when both conform), could be referred to the “gatopardo” status quo—when it is necessary to change everything—open up the political system to incorporate migrants into the state—so that everything remains the same—power would remain in the hands of the dominant groups.
resources, including alliances that can be called upon. Stinchcombe's definition of legitimate power is useful here: “A power is legitimate to the degree that, by virtue of the doctrines and norms by which it is justified, the power-holder can call upon sufficient other centers of power, as reserves in case of need, to make his power effective” (Stinchcombe 1968, 162). What is unique in my application of this model is that migrants may have access to a different range of allies, including international NGOs, economic resources raised or accumulated as migrant workers or business owners in the United States or elsewhere in Mexico, social capital and migrant-based organizations themselves, human capital accumulated within and away from the community, as well as local and state-level alliances.

Whoever wins gets to either maintain or shape public decisions and maintain or change institutions to the benefit of themselves and (potentially) their supporters (Knight 1992). Sometimes political power is sought as a goal in and of itself. Whatever goals they have once power is mobilized and won, I assume that all actors recognize power to be necessary in order to achieve those goals. Typically, though, those who fight to gain or keep power do so because they want to change the rules (or keep them more or less as they are into the future). 32

This loop continues (Lane 1997, 81). As the discussion above suggests, the iterative nature of this process is essential. This model helps to simplify and boil down many complex, historically and contextually contingent interactions between different groups within the sociopolitical space of a municipality. For example, the decision to “tax” or mobilize migrants as a group today might serve certain immediate goals of governance. However the decision to mobilize migrants by the cacique—or to sanction them—may be the very thing that motivates migrants to seek voice in the community at a later

32 Some might ask why migrants, or anyone else who gains power under the present system, would opt to change the rules of a game that they have just won. The answers could be many. First, although migrants who have become mayors, for instance, may not want to change the electoral system, there may be any number of other laws, practices and policies that they would want to change. In such a situation, then, even though a migrant gained power (and even if s/he did so in opposition of the previously dominant group), there may be no fundamental change to the way politics are done, but rather only a change in who benefits from the spoils of power. Second, migrants may win power or influence by working outside of established institutional channels. As such, they may want to make changes such that they are not vulnerable to the same tactics (e.g., town hall occupations) that helped them to succeed.
Despite this voice being effectively channeled and incorporated into the municipal political space so as to shore up the power and legitimacy of the status quo, there is also a risk that the decision at time t+1 to mobilize migrants might result in a legitimized and organized force of opposition at time t+2.

4.3 General Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** If migrants are able to form a coherent political coalition, or if the opposition mobilizes or incorporates the set of migrant interests (or makes personal connections with migrant elites) a migrant-led opposition is more likely to unseat the cacique than in the absence of such coalitions. This requires either mobilizing a dormant but disgruntled potential constituency (such as disenfranchised submunicipal community residents), or allying with other non-migrant opposition groups—for instance, opposition political parties, the autonomous teacher’s union leadership, commercial organizations, etc. Acting in coalition with home community actors, then, is expected to improve migrants’ chances of unseating the cacique or dominant political clique, thus initiating a transition.

**Hypothesis 2:** When a cacique—or dominant political clique—incorporates or provides benefits to enough “new” people, particularly migrants, to gain their adherence, without alienating core internal constituents and influential external actors, thus impeding a migrant – opposition alliance, his chances of retaining power are greater than if he had not incorporated migrants. The key here is that by coopting a potential new rival constituency that could sufficiently strengthen opposition groups to challenge the status quo, the cacique can shore up his own power and legitimacy.

**Hypothesis 3:** If the cacique chooses to repress and exclude migrants from political rights and incorporation (i.e., to fight) he may succeed in keeping challengers out in the short term. If migrants are unable, in the face of this repression, to find local allies to assist them (including state or federal actors), they will likely accept their effective exile, or return under depoliticized auspices that are acceptable to
the status quo powers. To do this, though, the cacique may have to protect some migrant rights, extend some privileges (such as voting), and potentially empower them more than he would like.

Though these hypotheses are plausible explanations of what might happen when migrants and caciques choose different combinations of strategies, it is somewhat difficult, based on this formulation, to predict what strategy will be chosen by each. Although my understanding of agency is rooted in Bourdieu's concept of the *habitus* (1990), in the next section I theorize the choices I formally specify a stylized game theoretic model of the interactions between migrants and caciques in terms of their rational calculations of expected utility (or payoffs) to establish a baseline theory.

5. SIMPLIFYING THE MODEL IN GAME THEORETIC TERMS

5.1. Strategic Form Model

I express this simple model first as strategic form game (see Morrow 1994, Chapter 4), without payoffs. Abstracting from the large number of relevant actors in the municipal political space as discussed above, this model has just two actors: migrants and the cacique. Conceiving of migrants and a cacique as unitary actors is a simplifying assumption for the purposes of this exercise. As the preceding discussion reflects, and as the case studies in chapters 6 and 7 show, this is not strictly the case. Nevertheless, it is useful here for the purposes of specifying the underlying dynamics at play in many high-migration places. As with the algorithmic model outlined above, each player in this game has two choices or “strategies”: to conform or to fight. Finally, the pre-history of this game assumes that migrants have already become

33 I fully recognize that this is a stylized simplification. Furthermore, the term cacique is somewhat loaded. Like North (1990)—who developed his neoclassical theory of the state assuming a unified monarch—the assumption of a single dominant power, here in a subnational realm, makes it easier to focus on the interaction of interest, between the emerging migrant actors and the prevailing power structure.
engaged in the municipality of origin. The matrix in Table 3.1 shows the four possible outcomes. As can be seen here, and as discussed above, if both players conform, the status quo holds. If one fights and the other conforms, the fighter wins. Finally, if both choose to fight, the stronger wins.

Table 3.1. Strategic Form Game Model: Migrants and Cacique

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Conform</th>
<th>Fight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cacique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conform</td>
<td>Status quo</td>
<td>Migrants win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight</td>
<td>Cacique wins</td>
<td>Conflict: stronger wins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What the theory predicts in a given case depends upon which player is stronger. For simplicity, I construct two models with the same structure as the matrix in Table 3.1: one assuming the migrants are stronger and one assuming the cacique is stronger. This is important because each player’s strength, and their expectation of victory in a fight, is what is expected to determine their choice of strategy. Table 3.2 assumes the migrants are stronger and Table 3.3 assumes that the cacique is stronger.

The only differences between the models presented in figures 3.2 and 3.3 are in the payoffs when both choose to fight. I will begin, then, with a discussion of the other three cells before focusing on the outcome when both choose to fight. It is assumed that each actor places a different value upon the status quo. In general, the cacique will value the status quo at least as much as migrants. It is possible for migrants to value the status quo as much as the cacique, but not more (s_c ≥ s_m). Similarly, each player

34 Cases where migrants may value the status quo as much as the cacique are those in which they have been incorporated into the dominant group on favorable terms.
places a particular value on victory. For migrants, victory might mean that they win official positions of power, such as mayor, or simply that they or their organizations have effective influence over public decisions from outside of formal government. For the cacique, victory means the effective extraction of financial resources or other benefits (such as legitimacy) from migrants; particularly when they do not have to reciprocate with concessions or by giving up power. It is assumed that the value of victory is greater than the value of the status quo for either player. That is, contra Leibniz, this is not the best of all possible worlds. Things can always get better.

Formally: \( v_c > s_c & v_m > s_m \)

Similarly, each player will place a different value on defeat—defined as the other group getting its way. I assume that defeat cannot be equal to the status quo for either player. That is, however bad things seem, they can always get worse.

Formally: \( s_c > d_c & > s_m > d_m \)

Where \( s_c \) and \( s_m \) are the values of the status quo for the cacique and the migrant, respectively. Similarly, \( d_c \) and \( d_m \) are the values of defeat. The most important cell in both versions of this model is that in the lower right corner, when both players choose to fight. Regardless of the result, there is an assumption that fighting has a cost “f” that must be borne by both players, though the cost of fighting is not necessarily the same for each.\(^{35}\) For example, some players might have experience fighting, it might be part of their identity, and it might be a preferred strategy, everything else being equal. Indeed, as discussed below, some actors might have a bias in favor of (or against) this strategy that is unrelated to

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\(^{35}\) Realistically, there may also be a variable cost of losing, beyond the simple cost of fighting, due to exile, retaliation or exclusion suffered by the losers of a fight that would not be suffered if they had chosen to conform. For the sake of simplicity, I do not explicitly model this cost here.
calculations of utility. Thus, it is worse to fight and lose than it is to not fight and be defeated by a value of “f.” If the cacique or migrant chooses to fight and loses, the respective payoff values are:

\[ d_c - f_c \text{ and } d_m - f_m. \]

**Table 3.2. Strategic Form Game Model: Migrants Stronger than Cacique**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migrants</th>
<th>Conform</th>
<th>Fight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cacique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conform</td>
<td>Status quo</td>
<td>Migrants win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( s_c, s_m )</td>
<td>( d_c, v_m )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight</td>
<td>Cacique wins</td>
<td>Conflict: stronger wins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( v_c, d_m )</td>
<td>( d_c - f_c, v_m - f_m )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

s=value of status quo  
d=value of defeat if other group holds power  
v=value of victory  
f=cost of fighting
Table 3.3. Strategic Form Game Model: Cacique Stronger than Migrants

Model Prehistory: migrants already mobilized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cacique</th>
<th>Migrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conform</td>
<td>Conform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status quo</td>
<td>$s_c, s_m$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cacique wins</td>
<td>$v_c, d_m$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$s$=value of status quo  
$d$=value of defeat if other group holds power  
$v$=value of victory  
$f$=cost of fighting

According to these assumptions, for each player, the worst outcome is fighting and losing. Fighting when the opponent conforms (and thus winning) is the best outcome, followed by fighting when the opponent fights and winning. These two are equal when $f = 0$. In Table 3.2, it is assumed that migrants are stronger, and that everyone knows this. In Table 3.3, it is assumed that the cacique is stronger, and everyone knows this. The cost of fighting is key to determining the rank order of preferences for each player. Specifically, if the difference between the value of victory and the value of the status quo is greater than the cost of fighting ($f > v - s$), the status quo is preferable. For the moment, I assume, however, that $v - f > s$ and that $d - f < d$, which means the rank order of preferences for each player is as follows:

migrants: $v_m > v_m - f_m > s_m > d_m > d_m - f_m$

cacique: $v_c > v_c - f_c > s_c > d_c > d_c - f_c$
5.2. Extended Form of the Model

Two expressions of the model are depicted in extended form in Figure 2.4. As shown, the cacique moves first, however the results do not differ if migrants move first. Based on the rank preferences derived above, the extended form of the games can be solved using backwards induction (see Morrow 1994, Chapter 5). In version “A”, the case where the migrants are stronger, the cacique knows that if s/he chooses to fight, the migrants will choose to fight back and they will win. This is because we know that migrants prefer victory minus the cost of fighting to defeat.36 If the cacique chooses to fight, the expected payoff is \( d_c - f_c \), since s/he knows s/he will lose. If the cacique chooses to conform—which in this context could mean reaching out to mobilize migrants to support the community (and his cacicazgo), to recruit migrant leaders to run for office, or to otherwise seek alliance with the new migrant sector—migrants will choose to fight, since \( v_m > s_m \). The fact that migrants are expected to fight in either situation, then, serves to deter the cacique from fighting in the first place, since \( d_c > d_c - f_c \).

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36 As specified here, this demonstrates the importance of the cost of fighting. Where the cost of fighting is quite high, the utility of this strategy falls, even when victory is likely. Similarly, if the assumptions that both players have complete knowledge of their own strength and the strength of their opponent is relaxed, the results of the model become far less predictable.
Figure 3.1. Extended Form Game Model: Migrants vs. Cacicques

Cacique moves first*

A. Migrants Stronger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migrant wins</td>
<td>$(d_c - f_c, v_m - f_m)$</td>
<td>Cacique wins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant wins</td>
<td>$(d_c, v_m)$</td>
<td>Status quo holds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Cacique Stronger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cacique wins</td>
<td>$(v_c, d_m)$</td>
<td>Migrant wins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cacique wins</td>
<td>$(v_c - f_c, d_m - f_m)$</td>
<td>Status quo holds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Outcomes are identical regardless of who moves first.

M = Migrants; C = Cacique
f = fight; c = conform

$s$ = value of status quo
$v$ = value of victory
$d$ = value of defeat if other group holds power
$f$ = cost of fighting

Version “B” of the model, representing the cases where the cacique is stronger than the migrants, is almost the exact inverse of version “A.” Using backward induction again, we conclude that the cacique knows that the migrants will choose to conform if he chooses to fight. This is because the migrants prefer $d_m$ to $d_m - f_m$. This gives the cacique an expected payoff of $v_c - f_c$ if he chooses to fight. Looking to the lower branch of version “B” of the model, we can conclude that the cacique expects the migrants to fight if he chooses to conform, since fighting when the other conforms results in victory, $v_m$, which is preferable to the status quo, $s_m$. 
5.3. Discussion: Addressing the Limits of the Game Theoretic Model

The equilibrium of both versions of the model specified above is with victory (and a strategy of fighting) for the stronger, and conformity and defeat for the weaker. This does not explain all cases, as will become clear in the case studies. There are numerous cases where conflict is the result of an emergent organized migrant constituency (i.e., both choose to fight) or where the status quo persists more or less unaltered, despite the emergence and engagement of migrants in their home municipalities. There are several possible reasons this simplified game model does not explain all outcomes, some that have to do with the specific assumptions made, and others than extend beyond the terrain that can be modeled within a rational choice framework.

5.3.1. Relaxation of Assumptions within a Rational Choice Framework

Within a rational choice framework, and as alluded to above, the cost of fighting might be so high that the stronger party chooses not to fight when the opponent does. Second, the predicted outcome becomes less clear if the players lack complete information about the relative strength of their opponent. For example, migrants might lack full confidence in their status and influence back home, in part because of the fact that they have been absent and do not fully understand the political dynamics there. On the other hand, a long-dominant cacique might be overconfident in the level of his public support and the extent of the resources and alliances he can bring to bear in a conflict, which will make him less averse to fighting than perhaps he should be. The overestimation of strength on the part of one player, coupled with the underestimation of strength of the other should increase the likelihood that the overconfident player will fight (and win) and the less confident player will back down (and lose). If both are confident there will be a higher likelihood of conflict and if both are less confident, the likelihood of the stability of the status quo will proportionately increase. Additionally, a stable status quo equilibrium would be expected
to be more likely where migrants and caciques have more or less equal strength, lowering the expected payoff of choosing a fighting strategy.

5.3.2. Adjustments Outside of a Rational Choice Framework

Moving beyond the constraints of rational choice theory, the behavior of agents is likely explained by many factors other than utility-maximizing calculations. For instance, the habitus of different types of actors and actors with different cultural backgrounds can have powerful effects on behavior, particularly when the players lack sufficient information or ability to foresee the outcomes of different strategies. That is, even if we accept that political actors are strategically calculating in the pursuit of their goals, when faced with uncertainty they might fall back on habits and norms of behavior, personal ethics (i.e., beliefs about how one ought to act), or ideological orientations. The empirical case studies show how different migrant actors develop identities, ideologies, skill sets, and habits of behavior through their experience as migrants. As I interpret these cases, actors—migrant and non-migrant—develop a certain political skill set and an accompanying identity and ideology, as well as personal, partisan, and organizational loyalties over the course of their lives. All of this can increase their propensity to certain types behavior—for example, fighting or conforming.

A good example of this comes from my research of the case of San Miguel Tlacotepec, a Mixtec indigenous municipality in the state of Oaxaca.37 The recent history of this municipality has been shaped in many important ways by the indigenous migrant social movement leader Arturo Pimentel Salas. Pimentel was among a cohort of migrant labor and political leaders who gained political experience when away from his community as a direct action organizers of wildcat strikes, road blocks, public building occupations, and other extra-institutional radical political actions. This type of political action was the

37 The case is discussed in considerable detail in chapters 5 and 6.
skill set he developed, and it corresponded with the development of a Leftist ideology. This ideological, identity and skill formation arguably led Pimentel to pick a fighting strategy when he and his allies returned to their home town to wrest political control from the long dominant political group there. As I interpret it, Pimentel did not choose to fight simply because this is the strategy through which he thought he would achieve the highest expected utility. Rather, he chose to fight because this is what he knew how to do. Furthermore, the ideological underpinnings of his movement led it to take a particularly adversarial stance vis à vis the status quo, which would have made it particularly difficult to justify conforming.

This is not to say that expected utility is not an essential element to understanding actor choice, nor that goals are not fundamental to theorizing about this choice. Indeed, I would not have spent the time specifying the game theoretic model above if I did not believe it helped to shed light on these questions. The point, though, is that in complex and unpredictable sociopolitical contexts, and in situations of limited information, actors are likely to be biased in the direction of their *habitus*; a conglomerate forged by their previous experience, their cognitive orientation and skills, social and cultural norms, personal loyalties, and other elements of the community context.

5.3.3. Introducing the element of time

Introducing the element of time, and thus considering the interactions between migrants and caciques over a more extended history, helps to account for a wider range of possible outcomes. For example, the static model does not make it possible to consider how the strength of players evolves or how their motivation to cooperate and ally with each other or to oppose each other changes. Consider, for instance, the first iteration of the migrant – cacique interaction, in which the cacique is stronger, as in panel “B” of Table 3.1. In this case, despite choosing to conform (i.e., engage in such a way so as to support the prevailing authorities and the status quo) the cacique fights (e.g., extracts/accepts resources from migrants without offering corresponding benefits). In the simple version of the model, this is the
strategy that would maximize the cacique's current benefit. However, once this has happened, migrants may shift from having a conciliatory and supportive orientation toward the cacique and the status quo to having an adversarial orientation. Feeling thus aggrieved, they might put more efforts into organizing potential supporters (in the U.S., in the community, in the state, etc.) to be prepared to successfully challenge that cacique at a later date.

To put this in the language of the model, the extraction by the cacique of benefits from migrants serves as motivation for migrants to find ways to increase their strength to be able to fight and win another day. If a forward-looking cacique foresees this, he might choose to “conform” when migrants choose to “conform” (outcome: status quo). This pathway has the potential benefit of securing migrants as supporters and increasing legitimacy, while making it less likely that the opposition will mobilize migrants on its behalf and present a more serious challenge in the future. In addition, caciques, as ambitious political actors, may balance the demands of the present against those of the future. As Levi (1988) discusses, the discount rate of the monarch—or here, the cacique—reflects the degree to which he values the present over the future. As such, a cacique who has a more acute need for the resources he can extract from migrants in the present, will be more likely to do this despite the potential long term costs if he has a high enough discount rate.

5.3.4. Accounting for the Role of Multiple Actors

Reducing the number of actors to two, as I do in the simplification of the model does not mean that the role of the multiple actors in the municipal space is overlooked. When using these models to evaluate empirical cases, the key task is to thickly describe the political context. Any political actor who is dissatisfied with the status quo and wants to change it generally must either seek political power directly or ally with an opposition group that also seeks changes to the status quo (i.e., an opposition group that chooses to 'fight'). Forging alliances with opposition political forces in the home community or
state is one way that migrants might effectively increase their strength and accordingly achieve their goals. Similarly, the threat that migrants might shore up the power and legitimacy of opposition political parties or factions can motivate caciques (or those of a dominant political faction or party) to seek alliance with or to coopt migrants.

Alliance with migrants would, in this formulation, be among the principal political “currencies” to be mobilized by cacique or opposition in their competition with each other. As such, migrants could be seen as a key swing factor in determining the winner in the municipal political space. In my formulation of the model, the local opposition to the cacique and other internal and external actors are present (by implication) in the “fight-fight” cell when determining who will win. That is, in the situation where the migrants choose fight and the cacique chooses fight, the task is to analyze what resources and alliances each party to the conflict brings to bare. Indeed, expectations of what will ultimately happen in the event of a fight should have a powerful impact on the decision of the parties about whether to choose fight or conform. In the game theory exercise, this is the empirical challenge of determining relative payoffs.

A final complication that is somewhat difficult to account for within the context of this model is the assumption that migrants and caciques (not to mention other political forces not explicitly modeled) are unified collective actors. In the real political world—particularly in the small and medium-sized Mexican municipalities examined in this study—parties, movements, factions and organizations are characterized by internal conflict and factionalism. Thus, in many high-migration municipalities, some migrant groups and individuals are aligned with the dominant political group, some with the opposition, and some in opposition to each other as well as to a third, non-migrant group. This complexity can make it difficult to explain the aggregate outcomes of municipal political systems using a general theoretical model, as formalized above. By beginning with a formal framework, however, it becomes possible to wade through particular political spaces, characterized—as they are by many individuals and groups with a variety of converging and competing interests, ideologies and identities—without getting lost in the complexity.
In the next section, I present an aggregate, municipal-level model of the processes through which the emergence of migrants as a social group can impact a municipal political system. In addition to clarifying the range of municipal-level outcomes that result from the theorized interactions of individual agents, this process model helps to clarify the connection between the three research questions of this dissertation.

6. A PROCESS MODEL OF MIGRATION-LED POLITICAL CHANGE IN MEXICO: A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

In the final section of this chapter, I discuss the range of pathways that can be taken by a municipal political system when faced with high levels of out migration. The model shows how municipalities can be divided into several categories based on the decisions of migrants, prevailing political leaders and the community that stays behind, and the interactions between them over time. Here the goal is to clarify the categories that a municipality can fit into at different key points in this process, which taken together can be understood to lead to different municipal-political system outcomes.

The process model, summarized in Figure 3.2, shows a set of different pathways through which migrants are mobilized to act upon sending-municipality political systems. The starting point is the set of municipalities with significant outward migration. Given high levels of outward migration (1), migrants either mobilize to engage in their home towns (2a), or they do not (2b). Accounting for variation on this first branch is the first empirical task of the dissertation. The specific objective is to identify the conditions for emergence of migrant civil society. It should be noted that, although Figure 3.2 presents “migrant collective action” as dichotomous, theoretically this can be conceptualized as a continuous
variable, with places having different levels of migrant mobilization.\textsuperscript{38}

**Figure 3.2. Pathways of Migrant Incorporation into Municipal Political Systems**

I theorize two categories of causes of “migrant collective action”: bottom-up and top-down. Bottom-up migrant collective action is represented by the first branch of Figure 3.2 and refers to migrant social or political mobilization that emerges and is motivated by migrant leaders themselves when abroad

\textsuperscript{38} In Chapter 4 this variable is operationalized as a count variable, measured by the number of migrant-funded collective remittance projects under the 3x1 program.
Top-down migrant mobilization occurs when home-country government actors (local or state-level) are the prime movers who recruit migrant leaders to run for office or encourage the formation of migrant based organizations (MBOs). This form of migrant mobilization is reflected by the arrow moving from the box labeled “migrants do not mobilize” to the box labeled (on its lower half) “migrants mobilized from-above” (2b to 3c). As should be clear from reflecting on Figure 3.2, “bottom-up” and “top-down” causes are ideal types, and both bottom-up and top-down dynamics often coincide. Among the key motivations behind the “top-down” organization of migrant-civil society groups by governors and mayors is to encourage them to raise and contribute collective remittances to the home-community. Other instrumentalist motivations include the courting of political support and votes from return migrants and their families living in the area or the cultivation of an image as a friend to the migrant.

When migrants mobilize to act collectively from the bottom-up, there are two possible subsequent pathways. They can retain their status as autonomous civil society actors (3a) or they can become coopted by prevailing authorities and government actors (3b). Once arrived at either 3b or 3c, migrant civil society groups can be classified as quasi-governmental corporatist bodies that are the sole representatives of the migrant sector before the state or local government. When this relationship is institutionalized and becomes stable over time, the outcome for the municipal political system is continuity (4c). The emergent migrant-based socioeconomic sector is successfully integrated into the municipal system, establishing a new neocorporatist equilibrium. The key here is that the prevailing political elites manage to remain dominant and avoid potential challenges to their political power from an organized migrant sector through the mechanism of cooptation. This mode of neocorporatist representation of the interests of emerging social groups has been common in post-Revolutionary Mexican history, such as with peasants, workers

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39 Governors and other home-country political actors also have mobilized and recruited individual migrant leaders to be candidates for local political office. The paths to power of these individual migrant leaders—whether recruited by home country actors or emerging from autonomous migrant-based organizations, are the central focus of the second section of the dissertation.
and popular sectors. The same general pattern can occur with individual migrant political actors as well. For example, there are numerous cases of migrants who have been recruited by political parties to run for mayor or other local offices. When these are recruited from the top-down or coopted by prevailing elites they serve to shore up their strength and legitimacy, at least at t1.\(^\text{40}\) A defining characteristic of this type of interest representation, and the main way in which it is distinguished from pluralistic interest representation (outcome 4b), is the extent to which migrants are permitted to organize to promote their interests or seek political power independently of the dominant political group in the municipality.

In cases where migrants are mobilized from the top-down or coopted by prevailing government actors, they might still follow the path to autonomy (3b/c to 3a). This pathway, particularly that going from 3c to 3a, reflects the risk that can be run by dominant political actors by mobilizing migrants. Though the motivation for doing so may be to meet short and medium-term political and governance objectives (to recruit candidates, raise funds for public works projects, etc.), the long-term unintended consequence can be the cultivation of potential rivals. When migrants are consolidated as an autonomous social or political force in a community, some develop or maintain a fundamentally adversarial and oppositional orientation vis-à-vis the state and/or municipal government. Others are able to develop a collaborative working relationship with the local government.\(^\text{41}\) When migrants seek to remain or become autonomous, there are two possible outcomes, depending on the nature of their interaction with government actors. First, prevailing authorities might choose to repress migrant political and social actors,

\(^{40}\) Indeed, as the case study research demonstrates, once a migrant politician has been recruited and mobilized by prevailing elites, they may very well split with their original political godfathers to ally with another party or group, or to form an autonomous political movement or faction of their own.

\(^{41}\) Of course, the orientation of autonomous migrants is in part determined by the behavior of prevailing political actors. Thus, the interactions between migrant and non-migrant actors as theorized above are key to understanding the municipal political system outcomes. It should also be noted that this is an ongoing process, and autonomous migrants can later become fully integrated (i.e., coopted). Also, opposition is most effectively operationalized vis-à-vis the municipal government, however, there are typically local actors allied with the state government. In many cases these local allies of the state government are the prevailing municipal authorities that are displaced by oppositional migrant political actors, or individuals that they support.
either by excluding them from participation and local “citizenship” or by more or less violently preventing them from organizing in the local political space (4a) (this is the outcome where both migrants and caciques choose a “fight” strategy). This outcome is characterized by a change in the municipal political system, as the dynamic of repression and adversarial organization devolves into social and political conflict, factionalistic competition, and disequilibrium. Unlike outcome 4b, 4c, and 4d, this outcome is unstable and weakly institutionalized. It constitutes a change in the municipal political system insofar as there is a break in the monopoly of political power of a particular group.42 Second, a combination of somewhat less adversarial migrants and somewhat more accepting authorities can lead to an increasingly pluralistic local political system. When migrant mobilization is explicitly political, this outcome is characterized by a strengthening of institutionalized competition and a new, more democratic equilibrium (4b).

Before concluding, it is necessary to make note of a level of complexity not explicitly represented in Figure 3.2, which represents the dynamics of top-down and bottom-up mobilization of migrants and the nature of the interactions between migrants and prevailing authorities. Another important dimension not reflected in Figure 3.2 relates to the type of mobilization: political or social (or civil society). In the next two chapters, the analysis focuses on the emergence of migrant civil society groups and collective remittances and the political success of migrant political actors (namely mayors).

Figure 3.3 makes explicit these two basic types of migrant mobilization. Sometimes migrants mobilize (or are mobilized) to raise funds or engage in activities to benefit their communities in Mexico. The focus here is principally on those organizations that turn their attention back home and organize collectively to benefit the community there. In other instances migrants are mobilized or mobilize to seek political power and influence in their home towns. As with migrant civil society mobilization, migrant

42 As with all stylized stories of complex social and political phenomena, there are caveats. For example, many municipal political systems in rural Mexico have long been characterized by factionalism, personalistic competition and conflict. As such, one could argue that the “change” classified in 4a is not so fundamental after all.
political mobilization can be motivated from the top-down or the bottom-up. For example, there are cases (discussed in this dissertation) of migrants who were recruited by political leaders in their home states to return home and run for office. Other times, migrants organized political campaigns or movements independently of prevailing authorities and with the goal of returning home to unseat them.

As Figure 3.3 shows, these two types of migrant mobilization are not mutually exclusive, and in some cases can mutually reinforce each other. Some migrant political actors begin and remain only political actors, with limited significant engagement with migrant civil society groups. Similarly, some migrants who are involved in civil society organizing and collective remittance projects never become interested in politics. However, there are cases where migrants who begin as civil society leaders and use this organizational base and the social status that it sometimes brings as a political platform. Alternatively, migrants can begin by seeking political power, only later to become engaged in mobilizing and leading migrant civil society organizations.

**Figure 3.3: The Interactions Between Political and Civil Society Mobilization**
7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have developed some basic models of how migration can impact the politics of migrant-sending municipalities in Mexico. The process model in Figure 3.2 with which I concluded accounts for cases where migrants do not mobilize either as civil society or political actors in their home municipalities, despite high levels of out migration, and what I have classified as the emergence of a migration-based economy. Nevertheless, the principal dynamic that the theoretical models presented in this chapter have attempted to capture is the relationship between the dominant political group in the community, and migrants. I began by developing a general theory of how municipal political systems incorporated migrants. This section laid out several basic assumptions and postulates, including who the key social and political actors in the municipal political space at time “t” are, and how the introduction of migrants as a new set of actors at time “t+1” is expected to alter the sociopolitical balance. Second, I reformulated and simplified this theory of migrant incorporation into municipal politics in Mexico as a dynamic algorithm. This introduced micro-level action into the model, by theorizing the strategic behavior of two stylized actors—migrants and caciques—and specify three general hypotheses. Third, I further simplify the algorithmic model with a simple two person game theory exercise, and discuss the strengths and limits of this simplification. Finally, I conclude by presenting an aggregate framework of the different processes through which the emergence of migrants as a social group can impact municipal political systems. This municipal-level process model clarifies four basic municipal political system outcomes, and demonstrates the connection between the three research questions of this dissertation.

The next two chapters offer theoretically grounded, quantitative analyses of two different ways in which migrants become influential actors in their municipalities of origin. First, in Chapter 4 I examine the determinants of migrant collective remittances through the Mexican Government's 3x1 Program for
Migrants. Despite its limits, discussed in the chapter, this provides a general sense of the extent to which migrants are organizing collectively to support their communities and municipalities of origin, and what kinds of municipalities are benefiting from their support. Second, in Chapter 5 I examine the biographies, social backgrounds, and pathways to power of migrant mayors in the state of Oaxaca and demonstrate how they differ from those of non-migrants. These quantitative analyses are particularly useful to demonstrate the empirical patterns across a large number of municipal cases to better understand the different types of places where migrants are engaging as civil society and political actors. To unpack the strategic interactions of different agents and the historical processes that explain these patterns and have been theorized in this chapter, in chapters 6 and 7 I turn to the qualitative examination particular migrant political actors and the municipal political systems in which they are engaged.
CHAPTER 4
TRANSBORDER MIGRANT CIVIL SOCIETY AND COLLECTIVE REMITTANCES:
EXPLAINING HOME TOWN ENGAGEMENT IN MEXICO

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I seek to answer the first empirical question of the dissertation: Why do immigrants living in the United States act collectively to contribute to public goods back home? We know that by far the most common form of connection between migrants and their hometowns is through ties with family members, including the sending of private remittances. But why, under what conditions, and in what kind of places do migrants move beyond participation in the private sphere to collective, trans-border engagement in the public sphere? There is a significant body of research on the formation and nature of migrant based organization (MBOs) from Mexico and elsewhere. This chapter contributes to literatures on migrant collective action and civil society formation by painting a nation-wide empirical picture of migrant collective home community engagement in Mexico through the federal government's 3x1 Program for Migrants.

This program, based on a similarly structured program piloted in the state of Zacatecas, was established at the federal level in 2002 (Soto Pirate and Velásquez Holguín 2006, 12). The specific goals of the program include: 1. “To promote the joint initiatives in which migrants and the three levels of government execute projects to improve social conditions in the selected localities”; 2. “To promote the channeling of investments to the poorest and most marginalized communities”; and 3. “To foster ties of identity of Mexican nationals living abroad with their communities of origin” (Soto Pirate and Velásquez
Holguín 2006, 13, citing Diario Oficial de la Federación, 2/18/2005, pp. 56-72). Under the program, migrants organized in HTAs propose a project, together with their municipal government in Mexico, and contribute a set amount of money. If approved, the migrant contribution is matched by equal contributions from the federal, state, and municipal governments (Soto Pirate and Velásquez Holguín 2006, 14).

The analysis in this chapter draws on, and hopes to contribute to, two streams of empirical research. First, this research has implications for the debate between those who view migration and remittances as dependency-generating versus development-enhancing. Much of the research in this protracted debate (see Binford 2003, for a summary) has focused on the quantitatively much more prominent individual migrant remittances. Over the course of the past decade, however, research has increasingly focused on the impact of collective remittances (e.g., Burgess 2005, 2006, 2012; Fernández de Castro, García Zamora, and Vila Freyer 2006; Ibarra Escobar 2005; Orozco and Lapointe 2004; Orozco and Welle 2005), particularly due to the efforts of governments to make use of collective migrant remittances to more effectively meet goals of social and economic development (Cano 2004). The long-common practice of collective remittances has become increasingly institutionalized across the country over the past decade, as has the relationship between sending municipalities, states and countries (Fernández de Castro, García Zamora, and Vila Freyer 2006). Identifying the patterns and determinants of these migrant investments is a necessary first step to fully understanding how migration impacts municipal politics. That said, demonstrating the social, political and organizational factors that explain variation in the number of 3x1 projects across Mexican municipalities has important public policy implications as well. The target beneficiary population of the 3x1 Program for Migrants—which falls

43 My translation from the original Spanish, which reads: “1. ‘Impulsar las iniciativas corresponsables en las que los migrantes y los tres órdenes de gobierno ejerciten proyectos que mejoren las condiciones sociales de las localidades seleccionadas’; 2. ‘Promover que las propuestas de inversión se canalicen a las comunidades de alta migración y pobreza’; 3. ‘Fomentar los lazos de identidad de los connacionales radicados en el exterior hacia sus comunidades de origen.’”

within the Mexican Federal Government's Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL, in Spanish)—includes the “inhabitants of migrant origin communities or other localities that migrants are interested in supporting and that are in conditions of poverty, underdevelopment or marginalization...” (SEDESOL 2011, 53, my emphasis). Though evaluating the effectiveness of the program in meeting these goals is not the primary objective here, the analysis shows that 3x1 dollars are not effectively targeting the poorest localities (this is consistent with the findings of Aparicio and Meseguer 2012). Though this is not particularly surprising, as migrants do not tend to come from the poorest communities, the evidence suggests that this program is not leveraging migrant funds to channel more municipal, state, and federal funds to the poorest communities in the country.

Second, this chapter contributes to the scholarship on the growth of migrant civil society, the limits and potential of collective remittances and the emergence of transnational migrants as rights-demanding political subjects at the state and national level in Mexico (see Ayón 2010; FitzGerald 2008, 2009; Iskander 2010; Kapur 2010; Smith 2003). Presenting an empirical picture of one aspect of the transborder engagement of Mexican migrant civil society is the central goal here. Understanding the contextual determinants of migrant collective remittances is important in its own right. But it is also an important first step toward a better understanding of why and under what conditions migrants become or remain active in the social or political life of their home towns, how they relate with municipal, state and federal governments back home (whether as autonomous civil society actors, oppositional actors, or absorbed and coopted participants in quasi-state corporatist networks), and how this impacts political and economic development.

I begin below by briefly reviewing relevant aspects of the scholarship on migrant civil society, collective remittances, collective action, interest groups and social movements to clarify theoretical propositions and their hypothesized empirical implications. Second, I discuss the data used in the analysis and operationalize the dependent and independent variables. Third, I discuss my choice of statistical model to test the hypotheses. Fourth, I present and interpret the findings. I conclude by discussing the
implications of the findings for our understanding of migrant civil society, collective remittances, Mexico's 3x1 program and broader questions concerning the political impacts of migrant home-community participation.

2. EXPLAINING TRANSBORDER MIGRANT COLLECTIVE ACTION

Previous research suggests that migrant associations tend to be formed by migrants from rural locales, from states with longer migration histories, and by those from communities that are more settled and integrated into the US. In addition, as Alarcón (2002) argues, the engagement of state governments and the Mexican consulates in the US with migrant communities are often key factors explaining the emergence of migrant associations. Findings from my analysis of Mexico-wide, cross-sectional data, at the municipal level of aggregation are consistent with historical case study research (Alarcón 2002) and survey research of US-based migrants (Jones-Correa and Andalón; Portes, Escobar, and Walton Radford 2007). While the aggregate nature of the data analyzed limits some of the inferences that can be drawn, due to the dangers of ecological fallacy, the chief contribution of the analysis lies in the comprehensive empirical picture of the political and economic correlates of migrant collective remittances through the 3x1 program.

Collective action is difficult due to free-rider problems (Olson 1965) and general resource deficiencies (McCarthy and Zald 2001). In order for migrant civil society to emerge, then, a number of barriers to organization must be overcome. Individual decisions to form or join organizations in the US to financially support home communities can be analyzed with reference to two constituent parts: desire and ability. A necessary condition for individual contribution is the desire to make a contribution—in this case a financial contribution. The will to contribute, however, is not sufficient, as one must also have the financial and organizational wherewithal to do so. This latter condition, however, is neither necessary nor
sufficient in a deterministic sense. On the one hand, it is possible for a motivated but isolated individual to be unable to make a meaningful financial contribution to a home-community public good, despite a relatively high level of disposable income. On the other hand, it is conceivable for an individual of relatively modest economic resources to increase the collective impact of a contribution to her community by the hard organizational and fundraising work typical of the most successful HTAs. Hence, although individual level will and financial resources are theoretically important in explaining collective remittances, I choose to focus on the level of communities—specifically, binational communities of migrant sending-receiving dyads. This is because the potential to raise funds for a project in the home community is a function of community-level characteristics. It is these collective indicators that are expected to determine the probability of migrant-collective action. I now turn to a discussion of these characteristics and theorize why they are expected to be important.

3. THE CAPACITY OF MIGRANTS TO SUPPORT THEIR HOME TOWNS

3.1. Financial Capacity

A key factor expected to affect the probability of migrant collective action is the level of income of the migrant-receiving-community. The pool of resources from which migrant leaders (and home-community municipal and community actors) must draw to raise funds for home community projects is determined primarily (if not always exclusively)\(^{45}\) by the income level of community members where

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45 Though rare, there are some cases where migrants from a single community in Mexico will raise funds from their paisanos living in more than one US city.
MBOs are organized in the US.\textsuperscript{46} It is important to note, that this pool of resources does not necessarily need to come from actual community members, though these may be the most likely to contribute. For example, it is common for migrant based organizations, or federations of the home town associations from a single state in Mexico, to raise funds by organizing picnics, beauty contests, raffles and other activities. Although the attendants of these events may mostly be from the state or community raising the funds, such events are also often frequented by migrants and non-migrants with ties to other communities, municipalities, states and even countries. All of this is to say that indicators of the fundraising potential of migrant based organizations are expected to be directly tied to both the numbers and the resources present in the broader receiving community and city contexts.

3.2. Organizational Capacity and Social Networks

Beyond the financial capacity of sending and receiving communities and municipal governments in Mexico, it is also expected that non-financial factors will impact the likelihood of migrant collective action. These include the development of transnational social networks between migrants living in the US and individuals who remain in their community in Mexico, as well as the development and institutionalization in the US of state-level migrant-based organizations and federations of hometown associations (HTAs).

These federations are associated with a particular sending state in Mexico and are typically organized in a specific city or region in the United States. For example, there are federations of HTAs from the state of Zacatecas organized in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Jose, Chicago, and Dallas-Ft.

\textsuperscript{46} This expectation extends, in theory, to settlements of migrants from a particular community wherever they may be concentrated away from home. For instance, hometown organizations located in migrant receiving locales such as Mexico City may not be qualitatively different from organizations based abroad (see Fitzgerald 2008). Nevertheless, this is a contested issue, as scholars of migrant transnationalism argue that there are fundamental sociological differences between the “transnational” communities that exist in social fields that cross borders and those where social fields occur within a single nation-state context.
Worth, among other places. These federations can be particularly important in facilitating the mobilization of resources for 3x1 projects, as they have developed institutional relationships with municipal, state, and federal government actors in Mexico, can assist HTAs with the paperwork and project proposal development necessary to get a project successfully funded, and so forth. Indeed, the Federation of United Zacatecan Clubs in Illinois and the Midwest, based in Chicago, actually requires that its member HTAs apply for 3x1 projects through the federation, rather than directly to SEDESOL, the responsible federal agency (Estrada interview 2011). While the growth in the number of HTAs in a city or region of the US generates a critical mass often necessary to justify the formation of a federation, the existence of a federation in turn can spur the formation of additional HTAs. Being part of such a migrant civil society network—particularly when institutionalized under the umbrella of a federation—is expected to increase the capacity of a given a HTA to secure 3x1 projects for their communities.

3.3. Competing Hypotheses on the Effect of Fiscal Capacity

Though not necessary to account for migrant collective action generally, the mobilization of migrant contributions to 3x1 projects requires municipal governments to have a basic level of fiscal capacity. This is expected to be the case, first, because municipal governments must match funds contributed by migrants. Second, there are often peripheral costs associated with mobilizing migrants to form clubs and raise funds for community projects. Specifically, mayors and other municipal government actors frequently travel to the United States to meet with HTA and state federation leaders for this purpose, which is facilitated by municipal fiscal capacity. For example, the Mayors of Uriangato and Yuriria, Guanajuato visited Chicago in 2011 to form new migrant clubs and solicit 3x1 contributions

47 According to Estrada (interview 2011), this is also the process followed by the Southern California Federation of Zacatecan Clubs in Los Angeles, and likely others as well.
(González interview 2011). Following this logic, we would expect more 3x1 projects to be directed to municipalities with more revenues.

A counter-hypothesis about the impact of municipal fiscal capacity holds that necessity, rather than capability, is what is most likely to drive the distribution of 3x1 resources, particularly in high-migration locales (see FitzGerald 2008). Specifically, mayors from municipalities with lower per-capita revenues, who are thus more fiscally constrained, are expected to be more likely to seek resources from migrants. The 3x1 program is likely particularly attractive to fiscally constrained mayors in high-migration municipalities not only because of the funds they can raise from their migrant citizens living in the US, but even more importantly because of the state and federal matching funds that come with it.

3.4. Competing Hypotheses on the Effect of Community Wealth

Similar to the competing hypotheses about the impact of municipal governments' fiscal capacity on migrant collective remittances, the relative wealth of sending communities is expected to make 3x1 projects more likely in poorer communities whereas the limited resources of such communities is expected to make them less likely.

Migrants from wealthier communities with lower poverty rates are less likely to be motivated to contribute to their communities because they do not perceive as much need. As noted above, the simple fact that serving high poverty communities is among the goals of the 3x1 program provides an additional reason to expect projects to be more common in less well-off communities that are in need, for instance, of investment in basic infrastructure.

However a contrary mechanism may make poorer communities less likely to benefit from 3x1 projects. To understand how this mechanism works, some additional explanation is required. As explained above, under the basic structure of the 3x1 program equal contributions are made by migrants, the municipal government, the state government and the federal government. In practice, however, it is
often the case that some or all of the “migrant” share is paid by the non-migrant beneficiaries who live in the community. These beneficiaries might be the residents of a street that gets paved, those who will benefit from an improvement to the municipal water system, or even all households living in the community. The existence of this practice is expected to make 3x1 projects more common in relatively wealthier communities which are capable of raising the necessary funds from their non-migrant residents.

4. WHY DO MIGRANTS WANT TO SUPPORT THEIR HOME TOWNS?

The desire of migrants in the US to support their communities in Mexico is driven by several types of factors. One perspective expects that the more integrated and assimilated into US society a migrant community becomes the less likely they will be to retain important personal, social, cultural and economic ties to their home communities. The transnational perspective holds that migrants need not—and do not—identify with one polity or the other, and that there is no reason to expect a weakening of transborder ties (including collective and individual social and economic remittances) as migrant communities in the US begin to exhibit characteristics of increased assimilation. In addition to this debate, the desire of migrants to remit can be understood as driven by instrumental and self-interested motives (e.g., migrants who expect to return home, or who regularly return home will be more interested

48 I know of no systematic data source on the portion of 3x1 projects to which community beneficiaries have made contributions, let alone the share of those contributions. However, anecdotal evidence gathered at field research sites suggests that this practice is quite common (e.g. Castellanos Carrazgo interview 2010).

49 An extreme example of this was a proposed 3x1 project to build a new basketball court in El Marfil, a wealthy Guanajuato city suburb where former Governor Juan Manuel Oliva (2006-2012) lived, and which has almost no migration (Sánchez interview 2010).
in making investments there) or more collectivist and affective ties. The latter might be driven by factors such as religious devotion—for instance to the community's patron saint—, a collectivist culture according to which an individual or community has been socialized to feel an obligation to help the community, among other factors.

A fundamental debate within the sociological scholarship on immigration is between the assimilationist and the transnational perspectives. This debate is colored by a strong normative undercurrent, with assimilationists tending to view the assimilation of immigrants to the dominant receiving country culture as desirable and transnationalists viewing the preservation of sending country and community cultures and traditions as valuable in and of themselves. To clarify theoretical expectations about the likelihood that migrants will organize to make contributions to public goods in their home towns, however, it is necessary to move beyond the normative debates about what migrants and what receiving societies ought to do. On the assimilation side, it is expected that the longer migrants have lived abroad and away from their origin communities, the less likely they will be to remit. An expectation following from the assimilation perspective is that migrants become less likely to remit collectively and form HTAs the longer they are away from their homes. On the other side, receiving-communities in which migrants have children and spouses living with them are more settled and assimilated in the US and accordingly expected to be less likely to use their time and money to support public goods in their home towns in Mexico.

The transnational perspective holds that migrants do not necessarily have to choose a single national identity, and accordingly can exhibit signs of economic and social “assimilation” to US society while still retaining the sufficient loyalty to and identification with their community in Mexico. Consistent with this perspective, communities with longer migration histories might actually exhibit a higher likelihood of collective remittances, due to a number of factors. Migrants from communities with higher migration and longer migration histories are expected to have higher earnings in the US (and hence more disposable income) for a couple of reasons. First, due to self-selection bias, migrants (and high
migration communities) are not likely to be among the poorest because of significant costs of migration. Second, those who are more economically successful in the US context will have more disposable income to dedicate to remittances, collective and otherwise.

4.1. Individual Motivations: Altruism Model

Economic analysis of remittances sent by individuals to their families back home theorizes that migrants choose to remit a portion of their income because of feelings of altruism for their family members left behind (Amuedo-Dorantes, Bansak, and Pozo 2005, 38). A testable implication of this model is that remittance levels should be responsive to the economic well-being of both the sender and her/his family back home. As need goes up in the sending community, an altruistically-motivated remitter is expected to send more money. Similarly, as an immigrant living away from home finds more economic success, she is likely to send more money, though perhaps a diminishing share of total income. At the same time, however, a potential implication—consistent with the assimilationist approach to immigration studies—is that remittance activity will diminish over time as family and home-community ties grown weaker. This would particularly be expected to be the case after family reunification has occurred.

I extend this model in general terms to the question of collective remittances. As with individual remittances, according to the extended altruism model, migrants living away from home in the US are likely to be motivated to organize their paisanos to contribute for community projects back home if they have loved ones still living there whose quality of life they hope to improve. Accordingly, and not surprisingly, places where a greater share of families have members living in the US are likely to receive more 3x1 projects, as are places where a greater portion of the households are headed by women (insofar as this is an indicator of divided families).
4.2. Individual Motivations: Insurance-Model

Another common model used to explain private remittance behavior might help to explain collective remittances as well. As Amadeo-Dorantes and her colleagues (2005, 39) summarize, in the “insurance” model migrants remit in order to retain good standing with their families back home. If this theory holds, then, it is expected that migrants in more precarious situations (for example, if they are undocumented and accordingly at greater risk of deportation) will, ceteris paribus, be more likely to remit. Following this logic, one reason migrants might organize to send remittances for public goods back home is to retain good standing in their community, either because they plan to return home at some point or because the precariousness of their situation makes it such that they are not sure when they might be forced to return home. Implications of this include that migrants will self-insure by contributing collective remittances if their situation in the US is more precarious, but also, more broadly, if they plan to return home for some other reasons. With respect to the former, Amadeo-Dorantes and her colleagues point out that among the implications of this model is that migrants with more precarious employment and migration status will remit more. More generally, migrants are expected to be more likely to make collective contributions to public goods in their home towns where they are required to do so in order to retain their rights as community citizens, to collectively titled ejido or communal lands, to lay the groundwork for a political campaign, or simply because they want to make their community a nicer place to live (see Danielson 2013). Factors such as migrant home ownership, high rates of circular migration, and undocumented status in the US might accordingly motivate migrants to collective action to benefit their home towns. Plans to retire in one's community of origin or membership in an ejido or communal land collective is also expected to make migrants more likely to organize to contribute to public goods back home.
4.3. Communitarian Ethic and Cultural Identity

The strength of home community social and cultural identity is expected to have an independent impact on the likelihood of collective contributions. This expectation is consistent with arguments of the culturalist school of social movement scholarship (e.g., Goodwin and Jasper 1999; Polletta and Jasper 2001), which argues that collective action is explained by the strength of cultural identity, rather than by rational calculations of utility (Olson 1965) or the support of financial benefactors (e.g., McCarthy and Zald 2001). Applied to the questions addressed here, this perspective holds that strong ethnic-based community identity facilitates the formation of organizations among indigenous migrants in the US (see Fox and Rivera-Salgado 2004; Rivera-Salgado 1999). Specifically, communities whose migrant members have been socialized to feel particularly tied to and obligated to contribute to the general community welfare are expected to collectively remit at higher rates. For example, indigenous migrants, all else being equal, would be expected to contribute collectively because of strong identification with their communities and customary norms of community service and citizenship prevalent in many indigenous communities.

Following a similar logic, migrants hailing from more Catholic and religious municipalities are expected to contribute more to their home towns because of the affective community ties that religious belief and practice foment. For example, migrants who enjoy coming home for patron saint and other religious celebrations often contribute to the improvement of town churches. Despite strict separation of Church and State in Mexico, 3x1 Projects can be used to restore town churches and temples, provided that these have historical importance (and Mexico's communities have no shortage of historically important colonial churches).

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50 Unfortunately, the Mexican census does not collect data on religiosity (e.g., frequency of attending religious services).
Finally, migrants who are *ejidatarios* or *comuneros* (hold rights to collectively titled lands), might be more tied to their home towns for interest-based reasons (because they have to remain in good standing with the *Ejido* or *Communal* land authorities), but also because being a member of such a community tends to instill a collectivist ethic in its members. Eisenstadt (2009, 2011), for example, shows that members of *ejidos* had notably more collectivist identities than others and argues that this has to do with the fact that these communities had to mobilize in order to pressure the Federal Government to recognized their collective land rights, particularly in the state of Chiapas.

4.4. Migrants Contribute Because they are Asked

Thus far, I have focused on the supply-side factors hypothesized to explain migrant trans-border collective action. That is, varying desires and capacities of migrants have been theorized to account for different levels of collective contribution. However, HTA formation generally, and 3x1 projects specifically, are likely also a function of demand side factors. Specifically, Mexican actors such as mayors and governors often mobilize migrants and solicit their collective contributions to public goods. An implication of this proposition is that collective remittances are more likely in cases where Mexican political actors have solicited and mobilized the support of migrant communities in the US. Consistent with Rosenstone and Hansen's argument (1993) that people participate in political activities when they are asked (and when they do not participate, it is usually because they were not asked), one factor that is expected to account for the formation of HTAs and the number of 3x1 projects that have gone to a municipality is this top-down mobilizing initiative of political actors based in Mexico. Factors such as trips by mayors, governors, and other public officials to meet with migrant communities in the US and the
engagement of the Mexican Foreign Ministry with migrant leaders is thus expected to increase the likelihood of collective contributions.  

Additionally, places where municipal or agrarian authorities have the ability to require migrant contributions to public goods and possess the power to sanction them if they fail to comply (such as with fines, loss of community rights, etc.) are expected to see much higher rates of migrant participation and contribution (see Danielson 2013). This type of leverage is quite present in many the indigenous customary law municipalities in the southern state of Oaxaca, where lands are generally collectively titled, and migrants are at risk of losing land rights and other rights to “community” citizenship (Juan Martínez 2013).

4.5. Neocorporatist Explanations: The Institutionalization of State-Migrant Relations

Mayors and governors have incentives to mobilize (or coopt already mobilized) migrant civil society groups to secure financial contributions, to cultivate influential political allies, and to present themselves as being “friends to the migrant.” Relationships between state and local political actors are particularly well established in places with a deep history of migration, where these relationships have been institutionalized, and thus are not as bound to the motivations of particular migrant leaders and non-migrant politicians (see Délano 2011; Duquette 2011; Iskander 2010). Although this institutionalization might take the form of pluralistic interest articulation and lead to a strengthening of social capital locally, it can also take a more exclusionary, neocorporatist form. For instance, the distribution of migrant collective remittances under the 3x1 Program might be explained by political factors. If this proposition is

51 This proposition cannot be directly tested, as there are no systematic data on official mayoral or gubernatorial visits to migrants in the US, or on whether Mexican government officials initiated these meetings. Qualitative field research and author interviews with several mayors and other government officials suggest, as noted above, that this practice is quite common (e.g., de la Torre Flores interview 2010; González interview 2011; González Martínez interview 2011).
true, we would expect to 3x1 projects to be more numerous and more likely in municipalities that support the governor's party, or states and municipalities that support the president's party.

On the one hand, the politicization of 3x1 project distribution might increase in states and municipalities where one party is dominant, due to the fact that decreased accountability allows more patronage to flow. On the other hand, we might expect governors to bias the distribution of projects to more politically-competitive municipalities (and mayors to support more politically competitive localities), in order to support their political allies (Aparicio and Meseguer 2012). Although projects are proposed by migrant organizations and municipalities, they are accepted or rejected by a committee consisting of representatives from the state, federal, and municipal governments as well as the migrants. It is recognized, however, that the governors are able to dominate the process (interview with Heredia 2010), along with the federal representatives. Thus, insofar as these state actors use their leverage on the committee (COVAM) to benefit their co-partisans, we would expect both the dollar amount and the number of projects to be greater in municipalities with mayors of the same party.

5. OPERATIONALIZATION OF DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

In this section I operationalize the hypotheses outlined above by presenting the dependent and independent variable indicators, and presenting descriptive statistics of the variables used in the analysis. Next, I outline the analytical methods used to test the hypotheses and the selection of the models estimated before presenting and discussing the statistical findings and concluding.
5.1. Dependent Variables: Measuring Migrant Collective Remittances

As noted above, my broad interest is to better understand where and why migrants organize collectively around their home-communities, and specifically, why they choose to pool their resources to contribute to public goods back home. Focusing on the relatively smaller number of organizations that contribute money to collective goods, rather than on the full universe of migrant civil society organizations in the US, allows the analysis to focus more closely on those migrant organizations that are most directly engaged in their communities of origin, and accordingly expected to have the most intense political impact there. This is in many ways a superior indicator to a broader measurement of the number of HTAs, as it captures those places in which migrants from the same community in Mexico have not only gotten together for social or mutual assistance purposes in the United States, but have actually engaged in a direct way—and expended of their own money and time. Here I use two measures of collective remittances. First, I operationalize collective remittances as a count variable reflecting the number of 3x1 projects implemented in each municipality (range 0 to 396) from the commencement of the federal 3x1 Program in 2002 through 2008 (see Table 4.1). The second operationalization of this variable is the total value, in 2009 Mexican Pesos, of 3x1 project investments in each municipality from 2002-2008. One limit of the focus on the 3x1 Program is that it makes it difficult to determine the degree to which migrant groups are “autonomous” civil society groups, oficialista or coopted neocorporatist organs, or somewhere in between. In any case, I expect that the sample of HTAs that participate in the 3x1 program is biased in the direction of oficialismo, and these organizations are less likely to be social movement organizations with fiercely oppositional stances vis à vis the mayor of their home municipality, the governor of their state or the federal government.53

52 I am grateful to Lic. Irma Hidalgo, Director of the Federal 3x1 Program, for providing me with these data during an interview in her office in Mexico City, May 2010.

53 Another potential point of criticism might be with combining all 3x1 projects over the period, rather than analyzing projects per municipality-year.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Obs</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
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<th>Max</th>
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<td>1. Capacity to contribute</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.a. Financial Capacity</td>
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<td># HTA Federations in US</td>
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<td>5.36</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Controls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ln(Population), 2005</td>
<td>2,454</td>
<td>9.33</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>14.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Migration Intensity, 2005</td>
<td>2,443</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>6.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one HTA in Municipality</td>
<td>2,457</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Constant 2009 Mexican Pesos (X $1,000).
5.2. Independent Variables: Factors Impacting the Propensity of Migrants to Contribute Collectively

As discussed, there are two broad categories of factors hypothesized to impact the likelihood of migrant collective remittances to their municipalities: 1) those that impact the capability of migrants or sending communities and governments to mobilize resources and 2) those that impact the motivation of migrants and sending communities to contribute the time and money necessary to support their home towns. Within each of these categories, we can also consider the role of sending municipality and state governments in encouraging the formation of migrant civil society groups and soliciting collective remittances (descriptive statistics for all variables are presented in Table 4.1).

5.2.1. The Capacity of Migrants, Sending Communities, and Sending Governments to Contribute

I operationalize three variables to measure different aspects of the financial capacity for contribution. First, I include a measure of 2005 per capita gross municipal product (GMP), which is based on UNDP estimates and published by the National Institute for Federalism and Municipal Development's National System for Municipal Information (SNIM-INAFED 2005b). As average municipal income does not give you a fully detailed sense of the financial capacity of typical families due to the inability to capture inequality, I also include an indicator of municipal poverty. Specifically, I use the 2005 estimate of the National Population Council's (CONAPO, Consejo Nacional de Población) Marginalization Index (CONAPO 2006). This indicator is based on a factor analysis of several correlated indicators of basic economic well-being, and is a relative measure of poverty. The indicators included in the index are the percentage of municipal population that: 1) is illiterate, 2) has not completed primary education, 3) does not have proper drainage or sewer service, 4) does not have running water, 5) lives in households with dirt floors, 6) does not have electricity, 7) lives in overcrowded households, 8) that earns less than two minimum wages and 9) that lives in locales with fewer than 5,000 people (CONAPO 2006).
In addition to the indicators of the financial capacity of migrant sending-communities, the financial capacity of municipal governments is also expected to impact the likelihood of migrant collective action (though the alternative hypothesis that more fiscally strapped municipalities will be more likely to seek 3x1 projects is also tested with this variable). The indicator of municipal government financial capacity used here is per capita municipal revenues. These revenue streams include municipal taxes and fees as well as monies distributed to municipal governments from the state and federal governments by formula or on a discretionary or project-specific basis (indeed, including any 3x1 funds). This variable was calculated by the author based on population data from INEGI 2005 Count of Population and Households (INEGI 2006) and state and municipal public finance statistics (SNIM-INAFED 2005a).

To capture the effect of the non-financial, organizational capacity for migrant collective remittances through the 3x1 Program, I include a measure of the number of federations of home-town associations in each state. These data were coded by the author based on the directory of migrant based organizations maintained by the Institute of Mexican Abroad of the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Relations (IME 2012). The number of state level federations is expected to be important because these organizations facilitate the ability of HTAs to navigate the bureaucracy of the 3x1 Program and often maintain strong personal and institutional ties with their respective state governments.

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54 I do not include indicators of migrant receiving-community financial capacity to contribute (such as US-community income or employment), despite the fact that these factors are theoretically relevant. This is principally because there is no easy way with the data available to account for the US-community characteristics of Mexican municipalities without any 3x1 projects or associated HTAs. A useful follow-up research project could explore the US community determinants of migrant civil-society organization, and the variation in migrants’ collective contributions to their Mexican communities among those communities that have at least one organization or have supported at least one 3x1 project.

55 This directory of HTAs and other MBOs is updated based on the information entered by members of the MBOs themselves. The version used here was last updated January, 2012.

56 Note that all 3x1 projects must have a sponsoring HTA, thus I do not include a variable measuring this factor at the municipal level. I do however include a binary variable equal to 1 if there is at least one HTA registered in
5.2.2. Migrants' Motivation to Contribute

I sub-categorize this set of variables into four groups: 1) the historical roots of US-bound migration at the municipal and state levels in Mexico, 2) altruism, 3) identity-based solidarity (cultural, religious or communitarian ethics).

As summarized above, the assimilationist perspective expects that as migrants become less tied to their home communities, states and countries, they will be less likely to make contributions to public goods. On the other hand, ties to home communities and states may remain strong despite long histories of migration. Furthermore, as migrants live longer in the United States and become more financially secure, their capacity to contribute is likely to increase. If longer residence in the US does not decrease the motivation to contribute to one's home community, these other factors might mean that longer histories of migration facilitate more, not less contribution. For example, the population of Mexican immigrants who were in the US before the passage of the 1986 Immigration Control and Reform Act (IRCA) are much more likely to be legal permanent residents (LPRs) or US citizens. And migrants who are authorized to live and work in the US are more likely to have prominent public roles in their communities on both sides of the border. Furthermore, and crucially, LPRs and naturalized US citizens can travel back and forth between their hometown and their home in the US with much greater ease than undocumented migrants, for whom reentering the country has become increasingly dangerous and expensive over the past two decades (Cornelius and Lewis 2006).

As already emphasized, state and municipal governments have clear fiscal and political reasons to want to mobilize the resources and organizational capacity of migrants living in the United States. Although I do not have direct indicators for the degree to which state and municipal government actors seek to mobilize the support of their diaspora communities living in the United States and elsewhere, it is

the municipality, and 0 otherwise to estimate the “always zero” from the “sometimes zero” groups in the zero-inflated negative binomial regression model estimated below.
expected that both the motivation to develop migrant-focused policies generally and to engage with diaspora communities specifically is something that develops over time, and is more likely in states and municipalities that have longer histories of migration. The two variables operationalized to test these propositions, then, are the percentage of municipal and state populations that resided in another country in 1985 (INEGI 1990).

The indicator used here to test an implication of the altruistic model is the percentage of households in the municipality that was headed by a woman (INEGI 2001, author calculations). Though limited in important respects, this variable is a reasonable proxy for the number of families that have members in the US and in Mexico (namely a husband and a wife, and possibly children).

I include four variables to measure different aspects of identity-based solidarity. The first measures the percentage of communally titled lands (ejido or communal, in hectares) that is designated for communal use, rather than subdivided into individual parcels (INEGI 2007, author calculations). Second, to test the ethnic-identity hypothesis that indigenous migrants are more likely to maintain ties with their communities of origin because of an ethic of collective identity and social responsibility as well as the presence of customary norms that motivate migrant contributions, I include a variable for the percentage of the municipal population that speaks an indigenous language (INEGI 2001, author calculations). The third type of identity-based solidarity that is expected to tie migrants more to their communities of origin, and accordingly motivate them to act collectively on its behalf, is religion. Accordingly, I include the percentage of the municipal population that is Catholic. As noted in section 4 above, there is an important distinction between religiosity and religious confession. The Mexican census does not collect data to measure the former, such as the frequency of church attendance. For my purposes, however, the percentage of municipal population that identifies as Catholic is more relevant. This is because the

57 With the data available, it is difficult to disentangle the migrant civil society organizations and 3x1 projects that were motivated by the bottom-up initiative of migrants from those formed directly due to the organizing efforts of mayors and governors. Some of these issues are touched on in the qualitative case studies in chapters 6 and 7. Systematic quantitative examination of this question, however, must be left for future research.
mechanism hypothesized to be at work relates to the collective contributions of migrants, which are expected to be more likely when they maintain long-distance solidarity with their community of origin. Given Mexico's history as a country with deep Catholic roots—as manifested in the celebration in communities of patron saints, virgins to which communities are devoted, and other Catholic festivities—this collective solidarity is expected to be stronger in communities where Catholicism remains dominant compared to communities, for instance, where evangelical Christianity has made significant inroads.

5.2.3. Political Explanations of 3x1 Project Distribution

Migrant collective action, and particularly the distribution of 3x1 projects, is also expected to be impacted by a number of political factors. These political factors, though both broadly classifiable in terms of different forms of clientelism, fall into two classes: 1) those related to the distributions of public resources to friendly states and municipalities (rewarding political supporters) and 2) responding to political competition by rewarding politically competitive municipalities. A third potential category is simply that projects and migrant contributions are distributed in accordance with objective, programmatic criteria. However, the achievement of program goals is not necessarily inconsistent with patronage (though it is arguably impeded by it), nor does the failure of these goals alone point to a politicization of the program.

To test the hypotheses that 3x1 projects are more likely to be distributed to co-partisans I include a series of municipal and state-level political variables. At the municipal-level, I include 1) a variable equal to the number of years from 2002-2008 (0-7) in which the mayor and the governor were in the same party, 2) in which the PRI held the mayor's office, and 3) in which the PRD held the mayor's office. At
the state-level I include a variable equal to the number of years from 2002-2008 (0-7) in which the governor’s office was 1) held by the PRI and 2) was held by the PRD.\textsuperscript{58}

To test the hypothesis that 3x1 projects are distributed to more politically competitive jurisdictions, I include one municipal-level variable and one state-level variable. The first is a binary variable equal to one if the municipality alternated from one party to another at least once from 2002 through 2008 and zero if one party controlled the mayor’s office over the entire period. The second is a binary variable equal to one if control of the governor's office switched from one party to another at least once over the period studied, and zero if one party dominated the state.\textsuperscript{59} Data for all of the political variables were recoded and calculated by the author based on CIDAC Electoral Database databases organized by the Center for Development Research (Centro de Investigación para el Desarrollo A.C, or CIDAC).

5.3.4. Control and Inflate Model Variables

Finally, I control for the natural logarithm of municipal population. This is to account for the fact that larger municipalities, all else being equal, have more potential migrants, migrant organizations and sending-communities and neighborhoods due to their size. I also control for the 2000 Index of Migration Intensity computed based on data from the Mexican census (CONAPO 2002). This index is calculated for each municipality based on a factor analysis, the component parts of which are: 1) the percentage of

\textsuperscript{58} For the four party-based variables, the PAN is the reference category principally because of the fact that that party held the presidency for the period under study and was the party in power when the program was established at the federal level in 2002. As such, there are theoretical reasons to expect 3x1 project distribution to favor PAN strongholds.

\textsuperscript{59} The municipal-level variables are dropped from several of the models as their inclusion leads to the elimination of a significant number of observations. This is in part due to the fact that 418 of the 570 municipalities in the state of Oaxaca are governed by the usos y costumbres system, and thus have not had partisan elections since the mid-1990s. Other observations are dropped if the municipal electoral data were not available for any election during the reference period.
households with a member currently living in the United States, 2) the percentage of households with at least one return migrant, 3) the percentage of households with at least one circular migrant, and 3) the percentage of households that receive remittances from abroad. This variable is included as a control because the 3x1 Program was designed to leverage migrant remittances and to benefit migrant-sending communities, we would expect the intensity of migration to have a powerful effect on the likelihood that a municipality benefits from a 3x1 project.

As some of the models estimated in the analysis reported below use the zero inflated negative binomial regression technique, I include additional variables that are expected to account for those municipalities where there is effectively zero probability of migrant collective participation. These so-called “inflate models”—explained below—include the natural logarithm of population and the Index of Migration Intensity, and add a binary variable equal to one if there is at least one HTA connected to the municipality in question, as this is required for participation in the 3x1 Program (IME 2012).

6. MODELS ESTIMATED TO EXPLAIN 3x1 PARTICIPATION

In this section I discuss my choice of statistical techniques to test the hypotheses developed and operationalized above. The dependent variables I focus on are 1) the number of 3x1 projects in each municipality from 2002-2008 and the total value (in constant 2009 Pesos) of the 3x1 investments received by each municipality over this period. Before proceeding to the multivariate analysis of what accounts for variation on these dependent variables, I estimate the Pearson's pairwise correlations between each independent variable and the dependent variables. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.2. I estimate ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models on the continuous second dependent variable of the analysis, the total value of 3x1 investments from 2002-2008. Selecting the most appropriate model for
the first dependent variable, the number of 3x1 projects in each municipality over the period, requires a few steps.
Table 4.2. Correlates of Migrant Collective Remittances
Pearson's Pairwise Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Number of Projects</th>
<th>Total Investment</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Capacity to contribute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.a. Financial Capacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per-Capita GMP, 2005</td>
<td>0.0720*</td>
<td>0.0768*</td>
<td>2,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per-Capita Mun. Revenue</td>
<td>0.0784*</td>
<td>0.0751*</td>
<td>2,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginalization, 2005 (CONAPO)</td>
<td>-0.1528*</td>
<td>-0.1530*</td>
<td>2,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Municipal Population Employed</td>
<td>-0.1163*</td>
<td>-0.1498*</td>
<td>2,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.b. Organizational Capacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># HTA Federations in US</td>
<td>0.3524*</td>
<td>0.3772*</td>
<td>2,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Motivation to Contribute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.a. Historical Roots of Migration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Return Migrants in Mun., 1990</td>
<td>0.3412*</td>
<td>0.3403*</td>
<td>2,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Return Migrants in State, 1990</td>
<td>0.4175*</td>
<td>0.4437*</td>
<td>2,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.b. Individual Motivation—Altruistic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Female-Headed Hhlds.</td>
<td>0.0577*</td>
<td>0.0644*</td>
<td>2,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.c. Community/Cultural Identity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Ejido/Communal Land Not Parceled</td>
<td>-0.0046</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>2,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Indigenous</td>
<td>-0.1465*</td>
<td>-0.1540*</td>
<td>2,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Catholic</td>
<td>0.1546*</td>
<td>0.1646*</td>
<td>2,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Political Factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.a. Rewarding/Helping Co-partisans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PAN Held Governorship</td>
<td>0.2227*</td>
<td>0.2057*</td>
<td>2,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PRD Held Governorship</td>
<td>0.2568*</td>
<td>0.3124*</td>
<td>2,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PRI Held Governorship</td>
<td>-0.3239*</td>
<td>-0.3510*</td>
<td>2,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PAN Held Municipal Government</td>
<td>0.0645*</td>
<td>0.0658*</td>
<td>2,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PRD Held Municipal Government</td>
<td>0.0905*</td>
<td>0.1045*</td>
<td>1,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PRI Held Municipal Government</td>
<td>-0.1214*</td>
<td>-0.1286*</td>
<td>1,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor and Gov. Same Party</td>
<td>-0.0167</td>
<td>-0.0243</td>
<td>1,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.b. Distributing to Competitive Places</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternation (Govs.'02-'08)</td>
<td>-0.0570*</td>
<td>-0.0261</td>
<td>2,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternation (Mayors '02-'08)</td>
<td>0.0504</td>
<td>0.0454</td>
<td>1,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Controls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ln(Population)</td>
<td>0.1071*</td>
<td>0.1367*</td>
<td>2,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Migration Intensity</td>
<td>0.3173*</td>
<td>0.3379*</td>
<td>2,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTA Dummy</td>
<td>0.1705*</td>
<td>0.2188*</td>
<td>2,457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistically significant at the 0.01 level.
1. Constant 2009 Mexican Pesos (X $1,000).
I first conduct a univariate analysis of the number of 3x1 projects in each municipality. As this is a count variable, it is theorized to have a poisson distribution in which the mean, \( \mu \) is the expected count \textit{and} the expected variance of the distribution, a condition known as equidispersion (Freese and Long 2006, 350). Figure 4.1 shows the observed values of the dependent variable, and compares them to the univariate poisson distribution, the predicted counts of which are determined solely by \( \mu \). A multivariate poisson regression model, which includes the independent variables operationalized above, is also displayed in Table 4.1. The curves in Figure 4.1 suggest that there is a problem of overdispersion, and it is evident that, though the multivariate model—not surprisingly—has a better fit than the univariate poisson distribution, it still significantly underpredicts counts of zero and over-predicts the probability of 1, 2 and 3 projects when compared to the observed data.

![Figure 4.1. Univariate and Multivariate Poisson Models, Observed and Predicted Counts of 3x1 Projects, 2002-2008](image)

In the real world many count variables are overdispersed, that is, their variance is greater than their mean, and there is a tendency of poisson models to under-predict counts of zero, as Figure 4.1 suggests is the case here. Accordingly, I run a negative binomial regression model and conduct an alpha
test for overdispersion, which confirms the suspicion that there is overdispersion and a negative binomial model is appropriate ($\alpha = 2.77$, significant at the 0.0001 level).

Figure 4.2. PRM, NBREG and ZINB Models, Comparison of Predicted and Observed Counts

![Graph showing predicted and observed counts for PRM, NBREG, and ZINB models.]

However, there are theoretical reasons to believe that there are two distinct types of zero counts of 3x1 projects in Mexican municipalities, those that have virtually no probability of having any projects (the “Always 0” group) and those that happen to have 0 projects, but have a probability greater than 0 of having a project. Accordingly, it is most appropriate, theoretically speaking, to use a zero inflated model, which first estimates coefficients to determine which cases have a zero probability of having a project, and then estimates a standard negative binomial regression model for those cases in which the probability of having a project is greater than zero. In Figure 4.2 I plot the predicted probabilities of different numbers of projects as estimated by poisson (PRM), negative binomial (NBREG) and zero inflated negative binomial (ZINB) regression models as compared to the observed distribution of the data (the univariate poisson distribution plotted in Figure 4.1 has been removed). As is evident, both the negative binomial and zero inflated negative binomial models improve notably on the problem of overprediction of zeros. Indeed, the ZINB and NBREG models fit so well with the observed distribution of the data that it is
somewhat difficult to distinguish the lines from each other. That said, when running the ZINB model, the Vuong test demonstrates that not only is there a theoretical reason to use this model, but this is supported by the statistical evidence as well ($z = 7.14$, significant at 0.001 level).

7. FINDINGS

Table 4.3 presents the results for four multivariate statistical models. As noted above, in addition to estimating zero-inflated negative binomial (ZINB) regressions on the count dependent variable (models 1a and 2a), I also estimate ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions on the total value of 3x1 projects from 2002-2008 (models 1b and 2b). The hypothesis tests of the impact of the independent variables in each of the models generally yield comparable results. As such, the bulk of the discussion below focuses on the results of Model 1a, with discussion of noteworthy differences with the other models where appropriate.

7.1 Capacity to Contribute vs. Need

The competing hypotheses about the impact of community well-being on the number of 3x1 projects is operationalized using two variables: gross municipal product (GMP) and the municipal poverty index. The first hypothesis tested with these variables holds that contributions are driven by community needs, and accordingly, expects less well-off communities (with higher poverty rates and lower per-capita income) to receive more projects. The counter-hypothesis argues that financial capacity is the key

60 In models 2a and 2b I drop the municipal-level political variables, as their inclusion leads to the loss of some 700 observations. More than half of these (418 to be precise) are usos y costumbres municipalities in the state of Oaxaca, which conduct their elections without the official participation of political parties.
mechanism, and that contributions should be more likely in more well-off communities. The tests of these hypotheses offer competing results.

Municipalities with lower levels of per-capita GMP were more likely to benefit from 3x1 projects. Specifically, a standard deviation increase in per-capita GMP decreases the expected count of 3x1 projects by 30.0% (see Figure 4.3). The impact of poverty, however, is consistent with the hypothesis that a basic level of financial capacity is necessary to make 3x1 projects possible. Specifically, a standard deviation increase in the poverty index decreases the expected number of 3x1 projects by 18.4% (see Figure 4.4).

These conflicting results are likely due to the fact that the two indicators of community welfare used are actually conceptually distinct. Whereas per-capita GMP is an indicator of the wealth of the average person in each municipality, the poverty index is mostly a function of the share of municipal population that experiences acute material deprivation. The distribution of municipal populations along the income scale might be such that the average income is relatively low, while the poverty level is also low. This would occur, for instance, in municipalities without very many poor households but also without very many wealthy households.

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61 As discussed in section 4 above, the poverty index is based on several different variables, most of which measure the share of the municipal population that experiences some basic form of deprivation, such as living in a home with a dirt floor or without running water.
Table 4.3. Estimating Migrant Collective Remittances to Home Municipalities
Multivariate Models of 3x1 Project Count and Investment Value, 2002-2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Model 1a (ZINB)</th>
<th>Model 1b (OLS)</th>
<th>Model 2a (ZINB)</th>
<th>Model 2b (OLS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta$ s.e.</td>
<td>$\beta$ s.e.</td>
<td>$\beta$ s.e.</td>
<td>$\beta$ s.e.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Capacity to contribute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per-Capita GMP, 2005</td>
<td>0.00 **** 0.00</td>
<td>-0.08 **** 0.02</td>
<td>0.00 **** 0.00</td>
<td>-0.05 **** 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per-Capita Mun. Revenue</td>
<td>0.00 0.00 0.11</td>
<td>0.18 0.00 0.00</td>
<td>-0.22 0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginalization, 2005 (CONAPO)</td>
<td>-0.22 ** 0.08</td>
<td>-1.788 **** 452</td>
<td>-0.26 *** 0.08</td>
<td>-1.013 *** 311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># HTA Federations in US</td>
<td>0.08 **** 2.96</td>
<td>691.30 ***** 110.55</td>
<td>0.05 ** 0.02</td>
<td>467.77 ***** 81.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Motivation to Contribute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Return Migrants in Mun., 1990</td>
<td>1.75 **** 0.25</td>
<td>16,400 **** 2,337</td>
<td>2.44 **** 0.44</td>
<td>12,892 **** 1,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Return Migrants in State, 1990</td>
<td>0.46 **** 0.01</td>
<td>2,482 *** 738</td>
<td>0.21 0.13</td>
<td>2,179 **** 570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Female-Headed Hhlds.</td>
<td>-0.02 0.00 52.85</td>
<td>59.22 0.01 0.01</td>
<td>61.07 ** 35.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Ejido/Communal Land Not Parceled</td>
<td>0.00 0.00 -5.53</td>
<td>7.69 0.00 0.00</td>
<td>-4.28 5.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Indigenous</td>
<td>-0.01 ** 0.01 16.96</td>
<td>11.23 0.00 0.00</td>
<td>13.37 ** 6.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Catholic</td>
<td>0.03 **** 0.04</td>
<td>94.72 **** 24.27</td>
<td>0.01 *** 0.00</td>
<td>63.05 **** 15.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Political Factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PRD Governor</td>
<td>-0.05 0.02 -269.78</td>
<td>191.69-0.09 **** 0.02</td>
<td>5.79 110.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PRI Governor</td>
<td>-0.06 ** 0.03 -270.04 **</td>
<td>124.53-0.09 **** 0.02</td>
<td>-273.13 *** 92.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PRD Mayor</td>
<td>-0.10 *** 0.03 14.00</td>
<td>163.29 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years PRI Mayor</td>
<td>-0.09 **** 0.03 -394.31 ***</td>
<td>144.89 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor and Gov. Same Party</td>
<td>0.04 * 0.17 202.74 *</td>
<td>119.27 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternation (Govs. '02-'08)</td>
<td>0.26 ** 0.12 1,298 *</td>
<td>704 0.00 0.00</td>
<td>-474.25 529.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternation (Mayors '02-'08)</td>
<td>-0.07 0.08 -917.81</td>
<td>622.77 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Controls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ln(Population)</td>
<td>0.38 **** 0.08</td>
<td>953.26 **** 210.95</td>
<td>0.18 **** 0.04</td>
<td>458.92 *** 140.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Migration Intensity</td>
<td>0.23 **** 0.01</td>
<td>879.28 **** 302.24</td>
<td>0.20 **** 0.05</td>
<td>824.05 **** 212.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>-4.30 0.81 -15,350 **** 3,603</td>
<td>-1.30 ** 0.70</td>
<td>-7,830 **** 2,332</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflated Model (Logit Predicting “Always0”)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ln(Population)</td>
<td>0.08 * 0.08 n/a</td>
<td>-0.25 **** 0.06 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Migration Intensity</td>
<td>0.17 **** 0.17 n/a</td>
<td>-1.44 **** 0.13 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTA</td>
<td>0.44 **** 0.44 n/a</td>
<td>-2.22 **** 0.33 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.81 * 0.81 n/a</td>
<td>2.59 **** 0.57 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Observations:</td>
<td>1,538 1,538 2,255</td>
<td>2,255</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha:</td>
<td>1.283 n/a 1.266</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log Likelihood, full model</td>
<td>-2,693.711 n/a</td>
<td>-3,840.744 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R2</td>
<td>n/a 0.256 n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * statistically significant at the 0.10 level, **0.05 level, ***0.01 level, ****0.001 level.
These conflicting results are likely due to the fact that the two indicators of community welfare used are actually conceptually distinct. Whereas per-capita GMP is an indicator of the wealth of the average person in each municipality, the poverty index is mostly a function of the share of municipal population that experiences acute material deprivation. The distribution of municipal populations along the income scale might be such that the average income is relatively low, while the poverty level is also low. This would occur, for instance, in municipalities without very many poor households but also without very many wealthy households.

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62 As discussed in section 4 above, the poverty index is based on several different variables, most of which measure the share of the municipal population that experiences some basic form of deprivation, such as living in a home with a dirt floor or without running water.
This relationship suggests that migrants from relatively more equal municipalities—with low poverty rates but without high levels of per-capita income—may be more likely to form organizations and make collective contributions compared to migrants from less equal municipalities. Figure 4.5 shows the interaction between per-capita GMP and the poverty index. As the figure shows, at low levels of per-capita GMP, the level of poverty has a powerful interactive effect, leading to a wide swing in the expected number of 3x1 projects at low and high levels of poverty. In more wealthy municipalities, however, the impact of poverty on the already low expected count disappears. These results suggest that, indeed, a basic level of financial capacity is necessary before a community will be able to mobilize the resources to benefit from the 3x1 program. However, wealthy municipalities without the need for 3x1 projects—and that are not supposed to benefit from these anti-poverty investments—are not motivated to seek them out.
Despite this explanation, it is possible that these counter intuitive findings are the result of an endogeneity problem. Specifically, if migrants and mayors from less well-off communities are more likely to pursue a 3x1 project, these investments might have been successful at lowering levels of absolute poverty but without increasing the average wealth of the community. This is feasible in part due to the fact that many of the component indicators of the poverty index relate to access to basic physical infrastructure (such as running water, sewer systems, quality of home construction, etc.). Related to this, municipalities that receive more in private remittances from migrants might have seen similar improvements in housing stock and basic infrastructure—key indicators in the poverty index—but without spurring proportionate economic development and income growth.

Model 2a estimates a negative and statistically significant relationship between per-capita municipal revenue and the total number of 3x1 projects (p-value<0.001), but this variable did not reach statistical significance in the other models. This offers weak support for the hypothesis that fiscal necessity, rather than fiscal capacity, influences the number of 3x1 projects, but not their value. Thus, municipal governments that are more strapped for cash and have less reliable and steady streams of
revenue seek out 3x1 projects precisely because of their lack of funds, since the projects are a net fiscal gain for municipalities, which are really the ones that get $3 for every $1 they have to contribute.

As hypothesized, state-level organizations based in the US increase the capacity of migrant civil society groups to contribute to their home towns through the 3x1 program. Specifically, the expected number of 3x1 projects is estimated to increase by 23.7% for a standard deviation increases in the number of federations (see Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6. Number of 3x1 Projects, 2002-2008, by Number of HTA Federations

7.2. Motivation to Contribute

The sociological theory of immigrant assimilation expects that individual migrants become less tied to their home communities and more tied to their host community over time. As such, some would expect 3x1 contributions to diminish in places with longer migration histories, controlling for the present level of migration, as migrants from these places become less motivated to participate in home-municipality affairs. However, immigrants from communities with longer histories of migration to the US
are more likely to be LPRs or US citizens, have greater financial stability, and the free time necessary to participate in voluntary civic activity. Furthermore, authorities in municipalities and states with longer histories of migration are more likely to have taken the time to institutionalize their relationships with their diasporas; which is further expected to facilitate participation in the 3x1 program.

Estimates of all four models provide strong evidence that a history of migration—at both the state and the municipal levels—is a strong predictor of the number projects and total value of 3x1 investments. The percentage of both the municipal and state populations that, when asked in 1990, had lived in the United States in 1985 were a statistically significant predictor of the number and value of 3x1 projects (p<0.001).\(^{63}\) Specifically, a standard deviation increase in the state historical migration rate of increases the number of 3x1 projects a municipality is expected to receive by 31.8% (see Figure 4.7). Similarly, a standard deviation increase in the municipal historical migration rate increases the expected number of 3x1 projects by 18.9% (see Figure 4.8).

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\(^{63}\) Note that the state-level variable, though it has a somewhat higher bivariate correlation with the dependent variables, failed to reach statistical significance in Model 2a when the municipal-level political variables were removed.
It is noteworthy that the level of historical migration is such a powerful predictor of 3x1 participation from 2002-2008 when controlling for factors such as current migration intensity and the number of federations of HTAs. This might be interpreted in a number of ways. The fact that municipalities with deeper roots in US migration are more likely to benefit from 3x1 projects contradicts the expectations of assimilation theory (though the aggregate nature of the data means we should take care not to make too much of this) and suggests that migrants from communities that are more established in the US are also more capable of organizing and raising funds to help their home municipalities. The explanatory importance of state-level migration history points to the importance of the institutionalization of migrant-related policies and diaspora relations at the state-level, as well as the presence of diffusion effects through which migrants from a given community become more likely to form HTAs and contribute to the public good of their home towns when others from their home states have done so also, can explain the process to them, or both.
The individual altruism hypothesis that 3x1 contributions are more likely in places with more female-headed households was rejected. However, this might be explained by the limits of using aggregate data to test a hypothesis that is really about individual motivations. Further research is needed to better answer these questions and better explain the individual level determinants of home community engagement and financial contributions of immigrants in the US, though some scholars have begun to answer these questions (e.g., Duquette 2011).

The next hypothesis examined states that migrants are motivated to contribute to their home-communities because of feelings of identity-based solidarity, whether rooted in a communal ethic or ethnic or religious identity. The percentage of ejido lands designated for common use does not impact the number or value of 3x1 projects. Contrary to expectations that the communitarian ethic of indigenous municipalities, and the stronger affective (and informal institutional) ties to their communities would lead to higher levels of migrant hometown engagement, Model 1a shows the opposite to be the case. As Figure 4.9 shows, the negative relationship is modest, but statistically significant (p<0.05). The bivariate relationships presented in Table 4.2 are consistent with this finding. However, the second OLS regression—Model 2b, which excludes municipal-level political variables—estimates that the total value of 3x1 investments received is positively associated with the percentage of the municipal population that speaks an indigenous language. This finding might point to the fact that Oaxaca’s indigenous municipalities participate in the program at very low levels, while indigenous municipalities in other states are more participatory. More generally, this might be an indication that indigenous communities are less likely to take advantage (or benefit from) state services.
Consistent with expectations, the percentage of the municipal population that is Catholic is a strong predictor of the number and total value of 3x1 projects at the municipal level in all four models (p<0.001). In addition to being related to stronger affective ties to the home community among migrants from more Catholic municipalities, this relationship is consistent with FitzGerald’s finding that the Mexican state adopted the Roman Church’s strategy of dealing with migration (2009, Chapter 3). As shown in Figure 4.10, Model 1a estimates that the number of 3x1 projects in a municipality increases by 13.2% for each standard deviation increase in this variable (see Figure 4.10).
7.3. Political Factors

I now discuss tests of the political factors hypothesized to impact the frequency and value of 3x1 investments. These factors are related to corporatism or clientelism (namely, the partisan distribution of public goods) and the level of political competition (see Aparicio and Meseguer 2012). Municipal-level indicators of copartisanship (mayor and governor), mayor partisanship, and party alternation are included in models 1a and 1b. As noted, these variables are dropped to increase the number of observations in models 2a and 2b.
For both the municipal and the state-level partisanship variables, I use the PAN as the reference category, as this party controlled the presidency of the Republic for the entire period under study. Across all models, municipalities in stronger PRI states were significantly less likely to benefit from 3x1 projects. Municipalities in states with stronger PRD governors were also less likely to benefit, however this relationship is only statistically significant in Model 2a. Figure 4.11 shows the former relationship.

Figure 4.11. Number of 3x1 Projects, 2002-2008, Number of Years Governor was PRI, 2002-2008


Figure 4.12. Number of 3x1 Projects, 2002-2008, Number of Years Mayor was PRD, 2002-2008

Similarly, municipalities in which the PRD (p<0.01) and the PRI (p<0.001) controlled the mayor's office for more years (0 to 7), were significantly less likely to benefit from 3x1 projects. Municipalities more dominated by the PRI also received less in 3x1 investments. Figure 4.12 shows the relationship between the number of years the mayor’s office was held by the PRD and the expected number of 3x1 projects. Figure 4.13 shows estimated impact of the number of years the mayor was with the PRI (as estimated in Model 1a). These findings demonstrate that, holding other factors constant, municipalities in states and municipalities dominated by the PAN have been more likely to benefit from migrant (and municipal, state, and federal) investments through the 3x1 program. So as to not unfairly single out one political party, there was a modest but statistically significant positive relationship between mayor-governor copartisanship (specifically, the number of years the mayor and the governor were in the same party from 2002-2008) and the number (p<0.1) and value (p<0.1) of 3x1 projects (see Figure 4.14).

![Figure 4.13. Number of 3x1 Projects, 2002-2008, Number of Years Mayor was PRI, 2002-2008](source: SEDESOL 3x1 Project Database, 2002-2008; SNIM-INAFED 2005; IME 2012; CONAPO 2008; INEGI, 1995, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2007; CIDAC 2012.)

These findings are consistent with the argument that state and federal politicians, particularly the party of the President of the Republic, have favored their copartisans with 3x1 projects. This tendency
might be due to the cultivation by the PAN of a migrant constituency—to rival, for instance, the traditional PRI constituencies of peasant and worker organizations and the autonomous, dissident peasant and worker organizations loyal to the PRD. The weak relationship between mayor-governor copartisanship generally (which is not present in the bivariate test in Table 4.2), suggest that state governments controlled by all parties may be using their power to favor municipalities controlled by their copartisans.

Finally, also shown in Figure 4.14, there was weak evidence in support of the hypothesis that 3x1 project funding is strategically distributed to more competitive municipalities and states by government officials at higher levels of government. Models 1a and 1b estimate that states where more than one party held the governorship from 2002-2008 received more projects (p<0.05) and more in total 3x1 investment (p<0.1). Alternation of parties at the mayoral level had a negative, but not statistically significant relationship with 3x1 participation. The state-level political competition variable was not significant in models 2a and 2b, when municipal-level political variables are dropped. Figure 4.14 shows the interaction
between the binary variable for gubernatorial alternation and mayor-governor copartisanship. As this figure shows, the effect of state-level competitiveness reinforces the effect of mayor-governor copartisanship, with a higher intercept and a slightly steeper slope in states that had a governor from more than one party from 2002-2008.

8. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has focused on the nominally prepolitical phenomena of migrant civil society and particularly migrant collective remittances through the Mexican Federal Government's 3x1 Program for Migrants. The statistical analyses presented provide a comprehensive picture of the characteristics of the municipalities and states where migrants are most likely to organize to make these contributions. It thus improves our understanding of the factors that impact migrant collective action, beyond merely having high numbers of migrants living and working in the United States. As the analysis has shown, the likelihood of migrant collective remittances is significantly impacted not only by the level of migration intensity broadly, but by the presence of state-level federations of HTAs, the intensity of historical migration at the municipal- and state-levels, and the concentration of Catholics at the municipal level. Perhaps most interestingly for the purposes of the present study are the political factors that help to explain migrant collective action through the 3x1 program. Indeed, despite my characterization of this chapter in the first sentence of this conclusion as a study of the prepolitical activity of migrant civil society, the analysis suggests that there may be noteworthy politicization of the 3x1 program and of the state-migrant relationship more generally.

A brief caveat is in order here. Although I recognize the demonstrated downfalls of political patronage and clientelism, and the degree to which they are seen to impede the consolidation of
democratic institutions, I am not certain that this is the case here. That is, it may simply be that politicians have begun to cultivate migrants as a constituency. That 3x1 projects seem to have benefited PAN states and municipalities the most might simply mean that this party has been more focused or more successful at cultivating relationships with migrants. Insofar as these relationships improve the representation of this emerging constituency, the outcome might just as easily be democracy-enhancing as democracy-weakening.

However, some scholars argue that state-level federations of HTAs have become quasi-state, neocorporatist, or clientelistic organizations (Goldring 2002). The nature of the data analyzed in this chapter only permits an easy test of the hypothesis that state-level organizations—particularly those with strong ties with their home state governments—are key in facilitating the success of migrant based organizations and municipal governments in securing 3x1 investments. But this does not tell us anything about their impact on political competition and local democracy; and particularly, whether migrant hometown engagement, through the 3x1 program and beyond, serves to shore up the strength of dominant political groups, strengthens oppositions groups, or generates new autonomous bases of local political power. As pointed out in the introduction of this chapter, I expect that the focus here on migrant engagement through the 3x1 program is likely biased in the direction of more oficialista migrants, and at the very least leaves out ad hoc migrant organizations that do not, for whatever reason, participate in the program. Indeed, survey data from Oaxaca (analyzed in Chapter 5) demonstrate that migrants contribute extensively to home-community public goods outside of the 3x1 Program. Tests of the hypothesis that migrant contributions follow a neocorporatist logic are limited due to the nature of the data analyzed, given that the most oppositional migrants are expected to participate in the program at much lower rates. Thus, the extent to which migrants tend to be (re)incorporated into their hometowns through these

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64 According to former SEDESOL representative in Los Angeles, Dr. Martha Esquivel Arrona, “if participation [in the program] had to do with the level of organization, Oaxaca would participate much more” (Esquivel Arrona interview 2011).
 oficialista channels—one of the pathways though which migrants are theorized (in chapters 2 and 3) to impact local political dynamics—is empirically examined in subsequent chapters.

This dissertation seeks to answer questions about the democratization impacts of migration, particularly the impact of migrant social and political actors on their communities of origin. An important factor that impacts the quality of democracy is the presence of a robust and autonomous civil society. Accordingly, the organization of migrant civil society, particularly when it is autonomous and pluralistic rather than corporatist is expected to have democracy-enhancing impacts on sending communities. Migrant civil society—and home community-based “mirror organizations” responsible for monitoring 3x1 project implementation—may help to strengthen the quality of project administration and increase accountability (see Burgess 2010, 2012). An as of yet unanswered question, however, is the extent to which the emergence of migrant civil society and the “coproduction” of public goods by migrant civil society and the state (Duquette 2011), spills over into civil and political society generally to improve the quality of local governance, as an increased density of civil society can be viewed as democratizing in its own right.

In the chapters that remain, I examine the extent to which migrant civil society has spilled over to strengthen migrant representation, political competition, and democratic accountability more generally. To do this, I focus on a more narrow set of cases, first through the quantitative analysis of a survey of municipal governments in the state of Oaxaca (Chapter 5), and then through comparative qualitative case studies of migrant political actors (Chapter 6) and municipal political systems (Chapter 7) in the states of Oaxaca, Guanajuato, and Zacatecas.
CHAPTER 5
WHEN THE ROAD TO THE MAYOR'S OFFICE CROSSES THE BORDER: POLITICAL TRAJECTORIES OF MIGRANT MAYORS IN OAXACA, MEXICO

1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I addressed the first empirical question of the dissertation: why do migrants from some places organize in the US to engage collectively in the public life of their hometowns, while those from many other places do not? This nation-wide, quantitative analysis of migrant cross-border collective action—most particularly through officially channeled collective remittances—showed that having a high migration rate, though important, is not sufficient to explain the observed variation in migrant collective remittances. Historical, political, and cultural factors, including the depth of migration roots at the municipal and state-level, the partisanship of mayors and governors, the institutionalization of state-level federations of migrant Hometown Associations (HTAs), and a more Catholic population were found to be crucial predictors of the number and value migrant collective contributions at the municipal level.

The improved understanding of the patterns of migrant civil society engagement through Kapur's diaspora channel (2010), and the types of places where migrant collective action occurs provided by this analysis has important implications for subnational democracy. Everything else being equal, the thickening of migrant civil society, as argued by Burgess (2010, 2012), might enhance democracy in a variety of ways. Nevertheless, the extent to which this is the case depends crucially on how migrant civil society interacts with prevailing political dynamics. That is, who does migrant collective action help? As I have theorized, migrant social contribution and political engagement can both shore-up and undercut the power of dominant groups. Whereas in the previous chapter, I focused on the social and financial
engagement of migrant organizations in the public affairs of their communities through collective philanthropic contributions, the present chapter focuses directly on the political power of migrants by studying migrant mayors. According to Kapur's (2010) typology, this chapter examines the return channel of migrant influence.

As summarized in Table 2.1 in Chapter 2, there are four mechanisms through which migrants might strengthen or weaken democracy in their home communities. Due to limitations of the data, the present chapter focuses on two of these mechanisms. First, the “mode of engagement” of migrants has direct bearing on whether their impact is democratizing. Specifically, do they join the dominant political group, thus helping to shore up its legitimacy and power? Are they autonomous of the dominant political group? Do they strengthen opposition political parties and factions? The second mechanism of migrant political impact examined in this chapter is that of representation. Do migrants who gain influence and power—here the direct institutional power of the mayor's office—represent different sets of interests from the dominant coalition that had previously been in power? More directly, do migrant mayors descriptively represent different socioeconomic interests than non-migrant mayors, or are they from a similar socioeconomic class as mayors generally?

The first mechanism of migrant influence, “mode of engagement,” deals with the political group that migrants belong to and support when in office. In the algorithmic and game theoretic models presented in Chapter 3, this occurs when both migrants and the cacique choose to “conform.” The second deals with the social background of migrant mayors, as this is expected to influence how they govern and begins to examine the social groups and interests that they are likely to represent. It is important to note, however, that just because an individual comes from the popular classes does not mean that he will represent the interests of his class when in office (or vice versa). Unfortunately, the database analyzed in this chapter makes it difficult to answer questions about substantive representation. The comparative qualitative analysis presented in chapters 6 and 7 allows for more contextualized examinations of exactly how certain migrant political actors have gained power, how they have governed, the alliances they have
forged to do so, and the municipal level outcomes of their interactions with other social and political groups.

A broad theoretical motivation of this project, as discussed in the introduction, is to examine how the socioeconomic phenomenon of mass migration affects municipal political systems. Structuralist theories expect that institutional political power roughly mirrors socioeconomic power, as the dominant class is able to translate its economic power more or less directly into political power. Accordingly, one would expect return migrants—as well as migrant households and social groups who have successfully forged alliances with migrant-based organizations (MBOs) and transnational migrant leaders—to hold a disproportionate share of municipal political power in places with more migration and with greater economic dependency on migrant remittances. Wood's (2000) study of democratization in El Salvador argues, similarly, that a shift in the national-political economy of that country from one dominated by the interests of the traditional land-owning elite to one dominated by an emerging urban, financial elite (particularly those connected with the transfer of migrant remittances), shifted the balance of elite power, and increased the incentives for democratization. Although I do find that after controlling for the level of return migration, socioeconomic factors such as remittance dependency make migrants more likely to win political power locally, this alone is not sufficient to account for their success, as political, institutional and organizational factors matter as well.

To address these questions, this chapter analyzes data generated from a comprehensive survey of mayors in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca. The survey data includes cases from the two distinct municipal electoral systems: the political party-based system used in the rest of the country and an indigenous customary law system (known as usos y costumbres), in which communities autonomously determine local election rules. I begin by using bivariate analysis to show that mayors are more likely to have migration experience than the population of adult men in the rest of the state, suggesting that migration experience might serve as a pathway to political power. However, assessing the political importance of the fact the migrants seem to be over-represented in mayors' offices in the state does not
tell us how important this is for municipal political systems, particularly in terms of their level of
democracy. To begin to address this, the next step is to compare migrant mayors to their non-migrant
counterparts on a number of important indicators. I first do this with a series of bivariate analyses before
proceeding to estimate a series of multivariate logistic regression models to test seven hypotheses,
discussed and operationalized below.

Coupled with the finding that migration experience seems to help people rise to the position of
mayor, I find that migrant mayors are more likely to come from the popular classes (peasants or day
laborers) rather than be professionals, government workers, business owners, or teachers. This suggests
that migration experience may help individuals who would otherwise not have had access to positions of
power. This relationship holds when controlling for levels of municipal migration, municipal dependency
on agriculture, and several other intervening variables. The municipalities where migrants become mayors
are, not surprisingly, more dependent upon remittances, even after controlling for the share of municipal
population made up of return migrants. What is surprising, however, is that places with more associated
migrant hometown associations (HTAs) and where migrants have supported their communities with
collective remittances are no more likely to have elected a migrant mayor. This suggests that non-migrant
political leaders are just as apt at mobilizing the support of migrant civil society groups as migrant
political leaders. Another counter-intuitive finding is that non-migrants are more successful than migrants
in places where migrants retain voting rights after leaving, suggesting that migrants perhaps are less
motivated to seek (and accordingly win) office when they have been extended more rights. That is,
migrant voting rights at the local level in Oaxaca—as some have accused at the federal level (e.g., Ayón
2010)—may function to deflate the political ambitions of migrant political actors or mobilize the support
of migrants for non-migrant leaders who protect and extend their political rights. These findings serve to
set up the comparative qualitative examination of the pathways to power of migrant political actors over
time and beyond Oaxaca, as well as research to determine what, if any, difference migrant political
empowerment makes.
The goals of this analysis are two-fold. First, I compare the population of mayors to the general population of the state and the population of migrant and non-migrant mayors. This provides useful descriptive data relevant to questions of representation (the degree to which those in power are similar to the publics they represent) and access to political power. These findings have important implications for questions of the democratizing potential of migrant political actors. Second, I operationalize and test hypothesized explanations for the electoral success of return migrants. These findings raise important questions about the democratizing potential of migrant political actors, which are explored in chapters 6 and 7.

Below I begin with a brief discussion of the two literatures that inform the research in this chapter. Second, I outline competing and complementary explanations for how and under what conditions we should expect migrants to gain political power at the local level and derive corresponding hypotheses. Third, I operationalize the dependent and independent variables used to test the hypotheses and discuss the methods of analysis. Fourth, I present the results of a series of bivariate and multivariate statistical tests of the hypotheses. Finally, I discuss the results of the analyses, conclude, and outline next steps in the project.

2. RETURN MIGRANT POLITICAL ACTORS AND PATHWAYS TO POWER

This portion of the dissertation contributes to two distinct literatures. The first, reviewed extensively in Chapter 2, is the growing research program that examines the effect of migration, and migrant actors, on the politics of their home towns. The dominant current of this literature asks whether migrants serve as agents of democratization back home (Besserer 1999, 2003; Burgess 2005, 2010, 2012; Castro Neira 2009; Jiménez 2008; Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow 2010; Pfutze 2012) or if the negative
impacts of migration can also weaken political participation and competition (Ahmed 2012; FitzGerald 2000, 2009; Goodman and Hiskey 2008; Hirschman 1970; Wright 2009). The most relevant parts of this literature to the present chapter focus on the role of migrant political actors, particularly as members of the political opposition (e.g., Besserer 1999, 2003; Castro Neira 2009; Smith and Bakker 2005). It is important not to over-generalize from the findings of these scholars, however, as they select their cases on the dependent variables of high levels of migrant influence and organization and opposition to the dominant centers of political power. Indeed, this is one criticism leveled by Goodman and Hiskey (2008) to justify their decision to study all municipalities in Mexico, not just those with high migration rates or high levels of organized migrant participation. My focus on the backgrounds of migrant mayors across the state of Oaxaca allows for a more general understanding of their pathways to power and the types of impact they have on the political systems of their municipalities of origin.

Through my analysis of the socioeconomic and political backgrounds of migrant mayors, I bring the classical question of “who governs?” to the migrant democratization debate. Smith's study of the backgrounds of Mexican political elites (1979) and a vast amount of research by Camp (2002) have painted comprehensive pictures of the characteristics of political, economic, and social elites, mostly at the federal-level, and over the course of the 20th century, particularly during the heyday of PRI hegemony. Recent scholarship on Latin America (e.g., Langston 2006; Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008) examines the process of candidate selection, and how this has changed, becoming less centralized under conditions of increased political competition (also see Camp 2008). Similarly, scholars of comparative politics have developed and tested theories about the role of institutional and state structures, in addition to social and economic contexts, in determining who runs for and wins office (e.g., Borchert 2011).

Much less research on the question of political biographies, careers, and pathways to power has focused on the municipal, or even subnational, level. Classical and mid-20th century debates about who really controls the levers of political power often focused on the level of national politics, as do the important empirical contributions on Mexican elites. Although it is the case that many politicians who
achieve higher, national office began their careers at the local level (and perhaps increasingly so in Mexico within a context of political competition, see Langston 2006), it does not follow that most politicians that win or run for office locally go on to win higher office. In political environments where power has been increasingly decentralized, as has been the case in Mexico, it is more important than ever to better understand who governs at the local level. Furthermore, a comparative subnational research design makes it tenable to focus on the impacts of hypothesized causal variables while holding constant many of the contextual factors that make cross-national comparative research so challenging, while allowing theoretically interesting contextual factors to vary.

I choose to study the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca for several reasons. First, the state has become one of the top migration senders in the country, and families in the state received $1.4 billion dollars from abroad in 2011, below the 2008 peak of $1.5 billion but still an 80% increase since 2003 (BANIXICO 2013, author calculations). The state is in the top-six of aggregate remittance recipients, and is among the states with the highest dependency on these financial flows, which made up 9.8% of gross state product in 2007 (BANIXICO 2013, author calculations; INEGI 2012). Second, Oaxaca is unique in the Mexican context in a number of respects that make it a particularly interesting case for study. It is the state with both the largest number and the highest percentage of indigenous language speakers in the country—communities in the state speak 16 different pre-Colombian languages. Furthermore, since 1995, there have been two distinct local political systems in the state, with 418 municipalities governed by indigenous customary law institutions, known as usos y costumbres (or UC), and 152 governed by the system of political parties used in the rest of the country. I take advantage of Oaxaca's immense internal diversity, including linguistic and ethnic diversity, to create a comparative municipal research design to examine the background characteristics of migrant mayors and to see the extent to which they differ across social, economic, cultural and institutional contexts.

Finally, the general backdrop of the analysis is of course the state-level political context. Although this undoubtedly impacts different parts of a state in diverse ways, there are many elements that
are constant, and importantly distinct from the rest of the country. Until the local elections of 2010, Oaxaca was among the only states where the long-dominant Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) had yet to lose a gubernatorial election. During the period under study in this chapter the state continued to be controlled by an increasingly authoritarian PRI during the governorship of Ulises Ruiz Ortiz. Oaxaca's uniqueness in terms of the long political dominance of the PRI and its ethnic and geographic fragmentation pose certain methodological challenges, and I take care not to over-generalize the results. That said, I argue that Oaxaca's uniqueness poses an opportunity for critical tests of theoretical hypotheses about the nature of political opportunities available to return and transnational migrant actors. On the one hand, the relatively small size of Oaxaca municipalities compared to the average Mexican municipality makes it more likely that migrant political actors will gain influence there. Among other reasons, this is expected to be the case because the individual and collective remittances they bring back to the community are likely to make up a more important share of municipal income. Stated differently, if migrants are shown to have a significant impact on the politics of their home towns in rural Oaxacan municipalities, it might not be safe to conclude that they will have as easy of a time gaining influence in municipalities elsewhere in the country. On the other hand, if migrants did not have a notable impact in Oaxaca, we would expect them to be even less likely to become influential in the much larger communities throughout the country. The prevalence of non-partisan UC political institutions in three-fourths of the state's municipalities might also make the results less generalizable. For example, the formal (though often not actual) exclusion of political parties from municipal elections in Oaxaca might be expected to limit the cooptation of migrant actors relative to other states. My assessment based on extensive field work in Oaxaca—including frequent observations of the influence of political parties and other external political and social forces in UC municipalities—is that this is not generally the case. Nevertheless, chapters 6 and 7 compare Oaxaca cases from both political party and UC system municipalities with municipalities in the states of Guanajuato and Zacatecas to better identify the extent to which the quantitative findings from the Oaxaca case hold up in other contexts.
3. BACKGROUNDS AND PATHWAYS TO POWER OF THE NEW MIGRANT ELITE

There are two distinct but interrelated types of questions to be answered in this chapter. First, how and in what types of municipalities do migrants come to power? Second, how are migrant mayors different from non-migrant mayors? To answer the first question, I start from the premise that the growing economic importance of migration—which amounts to a fundamental change in the political economy of many migrant-sending municipalities—increases the likelihood that migrants as a group will experience greater, and possibly disproportionate, political power. Although this proposition is quite plausible, there are a number of reasons why the economic importance of migration to a municipality might not be sufficient to explain the political success of migrants. Accordingly, I suggest a number of additional factors to explain why migrants become motivated to seek power back home and that are likely to increase their chances of success. The answer to the second question helps determine the extent to which migrant political empowerment is democratizing.

3.1. Impediments to Migrant Political Power, Despite Economic Importance

There are three reasons why the economic importance of migration to a municipality would not directly translate into political power for migrants. First, migrants might not be a unified social class, let alone political interest group. Individual migrants within and across communities might hail from a variety of social and political backgrounds—from rich to poor, from political insiders to exiles. Furthermore, they have a wide range of experiences as migrants such as the sector of the US labor force in which they work and the formative political experiences that they might have as immigrants. Nevertheless, there is indeed an extent to which migrants and their families who stay behind do have a
definable set of economic and social interests, and accordingly have the potential to organize into social and political groups to advocate for those interests before the state—or to seek and win positions of institutional power.

The second reason the economic importance of migration to a municipality might not translate into political power for migrants is that even if a migrant gains political power, it does not follow that she will do so as a migrant by representing particular migrant interests, rather than some other set of political or social interests or identities. That is, migrant political actors may be oppositional to the prevailing ruling class or they may be deeply tied to that group. They may identify as migrants, members of the PRI or the PRD, indigenous peoples, teachers, day laborers, peasants, professionals, or some combination of these. In the end, these are empirical questions, which I examine below.

Third, even if migrants were able to organize a unified political interest group, as they indeed often do, the extent to which their economic weight translates into political power might be impeded by the difficulty of distance. That is, it is necessary to account for the mechanisms through which migrants as potential political actors, succeed despite having lived for an extensive period of time outside of the polity they seek to influence or govern. One hypothesized mechanism through which migrants are able to bridge this gap is through US or bi-nationally-based migrant based organizations (MBOs). Specifically, the social capital, status, and networks built by migrants when abroad through leadership and participation in MBOs might provide a channel through which they can remain connected with the public life of their hometowns and be sufficiently connected with centers of political influence and the general public while living out of the country. Another mechanism through which migrants might translate their economic power into political power is through alliances with government or opposition political actors back home. Indeed, there are cases where prevailing political elites have managed to retain power in the face of the major social and economic changes brought by migration by incorporating migrant leaders into their governing coalitions. As theorized in Chapter 3, although large scale migration is potentially destabilizing to individuals and groups that dominate local politics, clever politicians might find ways to take
advantage of the social status and economic power of migrants to shore up their own grip on power. Indeed, some of the findings from the analysis presented below suggest that frequently non-migrant local political elites hold on to power at higher rates in places with more migrant-based civil society groups.

3.2. Why Do Migrants Want To Come to Power?

Independent of the mechanisms through which motivated migrants might use their economic power (as a group or as individuals) to gain social and political power, the likelihood that migrants will win elections in their municipalities of origin is obviously conditioned by their desire to hold positions of local political power. This desire may exist or emerge for a number of reasons unrelated to the general economic importance of migration in a particular place. For example, Rivera-Salgado (1999) has argued that indigenous migrants—due to strong communal norms, traditions and identities—retain stronger transnational ties to their home communities when abroad because of the strength of communitarian norms and practices. It is a small step from this proposition to theorize that indigenous migrants should be more likely to want to hold positions of local authority in their home towns, which, all else being equal, would make them more likely to come to power there.65

Beyond this culturalist proposition, it is not uncommon for prevailing authorities or the General Community Assemblies, particularly in indigenous customary law-governed UC municipalities in Oaxaca, to require migrants to participate in lower level posts in the religious and civil hierarchies of their communities, and threaten them with sanctions when they do not (Danielson 2013; Juan Martínez 2013; 1999).

65 Some might argue that it is inappropriate to assume, as I do, that migrants are mayors because they were motivated to hold political power, as they may have been selected for the cargo because it is their duty to serve. The argument that in indigenous communities political power is not sought as in more Westernized places, but taken on as a burden and a civic duty by those who have gained the most respect in the community might be generally valid with respect to lower-level cargos. For a number of potential reasons, this essentialist view of indigenous peoples does not hold water when it comes to higher levels of municipal authority such as mayor, which are more hotly contested than ever, a fact demonstrated by an extremely high rate of postelectoral conflicts in usos y costumbres municipalities (see Eisenstadt 2007).
Thus, independent of the causal effect of cultural ties on migrants' continued engagement in their home towns, migrants might be motivated to seek the higher office of mayor in municipalities where they are faced with fines or other sanctions for failing to fulfill lower-level civic and religious obligations. In general then, migrants who find their rights or other interests threatened in some way by prevailing authorities are expected to be more motivated to seek office themselves in order to protect their interests. Indeed, this is what occurred in the Oaxaca municipality of Santa Ana del Valle, where migrants became politicized to protect their interests and rights due to what they saw as onerous community service obligations (Juan Martínez interview 2009).

Despite my assumption that those who sit in the mayor's chair want to be there, there are nonetheless compelling reasons to expect that migrants are more likely to seek out higher offices such as mayor in places where they have continued to remain engaged in community life. Such transborder migrant engagement can include a number of activities. First, expected to be particularly common in indigenous and UC municipalities, many migrants continue to fulfill their community service obligations—such as lower level religious and civil cargos, or tequio service (unremunerated labor to benefit the community)—from abroad. Participation in these activities can be direct (i.e., migrants return home from abroad to serve) or monetary (i.e., migrants pay someone to serve for them, contribute funds to the municipal government, pay a fine for non-participation, etc.).

Migrants can be motivated to continue participating by their love for their communities, and this community identity might be stronger in some kinds of places than others. Arguably the other side of this coin is that some migrants remain connected at the collective level because they are threatened with losing the rights to their lands or as members of the community.\textsuperscript{66} As theorized in Chapter 3, migrants who make monetary contributions to their home towns, whether voluntary or coerced, are more likely to

\textsuperscript{66} Indeed, the affective ties one has with community might be forged through processes of socialization which lead people from some communities to feel a stronger obligation to serve than people from other communities. As such, it might be that these sanctions are among the mechanisms through which some communities forge stronger community identities than others.
feel a right to have a say in what happens there. If migrants feel their interests are threatened or violated by the prevailing authorities—be it through exclusion, the loss of land or other rights, sanctions, and so forth—the likelihood that they will engage politically and in opposition to the prevailing authorities is expected to increase.

In sum, whatever the type of participation and whatever the motivation, it is expected that migrants will be more motivated to seek the office of mayor and more equipped to win in places where they participate more and where authorities require them to participate. I now turn to a discussion of testable hypotheses about what factors account for the political success of migrants in their home municipalities and an empirical examination of whether the migrants who govern are different than their non-migrant counterparts.

4. HYPOTHESES: WHERE MIGRANTS ARE SUCCESSFUL AND HOW THEY ARE DIFFERENT

Understanding the backgrounds of migrant mayors and their pathways to power is the principle goal of this chapter. For the purposes of the larger argument of this dissertation, the objective is to better understand the ways in which the empowerment of migrants as mayors is democracy-enhancing.

4.1. Tests of Migrant Democratization Theory: The Representation Mechanism
4.1.1. Hypothesis 1a: The Popular Representation Hypothesis

Per the representation mechanism (Table 2.1, Chapter 2) the Popular Representation Hypothesis holds that migrant empowerment is democratizing because it improves the representation of previously underrepresented groups in municipal politics. The key underrepresented groups I focus on empirically
here are peasants and day laborers, the less educated, and the indigenous. This hypothesis will be corroborated if migrant mayors are more likely to be members of the popular rather than elite classes when compared to their non-migrant counterparts.

4.1.2. Hypothesis 1b: The Elite Representation Hypothesis

The counter-hypothesis, the *Elite Representation Hypothesis*, expects migrant empowerment to have a democracy-weakening impact because migration experience simply helps already advantaged social groups—professionals, business owners, people with government connections, teachers—\(^67\)—to increase their power and political representation. The reason for this is that, although they are not among the wealthiest, migrants are not generally the poorest members of their communities. Furthermore, high migration communities are not the poorest or the richest.\(^68\) This hypothesis will be corroborated insofar as migrant mayors have higher levels of education and more lucrative professions when compared to non-migrant mayors.

4.2. Tests of Migrant Democratization Theory: The Mode of Engagement Mechanism

4.2.1. Hypothesis 2a: The Opposition Migrant Hypothesis

Per the hypothesized “mode of engagement” mechanism, the *Opposition Migrant Hypothesis* holds that migrants have a democratizing impact on their home municipalities because they come to power in opposition to prevailing political parties and elite groups. To test this hypothesis, I ask whether migrants are any more likely to become mayors in municipalities that strongly supported the long

\(^67\) In Oaxacan politics, particularly in rural municipalities, teachers are among the most connected and powerful community members, most typically mobilized in opposition to the PRI.

\(^68\) Although not easily tested here, one might also put forth a “Middle Class Migrant” hypothesis, insofar as migration experience strengthens a new migrant middle class to challenge the municipal elite classes.
dominant (at the time of the survey) Party of the Institutional Revolution (PRI). This hypothesis will be corroborated if migrants are more likely to be mayor where the opposition is stronger and where the mayor is a member of the PRI.

4.2.2. Hypothesis 2b: The Oficialista Migrant Hypothesis

The counter-hypothesis, the *Oficialista Migrant Hypothesis*, expects that dominant political groups—in the Oaxaca context, generally the PRI—help to explain the political success of migrant mayors. That is, following the pathways theorized in Chapter 3, migrant political actors come to power in an *oficialista* capacity, helping to shore up the power of already dominant political groups. This hypothesis will be corroborated if migrants are more likely to be mayor as municipalities are more supportive of the PRI and if migrant mayors are more likely to be members of the PRI.

4.3. Hypothesized Causes of Migrant Political Success

When testing propositions of the migrant democratization theory, it is also necessary to account for a range of factors that are also expected to impact migrant political success. To that end, the remaining hypotheses are formulated and tested to better understand the pathways to power of migrant mayors, and how these differ from those of non-migrants.

69 As the majority of the municipalities in the database conduct local elections under the non-partisan *usos y costumbres* system, I test the mayors' degree of “oficialismo” imperfectly by seeing how the political dominance of the official party in the municipality helps to explain the likelihood that the mayor was a migrant.

70 The caveat, impossible to examine with the cross-sectional quantitative data available, is that the PRI, though long-dominant in the state, has had many internal factions over the years. In a given municipality, the “dominant group” might very well be a cacique with deep loyalty to the PRI. However, the rivals of his local political group might be connected to a different faction within the PRI, or divisions might have more relevance in the municipal than the state-level context. These historical and local complexities must be addressed with the qualitative case studies in chapters 6 and 7.
4.3.1. Hypothesis 3: The Structuralist Hypothesis

This hypothesis simply predicts that municipalities that are more economically dependent upon migrant remittances will be more likely to have mayors that are return migrants. This hypothesis would be significantly weakened if former migrants are not found to be more likely to hold positions of authority in municipalities that are more economically dependent upon migration and remittances. The hypothesis would be corroborated insofar as mayors are not more likely to be migrants where remittance dependency is higher, controlling for migration intensity and other factors.

4.3.2. Hypothesis 4: The Social Network Hypothesis

As argued above, the structuralist theory that migrant economic power should translate directly into political power fails to specify the mechanisms through which this might happen. Particularly, a unique characteristic of migrants is that they spend long periods of time away from their communities of origin. Accordingly, their absence clearly represents an obstacle to political success. The Social Network Hypothesis expects that migrants as a group are more likely to actualize their power to affect public decisions and individual migrants are more likely to hold public office when they organize to act collectively through MBOs, even if their formation is not explicitly political. Such mediating mechanisms ought to be specified to build a more complete theory than is possible by simply testing the Structuralist Hypothesis, to explain why the economic importance of migration to a municipality helps to account for the political power for migrants there, and the conditions under which this power is likely to emerge.

Tests of this hypothesis have important implications for migrant democratization theory as well. If the presence of migrant civil society organizations does not increase the likelihood that the mayor is a migrant, this suggests that non-migrant political actors have been able to ally with migrant civil society—as theorized in Chapter 3—to shore up their own power as much as migrant mayors. This is not democracy-weakening in and of itself but should cause us to pause before concluding that migrant civil
society necessarily strengthens accountability, empowers new migrant political actors and otherwise increases the pluralism and competitiveness of municipal political systems.

4.3.3. Hypothesis 5: The Migrant Social Engagement Hypothesis

According to the *Migrant Social Engagement Hypothesis*, migrants are expected to be more likely to hold the office of mayor in places where they remain relatively more engaged in other areas of community public life. This includes participation, direct and monetary, in religious and civic *cargos*, *tequio* service (non-remunerated community labor), patron saint festivals, or through the funding of public works that benefit the community. Higher levels of participation are expected to impact both migrants' motivation to become mayor and their likelihood of winning. On the former, it is expected that migrants will be more likely to seek local political office and generally be more interested in public affairs in the home municipalities in places where they remain more connected to the social and cultural life there. On the latter, migrants are expected to be more likely to win elected office where their participation in community life and their financial support of public goods has been greater, as this should raise the status of migrants, increase their motivation to seek political power, and make them more likely to view themselves as community citizens with the right to exercise their voice.⁷¹

The *Migrant Social Engagement Hypothesis* will be supported insofar as a migrant is more likely to be mayor where migrants, as a group, are more socially engaged in their home towns and where they have contributed to public works projects that benefit the community (operationalized below).

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⁷¹ There are some limits to the available data that make it somewhat difficult to test this hypothesis. The available quantitative data make it possible to measure the degree to which migrants—as a group—have remained engaged in the public life of their community. This is indeed expected to be an important determinant of the probability of success of individual migrants. That said, it would be ideal to also estimate how the level of engagement individual migrant mayors had in their communities before becoming mayors. That is, migrants might be generally active in a given municipality, but the mayor, even if also a migrant, might not have been engaged at all. Because of this limit, it is important to not over-state the conclusions with respect to individual migrant political actors’ hometown engagement from abroad.
4.3.4. Hypothesis 6: The Punitive Municipal Government Hypothesis

This hypothesis holds that migrants will be more likely to have risen to positions of local authority in municipalities that require them to participate at lower levels, and sanction them if they do not. Authorities in some communities possess greater leverage to compel monetary contribution and direct participation in the community while abroad. For example, migrants who have plots of land or a home on collectively titled communal lands can lose the right to use these lands if they fail to fulfill their obligations as community citizens.

4.3.5. Hypothesis 7: The Migrant Rights Hypothesis

This hypothesis expects that migrants will be less likely to seek (and accordingly win) power where they do possess basic rights of community citizenship. The logic here, counter to that of the Punitive Municipal Governments Hypothesis, is that when migrants are able to retain some level of protection and membership in their home municipality—even if they do not possess the full rights of community citizenship—they will be less motivated to seek political power. As discussed in Chapter 3, when faced with the potentially destabilizing phenomenon of migration, one of the main challenges of prevailing authorities may be to sufficiently represent the wishes and interests of a migrant group insofar as they are a potential rival for power. In cases where migrants have become a clearly identified constituency, politicians may seek them out as supporters or extend them certain rights and protections, lest their rivals do so first. As such, it may be that the extension of voting rights to migrants has the counter-intuitive impact of shoring up the power of non-migrants (and prevailing authorities generally).
5. DATA AND METHODS

5.1. Dependent Variables: Specifying the Number of Migrant Mayors

I operationalize two distinct variables to account for the migration experience of mayors. The first measures whether the last place the mayor lived before becoming mayor was in the US or Canada. In the second, I measure whether the mayor has ever been a migrant. The reason for using two indicators of the mayor's migration experience will become evident below. These data, as well as several of the independent variables used in the analysis, come from the 2008-2010 Survey of Oaxaca, Mexico Municipal Governments (Danielson et al. 2010). When asked where they lived before becoming mayor, 3.0% said they had lived in the United States or Canada. The second dependent variable indicator is based on a survey question asking, first, if the mayor had ever been a migrant, and if so, where the mayor had lived. During the 2008-2010 term 15% of Oaxaca mayors surveyed had been an international migrant at some point.

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72 The survey was conducted in two parts between 2008 and 2010. The first part was funded by USAID-TIES Higher Education for Development Project, “Uniting Law and Society in Indigenous Mexico,” directed by Todd A. Eisenstadt and surveyed municipal authorities in 417 of the state's 418 UC municipalities. The sampling frame for the second part of the survey was the 152 Oaxaca municipalities governed by the party-based system. Resource and other limitations made it impossible to capture all 152 of these municipalities, so a random sample of 76 was chosen. Of those we have to date received data from 49. This part of the survey was supported by the Gill Family Foundation and a National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Award. For both sections of the survey, questionnaires were administered by the same survey research team from the State Institute for Adult Education of Oaxaca. The UC survey consisted of five distinct questionnaires and the party-system survey consisted of four questionnaires. The first questionnaire was administered to a group of three to four members of the municipal authority, typically the mayor, the sindico (the second most important post in municipalities), the finance alderman, the education alderman, among other elected positions. The second through fourth questionnaires consisted of short biographical surveys of the mayor, the sindico, the commissioner of communal resources (the most important position of agrarian authority), and the mayordomo—or the host of the community's patron saint festival. The UC survey also conducted a survey of a town elder, but the coverage and quality of data obtained by this part of the survey were poor and this module was not administered for the party-system municipalities.
In the first part of the analysis, I compare the recent migration experience of mayors with that of the adult male population and the percentage of households with at least one return migrant. This analysis demonstrates that migrants as a group are significantly overrepresented in the mayors' office, suggesting that migration may have become a new pathway to local political power. After comparing migrant mayors with the general population, I turn to a focus on the mayors themselves, comparing the individual characteristics and the social, economic and cultural characteristics of the municipalities where migrants were mayors with those where non-migrants were mayors. In the following sections I operationalize the variables used to test the hypotheses specified in the previous section.

73 Although the database used in the analysis does contain data on whether mayors have been migrants at any point in their lives, the Mexican census does not ask a similar question. Accordingly, here I compare the percentage of mayors who lived abroad right before becoming mayor with the percentage of the adult male population that lived abroad 5 years earlier.
Table 5.1. Descriptive Statistics: Migrant Mayors
Dependent, Explanatory and Control Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>N*</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent Variable</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Mayor</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>391</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Variables for Hypothesis Tests</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Education</td>
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<td>0.50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>389</td>
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<td>Peasant/Laborer</td>
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<td>0.50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>390</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous Mayor</td>
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<td>0.50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor in PRI</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>377</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muni. Voted for PRI in '04</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>391</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remittance Dependency</td>
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<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTAs</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collective Remittances</td>
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<td>0.50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron Saint Festival Particip.</td>
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<td>0.46</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punitiveness</td>
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<td>0.65</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Migrant Voting Rights</td>
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<td>0.36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Years of School</td>
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<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.48</td>
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<td>391</td>
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<td>Share of Land for Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usos y Costumbres</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Indigenous</td>
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<td>% Return US Migrants</td>
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<td>4.62</td>
<td>11.36</td>
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</table>

*Only includes cases where DV is not missing.

5.2. Independent Variables: Operationalizing the Hypotheses

5.2.1. Variables to Test Hypothesis 1(a&b): The Popular and Elite Representation Hypotheses

I argue that the social background of “who governs” is important for the quality of democratic representation. The variables to test these two competing hypotheses measure different socioeconomic characteristics of mayors. First, I include a binary variable equal to 1 if the mayor's occupation is either as a peasant or a day laborer (Survey of Oaxaca Municipal Governments). Other occupations included professionals, government officials, teachers, and businesspeople. Thus, a finding that migrant mayors are
more likely to be peasants or day laborers corroborates the *Popular Representation Hypothesis* and falsifies the *Elite Representation Hypothesis*.

The second variable used to test these competing hypotheses is a binary indicator equal to 1 if the mayor's highest level of education completed was primary school or less (Survey of Oaxaca Municipal Governments). Similar to the occupational indicator, a finding that migrant mayors are more likely to have primary education as the highest level attained corroborates the *Popular Representation Hypothesis* and falsifies the *Elite Representation Hypothesis*.

The final variable used to test these hypotheses measures whether the mayor speaks an indigenous language (Survey of Oaxaca Municipal Governments). A finding that migrant mayors are more likely to speak an indigenous language would suggest that migration experience works as an indirect mechanism to increase indigenous representation at the municipal level, thus, corroborating the *Popular Representation Hypothesis* and weakening the *Elite Representation Hypothesis*.

5.2.2. Variables to Test Hypothesis 2(a&b): The Opposition and Oficialista Migrant Hypotheses

The other tests of migrant democratization theory put forth in this chapter relates to the “mode of engagement” mechanism of democratization. To test the competing hypotheses derived from this theory—the *Opposition* and *Oficialista Migrant Hypotheses*—I look to two variables. As the PRI had been dominant in the state for eight decades at the time of the survey, migrants are classified as “oficialista” if they said they were members of the PRI, and oppositional if they did not (Survey of Oaxaca Municipal Governments). The *Opposition Migrant Hypothesis* would be corroborated if migrant mayors were less likely to be members of the PRI, and the *Oficialista Migrant Hypothesis* would be corroborated if they were more likely to be members of the PRI.

The great majority of the observations in this database were from municipalities governed by the officially non-partisan UC system, and a majority (63%) of mayors did not declare membership in any
political party. Although this certainly does not mean that they did not sympathize with a party (they were not asked this question), this makes it difficult to ascertain the extent to which mayors were truly oppositional to or supportive of the PRI. To overcome this limit, I use a second variable to test these competing hypotheses, and get a better sense of the degree to which migrant mayors are strengthening the opposition or shoring up the legitimacy of the official party. The indicator used is a binary variable equal to 1 if the PRI gubernatorial candidate (Ulises Ruiz Ortiz, Governor from 2005-2010) won the most votes in the municipality in the 2004 election (IEEPCO 2004).

5.2.3. Variables to Test Hypothesis 3: The Structuralist Hypothesis

The Structuralist Hypothesis predicts that places that are more economically dependent upon migrant remittances will be more likely to have mayors that are return migrants themselves. To test this hypothesis, I use data from person-level public use microdata files from the 2000 Mexican Census of Population and Households (INEGI 2001, author calculations) to construct a variable measuring the percentage of total income that comes from international family remittances in each municipality. Constructing this variable is a three-step process. Every person is asked to report their income from a variety of sources, including international remittances, employment, government transfers, and other sources. I take the sum of the international remittance income and total income of every person in each municipality to create an estimate of total municipal income from international remittances and from all sources. Finally, I calculate the quotient of international remittance income divided by total income to generate a municipal-level indicator of “international remittance dependency.” This is the share of municipal income occupied by international remittances.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{74} It may be that the income estimates from this census data are inaccurate. I take not position on this question. I argue, nevertheless, that the data are useful for what I want to measure, which is the subjective assessment of the importance of remittance income to each person, household and municipality.
5.2.4. Variables to Test Hypothesis 4: The Migrant Social Networks Hypothesis

This hypothesis, not mutually exclusive from the structuralist hypothesis, is based on the notion that migrants are more likely to become successful politicians in their home municipalities if they are able to draw on different transnational and local networks of support. To test the specific expectation that migrants are more likely to win local political office—to translate their growing economic power into political power—when they form organizations as migrants to engage in the social, economic or political life of their communities. Data were not collected in the 2008-2010 Survey of Oaxaca, Mexico Municipal Governments on mayors' membership in US-based migrant hometown associations (HTAs) or other MBOs. In the absence of such a variable, I use a variable equal to the number of migrant hometown associations registered in each municipality based on the directory of migrant organizations maintained by the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (IME) of the Secretariat of Foreign Relations (IME 2012). This indicator is somewhat limited, as the presence of one or more HTAs in a municipality does not entail that a migrant mayor is a member of such an organization nor that the organization's members are among his or her supporters.

I expect the connections that migrant mayors may have with HTAs to be potentially important and generally unique to current and former migrants. A negative finding here, however, would have important implications for migrant democratization theory, specifically with respect to the “mode of engagement” mechanism of migrant impact. If the number of migrant civil society organizations is not related to the likelihood that the mayor is a migrant, this would suggest that non-migrant mayors have been able to ally with migrant civil society, or at least that the presence of migrant civil society organizations has not hurt them politically. As theorized in Chapter 3, non-migrants, and the established authorities generally, might seek social alliances with migrants—particularly their support through collective remittance contributions—to shore up their own power.
5.2.5. Variables to Test Hypothesis 5: The Migrant Social Engagement Hypothesis

I operationalize and test two distinct variables to capture the level of migrant cross-border social engagement. First, to measure whether migrants have supported projects to benefit their communities through collective remittances I combine data from two indicators. First, I use data on whether the municipality has been the beneficiary of a migrant-funded project under the Mexican federal government's 3x1 Program for Migrants from 2002-2008 (SEDESOL 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008). By itself, participation in the 3x1 program only captures a particularly oficialista subset of migrant collective remittances. To account for this, I make use of data gathered in the 2008-2010 Survey of Oaxaca, Mexico Municipal Governments. Specifically, municipal authorities surveyed were asked if, during the past four years, migrants had contributed to public works. The combined indicator is equal to 1 if the municipality benefited from at least one 3x1 project and had at least 1 migrant funded project in the past 4 years, as indicated by the survey question.

The second indicator of migrant hometown social engagement is another binary variable, equal to 1 if migrants return home to participate in the community's annual patron saint festival. This is, on its face, an apolitical act. Nevertheless, I expect that places where migrants retain affective and social ties with their municipalities of origin will be more likely to see a migrant mayor elected.

5.2.6. Variables to Test Hypothesis 6: The Punitive Municipal Governments Hypothesis

According to this hypothesis, migrants are expected to be more motivated to seek power—and accordingly are more likely to have won power—in places where they are required to participate in home community institutions, fulfill service obligations (namely cargo and tequio service) and are sanctioned for failing to do so and where they see their interests or rights otherwise placed at risk. To measure how punitive the municipal authorities are to their migrant population, I construct a count variable equal to 0 if the municipality does not sanction migrants when they do not fulfill their community service obligations
and 4 if they suffer all of four different types of sanctions (fines, loss of land rights, loss of community rights, and other sanctions).

The logic here, as worked out in Chapter 3, is that migrants who feel that their rights have been violated or are under threat by prevailing authorities (cases where the cacique chose a “fight” strategy), will be motivated to seek power themselves. Even if migrants at time “t” are insufficiently strong to challenge an exploitative, rights-violating status quo, such violations, if viewed as unjust, are expected to make migrants more likely to mobilize to ultimately challenge the status quo at time t+1. That is, the violation of rights is expected to motivate migrants to seek power. As a necessary condition for migrant political success, the presence of potential sources of motivation is expected to increase the likelihood that the mayor is a migrant.

5.2.7. Variable to Test Hypothesis 7: The Migrant Rights Hypothesis

The specific indicator used to test this hypothesis is a binary variable equal to 1 if migrants have been granted the right to vote in at least some circumstances: through a representative if they are away, after having lived outside of the community for an extended period of time, after being temporarily away (Survey of Oaxaca Municipal Governments). As stated above, this hypothesis expects that migrants will be less likely to be mayors where they possess basic rights of community citizenship. In the terms of the algorithmic model in Chapter 3, migrant actors will choose to conform rather than fight (and attempt to change prevailing institutions) if they are happy with the status quo opportunities and resources available under the prevailing system.

5.2.8. Control Variables

I include 7 control variables. First, to ensure that variation in the education level of migrant mayors is not simply a function of variation in the education level of the municipalities they govern, I
control for the average number of years of school completed by the population 15 years old and older in 2000 (INEGI 2001). Second, and following a similar logic, I control for the percentage of municipal territory used for agriculture (INEGI 2007, author calculations) to see if migrant mayors are more likely to be peasants (and workers of other popular sectors) independently of the importance of agriculture in their municipalities. Additionally, this control variable is useful because it allows me to measure the impact of remittance dependency, independent of this other basic sources of economic sustenance in much of rural Mexico. Third, as the characteristics of the political system used in the municipality might impact migrant political success, I include a control variable equal to 1 for UC municipalities and 0 for party-system municipalities. Fourth, to most accurately gauge the degree to which migration experience helps to improve indigenous representation, it is necessary to control for the percentage of municipal population that speaks an indigenous language (INEGI 2001, author calculations). Fifth, as noted above, I control for the percentage of the municipal population that reported they had lived outside of the country five years earlier when asked in 2000. This variable is included to account for the simple fact that the likelihood that the mayor is a former migrant is a function of the number of former migrants residing in the municipality (INEGI 2001, author calculations). Sixth, I control for poverty (as measured by the 2005 index of marginalization, CONAPO 2006). Seventh, I control for the natural logarithm of municipal population (INEGI 2001, author calculations). These final two variables are important as controls, since migrants are expected to be more likely to be important political actors in poorer and smaller municipalities. Additionally, these controls are important due to the fact that they are correlated with variables of theoretical interest such as the education level, occupation, and ethnicity of the mayor and the intensity of migration, and thus their omission might bias the results.
6. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The analysis in this chapter focuses on mayors with migration experience in two ways. First, I want to answer a direct descriptive question about whether migration experience helps people to gain local political power. If it is true that migration improves one's chances of winning political power, it should be the case that the population of mayors is more likely to have migration experience than the general population. I compare the percentage of mayors who lived outside of the country immediately before becoming mayor (3.0%) with several indicators of migration intensity throughout the rest of the state, and find that mayors are far more likely to be recent migrants than the rest of the state according to three different indicators. The remaining analysis of this section consists of bivariate and multivariate comparisons between migrant and non-migrant mayors.

6.1. Comparing Mayors to the General Population

To conduct a preliminary test of the proposition that migration experience improves one's chances of gaining local political power, I conduct three bivariate tests to compare the migration experience of mayors to that of the population of the state. Consistent with a similar analysis that compared the percentage of UC mayors who were recent migrants to the percentage of the state and UC municipality populations that were recent migrants (Danielson 2013), I find that across the whole state, mayors are greater than five-times more likely to be migrants than the population of adult men generally. As Table 5.2 shows, 3.0% of surveyed mayors had lived abroad immediately before becoming mayor. I compare this to the percentage of the adult male population that had lived in the United States five years earlier in the average municipality (INEGI 2001, author calculations).\footnote{It might be questioned whether 2000 data are the most appropriate for this indicator, since data come from between 8 and ten years later. I opt to use 2000 data to ensure a reliable municipal-level estimate of the percentage of adult males who were migrants five years earlier. To do this, it is necessary to use the 2000 census data.}

A very small share of adult men in the
state, 0.79% lived out of the country 5 years earlier, and the difference between this percentage and 3.0% is statistically significantly different from 0 (p<0.01). Only 0.55% of Oaxacan men overall (as opposed to the average of municipal percentages) had been abroad five years earlier. Finally, though significantly higher than the percentage of the adult male population, the average of the municipal percentage of households with at least one member who is a return migrant (CONAPO 2002), 0.97%, is one-third the size of the percentage of mayors who are recent migrants (p<0.01).

Table 5.2. Migration Experience of Mayors and Oaxacans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Recent Migrant</th>
<th>Difference From Mayors</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayors</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households, 2000 (Average Muni.)¹</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>2.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men, 2000 (Average Muni.)²</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men, 2000 (Oaxaca)³</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Municipalities</td>
<td>407</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Percent of households in municipality with at least one return migrant in the average municipality.
2. Percent of adult males in municipality who lived in the US 5 years earlier (sample municipalities).
3. Percent of Oaxaca's adult male population who lived in the US 5 years earlier.

Sources: Data for mayors come from the 2008-2010 Survey of Oaxaca, Mexico Municipal Governments. Household remittance data come from the Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO, 2002) index of migration intensity, of which this variable is a component part. Data for the percentage of men who are return migrants come from author calculations of the microdata files from the 2000 Census of Population and Households (INEGI 2001).

The over-representation of migrants in Oaxacan town halls suggests that migration experience may increase an individual's chances of gaining local political power. The reasons for this are significantly more difficult to understand. For one, some might argue that migrants are a self-selected set who are more likely to seek and win political power for the same reason that they had the motivation, public use micro-sample. Sample sizes of the public use files are too small to ensure reliable municipal-level estimates using the intercensal 2005 Count of Population and Households.
courage and wherewithal to emigrate in the first place. That is, it may not be migration experience itself that makes migrants more likely to become mayors than non-migrants, and the same individuals might have been more likely than others to become mayors had they not chosen to migrate. I try to account for this bias somewhat by focusing on the percentage of adult males who were recent migrants in the average municipality, as opposed to the percentage of the general population that lived abroad five years earlier. That is, comparing the percentage of adult males who are recent migrants with the percentage of mayors who are recent migrants is conservative, since mayors are all adults, and mostly men. Nevertheless, this clearly does not correct other sources of potential bias.

Others might dispute the assumption that everyone who is mayor wants to be. Indeed, as noted above, in the context of UC communities, citizens (typically adult males) are selected to serve in cargos by the General Community Assembly, often against their will. As some defenders of these seniority-based systems of community organization, such as Cipriano Flores Cruz (interview 2007, also see Danielson and Eisenstadt 2009) often note, it is common for people to skip an assembly if they believe they might be nominated to serve in a cargo, as service often means they are taken away from their other, economically necessary work. Extensive ethnographic research in six Oaxaca municipalities, three of which are under the UC system, confirms that certain cargos in the religious and civil hierarchy are indeed viewed a burdens and community members have been known to hide in their houses, or leave town if they get wind that they might be nominated to serve in a post. That said, the position of mayor, which is now (though not historically) typically a paid position in charge of a significant budget, tends to be hotly sought after.

Finally, there are some possible empirical shortcomings due to the fact that the data on return and household migration rates are from 2000 and the data on mayors is from 2008-2010. Indeed, the rates of return migration from Mexico have increased sharply over the past decade and it may very well be the case that this trend in reverse migration is reflected in the mayoral data, but not in the state-wide data. Thus, provocative as it is, this finding should be seen as a starting point for further study, rather than a
conclusive statement that migration is indeed a new pathway to local political power in Oaxaca. I now turn to the comparative analysis of migrant and non-migrant mayors.

6.2. Bivariate Comparisons of Migrant and Non-Migrant Mayors

Before proceeding to the multivariate regression analysis, I first compare the mean of each independent variable among migrant mayors to the mean among non-migrant mayors. This bivariate analysis is useful to demonstrate the differences between migrant and non-migrant mayors on a number of dimensions, and to begin testing the hypotheses operationalized in section 4 above. The hypothesis testing technique used here is the two-sample t-test. Specifically, the test compares the mean of each independent variable within each group—migrant mayors and non-migrant mayors—by taking the difference and comparing this to 0. The null hypothesis is that the difference of means is not statistically significantly different from 0. In cases where there are competing theories as to the direction of the relationship, or where the relationship is unknown, a two-tailed test of significance is most appropriate. When theory suggests reason to believe that the relationship is in one direction, a one-tailed test is appropriate.

6.2.1. Bivariate Tests of Hypothesis 1: The Popular vs. Elite Migrant Hypotheses

Three different independent variables are used to test the Popular Migrant Hypothesis against the Elite Migrant Hypothesis. As shown in Table 5.3, 48.2% of non-migrant mayors did not advance beyond a primary level of education, 23.7 percentage points less than migrant mayors (71.9%). Similarly, migrant mayors were 28.7 percentage points more likely than their non-migrant counterparts to be peasants or day laborers (80.7% compared to 52.0%). Each of these differences was statistically significant at the 0.001 level, corroborating the Popular Migrant Hypothesis and weakening the Elite Migrant Hypothesis. Migrant mayors were no more likely to speak an indigenous language than were migrant mayors.
Two variables were used to test the competing *Oficialista* and *Opposition Migrant* hypotheses. Table 5.3 shows that migrant mayors were no more or less likely to identify with the PRI than non-migrant mayors, though non-migrant mayors were nominally more likely to affiliate with the PRI. The second variable used to test these competing hypotheses shows that migrants were more likely to be mayors in places that voted for the PRI gubernatorial candidate in the 2004 elections (p-value < 0.10). Specifically, now former PRI governor Ulises Ruíz Ortiz won 63.5% of municipalities with non-migrant mayors and 75.4% of municipalities with migrant mayors. This offers preliminary but weak evidence in favor of the *Oficialista Migrant Hypothesis*. Indeed, as the multivariate analysis below shows, this variable is no longer significant when controlling for other factors. That said, at the very least these results should give pause to those who expect migrants to be a uniquely pluralizing force via what I call the “mode of engagement” mechanism (Chapter 2).

The bivariate test corroborates the *Structuralist Hypothesis*. In municipalities where non-migrants were mayors, 5.5% of total income came from international remittances. This is 10.3 percentage points less than the percentage in municipalities with migrant mayors (p-value < 0.001). However, it might be that this relationship reflects nothing more than the simple fact that migrants are more likely to be mayor in places that have more return migrants, and remittance dependency is simply a proxy reflecting a larger set of potential mayors who have migration experience. I tease out the differences in the impact of these two variables below when I report the results from a multivariate logistic regression analysis.

Bivariate tests of hypothesis 4, the *Social Networks Hypothesis*, show no relationship. Surprisingly, the existence in the US of at least one hometown association affiliated with the municipality does not impact the likelihood that a former migrant is mayor. Bivariate tests to the *Migrant Social Engagement Hypothesis* show somewhat surprising results. First, migrants were not statistically significantly more likely to be mayors in places where migrants had supported public works projects compared to non-migrant mayors. Using a one-tailed test, which assumes that migrants should be more likely to be mayors where they have supported public projects, the bivariate relationship is marginally
significant (p<0.1). The test of this hypothesis using the second variable, migrant participation in patron saint festivals, shows that migrants are 13.3 percentage points more likely to be mayor where they return home to participate in these important religious festivities (two-tailed p-value < 0.01). Nevertheless, as will be shown below, this relationship is explained by the fact that the municipal authorities surveyed were more likely to report migrant participation in patron saint festivals in places with higher levels of migration.
Table 5.3. Bivariate Comparisons of Migrant and Non-Migrant Mayors
Two-Samples T-Tests With Equal Variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Non-Migrant Mayors</th>
<th>Migrant Mayors</th>
<th>Difference of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H1: The Popular vs. Elite Representation Hypotheses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Education</td>
<td>0.482</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasant/Laborer</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Mayor</td>
<td>0.471</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H2: The Oficialista vs. Opposition Migrant Hypotheses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor in PRI</td>
<td>0.319</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muni. Voted for PRI in '04</td>
<td>0.635</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H3: Structuralist Hypothesis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remittance Dependency</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H4: Migrant Social Network Hypothesis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTAs</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H5: Migrant Engagement Hypothesis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Remittances</td>
<td>0.503</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron Saint Festival Particip.</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H6: Punitive Municipal Government Hypothesis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punitiveness</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H7: Migrant Rights Hypothesis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Rights</td>
<td>0.869</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Controls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Yrs. School (mun.)</td>
<td>5.131</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of Land for Agriculture</td>
<td>0.276</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>0.892</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Indigenous</td>
<td>43.275</td>
<td>2.173</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Return US Migrants</td>
<td>0.373</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginalization</td>
<td>0.692</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log of Population</td>
<td>7.636</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p-value<0.1; **p-value<0.05; ***p-value<0.01; ****p-value<0.001.


Hypothesis 6 expects migrants to be more likely to be mayors where municipal governments are more punitive. I measure the “Punitiveness” of a municipal government vis à vis migrants with a count variable equal to 0 if migrants were not sanctioned in any way for not participating in community service.
positions when asked and 4 if they were sanctioned in all of the 4 ways about which they were allowed to answer. On average, the municipalities with migrant mayors were nominally more punitive against migrants (0.40 compared to 0.33), but the difference was not significant.

Contrary to hypothesis 6, hypothesis 7 expects that migrants will be more likely to be mayors where they have retained their rights to local citizenship than in places where their rights are threatened. The variable operationalized to test this hypothesis, migrant voting rights, suggests that migrants win office not necessarily because of the support they receive from migrant voters, but perhaps because they are not motivated to seek office in places where they are afforded rights, specifically the right to vote.

6.3. Accounting for the Success of Migrant Mayors: Multivariate Logistic Regression Analysis

I now specify and estimate 8 multivariate logistic regression models (logit) on the binary dependent variable (equal to 1 if the mayor has migration experience). Specifically, I estimate one model that tests each hypothesis individually and one full model that includes all independent variables. All eight models contain the seven control variables. Although the bivariate hypothesis tests presented above permit a preliminary assessment of the relationship between migrant and non-migrant mayors across a number of dimensions, multivariate analysis allows for the estimation of the impact of each explanatory variable on the likelihood that the mayor is a migrant while holding other intervening factors constant. Thus, the multivariate analysis sets a higher bar for corroborating each hypothesis. Results are presented in Table 5.4.
Table 5.4. Multivariate Comparisons of Migrant and Non-Migrant Mayors
Logistic Regression Estimates (Migrant Mayor = 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Model 1 Hyp. 1</th>
<th>Model 2 Hyp. 2</th>
<th>Model 3 Hyp. 3</th>
<th>Model 4 Hyp. 4</th>
<th>Model 5 Hyp. 5</th>
<th>Model 6 Hyp. 6</th>
<th>Model 7 Hyp. 7</th>
<th>Model 8 Full</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Education</td>
<td>0.611</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.418)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.533)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasant/Laborer</td>
<td>1.25***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.568***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.456)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.562)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Mayor</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.541)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.650)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor in PRI</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.417</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>(1.187)</td>
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<td>(1.569)</td>
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<td>HTAs</td>
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<td>0.0518</td>
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<td>(0.718)</td>
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<td>Migrant Projects</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>0.053</td>
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<td>(0.327)</td>
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<td>(0.432)</td>
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<td>Patron Saint Festival</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>0.437</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>(0.249)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Migrant Voting Rights</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.899**</td>
<td>-0.989**</td>
</tr>
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<td>(0.502)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Avg. Yrs. School</td>
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<td>-0.668***</td>
<td>-0.512**</td>
<td>-0.666***</td>
<td>-0.643**</td>
<td>-0.847***</td>
<td>-0.631**</td>
<td>-0.494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.26)</td>
<td>(0.255)</td>
<td>(0.254)</td>
<td>(0.245)</td>
<td>(0.251)</td>
<td>(0.277)</td>
<td>(0.263)</td>
<td>(0.329)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share of Land for Ag.</td>
<td>1.474**</td>
<td>1.227**</td>
<td>1.21**</td>
<td>1.184**</td>
<td>1.328**</td>
<td>0.957</td>
<td>1.589**</td>
<td>1.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.599)</td>
<td>(0.607)</td>
<td>(0.605)</td>
<td>(0.583)</td>
<td>(0.601)</td>
<td>(0.654)</td>
<td>(0.630)</td>
<td>(0.788)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.434</td>
<td>0.564</td>
<td>0.468</td>
<td>0.478</td>
<td>0.397</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>-0.147</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.669)</td>
<td>(0.655)</td>
<td>(0.646)</td>
<td>(0.63)</td>
<td>(0.641)</td>
<td>(0.657)</td>
<td>(0.655)</td>
<td>(0.802)</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Indigenous</td>
<td>-0.019**</td>
<td>-0.014***</td>
<td>-0.014***</td>
<td>-0.011***</td>
<td>-0.011**</td>
<td>-0.011**</td>
<td>-0.013**</td>
<td>-0.023**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.005)</td>
<td>(0.009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Return US Migrants</td>
<td>0.658****</td>
<td>0.512***</td>
<td>0.286*</td>
<td>0.526***</td>
<td>0.486***</td>
<td>0.428***</td>
<td>0.454***</td>
<td>0.315*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.184)</td>
<td>(0.172)</td>
<td>(0.148)</td>
<td>(0.173)</td>
<td>(0.165)</td>
<td>(0.160)</td>
<td>(0.161)</td>
<td>(0.181)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginalization</td>
<td>-0.559</td>
<td>-0.635</td>
<td>-0.264</td>
<td>-0.574</td>
<td>-0.606</td>
<td>-1.027**</td>
<td>-0.439</td>
<td>-0.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.429)</td>
<td>(0.445)</td>
<td>(0.441)</td>
<td>(0.422)</td>
<td>(0.434)</td>
<td>(0.485)</td>
<td>(0.463)</td>
<td>(0.569)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Log of Population</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.206</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>0.149</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.198)</td>
<td>(0.203)</td>
<td>(0.203)</td>
<td>(0.195)</td>
<td>(0.202)</td>
<td>(0.211)</td>
<td>(0.211)</td>
<td>(0.253)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.697</td>
<td>-0.349</td>
<td>-1.317</td>
<td>0.149</td>
<td>-0.242</td>
<td>1.186</td>
<td>1.002</td>
<td>-2.450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.858)</td>
<td>(1.826)</td>
<td>(1.754)</td>
<td>(1.652)</td>
<td>(1.726)</td>
<td>(1.751)</td>
<td>(1.769)</td>
<td>(2.377)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>284.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count R2</td>
<td>0.871</td>
<td>0.862</td>
<td>0.859</td>
<td>0.859</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>0.868</td>
<td>0.853</td>
<td>0.891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted Count R2</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>-0.042</td>
<td>0.244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p-value<0.1; **p-value<0.05; ***p-value<0.01; ****p-value<0.001. Standard errors are in parentheses.
The multivariate tests in Model 1 and Model 8 provide strong support for the *Popular Migrant Hypothesis*. Although the relationship between mayors' education and migration experience disappears when controlling for the average level of education in the municipality, the logit estimates show that migrant mayors are significantly more likely to be peasants or day laborers compared to non-migrant mayors (p-value <0.01 in both models). This finding shows that migrant mayors are significantly more likely to be drawn from the popular, non-elite classes, suggesting that migration experience may open the way for people to become mayors without the relatively high levels of education or professional or governmental connections typical of non-migrant mayors. The finding is substantively significant as well. As shown in Table 5.5, the predicted probability that the mayor will be a migrant increases by 0.112 in the partial model and 0.120 in the full model when the mayor is a peasant or a day laborer. Figure 5.1 shows the relationship as estimated in the full model.

![Figure 5.1. Test of the Popular vs. Elite Migrant Hypotheses, Predicted Probability that the Mayor is a Migrant](image)

The multivariate tests provide inconclusive evidence for the competing *Oficialista* and *Oppositional Migrant* hypotheses, as there is no statistically significant relationship. Nevertheless, as suggested above, the finding that migrants are no more likely to support the dominant party or the
opposition is significant in its own right, and demonstrates a point that I made in earlier chapters and which is a central finding of this research: migrants engage in their home-community politics through a number of channels. Before I argued that there is no a priori reason to assume that migrants are likely to challenge the status quo. This finding suggests that there is no a posteriori reason either. That is, at least with respect to their party affiliations and the partisanship of the municipalities where they come to power, migrant mayors in Oaxaca are no different than non-migrant mayors.

Table 5.5. Predicted Probability that the Mayor is a Migrant
At Low and High Values of Significant Explanatory Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Predicted Probability</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Value1</td>
<td>Low Value2</td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasant/Laborer</td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Model</td>
<td>0.157</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remittance Dependency</td>
<td>Model 3</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td>0.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Model</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting Rights</td>
<td>Model 7</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.216</td>
<td>-0.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full Model</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>-0.102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. 90th percentile for continuous variables, 1 for binary variables.
2. 10th percentile for continuous variables, 0 for binary variables.

The estimates produced by both Model 3 and Model 8 support the structuralist theory that political power follows from economic power. More precisely, after controlling for the percentage of return migrants living in a municipality, mayors remain significantly more likely to have migration experience in more remittance dependent municipalities. Model 3 estimates a 0.097 point increase in the probability that the mayor is a migrant in the municipality at the 90th percentile of remittance dependency from a municipality at the 10th percentile. The estimated relationship is slightly less strong, but still statistically significant (p-value < 0.05), when including all independent variables in Model 8. This largely seems to be related to the fact that the number of observations drops from 391 to 284 in the full
model, causing the confidence interval at high levels of remittance dependency, where there are not that many observations, to become very wide in the full model (Model 8). Figure 5.2 shows the predicted probabilities that the mayor is a migrant at all levels of international remittance dependency as estimated in Model 3.

Figure 5.2. Test of the Structuralist Hypothesis, Predicted Probability that the Mayor is a Migrant

Surprisingly, a municipality having at least one associated migrant hometown association has no impact on the likelihood that the mayor is a migrant. In the full model, the sign is negative, though the relationship is not statistically significant. This is consistent with the findings from the bivariate tests, which also disconfirmed the Migrant Social Network Hypothesis.

Whereas the bivariate test provided marginal support for the Migrant Social Engagement Hypothesis—as migrants were found to be more likely to be mayors where they regularly returned home to participate in patron saint festivals—when controlling for the level of return migration and other factors, this variable is no longer significant. Migrant contributions to public work projects did not appear to help migrants to become mayors. This suggests that non-migrant political actors may have successfully
mobilized the financial support of migrants without having to give up significant political power.

The multivariate results also disconfirm the *Punitive Municipal Government Hypothesis*, meaning that migrant mayors are no more or less likely to win where their rights are threatened by prevailing authorities.

Finally, the multivariate models confirm the *Migrant Rights Hypothesis*. This counter-intuitive finding from the bivariate tests holds when controlling for many potentially intervening factors in Model 7 and Model 8. Specifically, the predicted probability that a migrant is mayor drops by more than half when migrants have retained some voting rights compared to where they have not. As shown in Figure 5.3, Model 8 predicts a probability of 0.176 that a migrant is mayor where migrants enjoy no voting rights and only 0.074 where they enjoy some voting rights. I explain this counter-intuitive finding by suggesting that migrants’ incentive to seek power is less likely to emerge where their rights are protected. Taken together with the findings that migrants are not more or less likely to be mayors in more punitive municipalities, I conclude that whereas suffering punishment does not impact the likelihood of migrant
mobilization and political success, the extension (or protection) of basic political rights may have a demobilizing impact.

The relationship of the control variables to the dependent variable is noteworthy in three cases. Not surprisingly, the percentage of the municipal population with return migrants significantly increased the likelihood of a migrant mayor (p-value < 0.10 in Model 8). The second control variable that is consistently statistically significant was the average number of years of education of the municipal population 15 years old and older. The role of this variable is that it protects against the erroneous conclusion that migrant mayors are less educated, independently of the education level of their municipalities. Exploring why migrants are more likely to be mayors in less educated municipalities is beyond the scope of this project. One possible explanation for this, consistent with the sociological literature on international migration, is that youth are more likely to leave school early in places with higher levels (and longer histories) of migration. Indeed, high migration communities often develop a culture of migration (e.g., Cohen 2004; Cohen and Sirkeci 2011; Massey 2005) in which youth view migrating as a rite of passage and where this choice is facilitated by established social networks. The third control variable with a consistent statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable is the percentage of the population that speaks an indigenous language. Specifically, migrants were significantly less likely to become mayors in more indigenous municipalities. This finding is somewhat surprising, considering that some of the most well studied cases of migrant political power are in indigenous communities in Oaxaca. Furthermore, some have suggested that indigenous migrants are more likely to remain engaged with the public affairs of their home towns due to the relative strength of community institutions (Rivera-Salgado 1999).
7. DISCUSSION

To assess whether the emergence of migrants as political actors in their home municipalities opens up the political space to new voices, I compared the social and political backgrounds of migrant mayors to those of non-migrant mayors. The bivariate and multivariate tests provided suggest that the empowerment of migrants as mayors is democracy enhancing via the mechanism of “representation.” The *Popular Migrant Hypothesis* was corroborated, and the *Elite Migrant Hypothesis* significantly weakened, at least in the Oaxaca context. Rather than further empowering an already privileged class within the municipal social field, migration experience may help people who would otherwise be excluded to access political power.

It is important to note that this does not necessarily mean that migrant mayors are from less privileged backgrounds than the typical municipal resident or the typical migrant. These migrant mayors may very well be more privileged than average. Even though migrants (particularly those migrants who come to power) might be more privileged than typical citizens, as I have shown, they are less privileged than the typical non-migrant mayor. This is not necessarily inconsistent with findings of Portes and his colleagues (2007) that migrants who are involved with transnational civil society, such as HTAs, are better off, better educated and more elite than typical migrants. That is, migrant civil society participation is an elite affair—similar to political and civic engagement generally (e.g., Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). But this frame of reference may be misleading. The migrant mayors in my study, and the transnational civil society leaders studied by Portes and his colleagues, may be relatively more privileged than other migrants or other citizens of their communities, just as the ascendant bourgeoisie class in Early Modern Europe was relatively privileged. Nevertheless, the rise of this class to displace the *ancien regime*, as has been famously argued, may be the *sine qua non* of the democratic path to modernity (Moore 1966). By showing that compared to non-migrant mayors, migrant mayors systematically hail from more popular
classes, this chapter has demonstrated how the emergence and success of migrant political actors has had an equalizing impact on the social balance of the political system.

However, just because the empowerment of the migrant political actors studied has had an equalizing impact on the social composition of political power, there is no evidence that this empowerment has led to a shift in the balance of political power in Oaxaca. In fact, in the bivariate analysis I find evidence that migrant mayors are slightly more successful in PRI strong-holds, though this relationship no longer holds when controlling for the other factors. At best, however, the absence of a relationship between mayors' partisanship (or municipal partisanship) and the likelihood that the mayor is a migrant suggests that politically, migrants sometimes align with the opposition and sometimes with the dominant party. That is, in the aggregate, the democratizing impact of migrant political actors via the “mode of engagement” mechanism may be a wash.

Consistent with expectations, and not surprisingly, the empirical analyses presented above support the structuralist hypothesis that migrants are more likely to be mayors in more remittance-dependent municipalities. Importantly, this result holds strong after controlling for the percentage of municipal populations composed of return migrants. Notably, and counter to expectations, the mechanism of migrant hometown associations does not seem necessary to translate migrant economic weight into political power, as there is no relationship between the existence of migrant-based HTAs associated with a municipality and migrant political power. This does not mean that HTAs are not important to determining mayoral success; but rather, perhaps political actors who stay behind in migrant sending communities are just as successful in mobilizing the support of HTAs—including their collective remittances—to increase their own legitimacy and improve their likelihood of political success.

Finally, the analysis provides evidence to support the Migrant Rights Hypothesis in both the bivariate and multivariate analyses. I interpret this seemingly counter-intuitive result to mean that migrants are less motivated to “fight” against the status quo where their rights have been protected, and more likely to seek direct political power where they have not. Moreover, migrant voters may be
mobilized to cast their votes for non-migrant political groups precisely where they have been granted political rights. And the results of this analysis suggest that non-migrant politicians may be better at mobilizing the political support of return and transnational migrants than aspiring migrant politicians. That said, the test of this hypothesis is imperfect for a few reasons. First, it is difficult to determine which of these two interpretations of the statistical results is correct with the available data. However, both accounts are consistent with the notion that migrant political and social energy are coopted by non-migrant politicians. Second, the cross-sectional nature of the data make it impossible to determine if and where the extension (or limiting) of migrant voting rights occurred and whether this, in fact had the impact of demobilizing (or mobilizing) potential migrant mayors or publics. Finally, much of the discussion in this and previous chapters has emphasized that migrant mayors do not necessarily oppose the status quo power structure. Accordingly, there are cases where a migrant is recruited to be mayor by the dominant political group—perhaps to improve the image of that group and its leadership—but without there being any earnest effort to represent the interests of migrants, or to release their grip on power.

8. CONCLUSION

The findings presented here, coupled with the analysis of migrant collective remittances and the 3x1 Program for Migrants in Chapter 4 establish several suggestive statistical relationships and make an important contribution to our understanding of the ways in which migrants remain engaged in their home municipalities after leaving, and the characteristics of the places where they do. This quantitative research leaves a number of questions unanswered, and suggests additional questions and testable hypotheses. As I

76 A more optimistic reading might suggest that non-migrant political actors are responding to the needs and demands of an emergent constituency, as democratic politicians ought to do.
have argued in this chapter, it is essential to understand the determinants of migrant political success, how
the population of mayors differs from that of the municipal populations they represent, as well as the
differences between migrant and non-migrant mayors. Empirically understanding the background of “who
governs” is important, as Smith argues (1979, 13), because “background is bound to shape … the general
outlooks of elites (and others), that is, their fundamental cognitive and normative orientations, as distinct
from their preferences on particular policy issues.” The set of follow-up research questions suggested
here, then, focus on the impact that migrant mayors have on the politics of their communities of origin.
That is, how are migrants different? Does it matter if they govern rather than non-migrants? I have argued
here that the fact that migrant mayors are more likely to come from the popular classes is democracy-
enhancing in itself. However, are migrant mayors—and other influential migrants—inclined to
substantively represent the interests of underrepresented groups? Drawing on Smith, does migration
change the “cognitive and normative orientations” of political actors or inculcate different policy
preferences in them? In sum, does the phenomenon of migrant politicians truly carry with it a promise of
enhanced democracy and improved substantive representation, or are migrant political actors the same or
worse than non-migrant politicians?

The cross-sectional nature of the data analyzed in this chapter made it possible to systematically
compare migrant mayors with non-migrant mayors and with the broader populations they represent. This
method is nevertheless limited in that it takes the essential element of time out of the analysis, making it
very difficult to analyze processes. It is also important to acknowledge the potential difficulty of
generalizing these results beyond the unique case of Oaxaca. In the next two chapters I seek to overcome
some of these limits, more deeply examine the process models outlined in Chapter 3, and begin to answer
the more substantive questions about the political impact of migrants addressed above.

To achieve this, the next two chapters use qualitative methods to compare six Oaxaca
municipalities (three UC and three political party-system cases) and three municipalities each in the high-
migration states of Zacatecas and Guanajuato. By examining the interactions between migrant and non-
migrant political and social actors over time in twelve municipalities, it possible to unpack the mechanisms that explain the statistical relationships, to assess the power of the models formalized in Chapter 3, and to shed further light on the overarching question of the impacts of migration on the political systems of sending municipalities. Chapter 6 focuses on the political biographies and pathways to power of several prominent migrant political actors and the organizations they have led, uncovering noteworthy variation in the modes of engagement in hometown politics and the political and ideological formations acquired as migrants. Chapter 7 focuses on the consequences of migrant political empowerment for the quality of local governance, and examines the ways in which migrant political actors interact with prevailing political actors to generate a range of municipal system-level outcomes, including political conflict and factionalism, institutionalized democratic competition, and neocorporatist cooptation (see Figure 3.2, Chapter 3).
CHAPTER 6
TRANSNATIONAL DYNAMICS OF LOCAL ELITE COMPOSITION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MIGRANT POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT IN THREE MEXICAN STATES

1. INTRODUCTION

To this point, this dissertation has empirically examined migrant hometown engagement via the diaspora channel and the return channel of influence using quantitative methods. Chapter 4 established the broad, nation-wide patterns of migrant collective remittance through the 3x1 Program for Migrants, whereas Chapter 5 showed how migrant mayors differ from non-migrant mayors and tested hypotheses about the factors that explain the political success of return migrants in the state of Oaxaca. These two chapters significantly contribute our knowledge of the types of municipalities where migrants are making collective financial contributions and the types of people who are rising to govern in town halls.

The present chapter most directly complements the analysis in Chapter 5 in that it seeks to provide further answers to the second question of the dissertation: What are the backgrounds and pathways to power of return migrant political actors? Instead of focusing on the characteristics of migrant mayors at a point in time (the 2007-2010 mayoral term) in Oaxaca, however, here I examine the processes through which migrants become politically engaged in their home communities in three Mexican states. The actors studied include individual mayors, candidates for elected office, and influential leaders of migrant-based organizations (MBOs).

To achieve this, I analyze extensive ethnographic field research data gathered over the course of two years. Empirically, the chapter compares the biographies of migrant political actors from Oaxaca to those from two other high-migration states, Guanajuato and Zacatecas. Data were also gathered in
interviews with migrant political and social leaders who remain active in their home states and communities, but live in the United States. Based on the biographical data gathered through in-depth interviews, I trace the processes through which these actors become engaged in the public life of their home communities. Between-case comparisons allow for the identification and systematic comparison of different modes of migrant engagement. With respect to the theoretical and empirical argument of this dissertation, this analysis identifies factors that help to explain whether migrants engage in their home town politics through oficialista or oppositional channels.

To frame this analysis, I borrow from a long tradition of social theory on the roles and compositions of elites (e.g., Pareto, Mosca, Michels) and mid-20th century studies of “community power” and pluralism in American Politics (see summary of this literature in Ricci 1971). In addition, the chapter applies to the municipal level some of the insights from more recent and less polemical research on “pathways to power” (see chapters in Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008) as well as studies of continuity and change in the composition of national elites in Mexico (Camp 2002, 2008; Centeno 1994; Smith 1979). Though most classical works of elite theory and pluralist critiques do not focus on the local level—and when they do (e.g., Dahl 1961; Hunter 1953; Ricci 1971) the focus is on big city politics—many of the concepts and expectations elaborated by this work are applicable at the level of small town politics in Mexico. The examination of “who governs” and how they get there touches on fundamental debates about the relative importance of structure, agency, and culture in determining political and social outcomes.

The biographical case studies presented below reveal that the mode of engagement of migrant elites into the political life of their home towns is explainable in part by their political identities. I find that the Oaxacan migrant political actors that have been most influential typically returned in radical opposition to the local power structures of their communities, as well as to the long-dominant authoritarian PRI-government. On the other hand, influential migrants from Guanajuato (long a PAN stronghold) and Zacatecas (now governed by the PRI, but held by the PRD for two six year gubernatorial terms until 2010) have tended to gain political influence through oficialista channels. This state-level
variation might be explained by a few different factors. First, as hypothesized below, “transnationalism from above”—that is, the engagement of state-level government actors with migrant civil society groups based in the US, particularly through the 3x1 Program for Migrants—institutionalizes the state-migrant relationship such that migrants (as collective, civil society actors, and also as politicians) are incorporated through oficialista channels. Second, consistent with classical theories of political incorporation (Stinchcombe 1968, 173), where migrants are excluded from effective political influence and representation of their interests, their mode of engagement is more likely to be conflictive and oppositional. This is particularly likely to occur when migrants are excluded from influence and their political identities and ideological orientations are not in line with the dominant powers. To put this in the terms of the theoretical models in Chapter 3, transnationalism from above makes migrant political actors more likely to choose a strategy of “conforming” to the status quo, while making prevailing political actors more likely to respond by “conforming” as well. On the other hand, in authoritarian contexts, migrants are more likely to choose a “fight” strategy, as are caciques.

Below I begin by conceptualizing the dependent variable of the analysis, the mode of migrant engagement into hometown politics. Second, I discuss the factors hypothesized to explain variation in the dependent variable. Third, I discuss the data, the method of analysis, and the case selection rationale. Fourth, I present the case studies of migrant political actors and summarize the findings. Finally, I conclude and discuss next steps.

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77 This is addressed more squarely in Chapter 7, however it merits mentioning that when migrant political identities are oppositional to the dominant powers, and there is an absence of institutionalized channels for the expression of oppositional voices, migrant empowerment is expected to yield an outcome of factionalism and political conflict.
2. CONCEPTUALIZING MODES OF MIGRANT ENGAGEMENT

To conceptualize the dependent variable, I borrow selectively from Siavelis and Morgenstern's typologies of the pathways to power of national-level legislators and executives in Latin American (2008). Each of their two typologies contains four candidate types. The types that are most relevant to the cases analyzed here include what they call “entrepreneurs” (or “free-wheeling independents”) and “group agents” or “group delegates.”

“Entrepreneurs” are independently minded political actors who come to power through relatively individualistic pathways, rather than through collective action or a long career of service as “party loyalists.” The influence of these individualistic migrant elites comes directly from their relationships with other local, regional or transnational elites, the personal financial resources they command, or a combination of both. Similar to Siavelis and Morgenstern's “entrepreneurs” or “free-wheeling independents” (2008, 22, 34), these independent elites do not necessarily have long-term identification with a particular political party, are more likely to have personalistic and populist leadership styles, and are relatively less tied to a particular regional or sectoral constituency. They tend to gain influence through charisma, and are most typically outsiders. As such, economically successful return and transnational migrants are often in a good position to gain local power following this channel. It should be noted though, consistent with the framework outlined above, that even independent migrant elites require the support of some mass group—if only ad hoc—and may rely on alliances with home state and community elites. Indeed, cases examined below suggest that individualistic migrant elites may be mobilized as political actors from the top-down by already dominant political groups and leaders in their home states, such as governors.

For other migrant political actors, the main source of power is through collective action and the ability to mobilize followers, and there is not heavy reliance (at least not initially) on official state-level
political alliances or recruitment. Depending on the type of organizational backing, these migrant elites might resemble Siavelis and Morgenstern's “group agents” (2008, 21). Examples of this type include those migrant political actors who derive their power as leaders of MBOs, nominally independent of political parties, though potentially mobilized or coopted by them.

The remaining two types conceptualized by Siavelis and Morgenstern include “party loyalists” and “constituent servants.” Rather than adopt these categories, though, I seek to capture the nature of the relationship of migrant political actors with the dominant political groups. As such, I conceptualize migrant political actors in terms of their relationship to the governor's party. That is, they can form part of the political opposition or be supporters of the official powers.

An emerging migrant political elite's relationship to dominant powers is conceptually independent of whether she is an “entrepreneur” or a “group agent.” In conceptualizing the different ways in which migrants engage and become influential in their municipalities of origin, then, I consider a two-dimensional matrix. The horizontal dimension in Table 6.1 reflects the degree to which local political elites are primarily independent actors rather than collective actors. The vertical dimension captures whether political actors are oppositional or oficialista in their orientation. In between these two extremes, one could place those political actors and organizations that are not fiercely oppositional to the prevailing forces, but that still seek to retain some level of autonomy and independence from them. Now that the theoretical approach has been outlined, and the key dependent variable of interest conceptualized, I turn to a discussion of concrete empirical hypotheses.
3. EXPLAINING DIFFERENT TYPES OF MIGRANT POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

What accounts for variation in the mode of engagement of migrant political actors? The qualitative methods used here make it possible to move a step beyond the hypotheses tested in Chapter 5. For example, here I directly assess the nature of relations between different migrant political actors and the prevailing state and local authorities, while considering the social and political biographies of migrant political actors. A key analytic distinction here, it should be emphasized, is that I am examining differences between different types of migrant political actors, rather than comparing migrant to non-migrant political actors. In addition, I rely on the theoretical framework formalized in Chapter 3 to consider migrant pathways to power over time, while focusing on interactions with other social and political actors. Finally, the inclusion of cases outside of Oaxaca makes it possible to consider the explanatory importance of state-level factors.
3.1. Explaining Placement on the Vertical Axis: Oppositional vs. Oficialista

First, I follow Arthur Stinchcombe, who defines political incorporation as “…the degree of responsiveness of the political system to the grievances of workers, peasants, or other groups” (Stinchcombe 1968, 173). The most concrete indicator of incorporation pointed to by Stinchcombe is voting rights. For a group to be politically incorporated, though, suffrage is not sufficient, as suffrage must be translated into actual influence over the decisions of policy makers. Hence, not only must members of a given group be in possession of mechanisms to influence who governs, but those they elect (including representatives of their group) must have the ability to affect public decisions. All else being equal, the higher the likelihood that a group will have its representatives in the government, the more incorporated that group will be assumed to be.

A hypothesis derived from this conceptualization of incorporation is that the higher the level of incorporation of a group, the less radical they will be. As Stinchcombe writes, “…people’s reactions to a system differ according to the probability that their demands will be reflected in government policy” (Stinchcombe 1968, 179). Although there are many potential factors that make a group’s demands more likely to be “reflected in government policy,” the most direct indicator is whether individuals from a given group hold positions of political power. As such, it is expected that the mode of engagement of migrant political actors will be less oppositional (and more oficialista) where state and local authorities have responded to their interests and incorporated them directly or indirectly into the government. Even if they are not in radical opposition to the political system, where migrants do not have a full complement of rights after leaving—perhaps even more so if they have contributed funds to public goods—they will be more likely to seek some form of representation, including (if not limited to) winning political office. Depending on the reaction of prevailing authorities—more likely to be adversarial in authoritarian contexts—this is expected to ultimately lead to an oppositional mode of engagement.

78 This is a variation of the hypothesis confirmed in Chapter 5 that migrants were less likely to hold power where they retained some voting rights.
The top-down mobilization (or cooptation) of migrants is another key determinant of whether the mode of engagement is oppositional or oficialista. But why do authorities seek to mobilize and represent emerging migrant groups? As theorized in Chapter 3, when both actors “conform,” the outcome is a shored up status quo with loyal migrants. For example, authorities might choose to “conform” despite being stronger than migrants (i.e., able to extract benefits from them without offering representation) because they want to forestall threats from migrants that might get stronger in the future or might be mobilized by the opposition. Similarly, migrants who are stronger than the “cacique,” and would thus be successful in securing any desired concessions, might not be interested in fighting due to an ethic of cooperation and hometown loyalty, or simply because their physical absence means they do not recognize how strong they actually are.

I hypothesize further that state-level transnationalism from above facilitates a relationship of cooperation between migrants and municipal governments. Indeed, this relationship is increasingly institutionalized through programs like 3x1. I expect that state-level transnationalism from-above makes it more likely that both migrants and municipal authorities (the cacique in the Chapter 3 models) will engage in “conforming” strategies, especially when prevailing municipal authorities are allies or in the same political party as dominant state-level actors. This expectation is consistent with the findings from Chapter 4 that state-level factors—such as federations of home town associations and the historical roots of migration—are among the most powerful predictors of the number of 3x1 projects at the municipal level.

The orientation of return migrants toward non-migrant municipal elites is also expected to be influenced by their political identities and ideology. I find that these vary considerably based on the nature of their experience as migrants and their experiences before emigrating, including the reasons for emigration. For example, migrants who were effectively exiled from their communities are likely to return in opposition to prevailing authorities and those who have supported the community in cooperation with the authorities from abroad are more likely to return in an oficialista capacity. The former
expectation is a corollary to the findings in Chapter 5 that migrants were less likely to be mayors in places where they enjoyed voting rights. As the case studies below demonstrate, some migrants forge a decidedly oppositional political identity—and concomitant combative tendencies—due to the context within which they became political actors away from home. Following the formal models from Chapter 3, in addition to political identity and ideological orientations, migrants are expected to choose a “fight” strategy when they recognize their superior strength compared to the cacique, when their particular set of skills biases them in this direction, and (as above) in contexts where influence via institutionalized channels of representation are absent (see Chapter 3, section 5.3.2).

3.2. Explaining Placement on the Horizontal Axis: Independent vs. Collective

Whether migrant political actors engage as “entrepreneurs” or “group agents” is expected to be influenced by their experiences as migrants as well. Migrant political actors are more likely to be independent minded and entrepreneurial in their orientation when their experiences as migrants have inculcated them with these behavior patterns. For instance, those who became immigrant entrepreneurs in the US or held other executive or managerial positions are more likely to adopt an entrepreneurial political style. Alternatively, migrants whose experience with the labor market as migrants involved collective action, such as union organizing and popular political and social mobilization are more likely to adopt a similar strategy when engaging back home.

Another factor expected to impact a migrant's orientation on the horizontal dimension of this typology is simply related to the opportunities and resources they are able to draw upon. Migrants who are relatively wealthier—or who are able to raise funds from others—will have the option of remaining independent and entrepreneurial if they are so inclined. Those without access to considerable financial
resources—or those who raise financial resources from many small donors—must rely more on the organization of political constituencies if they are to be successful.79

Prevailing non-migrant elites who want to shore up their legitimacy with migrants and their families without having to concede too much might see independent migrant politicians as less threatening to their authority. The logic here is that migrant leaders who do not have to answer directly to a broader social or interest-based constituency will be both easier to control and less inclined to demand reforms to the status quo. The empirical implication of this hypothesis is that entrepreneurial migrants should be more likely to be oficia|listas. The corollary is that entrepreneurial migrants who do not form such oficia|lista alliances will have a lower chance of being successful.

The counter-hypothesis to this is that prevailing elites might seek alliances with migrant leaders who have the capacity to mobilize new constituencies on behalf of oficia|lismo. Among the longer term risk of such a strategy is that an ally with a strong popular base of support is less dependent, making a future defection from the oficia|lista coalition a more attractive option, and accordingly more likely.80

Before delving into the analysis of the case studies, I now turn to a brief discussion of the qualitative data gathered, the methods of analysis, and the selection of cases.

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79 While this analysis considers migrant political actors that have varying levels of success, the universe does not include all potential migrant political actors, as the nature of the sample drawn is such that it is biased toward selecting relatively influential migrants. Migrant political actors that, for instance, failed in an attempt to win elected office are still considered to be relatively influential. The inclusion of these less successful cases, though, provides the analytic leverage necessary to draw conclusions not only about what mode of engagement migrants are oriented toward, but rather, what types are most successful and how these vary across states.

80 Nevertheless, migrants whose mode of engagement is independent and oficia|lista, particularly if they hold public office, might be able to build their own constituencies and charismatic authority and thus later have the option of defecting from their coalition. Examining the iterative process of interacting agents within the municipal political space—as I do in Chapter 7—reveals that this dynamic is often at play.
4. DATA, METHOD AND CASE SELECTION

4.1. Data

The ethnographic data for the selected biographical cases were collected between 2007 and 2011, and are based primarily on open-ended and semi-structured interviews with a broad range of political and social actors. The first two research trips in 2007 and 2008 were to the southern Mexico state of Oaxaca and lasted six weeks. On these trips, I made many initial contacts at the state level, and visited and conducted interviews in two of the municipalities that eventually became part of the sample for the comparative case analysis presented here. The bulk of the field research was conducted over a period of 9 months in 2009 and 2010. During this time, I spent five months studying the politics of six municipalities across the state of Oaxaca, two months in three Guanajuato municipalities, and two months in three Zacatecas municipalities. Finally, during 2010 and 2011 I traveled to half a dozen locales where migrants from the states and municipalities of the study are concentrated in three states, California, Illinois, and Colorado. During this year I also made a two-week return trip to Oaxaca, to observe the UC election process in one municipality, San Miguel Tlacotepec, and for follow-up interviews in one of the Guanajuato municipalities.

Data for the specific biographical cases analyzed in this chapter were collected principally through in-depth, loosely structured and open-ended interviews with the individuals themselves, and people with knowledge of their political biographies. In most cases, data also come from interviews of

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81 This portion of the research was supported by a Fulbright-García Robles scholarship and a Gill Family Foundation award.

82 Note: the political biographies analyzed in this chapter come from individuals in 8 municipalities: 4 in Oaxaca, 2 in Guanajuato and 2 in Zacatecas. The full sample of 12 municipalities is included in Chapter 7.

83 This portion of the research was supported by a National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Award.
people who knew the individuals, who were familiar with their political biographies, and from secondary sources.

4.2. Analytic Method

There is considerable variation among migrant political actors in terms of their mode of engagement in hometown politics, as conceptualized in the typology presented in Table 6.1. The analytic task here is to identify the factors that explain this variation. One benefit of the empirical focus on local elites and the comparative subnational research design used here is that it allows for a more contextualized understanding of migrant political engagement over time than cross-sectional statistical analysis. In addition, the analysis here is able to move beyond the sole focus on migrant mayors of Chapter 5 to allow an analysis of migrant actors influencing political dynamics from outside of the mayor's office. As the analysis of several of my cases shows, it is often the case that the most politically influential actors—migrant and non-migrant—are not those who sit in the mayor's chair, but those who determine who sits there and have great influence over him (or in rare cases, her) when there.

4.3. Case Selection Rationale

All of the municipalities and states selected for study have high rates of migration. Though relatively constant in terms of current levels of migration, the states selected for study vary on key factors. First, different parties controlled the governor's office in the three states. At the time of study, Oaxaca continued to be governed by a particularly authoritarian faction of the long-dominant PRI, which had not lost power in the state for 81 years before being defeated in the July 2010 elections. Guanajuato was among the first states where the governor's office was won by an opposition party, and the conservative

84 Although the party of the governor is not hypothesized to directly impact the mode of engagement, the authoritarian context in Oaxaca is expected to lead migrants to a more oppositional stance.
National Action Party (Partido de Acción Nacional, or PAN) has governed there uninterrupted for more than two decades. At the time the field research was conducted, and since 1998, Zacatecas was governed by the left-leaning Party of the Democratic Revolution (Partido de la Revolución Democrática, or PRD), until the PRD candidate was defeated by the PRI candidate in the 2010 elections. In addition to variation in party control, I chose cases that vary in the intensity of state-level institutionalization of the migrant–state relationship, or transnationalism from above. Although I classify Oaxaca as having “low” transnationalism from above and Zacatecas and Guanajuato as having “high” transnationalism from above, it should be noted that this classification is among high migration states. That is, Oaxaca would not be so classified among all Mexican states. This variation might be explained by differences in the migration histories of these states. Zacatecas and Guanajuato are among Mexico's traditional migrant sending states of the Center-West region of the country. Oaxaca is among a newer generation of high international migration states that emerged in the post-1965 era of mass U.S. migration. Likely related to the political ideology of the governing parties in each state, the nature of the migrant–state relationship varies, with Guanajuato having a neoliberal orientation and Zacatecas and Oaxaca having a neocorporatist or, perhaps, social democratic orientation (see Smith and Bakker 2008, on this distinction).

Within each state, I selected municipal cases with migrants that engaged in their home communities in different ways. Variation in mayor-governor relations was also sought. In Oaxaca, I selected both UC and party-system municipalities for study. All but one of the municipalities chosen have high levels of outward migration, so as to control for this factor. Within the municipalities selected

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85 The fact that several of the municipalities in Oaxaca studied had significant numbers of participants in the Bracero Program, a guest worker program that brought seasonal migrant workers from Mexico to the US from 1945 to 1965, strengthens the argument that state-level factors are key.

86 There are a few important exceptions to this case selection rule. I included one case, Salamanca, Guanajuato, which is a large city, with an overall low migration rate. I selected this case, however, because despite having a low municipality-wide rate of migration, several significant submunicipal communities have high rates of migration, and in one community in particular, a migrant has become a key community leader, forging important relationships with the municipal and state governments and a local NGO to promote community development. Two other cases, Uriangato, Guanajuato and Jerez, Zacatecas, are medium sized cities, with important industrial
(including satellite communities in the U.S), I sought interviews with and information on those migrants who were active in their home towns. While I do not know precisely how representative my sample is within or across municipalities, the key for the analysis here is that I selected municipal cases that had experienced different types of migrant engagement, and the most important migrant leaders and organizations within the selected communities. Although the power and influence of the different migrant political actors studied varies, even those who failed to achieve their goals—such as election as mayor—have gained a noteworthy level of political importance. I now turn to a presentation of the biographical case study data.

5. COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES OF MIGRANT HOMETOWN ENGAGEMENT

This section presents the case study research of ten migrant political actors from eight different municipalities. These are organized in terms of the dependent variable typology conceptualized in section 3 above. Section 6 below summarizes the findings as a typological theory (George and Bennett 2005), and discusses the results.

5.1. Oppositional and Collective Migrant Actors

5.1.1. Mosés Cruz and the RIIO in San Juan Mixtepec, Oaxaca.

This Mixtec indigenous municipality was recognized in 1995 as an autonomous, UC municipality. Though always retaining a degree of autonomy from the PRI-controlled state government, economic bases. Even still, they have high-migration rates and similar to Salamanca, have submunicipal rural communities with very high levels of emigration. Furthermore, these cases were chosen for study because each has had a mayor who lived the majority of his life in the United States.
“the caciques” retained local control and influence by allying themselves with and registering as members of the official party.

The most prominent and path-breaking migrant “elite” to emerge in Mixtepec was Moisés Cruz, who was elected mayor by the general community assembly in 1998. Cruz's pathway to power can be categorized as oppositional and collective, rather than entrepreneurial. The organization he eventually started, and with the support of which he won the mayorship is the indigenous migrant based organization the International Network of Indigenous Oaxacans (Red International de Indígenas de Oaxaca, or RIIO). He was indeed a charismatic leader, but his power was derived principally from his strategic acumen and his ability to mobilize his followers. Moisés, backed by RIIO, won power in the municipality in radical opposition to the prevailing authorities, and the PRI-dominated state government. Cruz allegedly used the money raised from migrants in the US to fund RIIO efforts to organize and mobilize the population—particularly those from marginalized submunicipal communities—rather than on public works projects to benefit the communities (Ortiz Gabriel interview 2008).

As with all political actors, several factors help to explain what caused Moises Cruz to shift from being a heavily exploited migrant laborer in Mexico and California, to becoming a leader in peasant and worker organizing, and ultimately a dominant political actor in his home municipality. For the purposes of the discussion here, it is sufficient to highlight a few key elements of his process of politicization as well as his mode of organizing (see Besserer 1999; Castro Neira 2009, for detailed discussions of Cruz's life). First, the ideological and political formation as members of the Left helps to explain the oppositional political orientation of this migrant based organization and its leader. This included his insertion into radical anti-government organizing in the northern Mexico state of Sinaloa, participation in the formation of the Single Front of Worker and Peasant Organizations (Frente Unico de Organizaciones Obreras y Campesinas, or FUOOC), which was allied with an emerging national movements for the organization of farmworkers and independent of official state organizations (such as the Central Nacional Campesino, or CNC) (Besserer 1999, 148-9). Moisés, along with other leaders from his community and
the Mixtec region of Oaxaca, suffered threats and repression for their political organizing activities, both in Oaxaca and in northern Mexico. After working and engaging in peasant and worker organizing for two years, Moisés split with the FUOOC and emigrated to the US, where he ended up participating in the grape strike alongside the United Farm Workers (UFW) (Besserer 1999, 206). These experiences, I argue, explain both his strategy of collective engagement and his oppositional orientation toward prevailing state and local actors in Oaxaca upon his return there.

In addition, his practical experience as a labor organizer arguably gave him the skills necessary to mobilize the opposition against the dominant *caciques* in San Juan Mixtepec. The specific strategy used to gain political influence and win the mayor's seat was to mobilize the historically marginalized submunicipal communities against the dominant municipal seat. In later sections of this project, I discuss more deeply the process of political evolution in San Juan Mixtepec, and particularly, the nature of the impacts that the empowerment of RIIO and Moises Cruz had there.

5.1.2. Arturo Pimentel Salas and the FIOB in San Miguel Tlacotepec

Similar to San Juan Mixtepec in many ways, the UC municipality of San Miguel Tlacotepec saw a politicized and organized group of migrants return to their community of origin after years of organizing, and social movement experience in the fields of northern Mexico and in California. These migrant leaders, most notably Arturo Pimentel Salas built significant organizational strength over the course of the 1980s and 1990s to ultimately form the FIOB (the Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations) and in 1995 used their organizational and social strength to secure the mayor's office for their preferred candidate, not a migrant himself.

These migrant leaders made use of their organizational strength and ideological commitment to return to their community with the goal of democratizing and modernizing the political and social system by removing the PRIist cacicazgo of the “*tios*”—the group of PRI-allied elders who had dominated local
politics under the customary system of *cargos*. Allying with local teachers—and the powerful dissident Section XXII of the national teachers' union—they managed to win municipal power using tactics of popular mobilization and direct action.

The migration routes taken by the Tlacotepec migrant-leadership—“la ruta mixteca” (see Escárga and Varese 2004)—positioned them to have their first formative political experiences with peasant labor organizing with the radical Left in northeast Mexico before migrating to the United States. Arturo Pimentel was trained as a teacher and became involved in the radical student movements starting in 1968 (Pimentel Salas interview 2011). He was a teacher, a principal, and a teachers’ movement leader (Pimentel Salas interview 2011). After finishing university, Pimentel did not have money, and on his vacations would migrate—like many others from the region—to work in the tomato fields in Culiacan, Sinaloa, where he led many movements.

5.1.3. Algimiro Morales

Algimiro Morales is another key migrant leader from Tlacotepec, originally allied with Pimentel. Born in Veracruz to Tlacotepec parents who had migrated to work on sugar cane plantations, Morales was raised in Tlacotepec, but migrated frequently with his family (Morales interview 2010). His first political experiences occurred at age 17 in Veracruz with the emergence of the student movement in 1968, which evolved into various anti-system, clandestine movements throughout the country. Next, like many migrants from Tlacotepec, and the Mixtec region of Oaxaca, Morales migrated to Sinaloa to work in the industrialized tomato industry. While there, he and other emerging indigenous migrant leaders became involved with radical, bottom-up labor organizing.

The foundations of what became the FIOB were laid in the experiences of this cadre of leaders as migrants and activists *within* Mexico, before they ultimately migrated, and continued organizing in the United States. It might be said that the seasonal migration from the Mixtec region to places like Veracruz,
and particularly Sinaloa, was a key mechanism through which the Leftist ideologies and movements were transferred to sending communities. Inspired by Marxist ideology that theorized that the vanguard of revolutionary movements was with the proletariat and in the cities, he moved to Mexico City, where the nucleus of a Tlacotepec-migrant led opposition movement was located. This group, the Popular Civic Committee, first forced a mayor of Tlacotepec to resign in 1970. In 1983, Morales first migrated to the United States, where the FIOB was formed. He quickly split with the organization, however, due to the alleged corruption of its central leader, Arturo Pimentel. Somewhat disillusioned with political activism, he then formed the Coalition of Indigenous Communities of Oaxaca (COCIO) in the City of Vista in San Diego County, which focused more on promoting and preserving indigenous culture (Morales interview 2010).

Although Morales for a time became somewhat disengaged from the transnational politics of San Miguel Tlacotepec (he recently returned to the community, and became reintegrated), the FIOB, led by Pimentel, continued to pressure the prevailing PRI-dominated power structure, and in 1996, in the first UC elections in the municipality, challenged the allegedly fraudulent results of the election by occupying the town hall and blocking the state highway that runs through the municipality, accordingly re-forming the power structure of the community.

5.1.4. Fidel Evaristo Castellanos Carrazgo

Fidel Evaristo Castellanos Carrazgo is an important migrant leader who has emerged in recent years in Santiago Asunción, a Mixtec indigenous community in the party-system municipality of Silacayoapan, Oaxaca. Castellanos migrated to southern California at the age of 17 after finishing his secondary education in Oaxaca. He was an undocumented migratory farmworker in California, Oregon and Washington like many other Mixtec immigrants. Nevertheless, he obtained status as a legal permanent resident in 1987, took advantage of a scholarship program for migrant workers to learn
English, studied to receive his GED, and attended community college. He ultimately transferred to the University of Oregon, where he received a degree in electrical engineering in 2000 (Castellanos Carrazgo interview 2010).

Despite being from a party-system municipality, Fidel's community of Santiago Asunción is entirely composed of communal lands, and strictly follows a system of cargos, though the municipality is not recognized under the UC system. Accordingly, in 2002 he returned home to serve as municipal secretary and again in 2008 to serve as Agent—the top executive post at the submunicipal level. In 2009 he served as Commissioner of Communal Resources—the most important position of agrarian authority—and in 2010 (at the time of our interview) he was serving as Secretary of Communal Resources. Castellanos' reintegration into the public life of his community was not necessarily unique, as many of the individuals serving in various administrative and agrarian cargos were return migrants; however, he was widely recognized as a principal leader of the community.

In 2008 and again in 2010, Fidel Castellanos and a clear majority in the community supported the election (60%) and re-election (73%) of PRD governments in the municipality long dominated by the PRI (IEEPCO 2007, 2010). The support of the PRD opposition by this high-migration community, coupled with that of most other communities in the hinterlands of Silacayoapan, was shored up by organizational support of the FIOB, the MBO discussed above. As a citizen and leader of Santiago Asunción, Fidel Castellanos retains a level of political autonomy, I classify his mode of engagement here as oppositional to the state government. Although he is now supportive of the municipal government, his re-engagement in the community and insertion into municipal politics was in opposition to the long dominant PRI.

Further, I classify Fidel as a “group agent” for two main reasons. First, as reviewed above, he acts principally as an agent of the Community Assembly of Santiago Asunción. Second, he has worked together and helped to form migrant based organizations in Washington state and California to support community infrastructure projects under the 3x1 Program for Migrants, including the modernization of
the potable water system to ensure access to clean water to households throughout the community for 24 hours a day (something previously only enjoyed by those households at lower elevations).

5.2. Oficialista Entrepreneurs

5.2.1. “El Tanao” in Uriangato, Guanajuato

Two-time mayor Carlos “El Tanao” Guzmán Camarena is in many ways a paradigmatic example an independent, entrepreneurial political actor. With only a sixth grade education, “El Tanao” left Uriangato at the age of 15 for Tijuana with dreams of becoming a bull fighter. Although, this dream never came to fruition, he eventually crossed the US border without documents, and after living and working in Los Angeles for a number of years, migrated to Chicago, eventually settling down in Waukegan in that city's Northern suburbs.

Beyond the extremely important experience of being an undocumented immigrant, El Tanao's political formation and background could hardly be more different from that of the Mixtec indigenous migrants from Oaxaca discussed above. He lived in the Chicago area for some 25 years, and worked in a number of different jobs. When asked, he proudly identifies himself as a gardener (Guzmán Camarena interview 2010a). Perhaps to build ties of identity with the families of migrants and return migrants themselves by defining himself in this way, it is evident that he self-consciously seeks to represent himself as a common man. This is also reflected in his manner of speech, which is quite informal, and typically laced with a significant amount of profanity (a characteristic about himself that he frequently emphasizes).

87 This nickname, by which Guzmán Camarena is widely known, was also his father's nickname. It comes from Stanislaus, and made reference to his Polish ancestry.

88 He even suggested that he should be referred to as “El Rey Yardero,” a reference and contrast to “El Rey de Tomate,” profiled below.
In addition to becoming a partner in a roofing company with other migrant entrepreneurs from the state of Guanajuato, his principal occupation when living in the US was as the head groundskeeper for an estate in the extremely wealthy suburban Chicago community of Lake Forest. He often speaks with great appreciation for the fact that the wealthy family he worked for treated him very well, like a member of the family. They would include him in everything. He rode with them in their limousine, and they would bring him along to parties, always introducing him as an “associate” rather than as an employee (Guzmán Camarena interview 2010a). These experiences gave El Tanao a great appreciation and love for the United States, which he identifies with culturally, describing himself as a “Gringified Mexican” (Mexicano Agringado).

His father was a member of the Mexican Democratic Party (PDM), which had its roots in the conservative, Catholic Sinarquista movement (see Rionda Ramírez 1997). Accordingly, Guzmán says he “has been anti-PRIista since he was conscious” (Guzmán Camarena interview 2011). El Tanao became involved with the local leadership of the PAN starting in the 1980s when he would return to Uriangato for visits. In 1994, he was recruited to be the PAN candidate for deputy of the state legislature by then governor (and later President of Mexico) Vicente Fox Quesada. By that time, the PAN had won the governor's office and the mayors' offices of some of the largest cities in the state, but the party was constantly searching for quality candidates to compete in elections, especially in the more rural parts of the state still dominated by the PRI. Guzmán lost the election, but was becoming more and more well known within PAN circles, despite holding his primary residence in the United States.

The first time the PAN won the mayor's office in Uriangato was in 1997, and Carlos Guzmán was named as Oficial Mayor, the person in charge of bureaucratic administration of the municipality—a position, according to him, that can function as a trampoline to elected office if you know how to use it correctly (Guzmán Camarena interview 2010b). And he did. He ran successfully for mayor with the PAN and served from 2001 to 2003. As Mexico does not permit consecutive reelection, he did not run again in 2003. The internal rules—or norms of nepotism, according to El Tanao—of the PAN meant that it was
another person's turn to get the mayoral candidacy three years later in 2006, so Guzmán decided to leave the PAN and run as the candidate of the Green Ecologist Party, which he described as a “vehicle” (Guzmán Camarena interview 2011).

In summary, it is evident that Carlos Guzmán Camarena fits Morgenstern and Siavelis’ (2008, 34) category of the “free-wheeling independent” or the “entrepreneur” and with respect to the state (and national) government, he is classified as oficialista. His support from the established leadership of the PAN in the municipality, and most importantly from President Vicente Fox Quesada, clearly helped propel him into the mayor's office. The support from President Fox once he was in office was also essential, and Fox certainly made use of Guzmán to bolster his own image as a leader who recognized the migrant as hero, which became a central component of his rhetoric. Indeed, the first national 3x1 project was in a submunicipal community of Uriangato, El Deramadero, and President Fox inaugurated it with Mayor Guzmán Camarena at his side in 2002. That said, Guzmán Camarena’s emergence as a member of the local power elite was not based on the support of a social movement or his leadership in migrant civil society groups—though he had a modest level of participation in such groups. Rather, his pathway to power was supported from the top, but his image as an outsider, and certainly as a migrant, made him an attractive candidate to promote, but ultimately a difficult candidate to control—at least for the local PAN leadership.

5.2.2. The Tomato King in Jeréz, Zacatecas

Mexico's most famous migrant politician, “The Tomato King” Andrés Bermudez, became mayor of this high-migration city in 2004 (with the PAN), after being denied the seat in 2001 (with the PRD). As with “El Tanao” in Uriangato, Guanajuato, the “Tomato King” was first recruited to run for office through state-level oficialista channels, to be the first to unseat the PRI in his municipality. In November of 2000, Jeréz Mayor Benito Juárez (1998-2001) was visiting migrants in Napa, California to inaugurate a
new HTA there, Club de Napa. He had invited PRD Governor Ricardo Monreal, who arrived with Bermudez after the completion of the ceremony. At that time, Governor Monreal, said to Juárez (that latter thinking he was joking), “What do you think, Benito? Should we bring Andrés back to be mayor of Jeréz?” (Juárez interview 2010).

The case of the campaign and eventual mayoral victory of Bermudez is well summarized by Smith and Bakker in various publications (including Bakker and Smith 2003; Smith and Bakker 2005, 2008). Bermudez promised to make Jeréz into a small California (Juárez interview 2010), and to “make a government with ideas from the United States, not with Mexican ideas” (Cano 2009). As with the case of El Tanao in Uriangato, Guanajuato, however, the personalistic and charismatic nature of Bermudez’ political persona, particularly his decision to switch from the PRD to the PAN when he failed to win the primary for the former party, demonstrates his pathway to power as being as a “free-wheeling independent.”

It is noteworthy that neither of these independent political entrepreneurs relied on migrant civil society in their states and communities as their principal sources of power, at least not initially. Rather, as I have demonstrated, clear efforts by state-level political actors—in interaction with national PAN politicians—explain the recruitment and success of both El Tanao and The Tomato King. Thus, consistent with what was hypothesized above, a high level of transnationalism from above might explain the engagement of migrant political actors via oficialista channels. Consistent with findings from Chapter 5, however, the mechanism of migrant civil society—specifically the institutionalization of the migrant-state relationship through the 3x1 Program—may not serve to propel migrant political actors to positions of power independently of the support of dominant political groups in their states. These cases also demonstrate, as speculated above, that prevailing political actors may find political alliance with “free-

89 The original Spanish is as follows: “Hacer un gobierno con ideas de Estados Unidos, no con ideas mexicanas.” (translation by the author).
wheeling independents” more attractive than alliance with “group agents” with strong organizational support from migrant civil society.

5.3. A Semi-Autonomous Migrant Group Agent?

Guadalupe “Lupe” Gómez, a highly influential migrant elite from the rural Zacatecas municipality of Jalpa, has been a key leader of migrant civil society and supporter of migrant philanthropy in Southern California for two decades (Gómez interview 2011). For decades Gómez has worked as an organizer of migrant HTAs to support community projects. At present, there are at least four active HTAs associated with Jalpa, and in 2009 there were nine 3x1 projects in the municipal seat and submunicipal communities.

Lupe Gómez migrated to Los Angeles with his parents when he was 13, grew up and went to high school in Southern California, and became a certified public accountant (Gómez interview 2011). Despite having left at a young age, he remained connected with his submunicipal community, Santa Juana, and the municipality generally. Gómez became an important Zacatecan migrant civil society leader as the number of HTAs from the state exploded over the course of the 1980s and 1990s, and was elected as president of the powerful Federation of Zacatecan Clubs of Southern California (Federacion de Clubes Zacatecanos del Sur de California, or FCZSC). Later he became the leader of the anti-PRI Zacatecan Civic Front (Frente Civico Zacatecano, or FCZ), a political spin-off of the non-partisan Zacatecan Federation (the FCZSC).

The original impetus of the FCZ was to allow Gómez and other Zacatecan migrants working with the FCZSC to support the opposition gubernatorial candidacy of Ricardo Monreal. The FCZSC also has a PRI-affiliated political organization, Zacatecas PRImero (Zacatecas First, but with a play on words using the party acronym). Through his leadership of the Santa Juana HTA, in the Federation and in the FCZ, Gómez gained significant status in his home municipality and among Zacatecans in California. When
gubernatorial candidate Ricardo Monreal visited migrants in 1998, Gómez committed to support his candidacy with the FCZ. Explaining his motivation for supporting Monreal, Gómez said: “We believed it was time for a change in Zacatecas. We cannot continue forever with the same party, which we know to be a corrupt party. The system is corrupt. We told [Monreal] 'We're going to support you, and all that we ask is that you govern well'”90 He continued: “When he won, we realized that our support [of migrants] matters (Gómez interview 2011).

However, Gómez quickly became disaffected with Governor Monreal and the PRD.91 He was recruited first by The Tomato King (who had broken with Monreal and switched to the PAN already), and later by the PAN leadership in the state, to run to succeed The Tomato Kind as Federal Deputy. Gómez emphasized that he was not a member of any political party, but when he decided to run he chose the PAN because of his life-long rejection of the PRI, his disaffection with the PRD, and the fact that he had met with PAN presidents, beginning with Vicente Fox, two or three times a year. That is, consistent with the strong outreach by the national PAN to migrants reflected in the political success of El Tanao and The Tomato King, Gómez's good relationship with PAN presidents, particularly President Fox, help to explain his choice of party.

Nevertheless, by his account, the state-level PAN leadership led director Pedro Martínez and Senator José “Chabelo” Trejo Reyes, blocked him from succeeding. According to Gómez: “It turns out that the state PAN, as I told you, Pedro Martínez together with Chabelo Trejo, as I understand it they made a deal with [Governor Amalia García of the PRD] to not support my candidacy [for Federal Deputy]... Chabelo has never won a popular election. If I would have won, I would have been the

90 In Spanish: “Pensamos que era tiempo que en Zacatecas hubiera un cambio. No podemos seguir toda la vida con un mismo partido que sabemos que es un partido corrupto. Es un sistema corrupto … 'te vamos a apoyar, pero que gobiernes bien. Es todo lo que le pedimos.'”

91 He described the Zacatecas PRD as “Las misma gata, revolcada,” a popular saying similar in meaning to: “the same wine in a different bottle.”
gubernatorial candidate [for the PAN in 2010]. It's that simple” (Gómez interview 2011).\textsuperscript{92} Chabelo Trejo did not want Gómez to become a successful politician in the state because he had aspirations to run for governor as well.\textsuperscript{93} Although Gómez did not say how Governor García helped the PAN leadership, nor what exactly she and her party might get out of the arrangement, it is conceivable that the emergence of another strong, charismatic and independent migrant politician in the state (in the wake of the death of The Tomato King), might have been seen as a challenge to the then established PRD order.

As the PAN is the third strongest political party in Zacatecas, the national PAN leadership was not interested in spending its limited resources to win a seat there. Though affiliated officially with the PAN, then, Gómez was left to run on the strength of his achievements as a migrant leader in securing state, federal and migrant funds for dozens of 3x1 projects in Jalpa and other communities in the district (Gómez interview 2011). Though he did not win, along with apolitical organized migrant civil society groups such as Long Beach, California-based Hermandad Jalpense (Jalpan Brotherhood), migrants in Jalpa have been responsible for dozens of projects in support of infrastructure, including water system improvements, roads, the construction of an Autonomous University of Zacatecas campus, and improvements and equipment for primary and secondary schools. This civil society development, arguably driven by the neocorporatist relationship between the Zacatecas state government and the powerful federations of HTAs, has become highly institutionalized in many respects. Further research and analysis might determine the degree to which different HTAs and migrant civil society groups manage to have their interests represented by state and municipal governments without becoming coopted by them.

Lupe Gómez’ power and influence in the community are rooted in his organizational base in migrant civil society organizations, including his community’s HTA, as well as the state-level

\textsuperscript{92} In Spanish: “Resulta que el PAN estatal, que le dije, Pedro Martínez junto con Chabelo Trejo, tengo entendido que hicieron un acuerdo con la gobernadora para no apoyarme. Bueno, no se por que... Por que ahí Chabelo no ha ganado una elección popular. Si yo haya ganado la candidatura, yo era el candidato de gobernador. Así de sencillo.”

\textsuperscript{93} Although Trejo did run for governor in 2010, he failed to win the PAN nomination.
organizations in Southern California. In many ways the FCZ and the Zacatecas state federations might be classifiable as *oficialista*, or corporatist because of their tight relationships with the institutions of the state government. Nevertheless, it has certainly been Gómez’ and other migrants’ intention to not be subsumed to the partisan politics in Mexico. In the end, this case demonstrates the difficulty in being a successful politician with a relatively autonomous base in migrant civil society. A somewhat pessimistic interpretation is that prevailing political groups see the utility in mobilizing and recruiting migrant politicians and civil society leaders to improve their images and for fiscal reasons, but not at the expense of their own power.

5.4. Oppositional Free-Wheeling Independents: Exceptions That Prove the Rule

In this subsection, I summarize two cases of migrant political actors that engaged in their hometowns as independents in opposition of the dominant party in their respective states. These individuals are noteworthy in part because of their failures to win the municipal political offices they sought.

5.4.1. Rubén Tiscareño, PAN mayoral candidate in Jalpa, Zacatecas

Tiscareño is a US citizen and owns a junk yard in San Antonio, Texas. He originally migrated to the US in the early 1980s, and was present to benefit from the “amnesty” provision of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). Tiscareño drives almost 700 miles each way from Jalpa, Zacatecas to San Antonio, Texas every weekend, firmly grounding him as a member of two sociopolitical communities. Like other entrepreneurial migrants like El Tanao and The Tomato King, Tiscareño does not participate in HTAs, citing his lack of time. He became a militant for the PAN in 1992, and when the party won the municipal elections in Jalpa in 1995—the first time a non-PRI candidate had won—he
participated as a campaign coordinator. During the 1995 - 1998 term he served as Assistant for Public Works. The previous two municipal elections (2004 and 2007) it was believed that he would be the PAN mayoral candidate, but he was not interested. As the 2010 election approached, he became motivated out of a desire to “do things better and differently” (Tiscareño interview 2010). In addition to being a business owner in the US, Tiscareño owns a ranch where he grows cactus (nopales) in Jalpa. His experience as a business owner who creates jobs, he says, prepares him to do the same as mayor, something other politicians are not prepared to do. Among other proposals, Tiscareño spoke of plans to develop an industrial park in Jalpa so as to attract investment from businesses.

It is clear that Tiscareño's experience as a business leader and his limited engagement with migrant civil society groups helps to explain his engagement in municipal politics as an entrepreneur. He can also be classified as being incorporated into politics back home via the opposition channel, as he originally participating in opposition to the PRI governments of the 1990s, and when running for office in 2010, ran in opposition to the then PRD-controlled state government. In the end, he lost the election to the PRI candidate who rode the coattails of the first PRI governor elected in the state in 12 years, Miguel Alonso. Support from the outgoing PAN administration and the endorsement of Lupe Gómez were insufficient to overcome these limits. Although other explanations are plausible—such as the resurgent popularity of the PRI in the state and the damaged brand of the PAN nationally—this finding is consistent with the hypothesis that “independent” migrant political actors need the support of powerful state-level actors to succeed politically.

5.4.2. Hugo Cruz, PRD leader and Alderman Candidate in San Pablo Huixtepec

Hugo Cruz is an “independent” migrant politician who attempted to lead a coalition against the dominant PRI government in San Pablo Huixtepec, Oaxaca. This high-migration, PRI-dominated municipality has had two non-PRI mayors, both from the PAN, most recently from 1996-1998. Hugo
Cruz emerged as an important leader in the contested municipal elections of 2007, after living most of his adult life away from the municipality.

Hugo Cruz played professional soccer for the first division club Atlante in Cancun, Quintana Roo from 1975 to 1984. In 1985 he immigrated to the Central Coast of California, where he lived for 12 years. Although he crossed the border without authorization, he too benefited from the 1986 IRCA law and became a legal permanent resident. After four years working at a French restaurant in the affluent town of Carmel, the owners of the restaurant expressed interest in investing in a Mexican restaurant. Cruz and another friend from San Pablo invested some of their own money, but his former boss provided them with the building and fully equipped kitchen to get their restaurant, La Flor de Oaxaca, off the ground. The restaurant was quite successful for some ten years, and was named one of the 10 best in Carmel (Cruz interview 2010) before ultimately going under.

After returning home to San Pablo Huixtepec, Cruz became involved in politics because of a desire to end the corrupt, PRI-dominated system of caciquismo. Trying to take advantage of a groundswell of popular opposition to the PRI (related in part to the backlash created by the 2006 violent conflict between Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz and the teachers' movement and the Association of Popular Peoples of Oaxaca, APPO, in Spanish), Cruz began holding meetings of disgruntled citizens at his house (which has a soccer field where community youth come to train and play). This opposition movement held a primary election (with some 200-300 participants) to select a ticket to challenge the PRI, and Cruz received enough votes to be placed as Education Alderman on the ticket. The group ultimately registered a slate of candidates under the PRD label, but Cruz implied that this was due to the fact that they are required by law to affiliate with a political party (Cruz interview 2010). Statements like these reflect Hugo Cruz's orientation as an independent, entrepreneurial political leader. Despite being approached by the PAN, they opted to remain independent from that party in the 2007 elections (though they formed an alliance with them in the 2010 elections). The 2007 election was the first year in which the PRD competed in Huixtepec, and for this reason, according to Cruz, “we made history” (Cruz interview 2010).
Even still, they lost the election, in large part because of the divided opposition between the PAN and the PRD. Even though he was unsuccessful, it is evident that Hugo Cruz has emerged as an important opposition leader in the municipality, but as is also reflected in federal level politics, Mexico's new three-party system often means that together, the two losing parties have more votes than the winner.

5.5. An Oficialista Group Agent

The final migrant political actor focused on here is Miguel Angel Montoya, from the community of Valtierra in the industrialized municipality of Salamanca (Montoya interview 2010). As noted in Table 6.2, this is the one case municipal case that does not fit the selection criteria, due to its being a large urban center with more than 200,000 inhabitants. Though not notably powerful in the municipal context, return migrant Miguel Angel Montoya has become particularly influential locally. He began organizing members of his community when he was living in Santa Barbara, California to raise funds for numerous community projects under the 3x1 program. Particularly since returning home, he has leveraged his connections with migrant civil society to establish and build relationships with municipal, state and federal government officials to secure 3x1 and other funding for various community projects. He also has been elected several times to be his community's delegate to the municipal government. Although he and migrant leaders from his community have not had a notable impact on politics in his urban municipality (which we would not expect, in such a large city), his advocacy and level of organization, forged abroad in California, has arguably made it possible for his community to secure public dollars that otherwise would not have been forthcoming to his marginalized rural community.

It is unclear what explains Montoya's oficialista orientation, both with respect to the municipal, state, and federal governments, all controlled by the PAN at the time of this study. A plausible factor, consistent with hypotheses, is that the high level of transnationalism from above and institutionalized engagement with migrants from the three levels of government provide a good explanation.
The findings from the case studies are summarized in Table 6.2. A general tendency reflected in the cases studied is that migrant political actors engaged in Oaxaca have tended to enter hometown politics in opposition to both the prevailing municipal power structure and to the PRI-dominated state government. In contrast, migrants engaging in Zacatecas and Guanajuato have done so in opposition to local PRI governments, but have been supported, at least initially, by PRD and PAN governors. That is, the most successful entrepreneurial migrant political actors were mobilized and supported in their efforts by powerful oficialista actors at the state and national levels.
Table 6.2. Typological Theory: Explaining Modes Migrant Hometown Engagement

Universe: High migration municipalities; engaged international migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Muni.</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gov. Party</th>
<th>UC (a)</th>
<th>Transnationalism From Above (c)</th>
<th>Experience as Migrant</th>
<th>Relationship with mun. authorities (d)</th>
<th>Mode of Engagement (e)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. Cruz</td>
<td>SJM</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>PRI</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Farmworker organizer</td>
<td>Adversarial</td>
<td>Opp. - Coll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pimentel</td>
<td>SMT</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>PRI</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Farmworker organizer/ teacher</td>
<td>Adversarial</td>
<td>Opp. - Coll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Morales</td>
<td>SMT.</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>PRI</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Farmworker organizer/ construction</td>
<td>Adversarial</td>
<td>Opp. - Coll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castellanos</td>
<td>Sila.</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>PRI</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Farmworker, student</td>
<td>Supportive (f)</td>
<td>Opp. - Coll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guzman</td>
<td>Urian.</td>
<td>Gto.</td>
<td>PAN</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Landscaping manager</td>
<td>Adversarial</td>
<td>Ofic. - Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bermudez</td>
<td>Jerez</td>
<td>Zac.</td>
<td>PRD</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Tomato grower, entrepreneur</td>
<td>Adversarial</td>
<td>Ofic. - Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gómez</td>
<td>Jalpa</td>
<td>Zac.</td>
<td>PRD</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Accountant, business owner</td>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Aut. - Coll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiscareño</td>
<td>Jalpa</td>
<td>Zac.</td>
<td>PRD</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Business owner</td>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Opp - Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Cruz</td>
<td>Huix.</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>PRI</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Pro. athlete (Mex.)/ restaurant owner (US)</td>
<td>Adversarial</td>
<td>Opp - Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montoya (g)</td>
<td>Salam.</td>
<td>Gto.</td>
<td>PAN</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Urban services</td>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Ofic. - Coll.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) The PRI in Oaxaca and the PRD in Zacatecas both lost the governorship in 2010, after the research for this study was completed.
(b) Described in the text, UC, or usos y costumbres, municipalities are those granted autonomy under the state constitution to govern themselves in accordance with internally defined customary law institutions.
(c) Refers to the level of state government engagement with migrants in the US.
(d) Refers to relationship with the municipal government at the time of engagement.
(e) Refers to relationship with the state government.
(f) Castellanos and the citizens of the submunicipal community of Santiago Asunción are supportive of the current (since 2008) PRD municipal governments. Before this party came to power, they and other submunicipal communities were not well represented by the PRI governments of the municipal seat in Silacyoapan.
(g) In this case, migration rates are low and there are important bases of economic activity other than remittances, specifically an oil refinery.
6.1. Why Some Migrants are Oppositional and others Officialista

The oppositional orientation toward the PRI in the cases of Oaxacan migrants studied can be explained by a few factors. First, the authoritarian context and the social exclusion suffered by migrants and others in rural sending communities makes migrants who engage politically likely to do so in opposition to the prevailing authorities. This provides an explanation for the counterintuitive finding in Chapter 5 that migrants were less likely to be mayors where their voting rights had been preserved after leaving. As hypothesized, when emergent social groups like migrants are not incorporated politically, radical opposition is more likely. In many cases, the political and social exclusion of indigenous peasants in rural Oaxaca was the cause of migration in the first place, and the social and political experience as migrants of key leaders empowered them to return home to seek change. The relative absence of institutionalized channels through which to do so makes radical opposition all the more likely.

This is demonstrated by the cases of the RIIO leaders in San Juan Mixtepec and the FIOB (and later FNIC) leaders of San Miguel Tlacotepec, whose insertion into hometown politics was characterized by radical opposition to the prevailing powers of their municipalities. This pattern of integration is consistent with the hypothesis that higher levels of exclusion and repression, as experienced by indigenous migrants leads to more radical, oppositional, and extra-institutional modes of engagement. That said, the process of repression – radicalization – repression is certainly dialectical, and mutually reinforcing. Indeed, the ideological education of young migrants like Moisés Cruz, Arturo Pimentel and Algimiro Morales, and their subsequent rejection of the prevailing politics of their communities and of the PRI government of their state may be what explains their initial attempts to change their community, and the country. Experiences of repression in the fields of Sinaloa, for example, and the rejection of the elder PRI-connected leaders who dominated municipal politics when they attempted to bring their new ideas home, certainly reinforced this ideological orientation.
The second factor explaining the finding that Oaxaca migrants are more oppositional than Zacatecas or Guanajuato migrants, closely related to the first, is the level of transnationalism from-above. As hypothesized, states with high levels of transnationalism from above were expected to have more oficialista migrant political actors. The state governments of both Guanajuato and Zacatecas have highly institutionalized relationships with organized migrant civil society, which helps to explain the oficialista orientation of noteworthy migrant political actors from those states. Nevertheless, the mechanism expected to facilitate this is the leadership of migrant politicians in migrant civil society groups. The success of El Tanao and The Tomato King, however, confound this theory, as both succeeded with the help of state and national politicians, but were not highly participatory in migrant civil society organizations. While Lupe Gómez of Jalpa, Zacatecas does fit the stylized model of the migrant political actor gaining prominence from a base as a migrant civil society leader, his case might be the exception that proves the rule. That is, his attempts to retain relative autonomy from political parties, and conflicts with the state leadership of the PAN, might be blamed for his lack of success, despite what should be described as a very promising platform.

6.1. Why Some Migrants are Independent and others Collective Actors

With respect to the horizontal dimension of the dependent variable typology, I find that migrants who enter the political fray in opposition to the governor's party tend to be “group agents” who rely on the organizational support of MBOs. In the rare cases when oppositional politicians have been “free-wheeling independents,” as in the cases of Hugo Cruz in San Pablo Huixtepec and Rúben Tascareña in Jalpa, they ultimately failed in their efforts.

In addition, as with the vertical dimension, migrant political actors' placement on the horizontal dimension is explainable by looking to their experiences as migrants, particularly the economic sectors in which they worked. The most noteworthy examples are those Mixtec leaders all of whom were
farmworkers either in Northern Mexico, the Western United States, or both. The mechanism that explains why farmworkers would engage in their home communities as collective actors rather than independent political entrepreneurs is less related to the nature of farm labor, and more related to their experiences of organizing for labor rights. It should be noted that these leaders also all come from Mixtec indigenous communities—as do many farmworkers. As such, it is possible that some characteristics of these communities, rather than the experiences of being a farmworker, are what ultimately explain the collective orientation of these migrants. Specifically, the culture of Mixtec communities is argued to be collectivist, and less individualistic, which might also account for a collective orientation of migrants who engage politically back home. This is indeed a plausible explanation for the migrant organizations from Santiago Asunción, and the leadership of Fidel Castellanos, as migrant organizations from that community are organized as committees within the system of cargos prevalent in the community.

For the most part, migrants engaged as “free-wheeling independents” have experiences as successful businessmen or managers in the U.S. In particular, The Tomato King was a highly successful tomato grower in California, and was purportedly made a millionaire after inventing a machine to more quickly pick and process tomatoes. El Tanao's experiences with US culture were notably positive, particularly when compared to the experiences of the highly exploited farmworkers from Oaxaca. Furthermore, his professional experience as lead groundskeeper at a the estate of a multi-millionaire—who always treated him “like a member of the family”—helps to explain his independent, entrepreneurial orientation as a mayor of Uriangato. As recounted in Chapter 7, this experience also importantly shaped his form of governing, and the way he interacted with his constituents and other politicians in his home municipality and state. Similarly, Rúben Tiscareño and Hugo Cruz' independent orientation might be related to their relative wealth and their experience as business owners. Nevertheless, in these cases, the fact that they did not have a strong collective base to their power, and did not have powerful allies at the state level might help to explain their ultimate lack of political success.
7. CONCLUSION

There are important differences in the ways in which the state governments of both Zacatecas and Guanajuato have dealt with their migrant populations. However, unlike with the case of Oaxaca, both states have had quite active efforts to incorporate migrants into local and state politics and to keep them socially and economically engaged after leaving. As argued above, this might help to explain why the places in these states that have seen particularly influential migrant actors emerge have not done so in radical opposition to the state government, as in Oaxaca. Though I believe several factors to be at play, the nature of the long authoritarian political system in Oaxaca, and the state government's relations with independent social groups in general helps to explain the radicalism of organized Oaxacan migrants. Corroborating the theory of incorporation, as expressed by Stinchcombe (1968) and summarized above, migrants are incorporated into local politics through the channel of radicalism because of the fact that they are excluded from securing effective state or local level representation through institutionalized channels of interest articulation and aggregation.

In Oaxaca—at least during 81 years of PRI dominance prior to 2010—the way out-groups have gained influence over policy and resources from the state has been through the negotiating leverage gained through direct action. The limited number of options for communities to successfully secure resources and representation from the state government through formal institutional channels radicalizes out-groups. Thus, similar to other social organizations in the state, especially those without quasi-corporatist connections to the PRI, independent MBOs in Oaxaca have been more likely to enter local politics in radical opposition to the status quo.

To be successful as political entrepreneurs, migrant elites must rely, at least initially, on the support of powerful state level actors. Indeed, in the noteworthy cases of El Tanao in Guanajuato and the Tomato King in Zacatecas, one could argue that state and national political elites promoted these migrant
politicians to challenge remaining bastions of the PRI in their states. These “free-wheeling, independent” politicians, though originally reliant on powerful state actors, were able to build their own local bases of power somewhat independently of political parties. The impact of these and other migrant elites on the political structures of their communities and the quality of democracy there is a topic more directly examined in the next chapter.

At first glance, the findings here seem to contradict those of Chapter 5 in an important respect. That chapter found that migrant mayors in Oaxaca were no less likely to be affiliated with the PRI than non-migrant mayors. The findings here suggest that migrant political actors in Oaxaca are disproportionately oppositional. It should be noted, however, that the principal goal here is to compare migrant political actors to each other, not to non-migrant political actors as was done in Chapter 5.

Furthermore, in this chapter I focused on municipalities where migrants had been particularly influential, rather than all municipalities in Oaxaca. In the next and final empirical chapter, I expand the qualitative case study to include additional municipalities where, despite high levels of migration, migrants have not been particularly influential. The goal of the comparative study of this expanded universe—still restricted to small high-migration municipalities—is to begin to holistically understand how migrants interact with non-migrants to generate aggregate, municipal-level political outcomes. That is, how and in what ways do migrants impact the political systems of their home municipalities?
CHAPTER 7
MIGRATION AS A DEMOCRATIZING FORCE IN SENDING COMMUNITIES?

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I seek to answer the final question of this dissertation: How do migrants affect the political systems of their municipalities of origin? I ask not only whether migrant political actors, migrant civil society, and other migration-related factors increase the levels of political competition in sending municipalities, but whether this competition is effectively institutionalized in local political systems. The first question of the dissertation (analyzed in Chapter 4) focused on the hometown engagement of migrant civil society groups and the second question (analyzed in chapters 5 and 6) focused on the political and social background of those in power. Here I focus most squarely on how migrant engagement interacts with and alters sending-municipality political systems. Specifically, I analyze the different ways in which municipal political systems—and the dominant political groups that make them up—deal with the emergence of migrants as a mobilized or mobilizable social and potentially political group. Building on Fitzgerald's (2009) research, I consider the ways in which different agents of the Mexican state support, coopt, and/or suppress the activities of migrant-based groups and individuals. I argue that variation in municipal political system-outcomes is explained by the nature of the interactions between migrant and home-country political actors.

To understand the factors that lead to these different outcomes, the present chapter employs a comparative subnational research design to analyze ethnographic data gathered from 12 high-migration municipalities in Oaxaca, Guanajuato and Zacatecas. The comparative qualitative methods complement research that focuses on places with well-organized and highly influential migrants by also selecting cases
with less migrant involvement—despite high rates of migration—and less democratizing results. This makes it possible to assess the impacts of migration on the political systems of sending-municipalities without highly politicized and organized migrants, and thus to do a more general accounting of their democratizing impact. Furthermore, I draw on the typology developed and tested in Chapter 6 to assess how different modes of migrant engagement lead to different outcomes at the level of municipal political systems over time.

The analysis presented below shows that the ways in which migrants become engaged, coupled with the ways in which prevailing authorities react to their emergence as new actors, determines the nature of their impact on the political system. Specifically, when migrants that seek to change the political systems of their home communities are met with resistance and repression from prevailing authorities, the outcome is increased competition characterized by factionalism and political and social conflict. When migrants are incorporated by prevailing authorities “from-above,” the likely outcome is what I categorize as “neocorporatist incorporation,” and a shoring up of the dominant powers. However, the longitudinal nature of the qualitative data studied demonstrates that over time, these dynamics can evolve. For example, just because prevailing authorities succeed in mobilizing and empowering migrant political actors to serve their immediate goals does not mean they can control them into the future. As the analysis of several cases examined below shows, once empowered by prevailing, home-state and home-municipality politicians, migrants can split with their former powerful supporters to ally with other political groups or seek autonomy.

Below, I begin by briefly recapping the “Process Model of Migration-Led Political Change” which is the framework used for the analysis. In section 3 I present the hypotheses and in section 4 I discuss the case selection rationale and method of analysis. In sections 5 through 7 I present the case studies of municipal politics in the three states. Finally, I discuss the results and conclude.
2. A FRAMEWORK TO ANALYZE MIGRANT IMPACT ON MUNICIPAL POLITICS

The framework used is drawn from the theoretical models in Chapter 3, particularly as summarized in the “Process Model of Migration-Led Political Change” developed in section 6 of that chapter. The agent-centered models theorized the ways in which prevailing municipal authorities respond to the emergence of migrants as a social group, and Figure 3.2 presented the expected impact of different types of migrant - “cacique” interactions at the level of the municipal political system. Based on this, I argue that the nature of the interaction between prevailing authorities and migrant social and political actors over time can lead to four general outcomes. As depicted in Figure 3.2 (Chapter 3), the outcomes are: “Factionalistic Competition,” “Pluralism and Institutionalized Competition,” “Neocorporatist Integration,” and “Continuity.”

In doing this, this chapter attempts a more comprehensive consideration of the central concern of this dissertation: Is migration a democratizing force in sending communities? Following Hirschman (1970), the classical perspective theorizes that migration serves as a political safety valve, releasing social pressure that would otherwise be placed on governments in the absence of sufficient economic opportunities for their populations. However, much recent scholarship on this question, reviewed extensively in Chapter 2, is considerably more optimistic. Using a modified, Hirschmanian model, these scholars have noted that, because of a range of new social phenomena and technologies (e.g., communications and travel), migrants often do not fully “exit” the political and social field of their home towns in the act of emigrating. To the contrary, they often continue to be active citizens in their places of origin and are able to leverage their economic power and social status to become influential actors from abroad, upon their return home, or both.

Yet, the fact that migrants sometimes become influential does not tell us anything about the nature of their influence. As summarized in Chapter 2, this literature expects migrants to enhance
democracy for a number of reasons. Perhaps the most common hypothesis is that experiences with the
democratic political system of the United States leads return and transnational migrants to remit
democratic attitudes and to behave more democratically after returning home (Burgess 2005, 2010, 2012;
Jiménez 2008; Pérez-Almendáriz and Crow 2010). I categorize this as the “Attitudes and Ideologies”
mechanism in Table 2.1 in Chapter 2. I agree in principal with the core of this hypothesis, that the nature
of the experiences of migrants are different, which leads them to have different attitudes and behaviors
than if they had never migrated. However, I argue that these attitudinal changes do not necessarily lead
migrant actors to behave more democratically. Furthermore, even when they do, the way in which these
migrants interact with non-migrant political actors means that the democratizing intentions or aspirations,
when present, do not necessarily pave the way to democratizing outcomes at the level of the political
system.

Skeptics of the argument that migration enhances democracy have not focused on the different
attitudes and behaviors of migrants compared to non-migrants. Scholars like Goodman and Hiskey (2008)
and Wright (2009) focus their attention on the “exiting” (that is migrating) of citizens and argue that the
political-demographic impact of this weakens democracy. When migrants simply exit, and those who stay
behind become disengaged from the politics of their home communities, it can become considerably
easier for the prevailing authorities to maintain their monopoly on power. In the framework laid out in
Figure 3.2, this is the path of low migrant engagement and continuity.

Other skeptics like Ahmed (2012), argue that remittances (and other unearned income) can be
used by autocratic leaders for patronage and repression, thus perpetuating authoritarian governance. In the
context of municipal politics in Mexico, a similar mechanism is at play when prevailing authorities
succeed in mobilizing or coopting migrant social energy and taxing their resources to shore up their
political control. To do this, however, they may have to incorporate at least friendly migrants and migrant
organizations into their political coalitions. Within the framework of this analysis, this mechanism is
likely to lead to the outcome of “Neocorporatist Incorporation.” Like Ahmed, Pfutze (2012) argues from a
political economy perspective, however his conclusions are different. He theorizes that households that
receive more income from remittances are less susceptible to clientelistic appeals by dominant powers.
His findings are consistent with this theory, showing that places with higher levels of migration in Mexico
were more likely to have elected an opposition political party. In my reading, the key distinction between
these two theories is who controls the resources sent home by migrants. If prevailing authorities are able
to access these resources directly or indirectly, it is reasonable to expect, as Ahmed does, that this will
strengthen their regimes. On the other hand, at theorized by Pfutze, if the receipt of remittances by
households truly increases their autonomy vis a vis prevailing authorities, this is likely to make them
more supportive of opposition political groups. These two mechanisms are not mutually exclusive, as
both households and the prevailing regime can simultaneously benefit from migrant financial support.
However, it is difficult to precisely theorize the net impact of this support. Where Ahmed's mechanism is
dominant, the expected outcome is either “Neocorporatist Integration” or “Continuity,” depending on the
extent to which migrants are incorporated and represented in the political system, rather than being taxed
without representation. Where Pfutze's mechanism is dominant, the expected outcome is increased
competition and a more inclusive political system.

Whether a municipality settles in to a new democratic equilibrium in which a plurality of
interests—including those of migrants and their families—find autonomous integration or a
disequilibrium characterized by “Factionalistic Competition” depends upon the reaction of the prevailing
powers to this increased competition. Acceptance and recalibration to the new dynamics make a new

94 This is because there is some portion of a population that would be inclined to support the opposition, but do not
because they fear they will lose some benefit afforded by their support of the dominant regime. I do not mean to
imply that nobody would freely support the powers that be if they did not depend upon a clientelistic relationship
with them.

95 An important caveat is that alternation of power does not imply the elimination of clientelism or vote buying.
The author has observed, for example, the distribution of bags of groceries to voters by one of the principle
opposition political groups during the lead up to the municipal elections there. The mayoral candidate for this
group justified this to the author by saying that they had to use the PRI's tactics to be competitive.
democratic equilibrium more likely and rejection, attempted exclusion, and repression make conflict or factionalistic disequilibrium more likely.

3. HYPOTHESES: HOW MIGRANTS IMPACT MUNICIPAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE

In this section I offer hypotheses to explain the variation in political outcomes in high-migration municipalities. These hypotheses were derived based on the “theory of migrant incorporation into municipal politics,” and its expression as a dynamic algorithm in sections 3 and 4 of Chapter 3. To review, my “theory of migrant incorporation” can be simplified as a dynamic algorithm focusing on the interaction of a migrant actor and a cacique, summarized as follows:

1. Migrants decide to engage or not engage in the public life of their hometowns.
2. Once there is a decision to engage, each actor chooses to conform or to fight.
3. If everyone conforms, the status quo equilibrium persists with the caveat that migrants are now incorporated into the prevailing system.
4. When one fights, and the other conforms, the fighter wins.
5. When both fight, the stronger wins.
6. The loop continues.

Migrants “conform” when they ally politically with the dominant group or provide financial support, for example through collective remittances. When they conform, I understand migrants to be accepting the opportunities and resources offered by the prevailing system. This does not necessarily mean they find this system to be optimal, however. Following Hirschman's model, migrants might choose to remain loyal at a given point in time despite the fact that they would prefer some set of reforms. The
*cacique* conforms by accepting migrant demands or by forming an alliance with migrants who become engaged in their home communities.

When migrants engage with an oppositional orientation toward the prevailing powers they are understood to employ a fighting strategy. In general, this means that they reject and seek some changes in the status quo political system. When prevailing authorities reject migrant demands for reforms, rights, representation, or power they are choosing a fight strategy. In cases where migrants conform, *caciques* fight by demanding that they fulfill certain obligations or by limiting the rights of migrants as community citizens. For instance, in many UC communities in Oaxaca, authorities might require that migrants continue to fulfill certain obligations when abroad, either by returning home to serve in *cargos* or sending money for community projects. When they do not, they can often lose rights in the community, be fined, lose their land, or be sanctioned in other ways. Based on these propositions about migrant – *cacique* interactions, I generate three general hypotheses explored in the case study analysis below.

**Hypothesis 1:** If migrants are able to form a coherent political coalition, or if the opposition mobilizes or incorporates the set of migrant interests (or makes personal connections with migrant elites) a migrant-led opposition is more likely to unseat the *cacique* and political transition is more likely than in the absence of such coalitions. Whether this strengthened opposition leads to a system-level outcome of “factionalistic competition/conflict” or “pluralism/institutionalized competition” depends on how the *cacique* reacts as well as the strength of prevailing institutional structures. That is, if the *caciques* fight back, conflict is more likely than if he conforms, and if prevailing institutions—such as the political party system—are strong, conflict will be less likely than where they are weak.

**Hypothesis 2:** By incorporating enough migrants into the dominant group, or by sufficiently representing their interests to keep them depoliticized, a *cacique* will be more likely to retain power in the face of a political opposition than if he had not incorporated migrants. The key here is that by coopting a potential
new rival constituency that could sufficiently strengthen opposition groups to challenge the status quo, the *cacique* shores up his own power and legitimacy. The expected outcome here is the incorporation of migrants into the dominant political system in a neocorporatist mode. The fact that this theory is understood as dynamic means that migrants who become engaged through the *oficialista* channel, might ultimately choose to go it alone or ally with opposition parties against their former political masters at the state or local level.

**Hypothesis 3:** *Caciques* who reject migrant demands or extract resources from them without offering corresponding benefits may succeed in keeping challengers out in the short term. If migrants are unable to find local allies to assist them in the face of this exclusion, they will likely accept their effective exile, or return under depoliticized auspices that are acceptable to the prevailing authorities. The dynamic nature of this theory, however, means that over time, migrants who are excluded at time “t” might be motivated to marshal enough resources in order to successfully challenge the *cacique* at time “t+1.”

As discussed extensively in Chapter 3 (particularly section 5.3), there are a number of extensions of and limits to the simple rational choice framework. Sometimes actor choices are heavily influenced by their *habitus* rather than utility maximizing rational calculations, and the fact that these interactions are historical, rather than static, means that a number of other outcomes are possible. The focus on two stylized actors should not be taken to mean that I overlook the importance of multiple actors in shaping municipal outcomes. Rather, this simplification helps to focus on how these two types of actors interact within the complex multi-actor political spaces described in the case studies. An actor—migrant or not—who wishes to change the status quo must seek political power directly or find allies with similar objectives. Individual and collective migrant actors effectively increase their strength when they forge alliances with opposition political forces in the home community or state, or work to mobilize
disenfranchised non-migrant groups. Such alliances thus make it more likely that they will win in a fight against the *cacique*. The recognition by prevailing political actors that this possibility exists can serve as a powerful motivation to represent migrant interests or incorporate migrant political actors as *oficialista* allies. However, forging an alliance with migrant groups or individuals at time “t” can have the unintended consequence of empowering a new rival for power in the future. Such an outcome, generated by the interaction of multiple actors over time, is an example of what I termed the “upshot/unintended consequences” mechanism in Chapter 2. Before presenting the cases, I now discuss the data analyzed and the case selection rationale.

4. DATA AND CASE SELECTION

To evaluate the impact of migrant actors on municipal political structures, I studied the recent political history (roughly since the 1990s) of a dozen migrant-sending municipalities in Oaxaca, Guanajuato, and Zacatecas. The data used for this portion of the project were collected through hundreds of open-ended interviews conducted during a year of field research in Mexico and subsequent targeted research trips to eight US locales in three states, during which I interviewed migrant leaders who were active in the selected Mexican states and municipalities.

The Mexican states were selected to vary on a number of factors. I study municipalities in states governed by each of the major political parties in Mexico, the PRI, the PAN, and the PRD. All three states have high migration rates, but, as argued in Chapter 6, the degree of state government engagement with migrants (transnationalism from-above) varies. Within each state, I selected municipal cases with different types and intensities of migrant participation and, in the case of Oaxaca, different municipal political systems (UC or party-system municipalities). The UC systems used in these communities have a set of common institutional structures that determine who governs and who occupies other posts of lower-
level civic and religious service (known as cargos). In the traditional model of UC institutions, those who reach the highest levels of authority—the mayor, the commissioner of communal lands, the sindico—are expected to have “scaled the ladder” of community service, beginning with the least prestigious cargos (Sorroza Polo and Danielson 2013). Migration has put a great deal of stress on this system through both direct and indirect means (Danielson 2013). Elsewhere I have focused precisely on how migration has impacted the stability of these UC systems (Danielson and Eisenstadt 2009; Danielson, Eisenstadt, and Yelle n.d.). Here, I am most interested in how prevailing authorities in UC municipalities interact with migrant political actors, and how the particular features of these institutions and customary norms help to determine how migrant engagement and competition for power impacts municipal political structures.

The municipal cases also vary in terms of the relationship between migrant and non-migrant political actors and the “mode of migrant engagement” (as examined in Chapter 6). This variation is important because it makes it possible to evaluate the hypotheses outlined above about how different combinations of migrant and cacique behavior generate different municipal-level outcomes. Finally, in each state I selected municipalities governed by allies and opponents of the governor and where migrants had different levels of internal, external and international resources available to them. Selecting cases that vary on these factors—which combine to determine the relative strength of migrants—makes it possible to test the propositions that 1) the stronger wins and, accordingly, 2) the stronger is more likely to choose to fight.

The analytic approach I take is twofold. First, I trace the within-case processes of migrant political engagement and interaction with non-migrant political and social actors. Second, I compare the cases to identify the combinations of factors that lead to different outcomes. More generally, a subnational design is best for the questions asked here simply because migrants are more likely to have an impact on smaller political systems and are less likely to significantly alter national political dynamics.
The next three sections present the municipal case studies. Section 5 presents the Oaxaca cases and sections 6 and 7 present the Guanajuato and Zacatecas cases, respectively. Section 8 presents the case studies in comparative perspective and discusses the findings and section 9 concludes.

5. MIGRATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE IN OAXACA

5.1. San Juan Mixtepec: A Cycle of Opposition, Repression, Cooptation, Opposition

This UC municipality, and its influential migrant leader Moisés Cruz, were discussed in considerably detail in Chapter 6. I add to that analysis here by more explicitly describing how Cruz and his organization, the International Indigenous Network of Oaxaca (RIIO, in Spanish) interacted with the prevailing political authorities and other groups in Mixtepec and in the state. After many years as a migrant both in Mexico and in California, Cruz returned to Mixtepec in the 1990s to wrest control from this long-dominant local group. Cruz’ strategy was to fight, and the prevailing authorities responded in kind.

Before Cruz and RIIO became powerful local actors, power in San Juan Mixtepec had always been concentrated in the municipal seat, or cabecera, and the numerous submunicipal communities and small ranch dwellers were systematically excluded (Bautista interview 2007). Cruz’ return to Mixtepec coincided with two other important exogenous changes. First, the state government officially recognized Mixtepec as an autonomous indigenous municipality under the UC system, meaning municipal elections would now be decided in accordance with the customary practices of the community, or by whatever internally determined procedures that were chosen. Second, Cruz returned to Mixtepec in the wake of a new policy of decentralization, under which municipal governments began to automatically receive
federal funds for administrative costs and public works projects. These guaranteed funds—the amount of which was determined by formula—made the holding of municipal power considerably more attractive than it had been previously, and is blamed by some as being the root cause of political conflicts that have intensified over the past decade (Cruz Bautista interviews 2007, 2008; Martínez Vega interview 2007).

Cruz’ strategy to win control of the municipal government was twofold. First, he raised funds from the Mixtepec immigrant community in California—particularly in the towns of Arvin and Lynwood near Bakersfield, where he first arrived in the late 1980s (Hernández interview 2011a). Second, with the resources raised from migrants, Moisés returned to Mixtepec with his RIIO allies in the late 1990s to begin mobilizing submunicipal communities to demand a voice in municipal affairs (and, crucially, to vote for Cruz and his slate of candidates). Hence, the victory of Moisés Cruz as mayor and the RIIOs subsequent control of the municipal government were pluralizing in that they opened up space for the representation of these previously excluded groups, namely those from submunicipal communities, and made the political system markedly more competitive.

However, the RIIO and the administration of Moisés Cruz arguably became a new, migrant-based (and submunicipal community supported) cacicazgo itself. RIIO-controlled municipal governments, which held the mayor's office uninterrupted until 2010, were in constant conflict with a PRI-allied rival political group affiliated with the National Peasants' Confederation (Confederación Nacional Campesino, or CNC). This conflict was particularly prevalent during and after elections, when the losing party (the CNC over most of this period) regularly protested the results. The General Community Assembly, which was the traditional community institution through which authorities were selected by show of hands, proved insufficient to ensure the peaceable election of municipal authorities under these fiercely competitive conditions. As a result, secret ballot elections were instituted. Despite these institutional changes, however, political and social conflict persisted.

96 Previously, municipal governments had to solicit funds from state and federal agencies.
In 2006, several years after finishing his mayoral term, Mosés Cruz was assassinated. To date nobody has been charged or convicted of the crime, and theories abound about who the likely culprit is.\textsuperscript{97} In the wake of the Moisés Cruz' assassination, RIIO struggled with deep internal divisions, and the organization split into two, and nearly three rival groups as the 2007 municipal elections approached (Bautista interview 2007). Despite the succession struggle, however, what remained of the RIIO ultimately united to support candidate Leonel Martínez, who was elected in 2007.

The next generation of RIIO was ultimately coopted by the PRI. After completing his term as mayor, Leonel Martínez served with the PRI as the alternate (suplente) behind Carlos Martínez Villavicencio in the state Chamber of Deputies,\textsuperscript{98} Although Leonel Martínez' alliance with the PRI helped him to rise in the ranks of state politics, RIIO lost control of the municipal government in the wake of the contested 2010 election. It is noteworthy that the group that ultimately displaced RIIO—Social Movement for the Unification of Mixtepec, or MOSUM—was another migrant-based organization, composed of many former RIIO adherents and supported by many of the same submunicipal communities that had originally rallied behind Moisés Cruz and the RIIO (Ortiz Gabriel interview 2010).

However, the pathway to the mayor's office of the MOSUM leaders did not go through institutional channels. Alleging fraud on the part of the RIIO, MOSUM adherents occupied the town hall for four months in the beginning of 2011. The State Electoral Institute (Instituto Estatal Electoral, IEE) eventually nullified the results of the election and scheduled a new election, which was won by MOSUM.

\textsuperscript{97} It is most common for people, particularly RIIO adherents, claim that Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz had him assassinated to prevent his power and regional influence from growing (Sánchez interview 2008). Others potential culprits, range from internal rivals within the RIIO organization to organized crime.

\textsuperscript{98} They won the seat, defeating the PRD (and FIOB supported) candidate Zoila Maldonado Herrera. In 2007, before running for mayor, Leonel Martínez had sought the PRD candidacy for the Juxtlahuaca district, but lost the spot to Bernardo Ramírez Bautista. According to Ramírez, after losing this spot he switched to the (New Alliance Party) PANAL, and supported a candidate to take votes away from Bernardo and the PRD, thus helping the PRI to secure victory in the general election. Governor Ruiz returned the favor by supporting Martínez when the CNC faction challenged his election to be mayor of Mixtepec later that year (Ramírez Bautista interview 2010).
candidate Antonio Victoriano Raymundo Flores (Flores 2011). Despite this new transition of power, however, San Juan Mixtepec remains deeply conflicted.\(^9\)

Thus, this case can be categorized as one in which the participation of politicized migrants has had a pluralizing impact, mobilizing new power centers and new voices against the traditional and authoritarian political system. However, as the ongoing process of factionalism, repression, cooptation, corruption and conflict reflects, the increased competitiveness caused by the introduction of migrant social energy has not been accompanied by the stable institutionalization of a political opposition in a new democratic equilibrium.

5.2. San Miguel Tlacotepec: Migrant-led Political Transition, Factionalism, and Political Conflict

Similar to San Juan Mixtepec in many ways, the municipality of San Miguel Tlacotepec saw a group of politicized migrants return after years of organizing and social movement experience in the fields of Northern Mexico and California to take control of municipal politics. As summarized in Chapter 6, arguably the most important migrant leader from Tlacotepec was Arturo Pimentel Salas. Pimentel, and the organization he founded, the FIOB Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations, gained power in the 1995 elections, displacing the government of the so-called “tíos,” a group of PRI-aligned town elders who dominated municipal politics.\(^10\)

As with RIIO in Mixtepec, the FIOB engaged in municipal politics in Tlacotepec with a fighting strategy, and the prevailing authorities, plus other new power groups, also had a fighting strategy. Like

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99 As I revise this chapter, the trend of political instability and violent internal conflict continues. First, by petition of some 60 submunicipal communities (out of 71), mayor Flores was forced from office. His replacement, who took office in September of 2012, was assassinated along with a municipal police officer he was traveling with, in late March of 2013 (Vélez Ascencio, "Crímenes de Mixtepec, Ajuste de Cuentas," Noticias, Voz e Imagen de Oaxaca, March 25, 2013, 2013.).

100 “Tíos” literally translates to “uncles,” but in the community people often address their elders as “uncle” or “aunt.”
RIIO, the FIOB secured power in Tlacotepec by using tactics of popular mobilization and direct action. However, their precise approach was in some ways the exact opposite of that used by Moisés Cruz and the RIIO. Rather than mobilizing the support of the disenfranchised submunicipal communities, Pimentel and his allies won the election by suppressing the votes of submunicipal communities. Unlike in Mixtepec, the submunicipal communities of Tlacotepec had long cast votes in municipal elections. Under the prevailing system, the leaders of the submunicipal communities (known as *agencias*) were supposed to collect ballots from their eligible citizens and deliver them to the authorities in the *cabecera*. Allegedly, the dominant group in the municipality would arrange for all of the ballots of the submunicipal communities to be cast for their preferred candidates. To win power in the municipality, Pimentel and the FIOB intercepted these ballots and would not allow them to be counted. The FIOB ticket emerged victorious after the ensuing post-electoral conflict.

Mayors favored by the FIOB were in power for twelve years before losing in 2007 and again in 2010. In addition to holding municipal power for twelve years, the FIOB supported the state deputy candidacy of a non-migrant protégé of Pimentel, Romualdo Juán Gutierrez Cortes, who was elected with the PRD in 1998. In addition to being a former state deputy, Gutierrez Cortes is the primary school principle, a secretary of the powerful Section XXII of the state teacher's union, and served as mayor from 2004-2007. Despite the FIOB's power in Tlacotepec and in the region, or perhaps because of it—the organization eventually divided. Pimentel was forced out for alleged corruption and Gutierrez Cortes became the new leader. After being forced out, Pimentel formed a new organization, the FNIC (the National Indigenous Peasants Front). After a violent and protracted postelectoral conflict through the first half of 2011, Pimentel's FNIC backed candidate secured control of the mayor's office for the first time since he was forced out of the FIOB.

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101 In 2010 the submunicipal communities regained the right to participating in mayoral elections for the first time in fifteen years.
In municipal politics, the gerontocracy of the *tios* lost most of their previous influence. However, shortly after the FIOB and its local allies began to dominate politics in the municipality, a new PRI power group emerged under the leadership of a Tlacotepec native from an important family, Yolanda Maldonado. Maldonado and her family, had lived for several decades in Mexico City before returning to Tlacotepec and near-by Juxtlahuaca, where they also have a house and own some of the prime real estate in the city. Maldonado's son, Orlando Molina Maldonado ran for mayor of Tlacotepec in 2007 and, despite winning the most votes, was not permitted to take office due to the fact that he had not maintained consistent residency in the municipality and had not completed a sufficient number of *cargos* in service to the community.

Although the municipality has not suffered levels of political violence similar to those of San Juan Mixtepec, the last two elections have been quite conflictive, requiring the intervention of state electoral authorities to resolve persistent post-electoral conflicts between competing groups. In sum, the empowerment of migrants through the FIOB made municipal politics more competitive and improved the representation of migrant interests, however, this competition has not been institutionalized, and municipal politics has come to be characterized by evolving cycles of struggle between competing personalistic factions.

5.3. Villa de Diaz Ordaz: UC Institutions
Limit the Politicization of Migrants (and Everyone Else)

The Central Valleys Zapotec municipality of *Diaz Ordaz* is in many ways a political community without elites, where Michels' “iron law of oligarchy” does not seem to apply. This is not because no individuals or groups have sought political power; but rather because the system of political and social organization and the political culture of the community make it very difficult to successfully seek power. Ambition is punished.
It is not particularly surprising, then, that in stark contrast to San Miguel Tlacotepec and San Juan Mixtepec, Diaz Ordaz is a case of very limited organized migrant participation in community politics. Despite intense pressures placed on the integrity of the system of cargos, the community is the case among my sample of three UC municipalities that has most strictly maintained the requirement that to reach higher positions of local authority, such as mayor, one must have completed a series of lower level civil and religious positions of community service (cargos). In order to retain “citizenship” in the community, absent members who are called upon to fulfill public service cargos, in the religious or civic sphere, must either return home to serve or pay a replacement.

The largest numbers of international migrants from Diaz Ordaz reside in and around Santa Monica, California and the surrounding area of West Los Angeles, where they work predominantly in the restaurant industry, other service sector jobs, and construction. Others have migrated to Oaxaca City and Mexico City. Migrants in Santa Monica form ad hoc committees—paralleling in many ways the traditional modes of committee formation in Diaz Ordaz to work towards some community objective. Following this model, migrants in Santa Monica have formed the “Mesa Directiva de Villa Diaz Ordaz,” and have raised money to support sporting events (basketball tournaments, including trophies for the winners), and to replace the roof of the Secondary School “Jose Maria Diaz Ordaz.”

Local authorities, speaking for the consensus of the General Community Assembly, send a request to the migrants that indicates what the most pressing needs of the community are (Ortega Cara interview 2009). Then the committee in California meets to build a consensus among the Diaz Ordaz community there, and to collect contributions. Migrants from Diaz Ordaz residing in Mexico City also have a hometown association, which is organized around a photography shop owned by a community member. Though generally apolitical, in 2001 this group of Diaz Ordaz internal migrants attempted to

102 These include “standing” committees like the junta de festejos—in charge of raising money for the annual patron saint and other community religious festivities—and the Committee for Potable Water, named by the community assembly to take charge of an initiative to improve the water system.
propose a mayoral candidate. A leader of this group, Eli Martínez, returned to the community, distributed a platform, and openly sought the office. However, political campaigns are counterproductive, and he was unsuccessful (Juan Martínez interview 2010).

The absence of migrant political power does not mean that migration has not had significant social and political impacts on the community, including on the structure of so called “usos y costumbres” institutions. Many migrants remain engaged with the community, and their monetary support is sought by the authorities for projects, though it is not considered to be obligatory, and migrants are not sanctioned for failing to contribute to these projects. To retain full rights as community “citizens” however, migrants are expected to serve in civil and religious cargos when chosen by the General Community Assembly, and can be subject to fines, having their houses cut off from public utilities such as water, or effectively being excommunicated for failing to do so.

That said, community citizens, including migrants, are now permitted to pay for a replacement to serve in their stead. Perhaps for this relaxation of the rules, and unlike cases such as the neighboring Central Valleys community of Santa Ana del Valle (see Juan Martínez 2013), migrants from Diaz Ordaz have not mobilized politically to advocate for their often unique interests and rights. Charismatic migrant leaders have not returned to become influential political actors, and HTAs in Santa Monica and Mexico City have offered their support to the community, but have not been able to use their financial weight or transnational social capital to win political power back home.

To explain the lack of migrant political empowerment and influence in Diaz Ordaz, it is necessary to understand the nature and functioning of prevailing political and social institutions. As political parties are barred from competing in elections in UC municipalities, politicization tends to come through the formation of groups or factions. Until very recently, no such politicization had occurred in Diaz Ordaz, migrant-led or otherwise. I theorize that when migrants are required, encouraged or coerced into participating monetarily or directly in their home towns from abroad or upon their return, they will be more likely to seek a voice in their community. Threats to migrants’ rights as members of the community,
to their lands, or to public services like water and electricity are expected to motivate migrants not only to comply with their duties as community citizens, but also, perhaps, to seek political influence. Specifically, migrants might seek changes to practices that sanction them heavily for not fulfilling their cargo requirements, as in the neighboring community of Santa Ana del Valle, to reduce the number of service requirements.

Diaz Ordaz return migrant Adelfo Santiago, for example, sees change as necessary, and believes that the community's energy should be directed toward development-enhancing activities, such as improvements in public infrastructure and productive investment. Instead, “80% of services aren’t productive, but are done out of custom/habit” (Santiago interview 2009). Adelfo and his wife Leticia, a naturalized US citizen from Diaz Ordaz, are among the only young couples (in their 30s) to return to the community, where they bake bread to sell in the community and to take to the market in the regional center of Tlacolula. Adelfo and Leticia are among those who have a different culture and identity that is related to their time spent in the United States, however they were quite critical of what they saw as typical migrants, who “do return with different ideas, but only one in ten young people who return are interested in working for change” (Martínez interview 2009). Adelfo did express his desire to become mayor, but noted that he must serve in some 8 or 9 lower level cargos before he is even eligible to serve on the municipal council. In short then, though arguably influential in the community for his age, people like Adelfo have a long time before they are likely to begin to have a direct impact on governance there.

Another aspect of the relationship of migrants and migration to the prevailing political and social system in Diaz Ordaz has to do with the fact that, in many ways, the remittances sent back to the community by migrants living and working in the US or elsewhere in Mexico are what make the

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103It is important to note here, that both San Juan Mixtepec and San Miguel Tlacotepec had observed—and still selectively observe—strict cargo service requirements in order to gain power before the migrants returned home and rebelled against these systems.
persistence of the traditional system of cargos possible. From this perspective, the parents and family members of migrants are able to spend their time and energies serving on committees and in other unpaid work for the community because of the economic assistance they receive from abroad. Indeed, even those who do not directly receive remittances benefit from them, as this is the top driver of employment and growth in the community. On the other side, though, without their family members who stay behind in the community fulfilling their service obligations, migrants would be in danger of losing their status as citizens in the community, and accordingly subject to a loss of rights to their lands, to have their houses connected to the public water system, among other sanctions.

Thus, despite a somewhat onerous burden placed on migrants, their families and the community in general to fulfill a large number of unremunerated service positions in order to maintain community citizenship rights, migrants have rarely sought political power, and never succeeded when they have. This seems to be most directly explicable by the unique political norms of the community to punish political ambition. Minor reforms in the service obligations may have been sufficient to forestall any push toward more significant change by migrants. That is, had the community—and the authorities—continued demanding that migrants provide direct service when selected at the risk of losing rights, they might very well have sought to use their economic and social power to demand more drastic changes to the system, such as the elimination of a large number of “service” positions that must be filled each year.

Pairing this case with the other UC municipalities studied, can help explain why migrants have not emerged as influential elite in Diaz Ordaz. One potentially important factor is that no key group of Diaz Ordaz migrants had such an important ideological formative experience as migrants. As with the two Mixtec cases examined, this experience gave a core group of migrant leaders the social movement organizing skills and the will to actively seek and successfully win power back home. Another factor, which might require further exploration, could be that by slightly relaxing the cargo burden placed on migrants, and allowing migrants to fulfill their obligations through monetary contributions, they have not felt as threatened by the prevailing system as others, and have accordingly not had the motivation to seek
radical changes. The continued stability of the UC institutions in Diaz Ordaz has given the community the tools to suppress politicization and conflict\textsuperscript{104} in a way that was not possible in the generally more conflictual Mixtec region of the state. However, this has been done in a way that limits significant change to the political structure of the municipality, resulting in an outcome of continuity.

5.4. Santiago Juxtlahuaca: Multicolored Oficialismo

The seat of the rural indigenous legislative and judicial district where both San Juan Mixtepec and San Miguel Tlacotepec are located is governed by the system of political parties used in the rest of the country, and has yet to see a true alternation of power. The exception to this was the mayoral administration of Carlos Martínez López Villavicencio, who was elected in 2007 with the Popular Unity Party (PUP). He briefly switched from the PRI to this party after failing to get the nomination to be the PRI mayoral candidate. However, he describes himself as a life-long member of the PRI, and returned to the PRI almost immediately after being elected on the PUP ticket. What is more, he was elected state deputy of the Juxtlahuaca district (former Mixtepec mayor Leonel Martínez was his alternate) with the PRI from 2011 through 2013.

Despite being the district seat of one of the highest migration regions of the country, and despite the strength of migrant based organizations in near-by Tlacotepec and Mixtepec, migrant actors have had a relatively minimal impact on politics in Juxtlahuaca. This does not mean, however, that organized migrant groups have no role in the municipality. First, the FIOB state office is located in Juxtlahuaca and the organization mobilizes submunicipal communities in this and other municipalities in the region to

\textsuperscript{104}There is an important exception to the rule of low political conflict in Diaz Ordaz, as the mayor and sindico were forced to resign from office by a mobilized and highly politicized group of citizens in 2009. However, this exception helps prove the rule, as the leaders of that movement were completely unsuccessful in winning power after the expulsion of the former mayor, in large part because of the community’s rejection of their evident ambition (Juan Martinez interview 2010).
advocate for more just distributions of resources. Additionally, the FIOB in Juxtlahuaca (and in the region) has become one of the most important currents within the PRD, competing with other national currents of that party to get its allies and members placed on municipal tickets and to be candidates for seats in the state legislature. Finally, during the government of Mayor Carlos Martínez Villavicencio, the municipality began to take advantage of the 3x1 program and to do so, mobilized two HTAs. By raising money from these communities, Mayor Martínez succeeded in mobilizing apolitical migrants in Madera, California to support a $3 million peso water treatment plant in the submunicipal community of Santa Catarina Noltepec. At least for now, these HTAs have not become highly politicized, and less so in opposition to the PRI.

Migrants led by the FIOB are supporting the PRD in the municipality in opposition to the PRI. Despite shoring up the power of the opposition, however, the PRI has not lost power in the municipality. The work of the FIOB to train submunicipal community leaders to understand municipal budgets and calculate how much money they should be getting from automatically distributed federal funds promises to empower these often excluded communities and make municipal politics more inclusive. At the same time, the municipal government's mobilization of oficialista migrant organizations, and the securing of funds from them for community projects, arguably serves to shore up the power of Mayor Martínez Villavicencio and the PRI, which in the context of Juxtlahuaca is likely to have an impact of weakening political competition. The net impact of organized migrants on politics in Juxtlahuaca, then, has been minor. Whatever boost the opposition has gained through the support of migrant groups has been sterilized by the mobilization of oficialista migrant civil society groups by the PRI. Nevertheless, the incorporation of organized migrants through institutionalized channel of the 3x1 program, on the one hand, and within the internal organization of the PRD in the municipality and the region, suggests that migrant voices are finding increased channels through which to be heard.

105 It is particularly ironic that the FIOB does this work throughout the region, but in Tlacotepec, the municipality where the bulk of its leadership is from, the submunicipal communities were long disenfranchised.
5.5. Silacayoapan: Migrant Organizations and Communities Strengthen the Opposition

This municipality was selected for study because it was among the only examples of a party-system municipality in the high-migration Mixtec region of the state where a party other than the PRI had won the mayor’s office. The PRD first won election in the municipality in the wake of Cuatémoc Cardenas’ 1988 presidential candidacy, but there was internal conflict in the municipal government, the state Congress intervened, and the mayor resigned. In the next municipal elections in 1992, the state government put all of its energy behind winning back the mayor’s office in Silacayoapan for the PRI and defeated an internally divided opposition. Subsequently, the PRI controlled the municipal government for close to two decades, until the PRD regrouped and won the elections in 2007 and 2010 (Vargas Cuenca interview 2010).

The successful victory strategy of the local PRD in 2007, similar to the strategy of Moisés Cruz in Mixtepec, was to mobilize the support of the disgruntled, marginalized, high-migration, and indigenous language-speaking submunicipal communities. Although they had the right to vote in municipal elections—unlike submunicipal populations in some UC municipalities—these communities had not been engaged in municipal politics. The victorious 2007 PRD municipal ticket secured the support of these communities by promising them a just distribution of the federal funds received by all municipal governments.

In addition, the PRD opposition cleverly blocked the age-old vote buying strategies of the PRI’s so called mapaches. Mapaches—literally meaning raccoons, because they go out at night—are party operatives who canvass communities and neighborhoods the night before an election to offer money and goods in exchange for votes. The simple tactic employed by the PRD in 2007—and again in 2010—was to block the roads connecting the municipal seat to the submunicipal communities on the Saturday night before the election, impeding the mapaches from bringing money and goods to residents there. This combination of strategies proved successful, and the PRD opposition won a majority in 11 of the
Silacayoapan's 13 submunicipal communities. Crucial among these supporters were migrant leaders such as Fidel Castellanos (profiled in Chapter 6) who came to a realization that the community should begin to participate politically in the municipality (Castellanos Carrazgo interview 2010). This support paid off, as the PRD administration fulfilled its campaign promise to distribute administrative and project funds to the communities based on their population (Castellanos Carrazgo interview 2010; Márquez López interview 2010).

Despite this electoral success, upon taking power Mayor Ramiro Márquez López was immediately faced with the challenges of governing an opposition municipality in Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz' Oaxaca. Specifically, the state government refused to release federal funds designated by formula to be distributed to each municipality, offering the mayor a bribe to motivate him to switch his party affiliation to the PRI (Márquez López interview 2010). Faced with this crisis, the FIOB mobilized its supporters to secure the release of the funds. In Mayor Márquez' words, “you could say that [the FIOB] functioned as a protective shield for us” (Márquez López interview 2010). With this support the administration was able to apply pressure to secure resources from the state government. To do this, as is common in Oaxacan politics, the organization mobilized supporters to travel to Oaxaca City and occupy the state's “Administrative City,” where numerous government agencies are located. Faced with this direct pressure, Silacayoapan, with the organizational support of the FIOB, was able to negotiate the release of the funds necessary to run the municipal government.

Though organized migrants were not the chief protagonists in the political transition in Silacayoapan, it is clear that the politicization of the high migration, indigenous submunicipal communities was integral to the PRD success. The continued ability of the PRD administrations to govern—particularly when faced with significant external and internal opposition—can be attributed to the support of the powerful migrant-based social organization that is the FIOB. Even still, the

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106The vote in the cabecera was evenly split.
municipality remains bitterly divided, and the PRI government responded to the election of an opposition party with a strategy of exclusion. Faced with this authoritarian response, opposition municipalities often look to the support of social organizations—in this case the FIOB—to place direct pressure on the state government. In this way, the electoral support from high-migration submunicipal communities coupled with the governing support of the FIOB suggest that migrant political actors helped to strengthen the opposition and accordingly make the municipality more inclusive. Thus, with the support of the FIOB, other state-level opposition groups, and high-migration submunicipal communities, the PRD leaders in Silacayoapan forged a successful coalition that led to a transition of power. However, due to the combination of a significant PRI organization in the municipality, particularly strong in the municipal seat, which was powerfully supported by the then PRI governor, the outcome—at least for the first PRD term—was characterized by persistent divisiveness and political conflict.

5.6. San Pablo Huixtepec: The Integration of Migrants into a PRI-dominated Municipality

This high-migration, PRI-governed municipality has had only two non-PRI mayors in modern history, both from the PAN. Informal migrant organizations have supported the construction of a clock tower in the central square and a new town hall, among other projects (Díaz Bailón interview 2009). These organizations have been created by the community's PRI mayors, and their leaders in the community of Seaside in Monterey County, California have had strong personal and family ties with important figures within the municipal PRI. There is a perception that some funds raised by HTA leaders, and their allies in the municipal government, were misused or stolen from immigrants in California for different community projects in San Pablo (interviews with migrants from San Pablo, Seaside, CA, May 2010). The bulk of migrant organizing and collective remittances in San Pablo has been driven from the top-down, is oficialista in orientation, and has not strengthened civil society—migrant-based or otherwise. Nor has it notably increased political competition. In fact, the results of migrant engagement
have generally been to shore up the authority and legitimacy of the governing PRI administrations. An exception to this *oficialista* tendency, as outlined in Chapter 6, is the case of the entrepreneurial migrant leader Hugo Cruz, who failed to win office on the PRD ticket in 2007.

In general though, the dominant political group in the municipality, the PRI, has succeed in drawing upon apolitical and *oficialista* migrant organizations to help it to shore up its legitimacy, while successfully deflecting opposition challenges such as that of Hugo Cruz and the emergent PRD. This was indeed made easier due to the powerful support PRI municipal governments of San Pablo received from Governor Ruíz Ortiz and previous PRI governors. Though the PRI won municipal elections in 2010, Gabino Cue Monteagudo, the coalition candidate in opposition to the PRI, was elected governor in the same year. As several of these cases have shown, the support of the governor is an essential factor that determines how well a mayor is able to govern. In the absence of powerful state-level opposition allies (such as the FIOB in the case of Silacayoapan), it is very difficult for mayors to maintain local governability in opposition to the state party.107

Nevertheless, the growing strength of opposition political groups at both the municipal and state levels, coupled with what appears to be a general sense of disillusionment toward municipal politics felt by many migrants (Díaz Bailón interview 2009; interview with migrants in Seaside, CA, May 2010), reflect the potential power of migrants to challenge the status quo in support of the opposition. Indeed, to an extent, one can argue that such challenges from the opposition, even when not successful, do have an important impact on the quality of governance by motivating the PRI to govern better and secure funding for more public works projects in order to retain the support of the public.108 A more pessimistic interpretation focuses on the fact that the emergence for the first time of the PRD in San Pablo in 2007—a

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107Since the transition of power at the state level, it is unclear if this consistent feature of Oaxacan politics has fundamentally changed.

108Indeed, according to Juan Santiago Herrera, the first PAN mayor (1981-1983), the PRI started governing better after they lost. As he put it: “Competition made the PRIistas work harder and do more public works projects when they returned to power” (interview 2010).
municipality where the sole opposition party has been the PAN—simply functions to divide the opposition to the stalwart constituency of the PRI.

6. MIGRATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE IN GUANAJUATO

6.1. Uriangato: The Many Coats of “El Tanao”

The political biography of Carlos “El Tanao” Guzmán Camarena was discussed in detail in Chapter 6. He served twice as mayor of the southern Guanajuato municipality of Uriangato, and failed in his most recent campaign in 2012. This case helps to demonstrate how the engagement of migrants in the politics of their home towns can serve to increase political competition at the municipal level, while still supporting the party in control of the state and federal governments, in this case the PAN. The case also demonstrates the importance of migrant politicians' political and ideological formation in the United States, and is perhaps a paradigmatic example of how attitudes and behaviors learned abroad can lead to the development of a very different kind of politician than is typical in the Mexican context. Furthermore, consistent with the quantitative findings from the Oaxaca data, his experience as a migrant, and his attractiveness to the PAN leadership in Guanajuato and beyond, helped to propel El Tanao, who only has a sixth grade education, into a position of local power typically held by people from more privileged backgrounds.

By helping the PAN to defeat the PRI locally and through his rule-based approach to municipal administration, it can be argued that Guzmán Camarena helped to make Uriangato a more inclusive polity. El Tanao views himself as “more of a City Manager, in the US style, than a typical politician” and proudly describes himself as a “Mexicano Agringado” (a “Gringified Mexican”), by which he means that he very self-consciously seeks to bring U.S. practices of strict bureaucratic and rule based authority to
Mexico, to remove corruption and patronage based politics and “govern like a businessman” (Guzmán Camarena interviews 2010a, 2010b, 2011). Despite his great affection for US culture and his attempts to govern in the style of a City Manager in a U.S. city, El Tanao did not express particular affection for migrants, nor did he see himself as being their representative in any particular way. As he phrased it: “I'm not going to do anything special for the migrants. They aren't heroes. They didn't leave to save the fatherland. I treat them just like anyone else.” And referring to his own motivation he added, “I didn't [migrate] to save the fatherland. I went to save myself” (Guzmán Camarena interview 2011).

Though his pathway to power was not through his participation in migrant civil society groups, once El Tanao was in the mayor's office, he helped organize several HTAs and secured 14 3x1 projects in the municipality during his first term in office (2000-2003). That said, his successor, Mayor Anastacio Rosiles of the PRI, completed 19 3x1 projects during his three year term (2003-2006) and the PRI continues to be more active in mobilizing migrant civil society. Furthermore, one of the campaign pledges of Mayor Ramón Pérez of the PRI—who came to power in 2009 after El Tanao's second term—was to mobilize even more migrant civil society groups to support public work projects in their communities (Pérez interview 2010).

As mayor, Pérez' administration focused on identifying migrant leaders in the US and to mobilize them to organize HTAs and support 3x1 projects. The mayor made one trip to Illinois as mayor, and his Director of Social Development Miguel Domínguez traveled to Oxnard, California, where a new HTA was established (Domínguez interview 2011). Despite these efforts, and other policies to attend to the particular needs of migrants at the municipal level, a small caveat is in order. One of the key operatives for the PRI in the region, Miguel González Martínez, traveled to Oxnard in 2009 to mobilize his brother-in-law (the club's president) and a nephew (the club's treasurer) (González Martínez interview 2011).

Furthermore, the president of an HTA based in the municipal seat—Club Cuitzillo of Aurora, Illinois—is

109This is consistent with the finding that non-migrant mayors in Oaxaca are just as successful as migrants in securing the support of migrant civil society (see Chapter 5).
a stalwart PRIista and served in the first administration of Ramón Pérez (1997-2000) (González Martínez interview 2011).

Thus, the impact of migrants on the politics of Uriangato is multifaceted. First, the direct impact of El Tanao's political success—especially insofar as his role is seen as integral in breaking the PRI monopoly on power—helped to pluralize local politics. That said, over time, his actual impact on municipal political structure may have had some unintended consequences. First, as a self-described practitioner of “chaquetismo,” or party switching, his personalistic style resulted in the splitting of the political opposition and a fragmentation of the local party system. Second, as the concerted efforts by PRI governments to reach out to migrants show, the mobilization of migrants is engaged in by all parties, and at least in this case has been undertaken in a significantly partisan way. Thus, the engagement of migrant actors in Uriangato—by El Tanao and HTAs—can be interpreted in an optimistic light to reflect the fact that migrants as a social group are being incorporated into an increasingly competitive municipal political system. The pessimistic interpretation of this phenomenon is that the partisan fragmentation characteristic of municipal politics is being reproduced, and not fundamentally altered, by migrant engagement.

Scholars like Peréz-Almendáriz and Crow (2010) and Jiménez (2008) hypothesize that migrants get a democratic education by living in the US and remit these practices or return with them, thus acting as agents of democratization back home. In many ways El Tanao embodies this hypothesized mechanism of democratization, as a self-styled “Gringified Mexican” who became one of the most powerful politicians in his municipality. Nevertheless, one can argue that this attitude helped to explain El Tanao's personalism, which in an unintended way, served to reinforce this destructive tendency of local politics in Mexico.
6.2. Yuriria: Where a Dead Man Governs

This high-migration, rural municipality borders Uriangato and is similar in many respects, yet it has not seen the emergence of politicized migrant individuals or organizations, allowing for a controlled, paired comparison. Yuriria is even more dependent economically upon migration, and a larger share of its population resides in the rural hinterlands of the municipality. Like Uriangato, but to an even greater extent, Yuriria has seen significant migrant civil society organization and collective remittance projects. This includes migrant business investment in the submunicipal community of the El Timbinal, where a textile factory was started under the mostly defunct program “Mi Comunidad” launched by then Governor Vicente Fox in the 1990s (see Smith and Bakker 2008, for a comprehensive analysis of this endeavor). In addition, the municipality benefited from 39 migrant collective remittance projects through the 3x1 Program from 2002 to 2009. These migrant-funded projects went to 19 different communities, but none of them went to the municipal seat (SEDESOL 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009), reflecting the higher levels of migration and migrant civil society organization in the submunicipal communities.

There is an increasingly institutionalized and active HTA in Chicago, of Casa Club Yuriria. This club was in the process of registering as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization at the time of my interview with its new president Mario Alberto Salazar in March 2011. According to him president there is a chance that the former long-serving club president, who has retired and returned to Yuriria, may have political ambitions (Salazar interview 2011). While the high rate of migration and an increasingly organized migrant civil society mean that an influential migrant political group (or individual) might emerge in this municipality, this has yet to occur.

The caveat to the classification of Yuriria as a place with weak migrant influence on municipal politics is found in the case of former mayor Don Pedro Gaviña. Don Pedro was a Yuriria native who moved at a young age to the state of Morelos, where he eventually became a successful onion grower. During his long absence from the community he retained strong hometown ties, was a PRI militant, and
gained a great deal of good will from rural communities by hosting barbecues, supporting rodeos, and engaging in other populist (but popular) displays of wealth and generosity. Upon his return to Yuriria in the late 1990s, he aspired to the PRI nomination for mayor. When he was not selected as the candidate, he chose to run with the PAN and was the first non-PRI mayor elected. As in many other cases throughout Mexico—and some of the cases examined in this dissertation—it is often the case that alternation of parties in power is explained by this kind of party switching.

After leaving office, Don Pedro Gaviña was convicted of public corruption for brokering a self-enriching land deal (buying a piece of his own private property for the municipality at an inflated price) and ultimately served time in jail and lost his right to run for public office again. Don Pedro viewed the lack of support from the PAN Governor at the time as a betrayal and again switched parties, this time to the Green Ecologist Party—which, as is evident here and in the Uriangato case, serves as a willing vehicle for charismatic politicians looking to switch parties.\(^{110}\) His conviction made him ineligible to run for mayor again, however, so his son Gerardo ran and won on the Green Party ticket. Don Pedro died while his son was in office, but his daughter-in-law María de los Ángeles de Gaviña ran and was elected mayor in 2009.\(^{111}\) In the words of Yuriria native and University of Guanajuato professor and political analyst, Luis Miguel Rionda, “A dead person is still winning there” (Rionda interview 2010).

Thus, the migrant communities of Yuriria have been incorporated apolitically; supporting the development of infrastructure and business in submunicipal communities, but without making significant political demands or becoming direct political actors themselves. As such, at least at present, the prevailing power groups in the municipality have benefited from migrant resources without having to respond by significantly empowering migrants as a social group.

\(^{110}\) Guzmán himself referred to using the Green Ecologist Party as a vehicle (Guzmán Camarena interview 2011).

\(^{111}\) She had no previous political experience outside of the traditional role of the mayor’s wife to direct the municipal office for Integral Development of the Family, DIF) (de Gaviña interview 2010).
6.3. Valtierra, Salamanca: Organized Migrants in the Hinterlands of an Industrial City

Salamanca is a case that does not fit the selection criteria of the other cases due to its being a large urban center with more than 200,000 inhabitants. Even though this city has a low overall migration rate, its rural, submunicipal communities, such as Valtierra, have high rates of migration and in some cases, significant organized migrant civil society participation. Furthermore, the municipal and state governments—controlled by the PAN since the early 1990s—have departments that aim specifically at developing migrant sending communities and providing supports for migrants and their families, while also mobilizing migrant collective remittance projects.

I focus here on the community of Valtierra, where a particularly entrepreneurial return migrant leader, Miguel Angel Montoya (profiled in Chapter 6), has become an influential actor and a key liaison with municipal, state, and federal government officials. Montoya has been instrumental in mobilizing migrants from Valtierra in Santa Barbara—where he lived as a migrant for several years—to contribute funds for public works projects. The direct impact of migrant civil society groups, and Montoya's energy and leadership in particular, have helped Valtierra to secure public infrastructure spending from municipal, state, and federal governments that otherwise might not have been forthcoming.

Thus, through the institutionalization of the migrant-government relationship through the 3x1 program, the PAN in Guanajuato and particularly in Salamanca has been able to benefit from the apolitical (and accordingly oficialista) financial and organizational support of migrants. Considered from the perspective of municipal politics, then, it is evident that the PAN municipal governments of Salamanca gain legitimacy thanks to a successful leveraging of migrant resources. This is not to say that high migration communities like Valtierra are not better represented because of this institutionalization of the migrant-state relationship. This may very well be the case. The key point is not to condemn the PAN government in Salamanca for coopting migrant social energy, but rather to demonstrate how, under
certain circumstances, home-municipality government actors can benefit politically from mobilizing migrant resources while still benefiting migrant sending communities. In the best of cases, this support of migrant-sending submunicipal communities can both cultivate long-term political allies, such as Montoya, while also laying the foundations for long-term support and loyalty of particular rural communities. However, as the cases of El Tanao and The Tomato King demonstrate, by mobilizing and empowering new political actors, prevailing actors always run the risk of inadvertently creating new rivals.

7. MIGRATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE IN ZACATECAS

7.1. Jalpa: Impacts of a Semi-Autonomous Migrant Leader?

The PRI controlled politics without interruption in this rural Zacatecas municipality until 1995, when PAN candidate Francisco Sandoval Martínez was elected mayor. The PAN continued to govern the municipality almost uninterrupted for 10 years. As discussed in Chapter 6, the PRD won gubernatorial elections in 1998, unseating the PRI for the first time at the state level, and held that office until losing in 2010. Demonstrating the ubiquity of “chaquetismo” at the state level, winning Governor Miguel Alonso began his political career as an assistant to PRD Governor Ricardo Monreal, before serving as mayor of Zacatecas, also with the PRD. Monreal himself also switched parties after leaving the governor's office because of a split with his PRD successor Amalia García. He first left to the Worker's Party (PT), under whose banner his brother ran unsuccessfully for governor against Alonso. Indeed, Monreal's original run for governor was spurred by his decision to defect from the PRI to join the PRD when he failed to get the

112The PRD controlled the municipal government for one term, 2001 to 2004, during the second half of the state's first non-PRI governor, Ricardo Monreal of the PRD.
nomination. With the transition back the PRI rule at the state level (part of a national trend that culminated with the return of the PRI to the presidency of the Republic in 2012), the PRI regained control of the municipal government of Jalpa for the first time since 1995, arguably on the strength of Governor Alonso's coattails.

However, migrants also engage as civil society actors to support their communities of origin, and I have hypothesized that this engagement might strengthen local democracy through a number of mechanisms. The emergence of autonomous migrant civil society may have spill-over effects that lead to a thickening of civil society and civic engagement generally, while empowering migrant political actors that mobilized and represent new, formerly underrepresented constituencies. Migrant social and political actors have played a prominent role in Jalpa, and across the state.\textsuperscript{113} It is among the municipalities with the most robust migrant civil society engagement, led most prominently by Guadalupe “Lupe” Gómez (see Chapter 6). From 2002 to 2009 the community's migrants have sponsored more than 100 3x1 project, and migrant civil society was active supporting public projects under the state's 2x1 program in the 1990s, as well. In short, Jalpa is among the municipalities with the most engaged and active migrant civil society sectors, and Lupe Gómez has been the most active protagonist.

Gómez has long been a leader of migrant civil society groups in California and a prominent philanthropist in his home community. Though he led the Zacatecan Civic Front (FCZ)—an anti-PRI migrant-based group in Southern California—to support the gubernatorial candidacy of Ricardo Monreal against the PRI in 1998, he seeks to define himself as being autonomous of political parties (Gómez interview 2011). Gómez has been somewhat less engaged in municipal politics, though he was an active supporter of the failed mayoral candidacy of migrant businessman Rubén Tiscareño in 2010 (see Chapter

\textsuperscript{113}Indeed Zacatecas has been at the vanguard in Mexico (and, by extension, the world) in its efforts to institutionalize the relationship with migrant civil society, particularly to mobilize migrant collective remittances to support public works projects. It has also developed a unique political institution to ensure the representation of migrants in the state legislature. Specifically, one of the proportional representations seats allotted to each of the two parties winning the most legislative votes across the state (typically the PRI and the PRD) must be held by a migrant.
Similar in many ways to other prominent migrant leaders—though with a strong organizational base in migrant civil society—Gómez demonstrated his lack of party loyalty and a shared disaffection with Mexico's party system by first rejecting Monreal and the PRD, and now rejecting the PAN, after having been that party's candidate for a seat in the Federal Chamber of Deputies.114

The role of migrant civil society groups in Jalpa—including but certainly not limited to Gómez—has also had an important effect on the politics of the municipality. Specifically, the PAN controlled municipal governments there benefited immensely from the contributions sent by migrants for projects, and the state and federal funds that this mobilization leveraged. This is particularly noteworthy because of the fact that the municipal government was controlled by an opposition party (first in opposition to the PRI, then to the PRD) for 13 of its 15 years in office. This migrant civil society engagement, then, has arguably had a pluralizing impact on municipal political structure, by helping to channel resources for public infrastructure projects, including water system improvements, roads, the construction of an Autonomous University of Zacatecas campus, and improvements and equipment for primary and secondary schools. This civil society development, arguably driven by the neocorporatist relationship between the Zacatecas state government and the powerful federations of HTAs, has become highly institutionalized.

Migrant support for the PAN and the PRD at the state and local level in opposition to the PRI was an important factor in the political transitions. Over time, as the PRI was out of power for 15 years, the municipal government worked extensively with leaders like Lupe Gómez and migrant civil society groups to support infrastructure projects, promote migrant-funded business development, and secure educational scholarships. This mobilization of migrant resources to support sending submunicipal communities

114As discussed in Chapter 6, Gómez alleges that the state leadership of the PAN struck a deal with outgoing PRD Governor Amalia García to undercut Gómez' candidacy. The alleged motive on the side of the PAN was that had he won the legislative seat, Gómez would have been well positioned to be the gubernatorial candidate for the PAN in 2010 in the place of state-level party leaders (Gómez interview 2011).
shored up the power of PAN governments, but also likely promoted the thickening of a semi-autonomous migrant-based civil society.

The civil society and political mobilization of migrants at the state level through organizations like the FCZ, Zacatecas PRImero, and the various Zacatecas state federations might be classifiable as neocorporatist because of their tight relationships with governors and mayors and their effective control over the access of smaller, locally-based migrant civil society groups. However, Gómez and other migrant leaders active in Jalpa have the intention of remaining autonomous of powerful political actors, and their powerful social base in migrant-receiving communities in the US and sending-communities in Jalpa have helped them to achieve this to some extent. Now that there has been a transition back to PRI control of the mayor's office in Jalpa, and the governor's office in Zacatecas, it will be important to observe the extent to which migrant leaders and civil society groups manage to remain autonomous.

7.2. Jeréz: The Dream of a “Little California” in Zacatecas

The role of migrants in the politics of Jeréz, Zacatecas, particularly that of the millionaire return migrant Andrés Bermudez, “The Tomato King,” reflects many of the difficulties of an autonomous migrant political project. As described in Chapter 6, Bermudez came to power in his municipality of origin after becoming a millionaire tomato grower in California. He was recruited to run by PRD Governor Ricardo Monreal in 2000. Even though he won the most votes, he was denied the right to take office because he had not lived in Jeréz for the requisite period of time. Furthermore, he had ceased to be a Mexican citizen when he was naturalized as a US citizen (before Mexico allowed dual nationality), and had failed to request the restoration of his Mexican citizenship. Even though he was not allowed to become mayor, his PRD alternate became mayor, thus securing the transition from PRI control locally for the first time. Governor Monreal's support of Bermudez' candidacy, demonstrates how powerful state-level actors have tapped into migrant social energy and prestige to support their allies locally. In this case,
the result was to spur the first PRI loss in Jeréz. Bermúdez felt personally betrayed by Monreal, who promoted his candidacy, but did not support his right to take office. As a result of this betrayal, Bermúdez split with Monreal and the PRD and joined the PAN.

Three years later, Bermúdez ran again, and was elected mayor of Jeréz (see Bakker and Smith 2003; Smith and Bakker 2005, 2008). In both campaigns, and as mayor, The Tomato King—in some ways similar to El Tanao—promised to bring American ideas and practices to turn Jeréz into a small California (Juárez interview 2010). This discourse recalls the hypothesized mechanism through which migrant political actors can alter the political structures of their home towns by bringing back new attitudes, ideologies and behaviors from the United States (see Chapter 2). In the words of Autonomous University of Zacatecas researcher Dr. Miguel Moctezuma, however, “Andrés was more important for what he symbolized than for what he did” (cited in Cano 2009). Indeed, his candidacies and his larger than life populist style helped to open the debate in Zacatecas and nationally regarding the political rights of migrants, and the passage in Zacatecas of the “Migrant Law” (originally referred to the “Bermúdez Law”), which opened up the possibility for migrant candidacies for local office, while also establishing the legislative quota requiring that two seats be held by migrants in the state’s Chamber of Deputies.

Thus, Bermúdez entered politics having been mobilized from the top-down by the governor. Even though he did not become mayor on his first attempt, this campaign and his struggle for the right to be elected helped catapult him to prominence and made him a symbol of the migrant politician. Another noteworthy dynamic that this case reveals—common to the case of El Tanao in Uriangato—is how migrant politicians can serve the needs of home-country politicians. Particularly, during the 1990s and early 2000s as Mexico was becoming increasingly competitive politically, newly elected PRD and PAN governors were hard pressed to find good candidates to run for legislative seats and municipal government posts in rural places where virtually all elected politicians were from the PRI. In high-migration municipalities, successful migrants like Andrés Bermúdez appeared to be well suited for this. As theorized in Chapter 3, however, once catapulted to prominence with the help of state-level political
actors, they often became difficult to control by their original patrons, and may exacerbate tendencies toward personalistic politics and factionalism, which are particularly acute at the local level.

7.3. Tepetongo: You Can't Bring Los Angeles to Zacatecas

Tepetongo, which borders Jeréz, is unique among the sample municipalities as the only place where the PRI has never lost power. This case demonstrates that high levels of migration, and even noteworthy levels of migrant based organization activity and collective remittances, do not necessarily translate into migrant political influence or increased political competition. One of the most influential political leaders in the town, José Cupertino González Muro, spoke about the formation of one of the state's first migrant home town clubs, Club Deportivo Tepetongo in Baldwin Park, California (in Los Angeles). As mayor with the PRI in 1980, González Muro traveled to Baldwin Park to visit the club's leaders, who wanted to support the construction of a baseball stadium in the community. The club had held a fund raiser in Los Angeles, and González Muro wanted to investigate, and claims he observed corruption, and the stadium was never built. This ill-fated meeting between then-mayor González Muro and the leadership of Club Deportivo Tepetongo—particularly Miguel Flores—set the tone for migrant-government relations in Tepetongo for several successive years.

González Muro affirms that after his trip to meet with migrant leaders in Los Angeles in 1980, he stopped working with migrant clubs. One problem with migrant leaders in the US, as he views it, is that they want to have the same quality of services in Zacatecas as they enjoy in Los Angeles. He also disparaged the desire of some migrants to become candidates for office without living in the community.

115Interestingly, the dynamic can actually work in reverse. In Oaxaca, FIOB founder and migrant leader Arturo Pimentel supported local non-migrant leader Romualdo Juán Gutiérrez Cortes, first by helping to secure him a seat on the municipal council, and then by throwing the weight of the FIOB behind his candidacy for the local deputy seat in Juxtlahuaca. Thus catapulted to power, Romualdo secured sufficient support and state-level connections that allowed him to force Pimentel out (a decision, as it were, that may very well have been justified), thus taking control of the organization.
To gain a candidacy in the PRI, González Muro emphasizes, one is expected to have worked his way up within the municipal administration and as a party militant. You have to live in Tepetongo, not even Jeréz or Zacatecas, and one should not be someone who simply lives off his US pension. Miguel Flores, who has remained a fierce rival to González Muro and the local PRI since the incident surrounding the baseball stadium, has aspired to office himself, and supported another return migrant candidate, who ran and lost in 2003 (González Muro interview 2010). These opposition migrants—as well as opposition candidates generally—have been successfully kept from power by a relatively well organized and hierarchical PRI power structure.

Despite the strained relationship between González Muro—still one of the most influential members of the local PRI leadership (Esquivel interview 2010)—and organized migrants, in recent years PRI mayors have begun to cultivate these relationships. As González Muro noted, now that the government has developed programs like 3x1, the PRI municipal governments have taken advantage. 116 Mayor Cuatémoc de la Torre Flores (2007-2010), for example, traveled to the US 10 times during his three year term in office to help organize migrant clubs and propose numerous different projects for them to sponsor (de la Torre Flores interview 2010). Striking a different tone than González Muro, de la Torre Flores emphasizes the political importance of reaching out to migrants in the US. If a migrant in the US tells his parents to vote for a particular candidate or party, they will vote do it (de la Torre Flores interview 2010). Working on the relationship with migrants is overwhelmingly important, he says: “They are more influential than a citizen here” (de la Torre Flores interview 2010).

Hence, this case demonstrates that as long as migrant organizations and their leaders cooperate with the municipal authorities and do not challenge their political monopoly (or demand the same quality of services in Tepetongo as those available in the US), the authorities are happy to accept their philanthropic donations and promote their 3x1 projects. The other side of this coin, exemplified more by the fact that from 2002 through 2009 the migrants have sponsored 58 different projects through the 3x1 Program for Migrants.

116Indeed, from 2002 through 2009 the migrants have sponsored 58 different projects through the 3x1 Program for Migrants.
the attitude of Mayor de la Torre Flores, is that organizing migrants through oficialista channels can yield political benefits in the form of good will from influential migrants living in the US. In addition, mobilizing and leveraging migrant resources serves the immediate fiscal needs of mayors, and serves to generate good will in the high migration communities that benefit from the projects. This is particularly important for political actors, such as de la Torre Flores, who aspire to run for higher office and are interested in building a record of achievements for their platform (de la Torre Flores interview 2010).

Thus, this case exemplifies how a dominant political group can succeed at keeping potential opposition migrants from becoming politically empowered. The PRI in Tepetongo observes strict rules of succession to name candidates, is the principle employer in the municipality, and has been relatively successful at mobilizing migrant resources for public works projects, for which it can claim credit.117 This municipality is similar to Jeréz in many respects, and the ways in which it is dissimilar (such as being smaller and more rural) arguably make it a more rather than less likely place for migrant political actors to gain influence. This puzzling absence of successful migrant political actors in Tepetongo can be explained in part by the success of PRI governments in organizing migrant civil society to make collective contributions and by representing the interests of migrant-sending families and submunicipal communities, and by excluding those migrant groups and individuals who do not conform or that demand too much from the municipal government. Finally, the absence of state-level opposition or incumbent allies for migrants helps to explain their lack of success and the continuity of PRI control at the municipal level despite very high migration rates. Coupled with these factors, the resilience of the PRI can be explained by the local governments' ability to provide some level of representation to migrants and their families while maintaining a strong core of loyal supporters. On this point, Mayor de la Torre Flores explained the party's success in holding power without interruption to the continued loyalty of the

117In 2009, for example, one migrant club contributed a total of nearly $700,000 MXN ($52,000 USD) for projects in four different communities, leveraging the same amount each from the state and federal governments for these projects (SEDESOL 2009).
peasants to the PRI as the party that brought agrarian reform after the Mexican Revolution (de la Torre Flores interview 2010).

6. TOWARD A TYPOLOGICAL THEORY OF MIGRANT HOME TOWN IMPACT

In the previous sections, I focused on the within-case interactions and political processes that occurred in the 12 selected municipalities to demonstrate the unique dynamics of each municipal political system. In this section, I simplify the contextual detail discussed in the previous three sections and use the comparative method of difference to test the hypotheses outlined in section 3. As Table 7.1 shows, the outcome at the level of the municipal political system, as hypothesized, relates to the nature of migrant–non-migrant alliances and the combination of strategies chosen by the key actors in the model: migrants and caciques. The table also categorizes the cases by the state where they are located, and among the Oaxaca cases, by whether they are governed by internally determined customary law institutions (usos y costumbres) or the political party system used in the rest of the country.

Migrants in only three of the twelve municipalities studied had significant alliances with state-level opposition actors, all in Oaxaca. When migrants have state-level opposition alliances, they are both more likely to fight and (being stronger) and more likely to win. This is the case in two of these cases. The third case, Santiago Juxtlahuaca, may be the exception that proves the rule. Incumbent local politicians there worked through state-level institutions to mobilize and incorporate oficialista migrants, and opposition groups have failed to win power despite support by other migrant organizations. What this case suggests is the unsurprising fact that the impact depends on how the mobilization of migrant groups affects the net balance of power between incumbent and opposition actors.
Table 7.1. Typological Theory: Migrant Impact on Political Structure

Universe: High-Migration Municipalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>UC or Parties (a)</th>
<th>Migrant Alliance with State-Level Opposition</th>
<th>Migrant Alliance with State-Level Incumbents</th>
<th>Migrant Strategy</th>
<th>“Cacique” Strategy</th>
<th>Municipal Political Structure Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixtepec</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>UC</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>Conflict/Factionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tlacotepec</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>UC</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>Conflict/Factionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaz Ordaz</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>UC</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>Continuity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juxtlahuaca</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>conform/fight</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>Neocorporatism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silacayoapan</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>Conflict/Factionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huixtepec</td>
<td>Oax.</td>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>conform/fight</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>Neocorporatism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uriangato</td>
<td>Gto.</td>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>Neocorporatism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuriria</td>
<td>Gto.</td>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>Neocorporatism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salamanca</td>
<td>Gto.</td>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>Neocorporatism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jalpa</td>
<td>Zac.</td>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>conform</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerez</td>
<td>Zac.</td>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>Factionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tepetongo</td>
<td>Zac.</td>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>conform/fight</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>Continuity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Described in the text, UC, or usos y costumbres, municipalities are those governed by internally autonomous indigenous customary law institutions.

(b) In this case, migration rates are low and there are important bases of economic activity other than remittances, specifically an oil refinery.

In seven of the twelve cases studied, migrants had alliances with incumbent state government actors. Though the presence of such alliances make a conforming strategy for migrants more likely, the municipal political outcome varies based on how this variable interacts with others. Where these state-level alliances are present and when prevailing local authorities grant some additional representation to migrants by incorporating them into the dominant system, the outcome is neocorporatism. When prevailing authorities choose to accept whatever contributions migrants make without granting corresponding rights, the outcome is continuity.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{118}It is important to note, that in the some of the municipal cases, migrant groups are allied with opposition and incumbent state actors. In others, migrants have no noteworthy state-level alliances. In these cases, the outcome depends on the relative impact of different migrant groups on incumbent and oppositional actors.
Where migrants lack strong state-level political allies—whether oppositional or incumbent—the outcome has to do with the interaction of migrant and *cacique* strategies. Though lacking state-level alliances, migrants in places like San Juan Mixtepec managed to mobilize local, submunicipal allies, in addition to allies in California, to fight and win municipal power. As the discussion of this case demonstrated, however, this local coalition proved unstable, and the absence of oppositional state-level allies to counterbalance state-government enemies, the new migrant-based coalition was vulnerable to repression and cooptation. In Diaz Ordaz, Oaxaca and Tepetongo, Zacatecas, the two other cases where migrants lacked strong opposition or incumbent state-level allies, the key difference is that migrant actors as a whole were both less powerful and less combative.\(^{119}\) As a result, municipal authorities in these cases managed to incorporate migrants into the prevailing political structure to a limited degree in order to maintain a degree of continuity, despite high levels of migration.

Examining the different combinations of migrant and *cacique* strategies also helps to explain different municipal-level outcomes. When both conform, the expectation is that either continuity or neocorporatism prevails. The analysis of the cases shows that this combination of strategies results in a neocorporatist equilibrium. Although migrants in these cases manage to gain representation and are incorporated into the political system of their home municipalities, it is not fully democratizing because migrants do not exercise the autonomy to work from outside of official channels.

When migrants demand rights and representation on their own terms and the prevailing actors accept these demands, the predicted outcome is pluralism, and a new democratic equilibrium, however none of the cases studied follow this path. I do classify the outcome in Jalpa, Zacatecas as “pluralism,” however Jalpa migrants have generally conformed in recent years. The distinction here is the presence of a robust migrant civil society. As such, migrant organizations have retained a sufficient degree of

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\(^{119}\) This behavioral pattern is predicted in the game theoretic model in Chapter 3, which expects actors to be more likely to fight when they are stronger, and accordingly, more likely to win.
autonomy vis à vis both the state and municipal governments in order to have a pluralizing impact on political structure.

When both actors choose to fight, the stronger wins. As noted above, when a fighting migrant group has state-level allies, has a strong autonomous organizational base, or is able to mobilize previously disenfranchised local actors, it will be stronger and its expected likelihood of victory increases. However, even if strong, oppositional migrants choose to fight the status quo and win, when the once dominant power groups (and the population sectors that still support them) reject the legitimacy of the new migrant bosses, the result tends to be factionalism and political conflict. Consistent with hypothesis 1, when both actors fight, the outcome is factionalistic competition.

However, this outcome arose through a different process in the Oaxaca cases than in the Guanajuato and Zacatecas cases. Similar to Oaxaca cases like Tlacotepec and Mixtepec, migrant engagement in municipal politics in Uriangato, Guanajuato and Jerez, Zacatecas had the unexpected consequence of fragmenting municipal political systems. To be sure, when transitioning from a hegemonic party system like PRI-dominated Mexico, some fragmentation is a necessary condition for democratization. Nevertheless, despite markedly different local contexts, these cases exemplify one of the great challenges of consolidating democracy at the local level in Mexico: the institutionalization of political competition in the face of powerful tendencies toward factionalism and personalistic politics. A basic distinction between the Oaxaca cases and the others is that factionalistic competition has been coupled with deep political and social conflict. This is best explained by the authoritarian political system at the state level in Oaxaca, where the possibility of pluralistic competition has been choked off from the top. A distinct explanation, following from the comparative case study findings, is that a “fight” strategy by migrants is more likely to end in conflict in the absence of an alliance with state-level incumbents.

Finally, several of the cases demonstrate one of the great risks to home-country politicians who mobilize independent migrant candidates or seek to benefit from the resources provided by organized migrant civil society. This top-down mobilization can serve immediate needs of these politicians, such as
to cultivate an appearance as a friend of the migrant. However, once mobilized and thus empowered, migrant politicians can easily shift allegiances if it suits them only to become the rivals of their original patrons.

7. CONCLUSION

The goal of this final empirical chapter of the dissertation was to assess the impact of migrant engagement on the political systems of their municipalities of origin. I asked not only whether migrant engagement made municipal politics more competitive, but also whether this increased competition was effectively institutionalized in local political systems. Complementing the analysis from earlier chapters, which sought to explain variation in migrant civil society engagement and collective remittances and the emergence of migrant political actors, this chapter has focused on how these and other factors combine to alter the structure of politics in sending-municipalities.

The within- and between-case analysis presented here shows that the engagement of migrant actors in municipal politics leads to increased political competition at the municipal level in six of the cases studied. In the other six cases, municipal authorities were able to incorporate migrant social actors into the prevailing political system to establish a neocorporatist equilibrium, or to effectively block migrant actors from significant political influence of any kind. The comparative analysis suggests that this variation in municipal political system-outcomes is explained by the nature of the interactions and alliances between migrant and home-country political actors.

Increased competition (including pluralism, factionalistic competition, and conflict) occurs when migrants strengthen local opposition groups or mobilize disenfranchised submunicipal communities, or
when they are mobilized by state-level actors to challenge an entrenched local opposition. Perhaps due to the robustness of personalistic politics and weak institutions at the municipal level, when migrant engagement does increase political competition locally, it tends to result in factionalism, fragmentation, and sometimes conflict as opposed to a new pluralistic democratic equilibrium. In cases where migrants enter the political fray through more oficialista channels (e.g., with the support of the Governor), the pluralizing impact does not come about because new social forces (i.e., migrants, the poor, peasants, etc.) gain representation, but as a result of weakly institutionalized party structures and the persistent personalism of municipal politics. In the other half of the cases, however, prevailing local political groups have been more or less successful in incorporating migrants into their governing coalitions—and drawing upon migrant social and political energy to increase their own legitimacy—or to extract resources from migrants without having to provide corresponding benefits of representation.

Taken together, these cases demonstrate that migrants are not necessarily agents of democratization and pluralism in their home municipalities. Furthermore, when migrant engagement does increase competition, municipal politics often devolves into conflict and factionalism. Cases where migrants do come to enjoy a degree of recognition and representation in local political systems are most typically examples of neocorporatist incorporation, in which representation is conditional on support for the dominant local groups. Thus, noteworthy levels of social capital, status, and wealth, help migrant political actors to gain local influence, but it proves very difficult for them to bring fundamental changes to the way politics are done back home.

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120The latter typically occurs when non-PRI state governors mobilized migrants to challenge municipal PRI strongholds.
The most recent wave of Mexican migration to the United States is at its crest. Despite the fact that this wave may have broken and the high tide of Mexico-US migration may be receding, the economic, social, cultural, and political ties that have been forged will remain, and the futures of the two countries are as intertwined as they ever were. That is, although net migration from Mexico has shrunk to zero (Passel, D’Vera Cohn, and Ana 2012), the stock of Mexican born migrants and children of Mexican parents living in the United States will continue to grow, albeit perhaps at a slower rate, for the foreseeable future.

With respect to the subject of this dissertation, it is evident that migrants who currently live in the United States or have returned to Mexico after spending many years abroad have become an important social and political constituency in the Mexican polity. Although only a tiny share of the Mexican diaspora community exercised its right to vote in the presidential elections of 2006 and 2012, this dissertation has shown that at the subnational level, migrants are engaging socially and politically in their communities of origin, and continue to do so—perhaps even more intensely—after having spent many years living abroad.

The political engagement of migrants in their home towns can result in a range of outcomes at the level of municipal political systems, though these are not necessarily democratizing. This is the central finding of this dissertation, and explaining what causes the variations in migrant impact has been the principle empirical task. This finding challenges the arguments of scholars, policy makers, and migrant politicians themselves, who claim that through contact with the US political system and culture, migrants develop more democratic attitudes and behavior, and when they engage politically back home, they bring democracy with them. I agree that migration experience powerfully shapes the political identities and
behaviors of migrant political actors. However, the evidence demonstrates that this experience is by no means monolithic. What is more, I argue that even when the intentions of migrant political actors are to open up the political systems of their home towns, the impacts of their efforts to bring change to their home towns at the level of the municipal political system depend on a range of intervening factors, most importantly the response of already dominant political actors at the state and local levels.

This dissertation has proposed a framework for analyzing the importance of these factors and assessing the impact that migration has on the political dynamics of sending municipalities. I distinguish four general mechanisms through which migrants can impact the politics of their home towns, and identify the ways in which the impact at the level of the municipal political systems can either enhance or weaken local democracy. I focused on three empirical questions. First, why do migrants from some places organize in the US to engage collectively in the public life of their hometowns, while those from many other places do not? Though it is not surprisingly an important determinant, having a high migration rate is not sufficient to explain why migrants from some places remain highly engaged in the public life of their communities, municipalities, and states of origin, while others do not. Second, I ask if migrants that do become influential political actors back home differ from non-migrant political actors in important ways. Particularly, are the bases of social and political power of migrant politicians qualitatively different from those of non-migrant politicians? In sum, does the political empowerment of migrants change the face of local political power in substantively important ways, or is their newly gained social and economic status merely coopted by prevailing elite groups? Finally, the culminating question of the dissertation, asks if migrant hometown engagement pluralizes local political systems, deepens the institutionalization of political competition and otherwise strengthens democracy at the subnational level?

In this concluding chapter, I begin by revisiting the answers I gave to these three questions. Second, I synthesize these findings within the integrated framework for analysis developed in chapters 2 and 3 and interpret the results in the context of Mexican politics more generally. Third, I identify additional research questions and hypotheses to be tested in future research.
and discuss how the theoretical framework developed here might be usefully extended to analyze subnational political change in different contexts and that is driven by different socioeconomic phenomena other than migration.

1. WHERE MIGRANTS ENGAGE, HOW THEY'RE DIFFERENT, AND WHY IT MATTERS

I now revisit my answers to the core empirical questions of this dissertation. Why do migrants engage in the public life of their communities of origin? What explains the success of migrant politicians and how are they different from their non-migrant counterparts? What difference does migrant hometown engagement and power make at the level of municipal political systems?

1.1. Migrant Collective Remittances through the 3x1 Program

Chapter 4 focused empirically on the considerably more narrow practice of migrant collective remittances through the Mexican Federal Government's 3x1 Program for Migrants. My principal goal in analyzing this type of migrant civil society activity was to better understand the general patterns of migrant hometown engagement through this prepolitical and transborder channel. By identifying the state- and municipal-level factors that account for the number and value of 3x1 projects across Mexican municipalities, this chapter provides useful descriptive data about the economic, social and political characteristics of the municipalities that are benefiting from migrant collective remittances, and the federal, state, and municipal funds that these leverage. Of particular importance, the analysis identifies the factors that explain who benefits from the program other than merely having high levels of current migration.

Several specific findings are particularly relevant to the broader argument of the dissertation. The multivariate analysis showed that migrant collective remittances through the 3x1 program were facilitated
where migrant civil society was more deeply institutionalized at the state level and in places that, in addition to having high present levels of migration, had longer histories as migrant sending places. Although migrant hometown engagement through the channel of transborder civil society is not explicitly political, the analysis demonstrated that political factors are clearly at play. Specifically, 3x1 projects have disproportionately benefited states and municipalities where the PAN had a stronger presence between 2002 and 2008. Bivariate analysis showed that both PAN and PRD strongholds were more likely to benefit from the program, and PRI strongholds were less likely to benefit. However, controlling for migration levels and other intervening variables demonstrates that it is the PAN strongholds that are truly benefiting disproportionately from migrant collective remittances and from the 3x1 program more generally.

The evidence examined does not make it possible to determine whether the PAN has been unfairly benefiting from the program due to the fact that that party controlled the presidency during the period studied, or if other unmeasured factors account for these results. Furthermore, it might be the case that PAN leadership has simply been more focused on mobilizing migrant civil society groups and otherwise institutionalizing the state-migrant relationship than have the PRI or the PRD.\(^{121}\) The cultivation of migrants as organized civil society groups by political parties—particularly the PAN—might be seen as positive to the extent that this improves the quality of representation for this emerging constituency. Nevertheless, this is a double edged sword, and there is a fine line between democracy-enhancing improvements of political representation, and the politicization of social programs by politicians to distribute patronage to their supporters.

Considering the theoretical framework of the dissertation, these results support the argument that migrant engagement through the 3x1 program has benefited states and municipalities in the president's party. Although this is an important finding, it tells us little about the impact of migrant actors on the

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\(^{121}\)It is clear that PRD mayors and governors have also been quite active at cultivating relationships with their migrant communities abroad. However, as the multivariate analysis suggests, these municipalities, are actually less likely to benefit from the program when taking migration rates and other factors into consideration.
competitiveness of local political systems or the political success of migrants themselves. Furthermore, the focus on migrant engagement through the 3x1 program likely means that the subset of migrant civil society and collective remittance activity is biased in the direction of more oficialista migrants. Thus, based on this analysis we should not conclude that all migrants who organize to engage financially or otherwise in their municipalities of origin do so through the oficialista pathway.

1.2. The Pathways to Power of Migrant Political Actors

Chapters 5 and 6 focused directly on the role of migrants as political actors in their home communities and municipalities. In Chapter 5 I used bivariate and multivariate statistical methods to analyze migrant mayors in the state of Oaxaca and compare them to their non-migrant counterparts. In Chapter 6 I used comparative qualitative methods to identify and explain the different pathways to power taken by migrant political actors.

1.2.1. Comparing Migrant and non-Migrant Mayors in Oaxaca

My analysis of the backgrounds of migrant mayors in Oaxaca showed migrant mayors to be less educated and more likely to work in non-professional sectors of the economy than their non-migrant counterparts. I interpret this relationship to mean that migration experience can serve as a pathway to power for non-elite individuals whose access to positions of institutional power might otherwise be blocked. I argue that this result demonstrates a dimension on which migration can enhance democracy in sending communities and improve the descriptive representation of non-elite groups, not only of migrants themselves.

At the same time, however, some of the findings presented in this chapter are less consistent with the argument that migrants democratize their home towns. First, tests of the hypothesis that migrants democratize their home towns because they are more likely to ally with opposition political groups were rejected, as migrant mayors were no less likely to be members of the governing PRI than the opposition. Second, migrants are surprisingly less likely to be mayors in municipalities with hometown associations
and where migrants have been extended voting rights. Coupled with the other findings of this dissertation, I interpret this to mean that non-migrant political actors are just as successful in mobilizing migrant civil society groups as are migrant political actors. Specifically, I argue that the political incorporation of migrants through the protection of some voting rights—consistent with Stinchcombe's theory (1968, 173-180)—serves to depoliticize and de-radicalize migrants.

1.2.2. Comparing Migrant Political Actors to Each Other in Oaxaca and Beyond

Chapter 6 used comparative qualitative methods to compare the pathways to power of different migrant political actors, and to offer explanations that account for these differences. First, I identified a typology of “migrant modes of engagement,” showing that migrants engage politically either through oficalista or oppositional channels and either as “free-wheeling independents” or “group agents” (Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008). Next, I traced the process through which 10 migrant actors in Oaxaca, Guanajuato and Zacatecas became politically engaged in their communities of origin. The principal goal of this chapter was to explain why some migrant actors become engaged back home through oficalista channels, while others enter the political fray in opposition to dominant powers and why some were “free-wheeling independents” while others engaged as “group agents.”

In the chapter I argue that migrants' mode of home community engagement can be explained in part by their political identities. The biographical data gathered suggests that the most influential migrant political actors from Oaxaca have entered the fray in opposition to dominant powers back home. In contrast, the migrants who have been most influential in Guanajuato and Zacatecas have tended to engage through oficalista channels. I argue that this variation can be explained in part by the impacts of “transnationalism from above”—that is, the engagement of state-level government actors with migrant civil society groups based in the US, particularly through the 3x1 Program for Migrants. Migrants from PAN and PRD states are thus more oficalista because state-level actors in those states have worked to institutionalize the state-migrant relationship. In addition, these findings also suggest that in authoritarian
subnational bastions like Oaxaca where organized migrants are excluded from effective political influence they are more likely to engage through oppositional channels. I find that this tendency is reinforced by the fact that the most influential migrant organizations and their leaders developed radical political identities and practices due to their experiences at the bottom of the international labor market—particularly in industrialized agriculture in northern Mexico and California.

Those migrants who engaged as “free-wheeling independents” rather than “group agents” were found to initially rely on the support of powerful external actors, such as the governors of Guanajuato and Zacatecas, in order to gain a foothold into local politics. What is particularly noteworthy in these cases is that PAN and PRD politicians mobilized charismatic migrant political actors to challenge the PRI in rural municipalities where that party continued to dominate despite transitions at the state level.

On its face, the argument here that Oaxaca's authoritarian political system explains the tendency toward radical opposition of migrant actors from this state seems to contradict the finding from Chapter 5 that migrant mayors were no more likely to be from the political opposition than non-migrants, and that non-migrant politicians seemed to be even more successful where migrants had been incorporated politically—as indicated by protection of some voting rights after leaving. These apparently divergent results might be explained, first, by the fact that the two chapters have different universes of analysis. That is, Chapter 5 focuses on mayors in all municipalities in Oaxaca, and Chapter 6 focuses on municipalities with particularly influential migrant political actors and groups. Whereas the former compares migrant mayors to non-migrant mayors, the latter compares particularly influential migrant political actors (not only mayors) to each other. Even still, I recognize that the analysis in Chapter 6 might miss some particularly influential and powerful oficialista migrant political actors in Oaxaca. Similarly, there may be cases of oppositional migrant political actors in Guanajuato and Zacatecas—though they are unknown to the author.
1.3. Migrant Impact on Local Political Systems

In Chapter 7 I explored the final question of the dissertation: How do migrants affect the political systems of their municipalities of origin? In this final empirical chapter, I holistically considered how migrant political actors interact with and alter sending-community political systems. Specifically, I examined how the dominant political actors in a dozen high migration municipalities have dealt with the challenges and political opportunities presented by the emergence of migrants as an organized social—and potentially political—group.

Oppositional migrants who seek political change back home are often met with resistance from prevailing political actors, and when they are, the result is factionalism and political or social conflict. In cases where prevailing authorities incorporate migrants, and seek to represent their interests, the outcome is neocorporatist incorporation, which shores up the status quo. Over time, however, these interactive dynamics can evolve, and migrants who are at first incorporated by dominant powers through oficialista channels can develop autonomous or distinct bases of power. Similarly, autonomous migrant political and social leaders can be co-opted by prevailing authorities.

The comparative qualitative analysis showed that migrant engagement resulted in some form of increased political competition in six of the twelve municipalities studied. In the remaining six municipalities, dominant political actors incorporated migrant actors into the prevailing system, establishing a new neocorporatist equilibrium, or were able to block the influence of migrant actors despite high levels of migration. This variation can be explained by the types of interactions and alliances that develop between migrant and home-country political actors.

Migrant engagement via oppositional channels increases political competition. This can occur either when migrants form alliances with opposition political parties and groups or when autonomous migrants mobilize disenfranchised groups (such as residents of submunicipal communities) to challenge the prevailing political equilibrium. Although competition is a necessary condition for democracy, the case study analysis demonstrates how it is not a sufficient condition. Perhaps due to the robustness of personalism in Mexican politics, and the weakness of local institutions, I find that all but one of the cases
where migrants became a political opposition or shored up an already existent political opposition, the result is factionalism at best and deep and violent social conflict at worst.

Overall, the analysis shows that migrants are not always agents of democratization when they engage in the political life of their home municipalities. When migrants do engage in opposition to powerful groups back home, the cases examined suggest that the consequences at the level of the municipal political system are often increased conflict of factionalism. When migrants as a social group are incorporated such that they secure some level of recognition and representation in local political systems, the typical result may be the establishment of a new neocorporatist equilibrium in which the representation enjoyed is conditioned on their support for the dominant local groups. In sum, then, the growing economic and social importance of migration in some municipalities does help migrant political actors to gain influence back home. However, in the cases examined, it seems to have proven much more difficult for this influence to translate into fundamental, democratizing changes to the political systems of their home municipalities.

2. SYNTHESIS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this section, I attempt to synthesize the central empirical finding summarized above and consider the implications of the argument within the broader context of Mexican political development. Based on the qualitative evidence examined in chapters 6 and 7, I found that the modal response of the Oaxaca state and local governments to the emergence of migrant actors as rights- and influence-demanding political subjects has been exclusion and repression. I argue that this exclusion, on the one hand, and the adversarial orientation of organized migrants, on the other, are explained by the absence of institutionalized channels through which migrants—and other new social actors—might gain authentic representation. That is, in a context of weak institutions and the personalistic exercise of power, the
empowerment of a new social group results in destabilizing conflict, rather than consolidated democracy. In high-migration states like Guanajuato and Zacatecas, the PRD and PAN leadership have engaged with organized migrants much more, and sought to incorporate them into state and local political systems from-the-top. Some of the cases examined document the way in which migrant candidates for office have been recruited by state-level oficialista actors. In addition, the state level policies to mobilize migrant resources and develop ties with diaspora communities help explain the oficialista orientation of these migrants.

I also argue that the way in which migrants engage with political actors in their home states and municipalities is influenced by biographical factors that stem from their experiences as migrants. As argued in Chapter 6, the labor market experiences of migrants from Oaxaca, and their more intense experiences of exploitation as indigenous migrants—both within Mexico and in the United States—help to account for their greater tendency to oppose the dominant powers in their state and communities, particularly the PRI and regional caciques. The migration experiences of the Guanajuatan and Zacatecan migrant leaders studied differ dramatically, as these migrants were far more likely to be professionals, managers or business owners in the US.

I find in Chapter 4 that political factors help to explain the distribution of 3x1 projects. The bivariate analyses in that chapter showed that both PAN and PRD states and municipalities were considerably more likely to benefit from 3x1 projects, and PRI states and municipalities were much less likely to benefit. However, the multivariate analyses reveal that, when holding key intervening factors constant (particularly those related to migration intensity), PAN states and municipalities have been disproportionately benefiting from the program. This is consistent with the finding from Chapter 6 that Oaxaca (a PRI state) migrants tend to engage back home through the opposition channel, and Guanajuato (PAN) and Zacatecas (PRD) migrants engaged through oficialista channels. The home community engagement of organized migrants through the 3x1 program can be interpreted as an indicator of incorporation and the institutionalization of the migrant-state relationship, reinforcing the argument that the transnationalism-from-above prevalent in PAN and PRD states explains the oficialista orientation of
migrants in those states. More specifically, migrants seem to engage through *oficialista* channels in the PAN and PRD states because they were asked.

With respect to the fundamental question of this dissertation as to the impact of migrant political engagement on the quality of democracy back home, this pattern might be interpreted in an optimistic or pessimistic light. The optimistic interpretation is that migrants are pressing for and finding increased representation in more democratic places—namely, states where the PRI has lost and other parties hold power—and that this engagement has helped to reinforce the quality of democratic institutions and practices. This includes increased political competition at the local level (e.g., the displacement of the PRI establishment by PAN and PRD mayors supported by copartisans in the governor's office), the thickening of migrant civil society and civil society more generally, and the diffusion of more democratic attitudes and behaviors learned as migrants in the United States. The case study and quantitative research has provided examples where different combinations of these mechanisms were at play.

Although some of the evidence supports this interpretation, there is another half to the story. A more realistic (if not pessimistic) interpretation of these results is that the greater social and political incorporation of migrants in non-PRI states and municipalities is not a sign of democratization, but rather an indication that the PAN (and to a lesser extent the PRD) has succeeded in capturing the “migrant sector” in a new iteration of the old corporatist mode of incorporation that prevailed under the hegemonic-party system of the PRI in post-Revolutionary Mexico. Even though PRD states and municipalities were more likely to benefit from the 3x1 program, controlling for migration levels and other factors, shows that they are actually less likely to benefit from the program than we would expect. This suggests that the PAN as the party of the federal government during the period studied has used its connections with organized migrants to benefit its copartisans.

The big story then is not one of democratization. Rather, given the advent of increased political competition in Mexico—something that coincided with a new wave of out migration and an increase in the organization of migrant civil society groups—the PAN and to a lesser extent the PRD has succeeded in mobilizing migrant social and political energy in an updated version of the traditional corporatist mode
of interest aggregation and articulation perfected by the PRI long ago. Indeed, the technocratic wing of
the PRI itself, under President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, laid the groundwork to institutionalize the
relationship between the federal government and the diaspora through the Program for Mexican
Communities Abroad (Programa para las Comunidades Mexicanas en el Extranjero, or PCME) in 1990
(Orozco 2010). State-level outreach to migrants was pioneered by certain entrepreneurial PRI governors,
most prominently Governor Genaro Borrego of Zacatecas, who established a tight relationship with
organized migrants in the US in the 1980s, and Governor Romo in the 1990s (Martínez Gómez 2000).
The latter extended Governor Borrego's earlier efforts by working with the federal government and the
PCME to pilot the 2x1 program, in which migrant collective remittances were matched by state and
federal funds.

These federal and state efforts to institutionalize the relationship with migrants in the US were
arguably motivated by the need for the Salinas Administration to reestablish popular legitimacy in the
wake of what was widely seen as a fraudulent election in 1988. Indeed, the second place candidate,
Cuatémoc Cárdenas of the National Democratic Front (Frente Democrático Nacional, FDN)—which later
became the PRD—campaigned in the United States, promising migrants the right to vote from abroad and
dual nationality (FitzGerald 2009, 56). The protests of the migrant community at Mexican consular
offices in the US against what they (and many in Mexico) viewed as electoral fraud, and more broadly,
the surprising increase in political competition, motivated the PRI and President Salinas to reach out to
the migrant community and find ways to represent their interests, or at least limit the extent to which they
strengthened the political opposition, (Alarcón 2006, 159). Thus, just as the institutionalization of the
Mexican Revolution consisted in the corporatist incorporation of peasants, labor, and the popular sectors
through oficialista mass organizations,122 there was a need to incorporate migrants into the political
system as an emergent sector to limit the extent to which their organization might undermine the power of
the governing party (see Meyer 1992).

122These mass organizations are, respectively, the National Peasants' Confederation (CNC), the Confederation of
Mexican Workers (CTM), and the National Confederation of Popular Organizations (CNOP).
When the PRI finally lost control of the presidency with the victory of the PAN, President Vicente Fox Quesada pushed the federal government's policy of engagement with migrants much further by replacing the PCME with the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (Instituto de Mexicanos en el Exterior, IME) and the establishment of the 3x1 Program for Migrants at the federal level. The focus of his presidency on institutionalizing the migrant-state relationship was matched by a rhetorical shift, in which he famously declared the migrant to be a hero—a potential savior and modernizer of the homeland.

If one defines democracy and democratization in Mexico as anything that weakens the grip of the PRI, then the preponderance of evidence examined here from multiple sources of data and at different levels of government, suggests that the empowerment of migrants, their representation as a new social group, and their success as politicians, strengthens democratic competition by strengthening the non-PRI parties. However, a more careful consideration of the political context in the post-2000 era leads to considerably less optimistic conclusions. Specifically, as discussed in the introduction of this dissertation, the advent of political competition and increased pluralism in Mexico has been characterized, among other things, by a weakening of presidential power and a re-concentration of power in the hands of the governors. In this context, the fact that organized and engaged migrants are incorporated in opposition to the PRI, simply means that this emergent group is more likely to find representation and more likely to sympathize with the historical opposition parties.

This interpretation of the mode of migrant incorporation might be fruitfully considered in conjunction with the findings of Richard Snyder (2001) in his study of neoliberal economic reforms in the coffee sector. This innovative study found that, in the wake of the neoliberal reforms that removed regulation of the coffee industry and eliminated the state owned coffee monopoly INMECAFE, coffee producing states went through re-regulation processes through which new systems were established. That is, neoliberal reforms do not put an end to regulation; rather, they open the way to reregulation and the emergence of subnational institutions to fill the vacuum left by deregulation at the federal level.

In a similar vein, the decline of PRI-dominance in Mexico has meant the elimination of the old corporatist and clientelistic system of political organization and social representation. In the wake of this
system, however, new political actors—particularly at the state level—have gained positions of power
and in many cases established systems of representation. However, these systems seem to have fallen
short of being pluralistic “open access” systems (North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009). In this project I have
focused on how organized migrant social and political actors have been incorporated into the political
systems of their home communities after leaving.

So as to end on a more optimistic note, I will conclude this section by pointing to some of the
more positive findings from my research. Despite the fact that migrant political empowerment does not
seem to bring robust democracy to sending municipalities, the results from Chapter 5 show that whether
officialista or oppositional, democratizing or autocratic, institutionalizing or conflict-generating, migrant
political actors tend to represent popular, non-elite sectors. The qualitative evidence focusing on migrant
political actors in Guanajuato and Zacatecas is consistent with this result, suggesting that it might hold
beyond Oaxaca. Thus, migration experience may help non-elite individuals to gain access to positions of
power, which is a clear step toward democratizing migrant-sending communities. The substantive
importance of the improved descriptive representation of the popular classes, however, is a separate
question, and much of the evidence examined in this dissertation should lead us to be considerably more
skepticical, though further research is needed.

3. FUTURE RESEARCH AND EXTENSIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

In this final section, I discuss several concrete avenues for future research to answer questions
and test hypotheses suggested by this dissertation and propose ways in which the theoretical framework
developed here might be fruitfully extended to analyze continuity and change in subnational political
systems in different contexts. My research leaves several important questions unanswered, particularly
with respect to the substantive importance of migrant empowerment to political systems, the quality of
democracy, and social equality.

Additional research is needed to better understand the impact of migration on municipal political
systems. The qualitative analysis in Chapter 7 sheds important light on this question, but is somewhat
limited in its scope. Accordingly, a future project will use quantitative methods to identify how migration
and migrant political power correlates with indicators of political competition and political conflict in
Oaxaca. This analysis—originally planned as part of this dissertation—would make use of the municipal-
level survey data analyzed in Chapter 5 to test whether the political power of migrant mayors helps to
account for the likelihood that a municipality supported or opposed the opposition candidate in the
watershed 2010 gubernatorial elections—the first in 81 years in which a party other than the PRI won.

Although I know of no systematic database of the migration experience of mayors across Mexico, future
research could test the relationship between migration, remittances, 3x1 project participation and other
indicators of migrant engagement and the competitiveness of municipal politics, as well as other
indicators of local democracy.

A related research question not touched on in this dissertation is whether migration—which for
many years has meant the absence of large numbers of men from sending communities—results in the
political empowerment of women and improved descriptive representation. The theoretical proposition
here is that, when women are left behind (whether due to war, migration, or other phenomena) new
opportunities for participation in the public sphere are opened up.

Another fruitful area of research suggested by this analysis would seek to descriptively identify
the extent to which migrant civil society development spurred by the 3x1 program and by the
institutionalization of the state-migrant relationship more generally, functions to thicken civil society in
sending communities, whether it is migrant-based or not. Indeed, the existence of a robust and
autonomous civil society is understood to be an essential ingredient for consolidated democracy. The
democratizing and pluralizing impact of civil society is particularly likely when groups are autonomous,
rather than corporatist. Furthermore, insofar as the home community “mirror organizations” responsible
for monitoring 3x1 project implementation are robust, they may come to not only strengthen the quality of project administration and increase accountability (Burgess 2010, 2012), but of local governance more generally. Insofar as organized migrants only ensure accountability and good governance when they or their family members have contributed funds, the democratizing spill-over effect of the 3x1 program will be limited. If, however, the process of monitoring 3x1 project implementation spills over into civil society more generally, and facilitates practices of civil engagement and local government oversight, there may be significant democratizing effects associated with migrant civil society emergence.

The analysis in several of the chapters here suggests that the relationship between submunicipal communities and municipal seats may be of particular importance to the quality of democracy, the equity of public expenditure distribution, and the strength of migrant-led opposition movements. To that end, research focusing systematically on the role of submunicipal dynamics in explaining continuity and change in municipal political systems is an important area for future research (see Fox 2007b). Specifically, research might analyze what explains the submunicipal distribution of 3x1 projects. As the analysis in Chapter 4 showed that municipalities were more likely to benefit from the program when the mayors were copartisans with the governor, future research could test whether submunicipal communities that politically support the mayor are more likely to benefit.

In addition to these proposed expansions of the present study to answer related questions and to answer the same questions using different methods, the theoretical and empirical problems addressed in this dissertation suggest two fruitful avenues for future research. First, the impact of migration and migrant political actors, and the state and local level responses of prevailing government actors to them, is expected to vary considerably across countries. As such, there is a need for more research on migrant political impacts in different national contexts. Although the Mexico–US dyad is the most highly traveled in the world, India and China both send more migrants (and receive more remittances) and countries like Honduras and El Salvador are far more economically dependent on migration than is Mexico, suggesting that the political impacts should be even more intense there. Furthermore, such a cross-national comparison would make it possible to examine the different ways in which national-states
institutionalize their relationships with migrants and how this explains differences in the nature of migrant impacts on the political systems of their communities, states and countries of origin. Some scholars have begun to explore similar questions in different national contexts and in comparative perspective (e.g., Burgess 2012; Iskander 2010), but this remains an incipient research agenda, particularly looking beyond Mexico.

Second, the theory developed in this project might be further tested by expanding the geographical and conceptual scope of the analysis. By expanding the geographical scope to include additional countries and/or additional states in Mexico, it will be possible to arrive at more refined contingent generalizations about the political impacts of migration. Expanding the conceptual scope to evaluate the political impacts of drastic socioeconomic changes other than mass migration would provide a powerful framework within which to analyze subnational processes of democratization and political transition in a variety of contexts and driven by a range of factors.

This dissertation began with the observation in the migration-dependent Oaxaca municipality of San Juan Mixtepec that a group of migrants had returned home with skills and financial resources accumulated as migrants in northern Mexico and California to lead a municipal political transition. The success of these organized migrants—and their opposition to the long-dominant PRI seemed at first to be cause for great optimism about the democratizing promise of migrant political engagement. Following the recent history of Mixtepec, and examining this set of questions in a much broader set of cases across Mexico has led me to a much more measured, if not pessimistic set of conclusions. This dissertation formalized a series of theoretical models and developed an analytic framework so as to systematically study the concrete processes through which migrants engage in politics at home from abroad, and how their experiences while abroad change their behavior when they return home.
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