Case Studies

Clientelism and Citizenship

The Limits of Democratic Reform in Sucre, Colombia

by
Cristina Escobar

Political reality in Latin America raises important questions about the prerequisites for democratic citizenship. Popular movements often fail to take advantage of institutional openings and encounter obstacles in transforming their mobilizing power into institutional political power. An analysis of political participation in the Colombian department of Sucre shows that the clientelism that is so widespread in Latin American democracies inhibits the potential power of organized popular groups under new political rules and frustrates the promise of institutional change. First, a precarious economic situation forces important sectors of the population to value the immediate benefits of exchanging their votes over the more long-term and abstract benefits of political representation. Second, the long history of these political practices has created informal institutions based on networks of unequal exchange and has prevented the development of local participatory institutions that could serve as the basis of democratic citizenship. Third, politicians and their political machines have displayed a much greater ability to adapt to changes in political rules and institutions than the proponents of institutional political reforms generally anticipated.

Colombia is an interesting place to examine clientelism and democratic citizenship because, in contrast to the new democracies, which in many cases face economic crisis or must overcome the legacies of previous authoritarian regimes, it has enjoyed economic stability and civil government for several decades. In spite of this institutional democratic history, however, high abstention rates, entrenched clientelism, and constant violence show that

Cristina Escobar received her Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego, in 1998 and is currently teaching in the Department of Sociology at Temple University. She thanks Matthew Shugart, Gershon Shafir, Jeff Weintraub, Robert Gay, and the editors for their valuable comments on previous drafts of this article but retains responsibility for all interpretations and conclusions in this piece. She also thanks the Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Administrativas of the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana de Bogotá for its financial support.

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there are other limits to democracy. Colombia has undergone a process of democratic reform that started with the municipal reforms of 1986 (see Gaitán and Moreno, 1992) and continued with the enactment of the new constitution in 1991 (see Dugas, 1995). The municipal reforms involved political, financial, and administrative decentralization, including the popular election of mayors, giving the municipalities greater autonomy and facilitating local participation. The new constitution introduced significant political reforms, both electoral and nonelectoral (plebiscite, popular consultation, programmatic vote, state contributions to campaign financing, official distribution of ballots, etc.), aimed at facilitating electoral competition and citizen participation.

Escalating violence, particularly in the countryside, makes it difficult for a study of Colombian democracy to disentangle the effects of violence from other factors. As has much of the Colombian countryside, the northern coastal department of Sucre has been affected by guerrilla fighting and paramilitary activities, and violence is part of its political universe today. However, Sucre's institutional politics during the early 1990s were not governed by the dynamic of violent confrontation. The peace process that accompanied the political reforms brought about peace agreements between the region's two main guerrilla groups and the government. It was only in subsequent years, with the introduction of other guerrilla groups and the development of a unified paramilitary force in the department, that violent confrontation escalated. Sucre, then, constitutes a valuable case study because it is possible to analyze the effects of institutional change on the participation of organized sectors in the countryside within a regional dynamic that for a period of time (1990–1994) was not governed by political violence.

Sucre has the further advantage for such a study that it has both well-entrenched Liberal and Conservative political machines and one of the strongest and longest land struggles in the country. The political machines emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s, after Sucre was formed as a department, to replace the more traditional clientelism based on landownership that had characterized the area since the nineteenth century. The Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos (National Association of Peasant Users—ANUC) carried out a first wave of land invasions in the early 1970s and a second wave in the mid-1980s and, with blockades, marches, and sit-ins, forced the government to install and enforce programs of land distribution.

The democratic reforms, introduced as the peasant mobilizations reached their peak, encouraged peasant leaders to run for municipal councils, department assemblies, and even the House of Representatives. The results, however, were very far below what the leaders had expected; the majority of rural voters supported the traditional political machines. The main question I ask

in this article is why the relatively successful peasant mobilizations in Sucre did not translate into significant electoral power once the political reforms had created the opportunity for the participation of new political forces. I address this question theoretically by analyzing how clientelist relations impose limits on the exercise of the political rights that citizenship entails and why institutional changes are not always enough to overcome these limits.

CITIZENSHIP AND CLIENTELISM

Democratic citizenship, understood as "a practice of self-government" or "collective self-determination," requires the existence of a political community whose citizens are entitled and able to exercise civil, political, and social rights (Weintraub, 1992: 51).[1] For citizens to be able to exercise these rights, they need (1) a representative regime that includes a party system and an inclusive electorate effectively able to exercise political power; (2) a state, based on the rule of law, that protects individual rights (even from power holders), regulates relations in the private sector, and guarantees territorial integrity;[2] and (3) a political culture of democratic participation based on local participatory associations. While it is easy to see that an authoritarian regime fails to meet many of these requirements, the connection between clientelism and the limits of democratic participation is much less obvious.

The obstacles faced by citizens (peasant communities in this case) in the exercise of their political rights may well be institutional, since institutions, including parties and the electoral system, can vary substantially and some are better equipped to contribute to democratic practices than others. Impediments to the exercise of political rights can also be directly related to the fulfillment of civil and social rights. The protection of individual citizens' rights by the justice system and the guarantee of fair elections, for example, are necessary for citizens to be able to elect their representatives freely. Basic education and economic standing are also indispensable for the free exercise of political rights.[3] Since the state is conceived of as the guardian of citizens' rights (Barbalet, 1988: 109–110), the state also influences the possibility of the actual enactment of those rights. In many Third World countries, such as Colombia, where the state has traditionally been weak, the development of citizen rights may be threatened by the absence of the rule of law. Challenges to the state from within (e.g., from powerful economic, political, or military forces) are obstacles to the exercise of the state's rule on behalf of its citizens.

Finally, elements involved in the practice of citizenship should also be examined. Recent works coincide in emphasizing the critical role of political culture in the development of citizenship (Somers, 1993; Putnam, 1993;

Weintraub, 1992).[4] Democratic citizenship requires active participation in public affairs and, as Alexis de Tocqueville strongly emphasizes, a rich associational life. This associational life contributes to effective social collaboration and is a necessary precondition for effective self-government. Associations are part of what Tocqueville called "the sphere of collective action, conflict, and cooperation" that mediates between the state and civil society (Weintraub, 1992: 57). The political culture of citizenship entails a distinctive ethos, the "mores of citizenship" in Tocqueville's words, according to which citizens actively participate in the collective exercise of political power and take responsibility for their actions. This ethos contrasts sharply with that of the "spirit of the subject," which is characterized by political passivity and lack of responsibility, combined in some cases with periodic uprisings against the abuses or weaknesses of established authority (Weintraub, 1992: 60).

How can we address clientelism from the perspective of citizenship? The argument I want to make here is that citizenship and clientelism are fundamentally incompatible. Where clientelism prevails, formal political rights are inhibited, inasmuch as the client's vote is not a means of political expression but part of a transaction: "Clientelism is the exchange of political rights for social benefits" (Fox, 1990: 153). Clientelism serves as a substitute for social rights by ensuring the distribution—albeit selective and irrational—of state resources that the deprived population has been unable to obtain through electoral participation.

Clientelism is a poor strategy of political participation because the system and practices that sustain it are detrimental to democratic citizenship in general. As Foweraker and Landman (1997: 16) point out, the illegal manipulation of public resources for the private interests of political elites and the denial of equal access to these resources to the people both erode the rule of law and limit the universal claims of civil and political rights.

Social and economic inequality, the characteristics of which vary depending on particular class structures, is, then, a necessary condition for the development of clientelism. Clientelism, based on the exchange of votes for favors, works on the premise of the client's lack of resources and the "appropriation" of these resources by the patrons, who distribute them in exchange for votes.

Economic structure and the social and economic inequality derived from it are at the root of clientelist practices; however, there are ideological and cultural elements involved as well. Clientelism has generally been considered an obstacle to the development of autonomous organizations and political participation. It has been described as impeding more horizontal or class-based alliances (Scott, 1972: 104–105; Erie, 1988: 8, 249–252), the association

of autonomous groups (Graziano, 1977: 361–372), and the development of active citizens instead of dominated "subjects" (Caciagli and Belloni, 1981: 52–54). Because of the absence of political participation based on autonomous associations, the political culture of clientelism is fundamentally different from the political culture of citizenship. However, it would be inappropriate to conclude, without further analysis, that clientelism always entails the "ethos of the subject." Clientelism may well generate political apathy and irresponsibility with respect to public affairs (since people are excluded from political participation), but it does not necessarily entail subjection.

Recent studies have suggested that some forms of collective clientelism, particularly those associated with modern broker clientelism, can be interpreted as strategies of survival or forms of resistance (Gay, 1994; 1997). According to this less common perspective, communities or groups involved in forms of *resistance clientelism* are trying to get as much as possible from the situation in a highly calculated way. In my previous work on the political participation of peasants in Sucre (Escobar, 1994), I showed that generalized clientelism did not impede the development of a strong peasant movement and that clientelism existed in spite of—not in the absence of—"class consciousness." Thus, it would be inappropriate to include these cases in the same category of the "subjected" as other practices of clientelism. The word "subject" evokes the situation of traditional clientelism, in which transactions (all-encompassing, durable, and more legitimate) were accompanied by an ideological element of subordination, even though subordination was not always total and everyday forms of resistance were present. In modern or broker clientelism, where the transactions are more specific, periodic, and instrumental and the client is in a better negotiating position, the notion of ideological subordination no longer applies. Competition between brokers and their dependence on state resources make the boss appear to the client as a more fragile figure with a less secure status than that of the traditional patron (Caciagli and Belloni, 1981: 39). We need to abandon the traditional dichotomy that forces us to see people either as citizens or as subjects. The point I want to underline here is that "noncitizens"—those who cannot exercise their citizen rights because of the clientelist relations in which they are involved—are not necessarily subjects.

ELECTORAL DISAPPOINTMENTS

The institutional and administrative reforms, along with the peace agreements that reincorporated local guerrilla groups into the civil life of Colombia, seem an unprecedented opportunity for nontraditional political forces to

participate for the first time in elections and achieve important political victories. Contrary to the expectations of these newcomers to politics, these exercises in electoral participation for peasant organizations, civic movements, and ex-guerrilla militants of Sucre have proved disappointing.

The years after the municipal political and administrative reforms can be divided into three subperiods. The first subperiod, from 1986 to 1990, which included the first two mayoral elections, was not a time of great change in local politics in Sucre. There was a sort of inertia that kept politics operating as it had in previous years; most of the population was unfamiliar with the new laws, some of the laws were not enforced, and, most important, the political bosses continued to manipulate resources.

The second subperiod, from the Constituent Assembly elections in 1990 until the elections of 1994, was characterized by the entrance of new political forces into the electoral arena (indigenous communities, Christians, labor unions, etc.) and by the peace agreements between the government and guerrilla groups not only in Sucre but all over the country. The government signed peace agreements with the Movimiento 19 de Abril (April 19 Movement—M-19), the Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army—EPL), the Quintin Lame, the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Workers' Revolutionary Party—PRT), and the Corriente de Renovación Socialista (CRS), formerly part of the Unión Camilista–Ejército de Liberación Nacional (Camilist Union–National Liberation Army—UC-ELN). The last two of these groups, the PRT and the CRS, operated in Sucre and were closely linked to local peasant communities.

The enthusiasm generated by the Constituent Assembly elections (this was the first time that nontraditional parties had been able to achieve as much as 61.2 percent of the vote in Sucre)[5] along with the political reforms stemming from the new constitution gave new impetus to the political participation of groups traditionally unable or unwilling to gain representation through institutional political channels. Aside from peasant organizations, ethnic and religious minorities entered the electoral competition in Sucre for the first time. Important protagonists of these elections were also the civic municipal movements (see Escobar, 1998). Although the results at the ballot box in the 1992 local elections were modest, they represented the greatest challenge ever to the domination of the political machines. In Sucre, nontraditional parties registered 25 percent of the lists competing for the municipal councils; they elected 15.5 percent of the council members and 7 of the 24 mayors (29.2 percent) (see Tables 1 and 2).

The 1992 election was the best opportunity for organized peasants to participate in politics. In addition to those groups that had traditionally participated in elections (Democracia Popular [Popular Democracy—DP] and

TABLE 1
Number of Lists Participating in Municipal Council Elections in Sucre (1986–2000)

	1986		*1990*		*1992*		*1994*		*2000*	
Party	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*
Traditional	320	97.0	419	94.8	368	75.0	545	82.6	678	81.0
Nontraditional	10	3.0	23	5.2	123	25.0	115	17.4	157	19.0
Total	330	100.0	442	100.0	491	100.0	660	100.0	835	100.0

Source: RNEC (1986–2000).
Note: Data for the 1988 and 1998 elections are not available.

TABLE 2
Number of Elected Municipal Council Members from Traditional and Nontraditional Parties in Sucre (1988–2000)

	1988		*1992*		*1994*		*2000*	
Party	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*
Traditional	254	94.8	229	84.2	230	84.2	247	85.0
Nontraditional	14	5.2	43	15.8	42+2[a]	16.0	44	15.0
Total	268	100.0	272	100.0	274	100.0	291	100.0

Source: RNEC (1988–1994).
Note: There are no published data for 1990 and 1998.
a. As a result of the special peace jurisdiction, two additional council members were elected in Colosó and Corozal.

Junta Reorganizadora [JR]), the Constituent Assembly and the political reforms encouraged the participation of other ANUC groups that had until then remained abstentionist. In none of these cases, however, was the electoral support close to what the leaders and candidates had expected.[6] The achievements of the PRT ex-guerrilla militants were better than the results obtained by other peasant organizations but still quite low.[7]

The third subperiod in Sucre (from 1994 on), as in Colombia more generally, has been characterized by the recovery of the political machines, the decline of many of the new nontraditional political forces, and the increasing fragmentation of parties and movements into personalized factions (Pizarro, 1999; 2002). In Sucre, the enthusiasm created in 1992 faded and found no parallel in the 1994 elections. The successes of 1992 and the concomitant

optimism were reversed. In the 1994 elections, the new political movements lost ground. Only one mayor was elected from a political group outside of the traditional parties, and the number of municipal council members elected from new political groups remained about the same (15.8 percent in 1992 and 16.0 percent in 1994; see Table 2). Most of this nontraditional vote was won by a civic group made up of members of nongovernmental organizations, professionals, civic and union leaders, all mostly from Sincelejo, that would become the only third force of any significance in Sucre in the following years. As it would do in the future, this group won its position and survived politically by making alliances with leaders of the traditional parties and by avoiding radical positions that could jeopardize its members in an increasingly violent environment.[8]

Among the defeated political forces in the 1994 elections was the CRS (the guerrilla faction of the ELN), which had signed a peace agreement with the government and had a strong influence over one of the most radical abstentionist sectors of the peasant organization. As in the previous period with the other ex-guerrilla groups and with the peasant groups, the electoral results of the CRS were well below what its leaders had envisioned.[9]

Neither the municipal civic movements nor the peasant and ex-guerrilla organizations managed to recover after 1994. The small increase of nontraditional political forces in the 1997 and 2000 local elections (the nontraditional political forces elected mayors in 5 municipalities in 1997 and 19 percent of the municipal council members and 3 mayors in 2000) can be explained, in part, by the indigenous and Christian groups, which have become national political forces.[10] Most of the increase in the vote for nontraditional parties, however, is the result of the civic group from Sincelejo, now under the name of Movimiento Convergencia Popular Cívica (Popular Civic Convergence Movement—MCPC), which, by forming alliances with local and regional political leaders of the traditional parties, reached the Senate in 1998 and the House of Representatives in 2002.[11]

The experiences in the elections of 1992 and 1994 were important as exercises of autonomous political participation by peasant organizations, but the results were very far from constituting a representative political force in Sucre. Thus, given the strength of the mobilizations and the precarious electoral achievements, it is possible to say that peasant organizations were more effective in mobilizing the population and establishing direct pressure on the regional authorities than in seeking electoral representation to influence policy decisions. A blockade by 3,000 peasants could produce a response from the departmental government whereas not even 10,000 votes could give peasants any significant political victory in the department. Despite the long tradition of peasant struggles in Sucre and the political opportunity opened up by

the political reforms, clientelism continued to characterize politics in the countryside.

How can we explain this phenomenon? No single argument seems sufficient to address this question. Socioeconomic, political, and institutional factors all seem to have contributed to the persistence of clientelist relations in undermining advances in the political representation of peasant communities and other unrepresented sectors of the population.

VIOLENCE AND POLITICAL REFORMS

In contemporary Colombia, violence is increasingly pointed to as the main cause of the failure of democratic institutions. As with a growing proportion of the Colombian territory, Sucre has been affected by violence. Thus, the analysis of political processes in Sucre since 1986 needs to take into account the political events that developed outside institutional channels and their influence on regional politics. My argument, however, is that although violence has been present and has gradually come to dominate regional politics since the mid-1990s, it cannot fully account for the difficulties encountered by new political forces in winning political institutional representation in Sucre in the years following the political reforms.

Guerrilla groups, particularly the EPL (the armed branch of the Maoist-oriented Marxist-Leninist Communist Party), had maintained indirect relations with the ANUC since the early 1970s, but guerrilla activity in Sucre had been sparse and restricted to the most distant and least populated areas of the southern lowlands. In the early 1980s, the reorganization of the left that followed the peace negotiations between the government of Belisario Betancur (1982–1986) and the armed groups led to the creation of the PRT and the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria Patria Libre (Leftist Revolutionary Movement Free Country—MIR-PL, which joined the Cuban-oriented ELN in 1987 to form the UC-ELN), many of whose members later became the CRS. By the late 1980s, both groups were active in Sucre.

During the first subperiod considered here (1986–1990), the number of guerrillas in Sucre increased with the increase in the presence of the ELN in the region.[12] Guerrilla groups pressured landowners by supporting peasant land invasions and by kidnapping and extortion; landowners increasingly employed private armed groups not just to defend themselves from invasions and kidnapping as they had done in the past but to attack peasants and their leaders.[13]

As mentioned above, the second subperiod considered here (1990–1994) included the agreements with the PRT (January 1991) and the CRS (April

1994) that closed a chapter in the development of peasant struggles and violence in Sucre. Within the new context of the political reforms, both groups were interested in creating political forces that could guarantee the representation of popular sectors in the political system. Aside from the political pardon, protection, and economic programs to help reintegrate their militants (around 100 from the PRT and 50 of the CRS in Sucre) into society, these groups obtained specific political rights as part of their peace negotiations.[14] The PRT was allowed to have one representative in the Constitutional Assembly, though not as a voting member (Ramírez Tobón, 1991: 14; García, 1995: 47); the CRS negotiated two seats in the House of Representatives and the creation of a special peace jurisdiction (Jurisdicción Especial de Paz) in 195 municipalities.[15]

The negotiations with the PRT were relatively easy because during its eight years of activity in the region it had functioned more as an armed propaganda group than as an actual combat group and had not often engaged in direct confrontation with the military (Ramírez Tobón, 1991: 14; interview, Oficina de Reinserción, Sincelejo, December 1995). The negotiations with the CRS were longer and more difficult.[16] Landowners strongly opposed having Sucre as the setting for the negotiations between the government and the CRS and demanded the liberation of kidnapped landowners as a prerequisite for their support of the negotiations.[17] Aside from their public opposition to letting their towns host guerrilla negotiations, landowners had increasingly resorted to paramilitary groups to confront guerrilla activities. However, it was not until after the 1994 elections, and particularly after mid-1995, that violent confrontation reached a point at which it conditioned electoral politics.

Parallel to the decline in the number of victories of the new groups participating in politics, then, the third subperiod has been characterized by increasing violence as other guerrilla groups, especially the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—FARC), entered the area,[18] and the “self-defense” (*autodefensas*) or paramilitary groups were organized departmentwide with the support of landowners and merchants to fight the guerrillas. The new guerrilla groups were not rooted in the local peasant population and were not connected with the peasant struggles as previous guerrilla groups had been; they were branches of guerrilla groups that had developed elsewhere.

Whereas guerrillas continued kidnapping, extorting, and occasionally attacking towns and haciendas, the *autodefensas* proceeded to confront guerrilla actions and systematically eliminate ex-guerrilla members and leftist militants.[19] This situation not only undermined the modest electoral achievements of the PRS and the CRS but made electoral participation by nontraditional

groups a very risky endeavor.[20] Under these circumstances, the new incursions into politics in the context of the political reforms were curtailed and drastically limited. Violence, however, cannot by itself explain why, in the initial period after the reforms, particularly in the 1992 and 1994 elections, the new political forces in Sucre were unable to win electoral support from the population they claimed to represent. Other factors, then, need to be taken into account.

THE ECONOMIC LIMITS OF POLITICAL RIGHTS

I have stressed the role of poverty in indirectly limiting the exercise of political rights by making the population more prone to entering into clientelist relations or, more precisely, selling their votes. What was the impact of the peasant mobilization of the 1970s and 1980s, and how did it affect the political behavior of the peasant population?

The monopolization of land and the expansion of the cattle-raising hacienda in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries defined the structure of power that prevailed in the region of Sucre for decades thereafter and served as the material basis of the clientelist relations between peasants and landlords. Beginning in the late 1960s, the development of some initial capitalist agriculture in the region, the pressure of government laws of agrarian reform, and, most of all, the peasant mobilizations transformed the countryside. However, neither a prosperous farming economy nor a successful capitalist economy developed in the area. In spite of the emergence of some enclaves of capitalist agriculture, non-labor-intensive and low-risk cattle raising continued to prevail in the region. Peasants, whose work clearing the land and planting grass had helped build the haciendas, were no longer needed, and they were expelled from the land because their presence constituted a risk of state intervention and agrarian reform. Some were hired seasonally on the new capitalist cotton plantations that emerged in the region, while others were forced to join the movement for land or to migrate to the regional urban centers, where there were no capitalist industries able to employ them. As a result of the land struggle, the dependent relation between peasants and landlords that had sustained the traditional clientelist relations broke down. In their place, new forms of broker clientelism emerged in the 1970s (see Escobar, 1998).

The traditional political system that existed before the 1960s rested directly on the power and resources of the hacendados, who controlled the votes of most of the rural population by means of patron-client relations. The new system of broker clientelism that emerged in the 1970s and evolved into

a system of competing political machines did not depend directly on the hacendados, although it continued to support their power in the municipalities. A new class of politicians emerged that included not only professional descendants of the rich hacendados and merchants but also political newcomers. They specialized in manipulating state resources that they exchanged for peasant votes in the countryside and the votes of the large number of inhabitants of the newly formed shantytowns in the urban areas. This new class of politicians interested in maintaining or improving their political machines and their political positions had a different agenda from that of the hacendados, who were interested in maintaining low local taxes and in defending themselves from the peasant organizations and from the guerrillas. Despite their diverse agendas, politicians and landowners coexisted side by side and developed an implicit alliance (see Escobar, 1998).

In terms of land tenure, there is no doubt that Sucre underwent an important transformation. Comparison of the 1970–1971 and 1990 statistics (see Table 3) shows that latifundia of 500 hectares or more, which made up 41.6 percent of the total productive land in 1970, were reduced substantially (by 214,500 hectares) and made up only 15.9 percent of the productive land in 1990. It should not be assumed, however, that all the land lost by these immense properties was now in peasant hands. The total amount of land redistributed by the Instituto Colombiano de Reforma Agraria (INCORA) from 1968 to 1995 was 102,530 hectares, almost half of the total area lost by the biggest haciendas (INCORA, 1995). This redistributed land, along with a little over 10,000 hectares of public land whose ownership had been legally granted to peasants already settled there, accounted for the 6,200 new units of 50 hectares or less (113,895 hectares) registered in the 1990 census.[21] Something different occurred with the other 100,000 hectares lost by the biggest haciendas. Part of this land (40,000 hectares) was subdivided into smaller estates of 100 to 500 hectares and the rest (60,000 hectares) was subdivided into properties of 50 to 100 hectares. Thus, along with the distribution of land, the subdivision of estates also played an important part in transforming the countryside.

Although not a complete victory, this change was certainly an improvement in terms of peasant access to land, since an estimated 2,000 peasant families benefited from land distribution. However, this did not at all signify the end of the problem—thousands of landless peasants still remained in the region, and land alone was insufficient to construct a solid economy. In 1987, it was estimated that in the Desarrollo Rural Integrado (Integrated Rural Development—DRI) district (which includes the central region of Sucre, where land pressure is concentrated), 168,160 hectares were required to provide land to 3,442 landless peasant families and to enlarge the properties of

TABLE 3
Comparison of Number of Rural Units by Size in Sucre, 1970–1971 and 1990

	Units				*Area (hectares)*			
	1970–1971		*1990*		*1970–1971*		*1990*	
Unit Size (hectares)	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*
Total	21,398	100.0	31,486	100.0	844,865	100.0	860,432	100.0
Less than 5	12,575	58.8	15,226	48.3	18,755	2.2	18,384	2.2
5 < 10	1,975	9.2	4,103	13.1	13,542	1.6	29,993	3.5
10 < 50	3,889	18.2	8,074	25.7	88,065	10.4	185,506	21.5
50 < 100	1,141	5.3	2,172	6.9	78,562	9.3	155,602	18.1
100 < 500	1,515	7.1	1,741	5.5	294,262	34.9	333,654	38.8
500 or more	303	1.4	170	0.5	351,679	41.6	137,293	15.9

Sources: DANE (1971); Ministerio de Agricultura (1990).
Note: The comparison should be taken only as an indication of the changes in the distribution of land tenure, because the data from the 1970–1971 census and from the 1990 survey are not strictly comparable. I use these sources because they are the only ones available.

8,743 who did not have enough (CIE, 1987). From 1987 to 1995, INCORA acquired a total of 50,510 hectares (through the Programa Nacional de Rehabilitación [National Rehabilitation Program—PNR] and Law 30). Even though the pressure for land was alleviated, at least 100,000 hectares more were required to solve the land problem in Sucre.

Along with the increasing number of dispossessed that arrived in the urban centers, landless or smallholder peasants lacking resources (land, irrigation, credit, or technical assistance), help from the previous patron landlords, and access to the most basic social and state services (water, electricity, health, education, etc.) remained as potential participants in clientelist transactions with a new class of political brokers who offered them scholarships, medical assistance, roads, access to water and electrical power, building materials, etc., in exchange for their votes. A good indicator of the situation of the peasant population is perhaps the proportion of the population below the poverty level. The 1993 census established that 65.2 percent of the domestic units in Sucre were below the poverty level; in rural areas the proportion was even higher (DANE, 1993).

Despite the partial victories of the peasant mobilization in its two decades of land struggle and despite the "opening" brought about by the political reforms of the 1990s, the inequality sustained by the economic structure and the prevalence of poverty in Sucre's countryside continued to support clientelism and to limit the exercise of political rights by the peasant population.

MONEY POLITICS AND THE SURVIVAL OF THE POLITICAL MACHINES

The economic structure of Sucre creates the inequality that lies at the foundation of clientelist transactions. However, this socioeconomic situation is a necessary but not always sufficient condition. For clientelism to prevail, it is also necessary that the political bosses continue to control the resources that peasants need.

The popular election of mayors was the political component of an integrated package of fiscal and administrative municipal reforms in 1986. Law 11 of 1986 and Decree 1333 established the Basic Statute of Municipal Administration and ordered the participation of the community in local matters. This law, however, left untouched the municipal councils, whose members had controlled local administrations in support of the clientelist machines and were not interested in fomenting community participation (Moreno, 1992: 199–202). Not surprisingly, the number of council members elected from nontraditional parties at the time of the first mayoral elections in Sucre (1988) was quite low, only 14 out of a total of 268 (5.2 percent).

Fiscally, the 1986 law empowered the municipalities by defining the transfer of value-added tax revenues from the central government to the municipalities. These fiscal reforms were an important part of the reforms package and contributed significantly to filling the depleted coffers of most municipalities. However, they, too, were used by local politicians for their own political purposes. Financial analysis of two municipalities in Sucre, San Benito Abad (CEPROP, 1991) and Sincé (FIDES, 1991), shows the disproportionate increase in the share of the local budget assigned to the bureaucracy in the year of the first mayoral elections. Ironically, the increase in bureaucracy was possible precisely because of the transfer of money from the central government to the localities.

To survive the first two mayoral elections, the political machines used their usual methods of appropriating state resources and manipulated the municipal reform laws for their own benefit. However, a new style of politics, based on generalized vote buying, emerged. This new style considerably increased the cost of political campaigns and provided new challenges for the political machines. In addition, the cost of political campaigns had escalated, first, as a result of the rising prices of advertising, transportation, and the financing of extensive campaign teams that have affected Colombia as well as other countries (Leal and Dávila, 1991: 71–72); second, as a result of increasing party fractionalization, which forces candidates to finance their own campaigns; and third, because of the need to lure politically disenchanted and skeptical people to participate even in the most traditional

political rallies (López, 1998: 39–40). The increasing need for cash forced politicians to resort to other strategies. First, they sought to augment the campaign resources from private sources. Besides the traditional donations from cattle hacendados, who were interested in keeping local power in their localities, and the obligatory contributions from state employees to their political bosses, the new conditions pressured politicians to consider "investing" their personal fortunes, which in many cases had increased at state expense through corrupt practices such as bribes and inflated contracts. Politicians did not hesitate to invest these resources to guarantee their political survival, but the escalating costs of political campaigns and the commercialization of votes were not easily covered by these sources of financing. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the presence of drug money in Sucre's elections during the 1990s and to learn that one of the leading politicians was connected with the political scandal that cast a shadow over the presidential elections of 1994.

In addition to the increasing use of private resources, the second strategy used by politicians to cope with the escalating cost of political campaigns was the direct appropriation of pork-barrel funds (*auxilios*) not to be distributed "in kind" as had been done until then but to be used as sources of cash. The main method of appropriation was to create fictitious nonprofit development agencies to which the funds were diverted. This mechanism was not new. Politicians had been able to keep part of the pork-barrel funds for their own political needs by assigning them to local public or private organizations under their control (academies, Rotary Clubs, etc.).[22] In the late 1980s, however, as the need for cash increased, this mechanism became general in Sucre, as in the rest of the country. Because of the commercialization of votes, cash became in some cases electorally more profitable than the distribution of state services. Politicians created hundreds of fictitious foundations and corporations countrywide to which they diverted most of the pork-barrel funds. In Sucre, the creation of foundations and corporations started in 1986 and increased throughout 1987 and 1988. Since the national and departmental *auxilios* were intended, in principle, to be used for developmental works, all these institutions were called regional developmental entities. Consequently, there was a sudden explosion of private developmental agencies in Sucre during these years.[23] These foundations were created not only by the main political machines of the department but also by the middle-rank *gamonales* in order to sustain their political groups and to guarantee their reelection or that of their network's candidate to the departmental assembly. These foundations and corporations became the recipients of an increasing amount of state resources.

Among the various changes devised by the 1991 Constituent Assembly to return responsibility and credibility to Congress (including the dissolution of the elected Congress at that time) was the elimination of the *auxilios parlamentarios*, bringing about a drastic change in the system of appropriation of state resources by politicians (see Ungar, 1995: 102–103). Under this legislation, in 1994, a newly elected senator, one of the two most successful political leaders in Sucre since the reforms, was accused of using *auxilios parlamentarios* for his own political benefit and had to face a judicial investigation (*El Tiempo*, August 7, 1994; August 10, 1994; *El Espectador*, February 19, 1996).

Despite the reform efforts and the judicial charges against the two most successful political bosses in Sucre after the reforms were enacted, the institutional basis of the clientelist system was left unchanged.[24] In the absence of control over party labels, and influenced by the system of "remainders,"[25] which encouraged the multiplication of competing lists (which elect only the candidate heading the list), the increasingly fractionalized parties were still unable to achieve programmatic representation. Since their creation with the constitutional reform of 1968, the *auxilios parlamentarios* had been an important part of the negotiations between the executive, which had become "the source of nearly all substantive legislation" (Archer and Shugart, 1997: 118), and the legislature, which had abandoned its main responsibilities in exchange for the state resources to fuel its clientelist machines. Congress continues to be, for the most part, the place where politicians, motivated only by their particular clientelist interests, negotiate with the executive in order to guarantee their political survival or that of their clientelist networks. Although it lost some of its prerogatives in the 1991 constitutional reform, the executive continues to lack party support for its projects and has to use the old mechanism of negotiating state resources in exchange for congressional support (Archer and Shurgart, 1997).

Auxilios, then, did not die easily. Congressmen developed other mechanisms of appropriation of state resources ("disguised *auxilios*") in the following years. The role played by these *auxilios* and other forms of state-distributed resources in national politics seems to be deeply connected to the way the Colombian political system operates and cannot simply be eliminated by decree. Because of the elimination of the *auxilios parlamentarios*, the mechanisms underlying the exchange of goods for political support have changed, but the principle of negotiating support remains. Under the new Constitution (Article 346-355), the executive continues to be in charge of elaborating the national budget presented to Congress for discussion and approval, but it is now part of a national development plan coordinated with regional development

entities. To receive government support for specific projects, a municipality must submit a project and contribute a percentage of the costs. Despite these changes, resources are still subject to negotiations between the executive and individual congressmen that result in the allocation of development funds (*fondos de co-financiación*) to municipal and regional projects in areas where congressmen have their constituencies. The process is certainly much more complex than the previous system of *auxilios* and requires a great deal of maneuvering by congressmen. They now have to coordinate with municipal mayors, who are the ones in charge of developing and submitting municipal projects. The congressmen also have to secure the faithful support of the mayors to ensure that the latter will publicly acknowledge the congressmen as the ones responsible for interceding on behalf of the communities. One of the most interesting consequences of this new system of appropriation of state resources for electoral purposes has been precisely the new status acquired by municipal mayors. Before, under the rule of the 1886 Constitution and prior to the popular election of mayors, they were simply servants of the regional bosses who appointed them. Now, mayors have not only gained independence by virtue of being elected locally but also acquired the power of negotiation with the regional bosses. These bosses have to proceed carefully because they depend on the mayors to claim credit for the public works they have negotiated through the cofinanced funds.

In sum, the high costs of political campaigns and the constraints imposed by political reforms have forced important changes on the political machines, favoring those that were better able to adapt to the new context.

My emphasis on the survival of the political machines does not mean, however, that adaptation has been easy for them. In some cases, it has been very costly. One of the most important changes influencing the concrete mechanism of clientelist transactions was the new ballot system established in 1991. Before the reforms, the ballot was secret and consisted of a piece of paper with the name of a single candidate and his or her lists. It was printed and distributed by the candidates themselves. In spite of being secret, however, the ballots were easily controlled by the political machines. The *tenientes* generally held the identification cards of the voters and gave them back, along with the ballots, only when conducting them to the ballot box. Under the new system, the voter privately chooses his or her candidate from a ballot (*tarjetón*) provided by the electoral officials on which the names and pictures of all the candidates appear. Illiteracy and ignorance of the new system have undoubtedly been major problems, but the ballot has definitely worked against the political machines, which have lost part of their control over the voters. The ballot has increased the monetary losses of brokers in charge of buying votes on election day. On innumerable occasions, voters,

particularly young voters, have "robbed" brokers by accepting the money and then voting for another candidate. The ballot has also made it difficult to control the votes previously negotiated or the quota of votes requested by the political bosses of public employees. Part of the success of the nontraditional parties in 1992 can be attributed to the advantages of this new electoral system. Thus, the ballot has affected clientelism by augmenting the costs of vote buying and making the work of brokers more risky, but the change in the electoral mechanism has not come close to eliminating clientelist practices.

NEITHER SUBJECTS NOR CITIZENS

The challenge faced by new political forces to gain the peasant vote after the reforms is significant. Peasant leaders, ex-guerrilla militants, and activists who have benefited from the reforms and participated in elections all highlight the difficulty in eradicating the well-rooted practice of clientelism from Sucre's countryside. Besides the socioeconomic vulnerability and the institutional factors that allowed the political machines to reconfigure, factors internal to the new political movements also contribute to the prevalence of clientelist practices. I refer in particular to the political culture or participating practices mediated by local institutions.

Let us first look at the response that peasants gave to the invitation to support the new political forces electorally. One of the leaders of a peasant political group participating in elections in 1992 describes his experience as follows (interview, Sincelejo, August 1992):

> We found that in many municipalities, people continued with the vice of selling the vote, people who are involved in the peasant struggle but, when it comes to politics, go their own way. The majority of the electorate of the traditional parties is bought, not necessarily with cash but with medical prescriptions, slate tiles for the roof. In San Onofre, where we were expecting a good turnout, we lost a lot of votes. A similar sort of thing happened in Los Palmitos. They were giving 2,000, 3,000, up to 5,000 pesos, so people sold their votes that day. This is a real problem because people see us participating in politics, and some support us, but others don't, because we don't have the resources to give them, so they go with the politicians who offer them the cash. The people sort of prostitute themselves. The conscientious people, those who have clear political views, don't take that step. It's more of a problem with the masses, the majority of the people, who just don't get it, or they do understand but they just can't pass up the cash. We've even had to reassure people and show them that we won't hold it against them if they don't give us their vote. We have to tell them that we're still with them, guiding them, and that we're not like the others [politicians] who only come to sit with them and meet them when they're campaigning.

One of the more revealing cases for the analysis of the complexity of clientelist practices is the experience of the two guerrilla groups, PRT and CRS, who signed peace agreements with the government and participated in elections with their own political movements. A member of the PRT elected council member in one of Sucre's municipalities in 1992 describes the experience that year (interview, March 1992):

> The vote in the *veredas* [rural areas] is tied down by the clientelists. Out there, votes are bought more freely. At first, during the campaigns, [people said], "Yeah, sure, we'll vote for you, etc., etc.," but two or three days before the elections the traditional politicians bought their votes. So, the clientelists ended up winning. . . . Our organization is active in four of the nine *corregimientos* of this municipality, but people didn't vote for us, even people who had been supporting us as guerrillas. Here's something very interesting: in Don Gabriel, the hamlet where we carried out the peace negotiations, we got 6 votes! We were expecting at least 50. The Liberals bought a bunch of votes. . . . Who knows, it could also be that these elections were held in March, the month that people fear the most. This is a tobacco town, and people stop working around December or January. By February and March, everyone is stuck, unemployed, and the peasants are just starting to plant. The peasants finish harvesting in November and December. And even worse, this year, there was a severe drought and people lost their crops. The corn, the *ñame*, the manioc were all lost. So, maybe that had something to do with making people feel they had to sell their votes.

It is true that difficult economic circumstances and the manipulation of resources by the political bosses can limit the advance of new political groups in gaining the vote of the rural population. Members of the PRT faced the same situation in the poor neighborhoods of Sincelejo (interview, PRT militants, Tolú, March 1992). However, the fact that the same response was found in other localities, including more affluent ones, shows that vote selling is not just a consequence of poverty and economic inequality but, in addition, a practice deeply rooted in the political life of the region.

The experience of the CRS was little different from that of the PRT. As mentioned above, the votes obtained by the CRS in the 1994 elections were well below what the group had expected. They attributed this electoral defeat to the failure of their support in the countryside. "Traitors" was the word used by one of the principal peasant leaders to refer to the people who did not vote for them. The case of the CRS is particularly relevant because one of the points in the peace agreement, the regional development plans, included the provision of state resources for various communities where the guerrilla group had local support. However, the guerrillas' efforts to help the rural communities—by ensuring the flow of resources to the communities through their insistence on making development projects part of the agenda in the

peace negotiations with the government—were not enough to win the votes of the people (interviews, CRS and BDP militants, Sincelejo, December 1995).

New political movements trying to attract votes in the countryside have often found that peasants are reluctant to abandon clientelist transactions. Different approaches have been taken to solve this problem. One approach used by peasant leaders in the 1992 elections was to try to take advantage of the new ballot by instructing the peasants to cheat the brokers accepting money from them by marking a different candidate when in the voting booth. But, as a peasant leader tells us, this was not an easy task (interview, Sincé, March 1992):

> To anyone who needs to sell his vote, well, OK, sell it, but do it right. We spend time educating someone like that politically. We spend two or three days with him, and then once he's trained, he takes the money and goes and votes for us. That's the only way to fight vote-buying, by teaching people. But it's hard. . . . Now we're beginning to educate a wider range of people. Before, we used to just tell peasants, "Sell your vote." Nothing more. Now we tell them, "Sell your vote," but afterwards, we spend a few days teaching them whom to sell their vote to. The vote should not be sold to politicians in our coalition, because in the coalition [of the mayoral candidate we support], there are also vote buyers. So we have to train them to sell their vote to the opposition, to take both the money and the votes from the opposition. But it's a hard job. Sometimes, we stay up really late at night visiting people who have sold their votes.

Selling the vote at election time has become a generalized practice in Sucre's countryside, to the point that, as people of the region say, "people believe that selling their vote is a right they have." There are, therefore, not only economic and institutional aspects to clientelism but elements of political culture as well.

In spite of their valid mobilizing experiences, peasants in Sucre did not construct the basis for developing a practice of participation. On the one hand, the radicalism of the left, which condemned any participation in electoral politics, and the progressive consolidation of political machines excluded peasant communities from participating in local public affairs. Peasants developed a permanent disengagement from politics, which they saw as somebody else's job, and became used to negotiating their votes. On the other hand, the rigid and centralist structure of the peasant organizations, which was initially imposed by the state, focused on the preparation of leaders who would serve as links between the centralized organizational structure and the peasant communities. Within this model of organization from above, the creation of a sound basis of solidarity and participation among peasant

communities was not on the agenda. The organizational structure that was required to carry out and sustain land invasions demanded forms of collaboration and solidarity that could easily serve as the basis for a politically engaged and participating community. But neither the state nor the radical leadership of the ANUC, with some exceptions, encouraged and promoted the consolidation of self-governed, autonomous associations. The catastrophic failure of the community enterprises imposed by the government in many of the land invasions resulted in the economic ruin, division, and disintegration of the peasant associations. Communities that resisted subordination to the government had to face the utilitarian and, in many cases, authoritarian approach of the radical leadership of the ANUC, which was more interested in promoting a general insurrection than in fomenting solid and autonomous communities. The crisis and subsequent division of the ANUC created not only distrust and apathy but also serious divisions within the communities, which clustered in factions following their peasant leaders (see Escobar, 1998).

Thus, despite the magnitude and achievements of the mobilizations, the peasant organization in Sucre was unable to construct the foundations for community political participation that could have taken advantage of the political reforms. Some adverse experiences may even have reinforced the feelings of distrust, insecurity, and hopelessness that make the construction of a culture of solidarity and political participation more difficult and hinder the achievement of a democratic project. In the absence of a tradition of political participation, the political culture of clientelism has flourished, reinforcing the continuation of these practices even in the face of institutional innovations and herculean efforts by new political forces to change it. On the contrary, this political culture works hand in hand with the strategies of the political machines to maintain their power. It would be unfair to deny that there are valid experiences of local organization, but such experiences still only represent exceptions to the general trend characterizing Sucre's countryside today.

The experience of peasants in Sucre can also help us distinguish phenomena that might otherwise be conflated in opposition to the political culture of citizenship. Tocqueville's "spirit of the subject" best describes the situation in Sucre's countryside before the 1970s, when client relations were characterized by vertical relations of dependency and subordination to the landowners and there were few local contesting associations. After the 1970s, however, this term does not seem adequate to describe the situation in the countryside because autonomous and contesting peasant organizations had now developed and the links with landowners were broken. In this second scenario, political disengagement and immediate utilitarianism—rather than

"subjection"—seem to characterize politics in peasant communities. The irresponsibility and passivity that prevent people from engaging in an effort to gain local power are more the product of exclusion than of subordination.

The challenge to clientelism and to the political culture associated with it does not rest on creating "class consciousness" or fighting ideological subordination to patrons. Although some traces of this subordination may still remain, both the peasant movement and the transformation of patron-client relations into broker clientelism have already done the job of eliminating these ties. Instead of subjugated clients, peasants in Sucre are, for the most part, "political outsiders" in a system that excludes them as responsible and active participants.

Although the development of communitarian political participation entails much more than institutional change and requires a solid associational basis, a continuous practice, etc., I do not consider it to be an impossible task. However, it may well require long and continuous effort at the level of grassroots organizations that surpass by far the time limits of the new political movements interested in immediate electoral results. "Public-spirited citizenry," Putnam says, develops out of a long tradition and is not expected to emerge simply as a result of institutional reforms. The daily local operation of grassroots organizations could be a critical factor helping to break the vicious cycle of machine domination and clientelist political culture because it provides the local organizational structure and the space for active and responsible community participation necessary to build a democratic citizenry.

Obviously, these efforts will be futile if they are not part of alternative economic projects that could reduce the element of poverty and economic dependency that underlies clientelist transactions. Aside from the additional land redistribution that is required, grassroots organizations can serve both as schools of democratic participation and as sources of economic independence, necessary steps to challenge clientelism and construct democratic citizenship.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of politics in Sucre reveals the diversity and complexity of the limits to democratic citizenship. The political reforms in Colombia improved the legal and institutional mechanisms for local political participation and facilitated the incorporation of new political movements into electoral politics. However, the requirements for a substantial improvement in peasants' ability to exercise their political rights go far beyond institutional and legislative reforms.

The persistence of socioeconomic inequality has facilitated the development of clientelist relations among Sucre's rural population. Because their social rights are limited, peasants are forced to cede their political rights in order to ensure temporary alleviation of their daily fight against poverty. Transactions are now made between peasants and political brokers for state resources and no longer between landowners and peasants for the right to plow the land. Two decades of land struggle have helped break the traditional clientelist relations based on landownership and helped redistribute more than 100,000 hectares of land among the peasant population. However, the access to land has not been sufficient to allow peasants to build a solid economy and to escape the poverty in which many of them have been immersed. This economic situation, along with the precarious access to education, health care, and other state services, which are controlled by political bosses, have helped clientelism to prosper and will continue to maintain it.

The political reforms have influenced some of the mechanisms used by politicians to control resources and have changed the electoral mechanisms that had previously contributed to their control over the voters (mainly, the ballot system). However, machines have been able to survive and adapt to the new situation, although this adaptation has at times been costly and the internal operation of the machines has changed. The new constitution eliminated the *auxilios parlamentarios*, temporarily limiting politicians' access to these traditional sources of campaign financing. Nevertheless, because the institutional basis of the clientelist system—the negotiations between congressmen and the executive—was left basically unchanged, new mechanisms were found for distributing discretionary funds among congressmen.

Aside from the economic and institutional basis of clientelism, the analysis of politics in Sucre—in particular, the difficulties faced by new groups in winning the vote of the rural population—shows that the political culture of clientelism plays a fundamental role in maintaining this practice. Because the culture of clientelism is rooted in long traditions of economic dependency and political exclusion, only local community organizations providing both economic support and a locale for democratic participation can serve as the basis for developing a culture of democratic citizenship.

A final important element in this discussion is the combination of clientelism, which dominates the institutional political channels, and the escalating violence outside these channels that has taken over the countryside. Traditional studies have underlined the advantages of clientelism as an alternative to violence and class conflict, but the case of Sucre seems to suggest that clientelism does not preclude the possibility of violence. On the contrary, it has contributed to it. Because clientelism rests on the exclusion of most of the population from the exercise of power, it undermines the value of laws, the basis of the

democratic state. Institutional reforms, social programs, and grassroots organizations can do little to recover the political rights of the rural population if the rule of law and the state itself are eroded by the escalating warfare between guerrilla and paramilitary armies.

NOTES

1. This definition follows the civic republican tradition, which had its origins in the Greek polis, and contrasts with the liberal version, with roots in a tradition that comes from the Roman empire and refers to citizenship as a status provided by the rule of law (Pocock, 1992).

2. The argument concerning territorial integrity is drawn from Guillermo O'Donnell (1993; Przeworski, 1995: 11).

3. As Przeworski states, "while democracy offers to all the rights to be free from arbitrary violence, as well as to form and exchange opinions, the exercise of citizenship is feasible only for those individuals who enjoy some modicum of material security, education, and access to information" (1995: 35).

4. "Political culture" is a term that political sociologists have recently redefined, in Tocquevillian terms, as a sphere between the state and the market—he calls it "political society"—that includes "local participatory associations, decision-making networks, and cultural norms of public life" (Somers 1995b: 230–231), in other words, practices rooted in local institutions. This new definition does not allude at all to the more intangible symbolic system with which the term has been associated. On the contrary, the redefinition is an effort to rescue the term "political culture" from the Parsonian concept developed by Almond and Verba (1963) within the framework of the modernization theory of the 1950s and 1960s. In this widely criticized Parsonian meaning, the term refers to "cognitive, affective and evaluational symbols" that mediate between micro- and macropolitics (Somers 1995a: 119–120; also see Somers 1993; 1995b).

5. Of special significance were the 28,379 votes (30.73 percent of the vote) obtained by the single list of the political movement AD-M19, led by the demobilized guerrilla group M-19 and initially joined by the EPL, the PRT, and other demobilized groups. All the lists under the name of the Liberal party together obtained a total of 18,506 votes (20 percent), while the Conservative lists received 17,337 votes (18.77 percent) (RNEC, 1990).

6. For example, the Bloque Político de Masas (Mass Political Bloc—BPM) had supported land struggles and mobilizations in various municipalities in Sucre and in some other localities of the Atlantic coast and Antioquia. Its Senate candidate received 2,853 votes (1,792 of them in Sucre, 1.2 percent of the total vote for Senate in the department), and its candidate for the House in Sucre received 2,000 votes (1.4 percent of the total vote for the House in the department). The BPM participated again in the local elections of 1992, presenting candidates for the municipal council lists in seven municipalities and electing four council members. The BPM also ran a candidate for the departmental assembly, who received 3,288 votes (1.7 percent) (RNEC, 1992, and interviews with BPM militants, Sincelejo, September 1991 and August 1992).

7. The PRT won one mayoral election in one municipality, backed one of the two successful municipal council candidates of the AD-M19 in another municipality, and came close to electing another in a third municipality (RNEC, 1992; interview with PRT militant, Ovejas, March 1992).

8. By "third forces" I mean political movements that do not use the labels of the traditional parties, do not participate in their conventions, and maintain complete independence from them (Pizarro, 1999: 305). The civic group was responsible for the election of the only mayor and 18 of the 42 council members (42.8 percent) from nontraditional parties. The group was also able to elect two departmental deputies and one House representative and to negotiate important bureaucratic positions in the regional administration (RNEC, 1995; interviews with members of the civic movement, Sincelejo, December 1995).

9. In the local elections of October 1994, the CRS elected council members in five municipalities, two of them because of the special peace jurisdiction (established as part of the agreement reached in the peace negotiations). These electoral results were a great disappointment to the CRS militants, who had expected to elect the other seven candidates to the municipal councils who ran under the special peace jurisdiction. They had also hoped to have one of their leaders elected departmental deputy by running him second on a list of the civic movement (RNEC, 1992; 1994; interviews with CRS militants, Sincelejo, December 1995).

10. The indigenous groups elected 6 of the 291 municipal council members in the 2000 elections, and Christian groups elected 4 council members, a mayor, and a deputy to the departmental assembly (RNEC, 2000).

11. In the 1997 elections, the MCPC elected four of the five mayors of nontraditional parties as well as three deputies to the Departmental Assembly. In 2000, the MCPC elected two of the three mayors, 27 of the 44 municipal council members, and two of the three departmental deputies of the nontraditional forces (RNEC 1997–1998; 2000).

12. In 1988, 4 of the 5 armed conflicts occurring in the area involved the EPL and were concentrated in the southern lowlands, where guerrilla activities were already common. In 1989, however, 5 of the 8 armed conflicts involved the ELN. Besides the southern municipalities, ELN activities also reached more central municipalities (Morroa, Sampués, San Onofre, and Tolú). This trend continued the following year. The ELN was involved in 10 of the 14 armed conflicts of 1990, half of which took place in the northern municipality of San Onofre and in the mountainous region of Chalán, Colosó, and Ovejas, which, along with the southern lowlands, became a center of guerrilla activity over the next few years (*Justicia y Paz*, 1989–1990).

13. From 1988 to 1995, at least 12 peasant leaders of the ANUC were killed in what members of the organization considered to be specific campaign to eliminate their leaders in the department (*Justicia y Paz*, 1988–1995).

14. For more on the PRT negotiations, see *El Heraldo*, June 21, 1990; July 12, 1990; November 21, 1990; *El Tiempo*, July 12, 1990; July 25, 1990; August 6, 1990; September, 1990; October 19, 1990; October 22, 1990; October 31, 1990; December 27, 1990. For more on the CRS final agreement, see *El Colombiano*, March 12, 1994; March 17, 1994; March 28, 1994; *El Espectador*, March 13, 1994; March 18, 1994; *El Tiempo*, March 21, 1994; *El Nuevo Siglo*, August 12, 1994; *Vanguardia Liberal*, August 18, 1994; García, 1995: 60.

15. By means of this jurisdiction, candidates of the CRS could gain access to municipal council seats in addition to the regular ones by gathering 65 percent of the votes attained by the last council member elected "by remainder."

16. According to CRS leaders, during the 30 months of negotiations the CRS lost 118 militants countrywide (*El Tiempo*, March 21, 1993; April 4, 1993; October 6, 1993; *El Colombiano*, December 16, 1993; December 17, 1993).

17. In a security council meeting organized in Sucre in August 1992 to discuss the critical situation in the department, landowners complained that from January to August 1992, in just the municipalities of Ovejas, Los Palmitos, Chalán, and Colosó, 40 of them had been kidnapped and 3 had been killed (*El Espectador*, March 8, 1992; August 27, 1992; *El Heraldo*, July 3, 1993).

18. Twelve of the 18 armed conflicts in the region during 1995 involved FARC (*Justicia y Paz*, 1995).

19. From March 1994 to December 1995, ten ex-guerrilla militants of the PRT and CRS were assassinated, and many others left the region after receiving death threats (*Justicia y Paz*, 1994–1995; interviews, Oficina de Reinserción, Sincelejo, December 1995).

20. In April 1996, one of the two Assembly deputies of the civic movement Nueva Colombia, the ex-mayor of Corozal and the leader of its civic movement, Luis Miguel Vergara, was killed, as were council members of Tolú and Chalán and ex-militants of the PRT and the EPL (*El Tiempo*, June 29, 1995; *El Tiempo*, March 14, 1996; March 17, 1996; April 11, 1996; June 2, 1996; June 11, 1996; *Justicia y Paz*, July 1995).

21. The difference of more than 10,000 hectares may very well correspond to public land also distributed by INCORA.

22. Although a constitutional mandate assigned *auxilios parlamentarios* exclusively to regional development projects, Law 25 of 1977, established by the congressmen themselves, was vague enough in the description of the possible uses of *auxilios* to allow almost any use that congressmen could imagine. For more, see *Gaceta Constitucional*, May 20, 1991.

23. The official creation of 12 development foundations and corporations was registered in the official regional newspaper of Sucre (*Gaceta Departamental de Sucre*, January 31, 1986; April-June 1987; July-August 1987; September 1987; November 1987; April-June 1988).

24. One of these leaders subsequently returned to politics and became even more powerful. The other leader left politics, but his family continues to wield political power in Sucre as it has done for generations.

25. In the Colombian electoral system, seats are allocated to the lists whose votes reach the "quota" (total of votes divided by number of seats). The rest of the seats are distributed "by remainder," that is, to the lists with the largest remainders after the seats by quota have been distributed.

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