

Why No Party-Building in Peru?

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Peru may be the most extreme case of party collapse in Latin America. The breakdown of the Peruvian party system and democracy in the early 1990s has been widely studied.¹ What is striking, however, is that a quarter of a century after the initial collapse, and fifteen years after redemocratization, the process of party decomposition continues. Notwithstanding initial expectations that redemocratization would trigger party rebirth (Kenney 2003), no successful party-building has occurred. All parties created after 1990 have collapsed,² failed to achieve national electoral significance,³ or remained strictly personalistic vehicles.⁴ Most politicians are now partisan free agents who create their own tickets or negotiate positions on others' tickets at each election. Thus, parties have been replaced by "coalitions of independents," or tickets composed of free agents that are cobbled together for elections and then dissolve (Zavaleta 2014a).

This chapter examines why parties have not reemerged in post-Fujimori Peru. We argue that this outcome is partly explained by the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 1, but that party decomposition also generated a self-reinforcing dynamic. After parties collapsed, politicians developed alternative strategies (such as party-switching and

¹ See Cameron (1994), Cotler (1995), Kenney (2004), Tanaka (1998, 2005b), Lynch (1999), Levitsky and Cameron (2003), Planas (2000), Roberts (1995, 1998, 2006), Seawright (2012), and Vergara (2009).

² Examples include the Union for Peru (UPP), We are Peru (SP), and the Independent Moralizing Front (FIM).

³ Examples include the Socialist Party (PS), the New Left Movement (MNI), and Social Force (FS).

⁴ Examples include *Fujimorismo*, National Solidarity, the Nationalist Party, and Possible Peru.

the deployment of party substitutes) that enabled them to win elections without parties. By facilitating politicians' efforts to "go it alone," the diffusion of these alternative strategies further weakened incentives for party-building. Moreover, electoral competition appears to select for politicians who make effective use of these nonparty strategies and technologies. Hence, there may be a path-dependent logic to party system collapse.

PARTY DECOMPOSITION IN POST-FUJIMORI PERU

The Peruvian party system collapsed in the late 1980s and early 1990s under the weight of a hyperinflationary crisis and the devastating Shining Path insurgency.⁵ The four parties that dominated Peruvian politics in the 1980s – American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), the Popular Christian Party (PPC), Popular Action (AP), and the United Left (IU) – declined from 97 percent of the vote in 1985 to just 6 percent in 1995. Party collapse permitted the election of a political outsider, Alberto Fujimori, in 1990 (Cameron 1994). After his 1992 presidential coup, Fujimori governed without a party, relying on state institutions – particularly the intelligence agencies – as a substitute (Roberts 1995; Rospigliosi 2000). He created a new personalistic vehicle at every election: Change 90 in 1990, New Majority in 1992 and 1995, Let's Go Neighbor in 1998, and Peru 2000 in 2000.

Peru's established parties decomposed during Fujimori's eight-year authoritarian rule (1992–2000) (Lynch 1999; Tanaka 1998). Scores of ambitious politicians abandoned the so-called "traditional parties" and declared themselves "independents" (Planas 2000). No established party was able to seriously contest the 1995 presidential election.⁶ Politicians from diverse partisan backgrounds formed the Union for Peru (UPP), which backed the candidacy of former United Nations Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. Pérez de Cuéllar lost decisively to Fujimori, however, and the UPP quickly decomposed (Meléndez 2007: 231). Two embryonic national party organizations emerged in anticipation of the 1998 municipal elections: Fujimori's Let's Go Neighbor (Vamos Vecino, or VV) and Lima mayor Alberto Andrade's We are Peru (Somos Perú, or SP). However, both parties collapsed after the election. Fujimori abandoned VV for another personalistic vehicle (Peru 2000) prior to the 2000

⁵ For analyses of this collapse, see Cameron (1994), Lynch (1999), Roberts (1998), and Tanaka (1998).

⁶ APRA and AP won four and two percent of the vote, respectively, in 1995, while the PPC declined to field a presidential candidate and won three percent of the legislative vote.

election, and Andrade's decline in the polls triggered a wave of defections that reduced SP to minor party status. By 2000, party-building efforts had effectively ceased. The top five candidates in the 2000 presidential race (Fujimori, Andrade, Alejandro Toledo, Federico Salas, and Luis Castañeda) all headed personalistic vehicles.

The 2000–2001 democratic transition raised expectations of a return to parties. Scholars viewed the strong performance of established party candidates Alan García (APRA) and Lourdes Flores (PPC) in the 2001 presidential election as evidence of a traditional party comeback (Kenney 2003; Schmidt 2003).⁷ APRA also performed well in the 2002 local elections, capturing twelve of twenty-five regional governments.⁸ At the same time, a series of electoral reforms were undertaken in order to strengthen parties (Tuesta 2005; Vergara 2009). For example, the Fujimori-era electoral system, in which all 120 legislators were elected from a single national district, was replaced by one in which candidates were elected from 25 districts, which reduced the average district magnitude from 120 to 5 (Tanaka 2005b: 105, 125). Another reform established a minimum threshold of 5 percent of the vote for entry into Congress. Finally, the 2003 Political Parties Law banned independent candidacies, granted national parties a monopoly over legislative representation, and established a set of organizational requisites for national parties: to be legalized, new parties would require signatures from 135,000 supporters, as well as sixty-seven provincial branches – each with at least fifty activists – in two-thirds of the country's regions (Vergara 2009: 23).

Yet neither democratization nor institutional engineering halted the process of party decomposition. The “rebirth” of established parties proved illusory. The revival of APRA and the PPC was driven almost entirely by the electoral performance of García and Flores, respectively. In 2011, when neither García nor Flores was a candidate, both parties' electoral performance plummeted.⁹ New national parties that emerged in the 2000s – such as Alejandro Toledo's Possible Peru (PP), Luis Castañeda's National Solidarity Party (PSN), and Ollanta Humala's Nationalist Party (PNP) – were little more than “name plates” for personalistic candidates (Planas 2000: 38). Indeed, every new party that

⁷ García and Flores finished second and third, respectively.

⁸ UPP won two regions, while SP, Toledo's PP, the FIM and MNI each won one. The other seven regions were captured by regional movements.

⁹ Neither the PPC nor APRA fielded a presidential candidate in 2011, and the parties won six and four (out of 130) seats, respectively, in Congress. The two parties formed an alliance in 2016 but won only five seats in Congress. The other major parties from the 1980s either disappeared (IU) or survived as a minor party (AP).

won at least 4 percent of the national vote between 1995 and 2011 was a personalistic vehicle: a party created by, and exclusively for, a single presidential aspirant.¹⁰ The extent of party collapse was made manifest in the 2011 presidential election, in which every major candidate either led a personalistic vehicle (Humala, Keiko Fujimori, Toledo, Castañeda) or had no party at all (Pedro Pablo Kuczynski).¹¹

Although national parties survive, at least nominally (due to a law requiring presidential and congressional candidates to run on party tickets), they exist largely on paper. Parties' local linkages disintegrated during the 2000s (see Muñoz and Dargent, Chapter 7, this volume), and as a result, they largely disappeared at the grassroots level. As Table 15.1 shows, national parties have increasingly been displaced by provincial or regional "movements," or parties that compete exclusively in provincial and regional elections (De Gramont 2010; Zavaleta 2014a). The national parties' share of the vote in regional and provincial elections fell from 78 percent in 2002 to just 38 percent in 2014.¹² Whereas national parties captured seventeen of twenty-five regional governments and 110 of 195 provincial governments in 2002, they won only six of twenty-five regional governments and forty-eight of 195 provincial governments in 2014. By 2014, most national parties – including APRA and the governing PNP – had ceased to even run candidates in a majority of regional and provincial races.¹³

The success of new regional movements contributed little to party-rebuilding. Efforts to coordinate across regions or to scale up into national organizations failed (De Gramont 2010; Muñoz and Dargent, Chapter 7, this volume). Moreover, most of the regional movements that emerged in the 2000s were as loosely organized, personalistic, and ephemeral as the national parties they displaced (Tanaka and Guibert 2011; Zavaleta 2014a).¹⁴ As a result, local and regional politics grew

¹⁰ These include Toledo's PP, Andrade's SP, Castañeda's PSN, Humala's PNP, Humberto Lay's National Restoration (RN), and Cesar Acuña's APP. We treat *Fujimorismo* (created in 1990) as a single party, even though it changed names six times between 1990 and 2013.

¹¹ Kuczynski, known by his initials PPK, was backed by an alliance of parties. He later created a personalistic vehicle called Peruanos por el Cambio (PPK).

¹² Jurado Nacional de Elecciones and Oficina Nacional de Procesos Electorales online databases.

¹³ Taken from Vera (2010), Coronel and Rodríguez (2011), Remy (2010), and Tanaka and Guibert (2011). In 2014, APRA ran candidates in twelve of twenty-five regions and barely a quarter of Peru's provinces. The PNP ran no candidates in the regional election.

¹⁴ An exception is the Chim Pum Callao machine in Callao (Muñoz and Dargent, Chapter 7, this volume).

TABLE 15.1 *Provincial and regional governments won by national parties and regional movements, 2002–2010*

	2002		2006		2010		2014	
	Regions	Provinces	Regions	Provinces	Regions	Provinces	Regions	Provinces
National parties	18	110	7	109	6	72	6	47
Regional/provincial movements	7	84	18	86	19	123	19	148

Sources: Vera (2010); Coronel and Rodríguez (2011); Tanaka and Guibert (2011).

increasingly fragmented and fluid. An average of twelve parties contested each regional election in 2010 (Seifert 2014: 53–54), and few of these parties endured beyond a single election or two. Manuel Seifert (2014) measured regional “party volatility” by dividing the number of new parties by the overall number of parties in each regional election. In 2006, the average level of party volatility was 63.2, meaning that most of the parties competing in that year’s regional election were new (Seifert 2014: 45). In 2010, the figure increased to 68.3, meaning that on average, more than two-thirds of the parties in each region were new (Seifert 2014: 52).

Far from experiencing a rebirth in the 2000s, then, Peru’s party system decomposed further still. Not only were established parties displaced by personalistic vehicles, but at the local level, national parties of all types were displaced by short-lived, candidate-centered “movements.” The result was a level of partisan fragmentation and fluidity that is unparalleled in Latin America.

A DEMOCRACY WITHOUT PARTIES: FREE
AGENTS, *TRANSFUGUISMO*, AND COALITIONS OF
INDEPENDENTS

Post-Fujimori Peru is thus a democracy without parties (Levitsky and Cameron 2003). Electoral politics is organized around individual candidates. National parties’ capacity to channel political careers has evaporated. From the perspective of individual candidates, national parties no longer provide resources that can help them win public office (Muñoz and Dargent, Chapter 7, this volume). Gutted of their local organizations, most parties lack activists, campaign infrastructure, or financial or patronage resources to offer local candidates. Moreover, because partisan identities have largely evaporated, national party labels lack value; local politicians thus “prefer their own label.”¹⁵ Without resources or an attractive brand, national parties are, in the words of PPC leader Lourdes Flores, “completely unable to recruit good candidates. The good ones all want to go it alone.”¹⁶

Most contemporary Peruvian politicians are thus partisan free agents. New entrants to the political arena do not expect to build a career within a

¹⁵ Author’s interview with PPC President Lourdes Flores, Lima, March 30, 2011.

¹⁶ Author’s interview with PPC President Lourdes Flores, Lima, March 30, 2011. Also author’s interviews with AP legislator Víctor Andrés García Belaúnde (Lima, May 5, 2011) and former PP leader Juan Sheput (Lima, May 5, 2011).

single party, working their way up from local to national-level politics. Those seeking major executive posts (such as the presidency, regional governorships,¹⁷ or big city mayoralties) create and lead their own personalistic vehicle. National-level examples include Alejandro Toledo (PP); Ollanta Humala (PNP); former Lima mayors Alberto Andrade (SP) and Luis Castañeda (PSN); former Prime Ministers Federico Salas (Let's Advance), Pedro Pablo Kuczynski (Peruanos por el Cambio [PPK – Peruvians for Change]), and Yehude Simon (Humanist Party); and evangelical leader Humberto Lay (National Restoration).

Lower-tier politicians – those running for Congress, regional legislatures, city council, and most mayoralties – negotiate, at each election, positions on other politicians' slates. Many candidates purchase their place on legislative lists, with payments reportedly ranging from \$20,000 to \$120,000.¹⁸ Although most politicians formally affiliate with the party whose list they join, such “partisan affiliations” are, in reality, short-term contacts that cover a single election cycle. Because parties that are viable in one election are often not viable in subsequent ones, ambitious politicians must constantly renegotiate their partisan affiliations.

This practice of party-switching – known as *transfuguismo* – first gained notoriety in 2000, when Fujimori's spymaster, Vladimiro Montesinos, forged a congressional majority by bribing eighteen opposition legislators (known as *tránsfugas*, or “turncoats”) to join the *Fujimorista* ranks. A leaked video of one of these bribes triggered Fujimori's fall, and the original *tránsfugas* fell into disgrace. However, the practice of *transfuguismo* diffused widely in the post-Fujimori era. By 2014, many politicians had affiliated with five or more parties (former Vice President Máximo San Román had belonged to eight!). Take Tito Chocano. Originally elected mayor of Tacna in 1986 as a member of the PPC, Chocano was subsequently reelected with three different parties: the Union of Tacna Independents in 1989; Fujimori's Change 90/ New Majority in 1993; and his own vehicle, Strength and Development,

¹⁷ Between 2002 and 2014, elected regional executives were called regional presidents. A 2015 electoral reform changed the title to governor. To avoid confusion, we use the term governor to refer to all regional executives elected since 2002.

¹⁸ Author's interviews with ex-legislator José Barba Caballero, May 4, 2011; ex-PP politician Juan Sheput, May 5, 2011; PNP legislator Sergio Tejada, May 23, 2013; and PSN legislator Heriberto Benítez, May 27, 2013. According to Sheput, candidacies are “auctioned off.” Parties will take “anyone who is willing to pay.” These claims were confirmed in numerous interviews with party leaders.

in 1995. In 2000, Chocano was elected to Congress with SP, and when new elections were held in 2001 after Fujimori's fall, he was reelected with Lourdes Flores's National Unity (UN). In 2010, Chocano won Tacna's governorship as the candidate of AP. Thus, Chocano won elections with six different parties between 1986 and 2010.

Another example is Moquegua politician Jaime Rodríguez. Rodríguez first ran for office in Mariscal Nieto province in 1989, as the candidate of Mario Vargas Llosa's Democratic Front (FREDEMO) coalition. He then ran (unsuccessfully) for mayor of Mariscal Nieto in 1993 – this time with AP. In 2001, Rodríguez ran for Congress (again unsuccessfully) with National Unity. In 2002, Rodríguez competed for the Moquegua governorship with a regional movement called Commitment and Development. He lost, but in 2006, he won the governorship as candidate of another regional movement: Our Ilo-Moquegua. Rodríguez left office in 2010, but in 2014, he was reelected governor of Moquegua – this time as candidate of yet another regional movement: Kausachun. Rodríguez thus ran for office six times, with six different parties, between 1989 and 2014.

Chocano and Rodríguez are by no means exceptional. Indeed, *transfuguismo* – or the renegotiation of partisan affiliations at each election – became a routinized practice in post-Fujimori Peru. Politicians – particularly those who entered politics after 1990 – no longer develop stable partisan ties, but rather negotiate short-term contracts with parties prior to each election. An examination of the partisan trajectories of the ninety-three candidates who finished first or second in gubernatorial elections between 2002 and 2010 found that they had belonged to an average of 2.3 parties (which, given that many were first-time candidates, is a strikingly high number). Data from the 2014 elections reveal a similar picture. Of the fifty winners and runners-up in that year's regional elections, thirty-five had belonged to two or more parties, eighteen had belonged to three or more parties, and eight had belonged to four or more parties.¹⁹ Likewise, of the 195 provincial mayors elected in 2014, 168 (86 percent) had belonged to two or more parties, 101 (52 percent) had belonged to three or more parties during their career, and forty-eight (25 percent) had belonged to four or more parties. In Lima, thirty-four of the forty-two district-level mayors elected in 2014 had belonged to two or more parties, twenty had belonged to three or more parties, and

¹⁹ Tacna runner-up Jacinto Gómez had belonged to seven parties, while Pasco runner-up Klever Meléndez had belonged to six.

eleven had belonged to four or more parties. On average, the district-level mayors elected in Lima had belonged to 2.6 parties.

Similar patterns emerge in legislative elections. Of the ninety-eight legislators elected in 2011 who had previously run for public office, forty had switched parties since the last election. Another analysis found that 63 percent of all legislative candidates in 2011 had no prior affiliation with the party that nominated them.²⁰ Overall, we found that legislators elected between 2001 and 2011 had, on average, run for office under two-party labels. Given that a quarter of these legislators were first-time candidates, this figure is, again, strikingly high.

The dynamics of *transfuguismo* are nicely illustrated in Villa El Salvador (VES), a lower-income Lima district that was a bastion of the IU in the 1980s. IU politician Michel Azcueta served as mayor of VES between 1984 and 1990. After IU collapsed, Azcueta formed Democratic Platform to run (unsuccessfully) for mayor of Lima in 1993. In 1995, Azcueta recaptured the VES mayoralty, but now as candidate of Lima mayor-elect Alberto Andrade's We Are Lima (later SP). In 1998, he again ran for higher office and was succeeded by Martín Pumar, another former IU cadre who had joined SP. In 2002, with SP in decline, Pumar ran for reelection with Peru First, but he lost to Jaime Zea, another ex-IU member who ran with Lima mayoral candidate Luis Castañeda's UN. Azcueta, meanwhile, left SP to run for mayor of Lima on Toledo's PP ticket. In 2006, Zea was reelected with Humberto Lay's RN. He defeated Azcueta, who had left the weakened PP for Trust Peru. In 2010, the VES mayoral race was won by Santiago Mozo, a businessman who ran unsuccessfully with Always United in 2006 and joined PP after failing to gain the endorsement of Radical Change (CR). Mozo defeated the incumbent, Zea, who had jumped from National Restoration to UN; Pumar, who had left Peru First for CR; and Azcueta, who ran with Alliance for Progress (APP).²¹ Since 1990, then, every mayor of VES has been a *tránsfuga*, and the district's three leading politicians – Azcueta, Zea, and Pumar – have each switched parties *five* times.

If an increasing number of politicians are *free agents*, parties increasingly take the form of what Zavaleta (2014a) calls “coalitions of independents.” National, regional, and local-level politicians who create personalistic vehicles in pursuit of executive office fill their legislative

²⁰ *Diario 16*, February 26, 2011, p. 8.

²¹ In 2011, Mozo was removed from office and replaced by vice mayor Guido Iñigo. Iñigo was reelected in 2014 with his own movement, Villa Changes.

slates with free agents (either *tránsfugas* or amateurs without partisan backgrounds), most of whom lack real ties to the party.²² Party leaders recruit individuals who can contribute either votes (e.g., well-known personalities) or money to the campaign (Rozas 2012). Partisan history and activism are secondary criteria.²³ As former PP politician Juan Sheput put it, “parties recruit people who have money. And party activists don’t have much money.”²⁴

Individual politicians seek to join tickets with the greatest electoral potential, which tend to be those headed by the front-running candidates for executive office. Thus, they identify potential “locomotives,” or top-of-the-ticket candidates with powerful coattails, and seek to negotiate their way aboard the train they are pulling.²⁵ Again, partisan ties are nearly irrelevant.²⁶ Although most candidates nominally affiliate with the party they run with (by law, only 20 percent of parties’ legislative candidacies may go to independents), such affiliations are generally one-shot deals that cover a single election cycle: after the election, coalitions of independents disintegrate and candidates regain their free agent status.

An example of a coalition of independents is Radical Change (CR), a Lima-based party created and led by former congressman José Barba Caballero. The party has no membership or activist base, but rather is (in Barba’s words) merely a “platform in search of candidates.”²⁷ When CR ran in the 2010 municipal election in Lima, it awarded all of its candidacies – including the mayoral candidacy – to outsiders and free agents, using polling and candidates’ ability to make financial contributions as selection criteria.²⁸ As Barba put it, “It doesn’t matter who the [candidates] are or which party they come from, as long as they can

²² Based on author’s interviews with ex-Congressman José Barba Caballero, May 4, 2011; Possible Peru leader Juan Sheput, May 5, 2011; PPC leader Lourdes Flores, March 30, 2011; AP leader Víctor Andrés García Belaúnde, May 5, 2011; and VES district councilor Genaro Soto, July 20, 2013.

²³ Based on author’s interviews with ex-Congressman José Barba Caballero, May 4, 2011; Possible Peru leader Juan Sheput, May 5, 2011; PPC leader Lourdes Flores, March 30, 2011; and AP leader Víctor Andrés García Belaúnde, May 5, 2011.

²⁴ Author’s interview, May 5, 2011.

²⁵ Author’s interviews with Lourdes Flores, March 30, 2011; José Barba Caballero, May 4, 2011; and VES district councilor Genaro Soto, July 20, 2013.

²⁶ According to Lourdes Flores, who was the “locomotive” for the PPC in Lima’s 2010 mayoral race, prior to her entry into the race, when Alex Kouri was the frontrunner, PPC district mayoral candidates threatened, en masse, to defect to his party, Radical Change (CR). Asked how many PPC candidates would have defected had she not jumped into the race, Flores answered: “all of them” (author’s interview, March 30, 2011).

²⁷ Author’s interview with José Barba Caballero, May 4, 2011.

²⁸ Author’s interview with José Barba Caballero, May 4, 2011.

win.”²⁹ Thus, CR’s slate of district-level mayoral candidates was composed almost entirely of *tránsfugas*, most of whom abandoned the party after the election.³⁰

Another example is Social and Economic Participation Integration Andean Regional Reform (RAICES), a Puno-based regional movement that was created in 2009 by ex-Puno mayor Mariano Portugal. Prior to the 2010 local and regional elections, Portugal filled RAICES’ candidate slate with *tránsfugas* and high-profile newcomers, including local university president Juan Luque, who was RAICES’ regional presidential candidate. Three-quarters (nine of twelve) of RAICES’ provincial mayoral candidates were *tránsfugas* from other parties (Zavaleta 2014a: 86). RAICES won five of the twelve mayoral races it contested, and Luque qualified for the regional presidential runoff. Immediately after the first round vote, however, provincial candidates – who were no longer on the ballot – abandoned the party (refusing, e.g., to support Luque in the second round), and after Luque lost the runoff, RAICES collapsed.³¹ Four years later, Luque won the governorship with a new coalition of independents, Integration Project for Cooperation, none of whose candidates (except for Luque) had ties to RAICES (Zavaleta 2014b).

Coalitions of independents have emerged as the predominant form of electoral organization in post-Fujimori Peru (Zavaleta 2014a). We examined all political organizations that finished first or second in Peru’s twenty-five regional elections in 2006 and 2010. Organizations in which at least half of mayoral candidates had previously run for office under the same label were scored as parties, while organizations in which a majority of mayoral candidates were either outsiders (i.e., did not previously belong to a party) or *tránsfugas* (i.e., defected from another party) were scored as coalitions of independents. By this measure, only 16 percent of the winners and runners-up in the 2006 and 2010 regional elections represented parties (of these, ten were APRA candidates). By contrast, 70 percent of winners and runners-up finishers led coalitions of independents (another 14 percent were pure independents, in that their ticket did not run mayoral candidates or ran them in fewer than half the region’s provinces). In the 2014 regional elections, twenty-two of the twenty-five

²⁹ Author’s interview, May 4, 2011.

³⁰ Author’s interview with José Barba Caballero, May 4, 2011. *Tránsfugas* included Gustavo Sierra from PSN; Carlos Lazo from Trust Peru; Adolfo Ocampo from *Fujimorismo*; and Salvador Heresi Luis Bueno, Ricardo Castro, Luis Dibos, and Pedro Florian from PPC/UN.

³¹ In 2011, Portugal was elected to Congress on the PP ticket.

winning candidates either led coalitions of independents (seventeen) or were pure independents (five).

In post-Fujimori Peru, then, party politics decomposed down to their most basic unit: the individual candidate. Politicians became free agents, renegotiating their partisan affiliation at each election, and short-lived coalitions of independents became the primary mechanism through which politicians organized to compete in elections. Whether these coalitions of independents can be labeled parties is open to debate. Anthony Downs (1957: 25) famously defined a political party as “a team of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election.” Strictly speaking, coalitions of independents meet these criteria. On election day, they are Downsian parties. However, if teams of politicians must be even minimally stable to qualify as parties, then coalitions of independents should be viewed as an alternative form of electoral organization.

EXPLAINING THE ABSENCE OF PARTY-(RE) BUILDING

Why, nearly a quarter of a century after the collapse of the party system and more than a decade after redemocratization, has virtually no party-building occurred in Peru? The Peruvian case suggests that democracy and electoral competition, by themselves, do not generate sufficient incentives for party-building. It also raises questions about the impact of electoral design. As noted above, the 2000–2001 transition gave rise to a series of electoral reforms aimed at strengthening parties, including adoption of a lower district magnitude, a minimum threshold for entry into Congress, and a new Parties Law that banned independent presidential candidacies, granted national parties a monopoly over legislative representation, and established tough new requisites for legal registration. Not only did institutional reforms fail, but as Muñoz and Dargent (Chapter 7, this volume) argue, some of them may have made party-building more difficult.

The absence of party-building in post-Fujimori Peru can be explained, in part, by the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 1. For one, conditions for brand development were unfavorable. An elite consensus around neoliberal economic policies – rooted in the hyperinflationary crisis of the late 1980s and the success of neoliberal reforms in the 1990s – left little room for programmatic differentiation. None of Fujimori’s main rivals in 1995 (Pérez de Cuéllar) and 2000 (Andrade, Castañeda, and Toledo) challenged his economic program. After Fujimori’s fall, the

Toledo government (2001–2006) maintained his orthodox policies, and although Alan García (2006–2011) and Ollanta Humala (2011–2016) criticized neoliberal policies as opposition candidates, they continued them while in office (Cameron 2011; Vergara 2011). Thus, new parties such as Pérez de Cuellar's UPP, Andrade's SP, Castañeda's PSN, and Toledo's PP all failed to differentiate themselves from Fujimori on the left–right axis. Although Humala's PNP initially positioned itself on the left, it diluted its brand by shifting rightward in 2011.

Peru also lacked favorable conditions for organization-building. Particularly after 2000, politicians enjoyed open access to the media, and most new parties of significance enjoyed some access to the state, either at the local or the national level.³² Following Van Dyck (Chapter 5, this volume), then, politicians lacked strong incentives to invest in organization. They also lacked the means. Civil society organizations, which served as a platform for party-building elsewhere in Latin America (see Madrid, Chapter 11, and Van Dyck, Chapter 5, this volume), were weak in Peru. Both the labor movement and the progressive church weakened during the 1990s, and unlike Bolivia and Ecuador, there were no national peasant or indigenous organizations for new parties to build upon (Yashar 2005). Both the Shining Path, which penetrated and destroyed many popular sector organizations, and the state counterinsurgency, which reduced the space for political activity during the 1990s, had a dampening effect on associational life (Rénique 2004; Yashar 2005; Burt 2006).

The Shining Path insurgency was, of course, a major instance of violent conflict. However, the party-building effects of this conflict were limited by the fact that, unlike the FMLN in El Salvador (Holland, Chapter 10, this volume), the Shining Path was a narrowly based organization which, due in part to its use of brutal violence against civilians, lacked broad public support.³³ Thus, when a Shining Path front organization, the Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights (MOVAFDEF), attempted to register as a party in 2012, public opinion surveys found 85 percent opposition to its legalization.³⁴ Hence, even if MOVAFDEF

³² PP and the PNP each controlled the presidency for five years, while SP and PSN each governed Lima for eight years. Access to state resources was enhanced by the creation of elected regional governments in 2002 (Vergara 2009).

³³ See Del Pino (1998), Degregori (2010), and Gavilán (2012). According to the final report of Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Shining Path was responsible for 54 percent of the estimated 69,259 deaths that occurred during the insurgency.

³⁴ *Perú* 21, January 27, 2012. Another survey found that nearly 90 percent of Peruvians viewed a *Senderista* party as a national threat (*El Comercio*, November 18, 2012).

had registered as a party (its petition was denied), it is unlikely to have emerged as a viable electoral contender.

Following the Shining Path's defeat, levels of polarization and conflict in Peru were limited. The opposition to Fujimori was weak and fragmented throughout the 1990s, and levels of anti-Fujimori mobilization were low (Levitsky and Cameron 2003). Even the protests triggered by the flawed 2000 election were short-lived; it was ultimately an internal crisis that toppled Fujimori later that year (Cameron 2006). Perhaps as a result, the anti-*Fujimorista* opposition never gave rise to a party. During the 2000s, politics polarized briefly around presidential campaigns (in 2006 and 2011), but this polarization was confined to elite and media circles; neither populist candidate Ollanta Humala nor his opponents mobilized a substantial number of activists. Finally, although post-Fujimori Peru experienced a series of intense local-level conflicts (e.g., the 2002 *Arequipazo*, the 2009 Bagua incident, the Conga mining conflict in Cajamarca in 2011), these crises did not scale-up into national-level conflicts (Meléndez 2012).

Yet the causes of nonparty-building go beyond the absence of the conditions outlined in Chapter 1. The Peruvian case suggests that party collapse may itself be self-reinforcing (Levitsky and Cameron 2003; Sánchez 2012). In the aftermath of party collapse, politicians develop expectations, strategies, norms, and technologies that allow them to succeed in a context of elections without parties. Politicians who win public office without parties have little incentive to invest in them. Over time, the strategies, norms, and technologies of party-less politics may diffuse and even institutionalize. Moreover, electoral competition may select for politicians with the will, know-how, and resources to “go it alone.” Thus, in the absence of the kind of polarization and conflict that generates collective mobilization and new partisan identities, the prospects for party-rebuilding may decline over time. This, we argue, is what occurred in post-Fujimori Peru.

The Emergence of a New Model

Peru's party system collapse became self-reinforcing via several steps. First, politicians learned that they could succeed without parties (Levitsky and Cameron 2003). This learning process began with television personality Ricardo Belmont's victory in the 1989 Lima mayoral race and was reinforced by Fujimori's 1990 presidential victory. The crisis of the “traditional” parties had reduced the perceived value of established

party labels,³⁵ and Fujimori demonstrated that party organization was not necessary to win the presidency. Fujimori's subsequent political success – culminating in his landslide reelection in 1995 – thus triggered a bandwagoning dynamic, as politicians abandoned established parties for personalistic vehicles (euphemistically called “independent movements”) (Planas 2000). Many of these politicians were successful. Alberto Andrade (ex-PPC) and Luis Castañeda (ex-AP) were elected mayor of Lima, and both emerged as major presidential contenders; Alex Kouri (ex-PPC) was elected mayor and then governor of Callao; and José Barba Caballero (ex-APRA) was twice reelected to Congress after forming his own party in 1992. (Barba claims he was inspired by his friend Rafael Rey, who had abandoned the Liberty Movement and created National Renewal: “I thought to myself, ‘If that fool can form a political party, why can't I?’“.³⁶) At the same time, new politicians – those entering politics after 1990 – eschewed existing parties for personalistic vehicles, effectively launching their careers as outsiders. Prominent national-level examples include Toledo, Humala, and evangelical pastor Humberto Lay. Hundreds of other cases exist at the local and regional levels.

The rise of outsider politics generated a set of widely diffused practices and shared expectations that, over time, crystallized into informal institutions. These include:

Partisan Free Agency. Outside of APRA, politicians are no longer expected to establish enduring partisan ties or to pursue careers within a particular party. Rather, it is widely understood that politicians will act as partisan free agents, pursuing their career outside of parties and adopting partisan labels on a temporary basis in order to compete in elections.

Transfuguismo. It is also widely expected that politicians will routinely switch partisan affiliations, often renegotiating their party ties at each election cycle. This strategy of permanent *transfuguismo* is viewed by politicians as necessary for political survival. In the aftermath of party collapse, politicians learned that in a context of extreme volatility, loyalty to one's original party could derail a political career. Over the course of the 1990s, it became clear that continued political success required securing, at each election, position on a ticket headed by a viable “locomotive.”³⁷ By the mid-2000s, *transfuguismo* had achieved taken-for-granted status, particularly among new politicians.

³⁵ As PPC leader Lourdes Flores put it, “the problem is that when we construct a solid label, voters reject it” (personal interview, March 30, 2011).

³⁶ Personal interview with José Barba Caballero, May 4, 2011.

³⁷ Author's interview with VES district councilor Genaro Soto, July 20, 2013.

Coalitions of Independents. The parties led by presidential and gubernatorial candidates are not expected to nominate longtime activists and members for lower level candidacies. Rather, they select candidates – either outsiders or *tránsfugas* who can provide either the most votes or the largest financial contribution. These candidacies are expected to be short-term contracts that effectively expire after the election.

The norms of partisan free agency, *transfuguismo*, and the formation of coalitions of independents diffused widely during the 1990s and 2000s, eventually becoming (informally) institutionalized. In Villa El Salvador (VES), for example, local politicians were surprised in 1993 when the candidate linked to the long-dominant IU lost to the candidate sponsored by Lima mayor Ricardo Belmont's party, Public Works.³⁸ They quickly learned the new rules of the game, however, and in 1995, mayoral aspirant Michel Azcueta worked hard to secure the candidacy of We are Lima, the party led by Lima mayoral front runner Alberto Andrade.³⁹ With Azcueta's victory, "the idea of the locomotive took hold" in VES.⁴⁰ By the early 2000s, it was widely known that anyone seeking to win the mayoralty had to align him or herself with a viable Lima-wide candidate. At the same time, informal rules emerged regarding the formation of coalitions of independents, such as the "four by four," in which the Lima-wide locomotive and the local mayoral candidate each name four district councilor candidates.⁴¹

Norms of partisan free agency, *transfuguismo*, and coalitions of independents are not fully institutionalized. APRA and (to a lesser extent) PPC politicians continue to pursue partisan careers, and the rules of the game of nonparty electoral politics have not gained broad normative acceptance (indeed, *transfuguismo* generates widespread public disapproval). In practice, however, such practices have become widely known, accepted, and even taken for granted, particularly among politicians who began their careers after 1990.

New Technologies: Party Substitutes

Nonparty electoral strategies are reinforced by the fact that ambitious politicians have developed a range of "substitutes" (Hale 2006) for

³⁸ Author's interview with VES district councilor Genaro Soto, July 20, 2013.

³⁹ Author's interview with VES district councilor Genaro Soto, July 20, 2013.

⁴⁰ Author's interview with VES district councilor Genaro Soto, July 20, 2013.

⁴¹ Author's interview with VES district councilor Genaro Soto, July 20, 2013.

traditional party structures.⁴² Four party substitutes merit particular attention. One is private firms. Following the pattern of “corporation-based” party organization described by Barndt (Chapter 13, this volume), many successful businesspeople have mobilized the resources, employees, infrastructure, and distribution networks of their firms for electoral purposes, effectively transforming their firms into campaign organizations.⁴³

A prominent example of business party-building is César Acuña, the wealthy owner of a consortium of private universities whose hub lies in Peru’s northern coast.⁴⁴ After being elected to Congress with PSN in 2000 and UN in 2001, Acuña created Alliance for Progress (APP) prior to the 2002 local elections. APP was based almost entirely on Acuña’s business empire. Acuña’s universities were APP’s principle source of finance (Barrenechea 2014: 54–55). University profits were used to pay campaign workers and finance campaigns, and the universities themselves provided infrastructure such as printing presses, media outlets, and meeting space (Barrenechea 2014: 55–60). The universities were also a source of selective incentives to recruit candidates and activists (Meléndez 2011; Barrenechea 2014: 60–65). Most APP leaders and candidates held university posts,⁴⁵ and many lower-level cadres and activists held university scholarships (Barrenechea 2014: 65). Finally, Acuña’s Clementina Peralta Foundation, a charitable foundation funded by profits from the universities, operated a vast network of child care centers, health clinics, and other social services, many of which are staffed by APP activists (Meléndez 2011; Barrenechea 2014: 65–70). The Foundation’s activities serve as the bases for clientelist electoral mobilization (Meléndez 2011; Barrenechea 2014: 65–70).

Acuña’s business party strategy proved quite successful. In 2006, he was elected mayor of Trujillo, and in 2010, APP won 7.7 percent of the national vote, capturing fourteen provincial governments and the regional government of Lambayeque (Barrenechea 2014: 33–34). In 2014, Acuña was elected governor of La Libertad, displacing APRA from its longtime stronghold, and APP captured nineteen of Peru’s 194 provincial governments – more than any other party.⁴⁶

⁴² This section draws heavily on Zavaleta (2014a).

⁴³ See Muñoz (2010, 2014) and Zavaleta (2010, 2014a).

⁴⁴ On Acuña’s party-building project, see Meléndez (2011) and Barrenechea (2014).

⁴⁵ Examples include Humberto Acuña, Luis Iberico, Manuel Llemphen, Gloria Montenegro, and Walter Ramos (Barrenechea 2014: 60–61).

⁴⁶ Acuña ran for president in 2016 but was disqualified by the electoral authorities for vote-buying.

Acuña was not alone in deploying his business as a party substitute. The number of “business parties” increased markedly in the 2006 and 2010 local and regional elections.⁴⁷ In Ayacucho, for example, both the winner (Wilfredo Ocorima) and the runner-up (Rofilio Neyra) in the 2010 gubernatorial race were successful businessmen who, lacking parties,⁴⁸ drew from their own business empires to finance lavish campaigns (Zavaleta 2014a: 104–106). Likewise, Maciste Díaz (Huancavelica), Luis Picón (Huánuco), and Martín Vizcarra (Moquegua) used private firms as springboards to win or retain the governorship in 2010, while several other business-based candidates (Máximo San Román in Cusco, Fernando Martorell in Tacna) finished second. A stunning eleven of the twenty-five successful candidates in the 2014 gubernatorial elections were businessmen. Other business-based candidates won election to Congress. Examples include Julio Gagó, a photocopy machine vender who used his firm’s advertising and profits to raise his electoral profile and negotiate his way onto *Fujimorismo*’s congressional list in 2011, and José Luna Gálvez, owner of a private distance learning firm (and self-proclaimed “king of technical education”) whose lavish spending earned him a spot on Castañeda’s PSN ticket in 2011.

A second type of substitute employed by Peruvian candidates – especially at the local level – is media outlets. As Zavaleta (2010, 2014a) shows, local radio station owners and prominent radio hosts frequently use radio as a means to appeal to mobilize votes in the absence of on-the-ground organization.⁴⁹ In Puno, for example, outsider Hernán Fuentes used his Juliaca-based radio station, Radio Perú, as a springboard to the governorship in 2006 (Zavaleta 2010, 2014a: 94). Fuentes’s party, Forward Country (AP, Avanza País), had no grassroots organization, but he gained public recognition by using Radio Perú to repeatedly attack incumbent governor David Jiménez. Fuentes won the governorship with less than 20 percent of the vote, nearly all of which was concentrated in areas covered by Radio Perú (Zavaleta 2014a: 94). Fuentes was succeeded in 2010 by Mauricio Rodríguez, the founder of Radio Pachamama, the most successful station in Puno. Rodríguez’s coalition of independents, Political Project HERE (Proyecto Político AQUÍ), had

⁴⁷ See Ballón and Barreneachea (2010), Muñoz (2010), Meléndez (2011), and Muñoz and García (2011).

⁴⁸ Ocorima ran with (but quickly abandoned) APP, whereas Neyra created his own “Everyone with Ayacucho” movement.

⁴⁹ Media substitutes have been particularly widespread in the southern regions such as Cusco, Madre de Dios, and Puno.

no real organization, but Radio Pachamama – one of the few radio stations whose signal spanned Puno – allowed him to mobilize votes across the region (Zavaleta 2014a: 94–95). Likewise, Puno-based congressman Mariano Portugal used his radio station, Radio Samoa, as a platform for his electoral career (Zavaleta 2014a: 95). Radio-based candidates have also proliferated at the municipal level. In Puno alone, Zavaleta (2014a: 95) identified at least ten radio owners or journalists who finished either first or second in the 2010 mayoral elections. Four years later, popular radio journalist Oswaldo Marín was elected mayor of Juliaca, Puno’s largest city. Indeed, the use of media outlets as electoral springboards became so widespread that one Puno-based politician, Efraín Pinazo, observed that “if you want to be a candidate, you don’t create a party. You open a radio station.”⁵⁰

Media-based candidates have succeeded in other regions as well. For example, television and radio journalists such as Carlos Cuaresma and Hugo Gonzales Sayán used their media presence to capture Cusco’s governorship in 2002 and 2006, respectively (Muñoz 2010). In Madre de Dios, the winner of the 2010 regional presidential election (Luis Aguirre) was a radio journalist, while the runner-up (Simón Horna) was a local television broadcaster (Vilca 2011: 203).

Third, politicians turn to local “operators” as a substitute for party organization (Zavaleta 2014a). Operators are independent agents who orchestrate the grassroots campaign activities that are normally carried out by local party activists: they recruit candidates to fill out party tickets; build ties to local business, farmers, or neighborhood associations; organize meetings and rallies; organize the distribution of clientelist goods; and recruit and coordinate personnel to carry out key campaign activities, such as painting graffiti, putting up posters, and distributing fliers (Zavaleta 2014a: 99–102).⁵¹ Many operators are experienced former partisan cadres (often from leftist parties) who, in the absence of stable parties, turned to contracting out their services at each election (Zavaleta 2014a: 99). Like subcontractors, they maintain small networks of clients or hired hands which they can mobilize for activist work during campaigns.⁵² This enables local politicians to essentially “rent” the organization that in most democracies is supplied by parties. Rather than

⁵⁰ Quoted in Zavaleta (2014a: 94).

⁵¹ Also author’s interview with Genaro Soto, district councilman in VES, Lima, July 20, 2013.

⁵² Zavaleta (2014a: 99–102). Also author’s interview with Genaro Soto, district councilman in VES, Lima, July 20, 2013.

invest in grassroots organizations, then, local politicians simply rent them for campaigns. When the election is over, the contracts expire and the organizations dissolve.

Finally, an alternative nonparty strategy is the use of notables, or celebrity candidacies, as a substitute for a partisan brand. Thus, prominent athletes, soccer club owners, television personalities, religious figures, and other notables are routinely recruited onto candidate lists as a means of winning votes. In 2011, for example, four ex-members of Peru's prestigious national women's volleyball team were elected to Congress (with four different parties), as were two prominent sports commentators and two well-known religious leaders. In 2014, a former beauty queen, Yamila Osorio, was elected governor of the important southern region of Arequipa.

In sum, Peruvian politicians have developed a set of organizational substitutes that enable them to win elections in the absence of parties. The diffusion of these new electoral technologies makes it easier for individual politicians to opt for partisan free agency rather than join existing parties or invest in new ones.

The turn to nonparty politics in Peru has been reinforced by the fact that electoral competition selects for individuals who can win on their own. Thus, individuals who can deploy their firms or media outlets as substitutes for party structures and celebrity candidates who can substitute their own "brand" for that of a party appear to have an electoral advantage over professional politicians. Because traditional party politicians lack strong brands or organizational resources, they have difficulty competing against outsiders wielding party substitutes: they are outspent by businesspeople; they cannot reach voters as efficiently as radio-based candidates; and they lack the name recognition of celebrities and local notables.⁵³

The number of amateur politicians – individuals who accumulate resources and/or name recognition outside the political arena and deploy them as party substitutes in pursuit of public office – has increased steadily over time. We operationalize amateur politicians as candidates who, prior to running for public office, were established private business owners or managers, media figures (owners or journalists), or well-known religious, military, sports, or entertainment figures. In 2002, twenty-one of the fifty winners and runners-up in the gubernatorial elections were

⁵³ Author's interviews with PPC leader Lourdes Flores (March 30, 2011) and former PP politician Juan Sheput (May 5, 2011).

amateur politicians; in 2006, the figure increased to twenty-four of fifty; in 2010, it reached thirty-one of fifty, and in 2014, it reached thirty-nine. Likewise, the number of amateur politicians elected to Congress was fifty-four (of 120) in 2001, fifty-one (of 120) in 2006, and a striking seventy-four (of 130) in 2011. By 2010–2011, then, nearly 60 percent of the leading candidates for Congress and governor were businessmen, media figures, or celebrities.

Electoral competition may, therefore, have a selection effect that reinforces party decomposition. Candidates who win election via substitutes are particularly unlikely to invest in party-building. The ascendance of such politicians, together with the institutionalization of norms of partisan free agency, *transfuguismo*, and coalitions of independents may thus be self-reinforcing, diminishing the probability of party-rebuilding over time.

THE PARADOX OF *FUJIMORISMO*: AN EXCEPTIONAL CASE OF PARTY-BUILDING?

Fujimorismo may constitute an exception to the pattern of nonparty-building that characterized post-1990 Peru (Urrutia 2011a, 2011b).⁵⁴ After collapsing in the wake of Alberto Fujimori's fall from power, *Fujimorismo* reemerged as a major political force in the mid-2000s. Although Fujimori was imprisoned in 2007 for corruption and human rights violations, *Fujimorismo*, led by his daughter, Keiko, performed increasingly well in elections. After two *Fujimorista* parties won a combined 8.4 percent of the legislative vote in 2001, a united *Fujimorismo* won 13 percent of the legislative vote in 2006, 23 percent of the legislative vote in 2011, and 36 percent of the legislative vote in 2016. Moreover, Keiko Fujimori nearly captured the presidency in 2011 and 2016.

Fujimorismo possesses a relatively solid partisan base. Surveys consistently find that more Peruvians self-identify as *Fujimorista* than any other party, leading some scholars to describe *Fujimorismo* as a "nascent brand" (Meléndez 2010: 12). Based on a survey experiment carried out in 2011, Carlos Meléndez classified 6 percent of Peruvian voters as "core" *Fujimorista* supporters and an additional 10 percent as *Fujimorista* "leaners" (2012: 12). Though modest, these figures exceed those of any

⁵⁴ *Fujimorismo* has had eight different names since its foundation in 1990: Change 90, New Majority, Let's Go Neighbor, Peru 2000, Popular Solution, He Delivers, Force 2011, and Popular Force. We treat them as a single entity.

other Peruvian party, including APRA, which has long been considered Peru's largest party.⁵⁵

The possible consolidation of a *Fujimorista* party is a surprising – indeed, paradoxical – outcome. Alberto Fujimori openly disparaged parties and never invested in one of his own. He created and discarded four different parties during his presidency and opposed his daughter's efforts to institutionalize *Fujimorismo* after his imprisonment.⁵⁶ According to Keiko Fujimori, her father “doesn't believe in parties. Like a good *caudillo*, he doesn't like to cede power. And to build a party organization, you have to cede power.”⁵⁷

Yet several factors may facilitate *Fujimorismo*'s consolidation. One is its condition as an authoritarian successor party (see Loxton, Chapter 9, this volume). Fujimori's authoritarian regime left several legacies that facilitated subsequent party-building efforts. One is an established brand. Due to his government's success in stabilizing the economy and defeating the Shining Path, Fujimori was enormously popular in the mid-1990s and retained substantial support through the end of his presidency (Carrión 2006).⁵⁸ Even after revelations of massive corruption and abuse of power triggered his fall from the presidency, Fujimori retained the support of an important segment of the electorate. In a 2006 survey, for example, 48 percent of respondents expressed a positive view of his presidency.⁵⁹ In 2011, 30 percent of respondents ranked the Fujimori government as the most effective in the last fifty years (Ipsos 2011), and a 2013 survey found that 42 percent of Peruvians viewed the performance of the Fujimori government as “good” or “very good.”⁶⁰ Thus, *Fujimorismo* retained a potential base upon which to build.

Fujimori's authoritarian regime also left behind a patchwork of local patronage networks that could be used for party-building. Although Fujimori was notoriously reluctant to build a party organization, he made an exception in 1997, when he delegated to Absalón Vásquez the task of preparing a party – Let's Go Neighbor (VV) – to compete in the 1998 municipal elections. Vásquez used state resources to recruit

⁵⁵ According to Meléndez's survey research (personal communication), 2.0 percent of Peruvian voters are hardcore *Apristas*, while 6.3 percent “lean APRA.”

⁵⁶ Author's interview with Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013.

⁵⁷ Author's interview with Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013.

⁵⁸ When Fujimori was sworn in for an illegal third term in August 2000, his approval rating stood at 45 percent (Carrión 2006: 126).

⁵⁹ Ipsos Apoyo survey, January 2006.

⁶⁰ GfK survey, June 18–19, 2013.

dozens of mayors and city council members into a “Tammany Hall-like” machine.”⁶¹ Although Fujimori subsequently abandoned Vásquez’s project, VV networks provided a critical foundation for party-rebuilding in the mid-2000s.⁶²

A third authoritarian legacy that facilitated party-rebuilding was clientelist linkages. Fujimori’s heavy investment in politicized social programs gave rise to extensive clientelist networks (Roberts 1995; Schady 2000). Lacking a party, Fujimori created these linkages via the state (Roberts 1995), establishing strong ties to soup kitchens (*comedores*), mothers’ clubs, and squatters’ associations, particularly in the lower-income districts surrounding Lima.⁶³ Many of these networks survived – albeit in a weakened state – after Fujimori’s fall from power, and *Fujimorista* leaders viewed them as the “organizational pillars” of their party-building project.⁶⁴ Though modest, the network of soup kitchens provided *Fujimorismo* with an organizational platform that was unavailable to most new parties.

Fujimorista party-building was also facilitated by polarization and conflict. For *Fujimoristas*, the 2000 transition ushered in a period of conflict and struggle that they universally describe as the “era of persecution” (Urrutia 2011a). Fujimori supporters were treated as pariahs, scorned by much of the media, and occasionally insulted in public.⁶⁵ More than 200 *Fujimorista* officials were prosecuted for corruption or human rights violations in the early 2000s.⁶⁶ Many of them were convicted and imprisoned,⁶⁷ and dozens of others were investigated, charged but not convicted,

⁶¹ Author’s interviews with *Fujimorista* advisor Guido Lucioni, June 16, 2011; also author’s interview with ex-legislator Martha Moyano, May 5, 2011.

⁶² Author’s interviews with Guido Lucioni, June 16, 2011, and Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013.

⁶³ Author’s interviews with ex-*Fujimorista* legislator Martha Moyano, May 6, 2011, and *Fujimorista* parliamentary advisor Guido Lucioni, June 16, 2011.

⁶⁴ Author’s interview with Guido Lucioni, June 16, 2011. Also interview with Martha Moyano, May 6, 2011. Keiko Fujimori called the soup kitchens were “our principal base organization” (author’s interview, July 25, 2013).

⁶⁵ As Keiko Fujimori put it, “the media ignored us ... We practically did not exist. And that created more solidarity among us” (author’s interview, July 25, 2013). Also author’s interview with ex-*Fujimorista* legislator Martha Moyano, May 6, 2011.

⁶⁶ According to Adriana Urrutia, 217 *Fujimoristas* faced “constitutional accusations” between July 2000 and July 2003 (Urrutia 2011a: 102).

⁶⁷ These included ex-intelligence advisor Vladimiro Montesinos, ex-prime minister Víctor Joy Way, ex-interior minister Juan Briones, ex-intelligence chief Julio Salazar Monroe, and ex-attorney general Blanca Néida Colán.

or given suspended sentences.⁶⁸ In 2002, three prominent *Fujimorista* legislators, including former President of Congress Martha Chávez, were expelled from Congress. Finally, Fujimori himself was tried and convicted in 2007. Although Fujimori's conviction was generally perceived (in Peru and abroad) as legitimate, *Fujimoristas* viewed it as an act of political persecution.⁶⁹

The perceived persecution of 2001–2007 helped to unify and revitalize *Fujimorismo*.⁷⁰ As *Fujimorista* Jorge Morelli put it, “there is no better glue for a political movement than a feeling of injustice ... We were like Christians in Rome.”⁷¹ Likewise, Keiko Fujimori observed that although *Fujimorismo* was “badly divided” in the wake of Fujimori's fall, “once they started arresting people, persecuting people, we united.”⁷²

Fujimorismo thus reemerged in the early 2000s as a loosely organized social movement seeking Fujimori's return. Fragmented into several organizations, including *La Resistencia* and the *Comandos del Chino*, the movement was composed of an estimated 800 hardcore activists, many of whom were former military personnel angered by human rights investigations and trials.⁷³ The early movement mobilized against the prosecution of Fujimori government officials, the expulsion of *Fujimorista* legislators, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and other transitional justice measures.⁷⁴ *Fujimoristas* also broadcasted radio

⁶⁸ These include ex-ministers Luis Salas, Carlos Boloña, César Saucedo, Absalón Vásquez, and Jaime Yoshiyama, ex-president of Congress Martha Chávez, Fujimori's brother and advisor, Santiago, and Fujimori's daughter Keiko.

⁶⁹ Also author's interviews with Jorge Morelli, Lima, June 18, 2011, Martha Moyano, May 6, 2011, and Santiago Fujimori, Lima, March 24, 2011. Also Navarro (2011: 53–54) and Urrutia (2011b).

⁷⁰ See Navarro (2011) and Urrutia (2011a, 2011b). Also author's interview with legislator Martha Moyano, Lima, May 6, 2011.

⁷¹ Author's interview, Lima, June 18, 2011. Indeed, *Fujimorista* leaders began to use the “persecution” to mobilize activists. A common chant at *Fujimorista* rallies was “more persecution, more *Fujimorismo*” (author's interviews with Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013). According to Keiko Fujimori, when she speaks to new activists, “I tell them about the persecution.... It generates solidarity, commitment and pride” (author's interview, July 25, 2013).

⁷² Author's interview, July 25, 2013. According to *Fujimorista* politician Martha Moyano, “We went through ten years of the [anti-*Fujimoristas*] calling us corrupt, calling us killers. But the attacks made us much stronger. So I guess we need to thank [the anti-*Fujimoristas*]. They gave us the tools we needed to rebuild” (author's interview, May 6, 2011).

⁷³ Author's interview with Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013. Also Urrutia (2011a: 108–111).

⁷⁴ Author's interviews with Jorge Morelli, Lima, June 18, 2011; Martha Moyano, May 6, 2011; Guido Lucioni, June 16, 2011; Santiago Fujimori, Lima, March 24, 2011; and Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013.

programs (such as the Hour of the *Chino*) with messages from Fujimori, held events to celebrate important *Fujimorista* anniversaries, and organized meetings across the country in which the exiled Fujimori communicated with locals via radio (and later, Skype).⁷⁵ Although the movement was relatively small, it was characterized by a strong identity and subculture (Navarro 2011; Urrutia 2011b), rooted primarily in the shared experience of the 1990s counterinsurgency.⁷⁶

Fujimorismo began to take on a party-like form in 2005, when the exiled Fujimori created Yes He Delivers (*Sí Cumple*) in the hope of returning to Peru to run for president in 2006.⁷⁷ Built upon political networks from the old VV machine,⁷⁸ and with about 3,000 core activists, *Sí Cumple* dedicated much of 2005–2006 to a grassroots “Fujimori is Coming” campaign, mobilizing supporters around the idea of Fujimori’s return and eventual candidacy.⁷⁹ After Fujimori was detained in Chile, the party nominated hardline *Fujimorista* Martha Chávez as its presidential candidate. Chávez won only 7.4 percent of the vote, but *Fujimorismo* captured 13 percent of the legislative vote and Keiko Fujimori was elected to Congress with more votes than any other candidate. Keiko’s performance established her as a viable presidential candidate and a unifying figure within the movement.

After 2006, *Fujimorismo* lost much of its pariah status and gained far greater access to the media. Nevertheless, it maintained a foot in the social movement arena, mobilizing protests against Fujimori’s extradition, trial, and conviction in 2006–2007.⁸⁰ At the same time, the party continued to build up its organization, establishing a significant presence in the urban popular sectors (Urrutia 2011b). In 2011, Keiko Fujimori

⁷⁵ Author’s interviews with Jorge Morelli, Lima, June 18, 2011; Martha Moyano, May 6, 2011; Santiago Fujimori, Lima, March 24, 2011; and Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013.

⁷⁶ All *Fujimoristas* embraced hardline counterinsurgency positions and deeply distrusted human rights advocacy, which they viewed as soft on (and potentially sympathetic to) terrorism. Thus, all *Fujimoristas* rejected human rights trials, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and other transitional justice measures as unjust – even treasonous – attacks on the armed forces. Based on author’s interviews with Jorge Morelli, Lima, June 18, 2011; Martha Moyano, May 6, 2011; and Guido Lucioni, June 16, 2011. On the importance of ideology for party cohesion, see Hanson (2010).

⁷⁷ Author’s interview with Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013.

⁷⁸ Author’s interviews with *Fujimorista* politicians Guido Lucioni, June 16, 2011 and Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013.

⁷⁹ Author’s interview with Martha Moyano, May 6, 2011.

⁸⁰ According to ex-*Fujimorista* legislator Martha Moyano, Fujimori’s trial was a “powerful tool” for mobilizing activists and unifying the movement (author’s interview, May 6, 2011).

nearly won the presidency and *Fujimorismo* became the second largest party in Congress. Following the election, *Fujimorismo* (now renamed Popular Force) launched a new organization-building effort. By 2013, the party had provincial offices in 100 of 195 provinces, as well as 160 fully operational “base committees” in Lima.⁸¹ Popular Force was one of the few national parties to compete seriously in the 2014 regional elections, winning three governorships (more than any other party).

Fujimorismo’s future prospects remain uncertain. The party remains highly personalistic, and at times, it has been paralyzed by conflict between *Albertistas*, who remain strictly devoted to a movement-like defense of Alberto, and *Keikistas*, who, without openly opposing Alberto, seek to build a party that will survive him. It is not clear that *Fujimorismo* will survive Alberto Fujimori’s departure from the political scene. Thus, one possible scenario remains something akin to the Odríista National Union (UNO), ex-dictator Manuel Odría’s party, which remained strong in the decade following his 1956 fall from power (finishing third, with 28 percent of the vote, in the annulled 1962 election), but weakened and eventually disappeared after his death.⁸² Even if *Fujimorismo* does survive Alberto, it is likely to confront many of the same organization-building challenges facing other Peruvian parties. For example, a majority of the *Fujimorista* legislators elected in 2011 and 2016 were either political amateurs or *transfugas*, which suggests that Popular Force may be vulnerable to defection in the future. Given its solid base and Keiko Fujimori’s emergence as an electorally viable leader, however, *Fujimorismo* stands a reasonable chance of consolidating as party.

CONCLUSION

Peru is an extreme case of party decomposition. Nearly twenty-five years after the collapse of the party system, Peruvian politicians have not rebuilt the old parties or constructed new ones. The Peruvian case suggests that there may be a self-reinforcing logic to party collapse. Peruvian politicians learned how to win elections without parties and have developed a set of informal norms, practices, and organizational substitutes to facilitate such efforts. Indeed, electoral competition appears to be selecting

⁸¹ Author’s interview with Keiko Fujimori, July 25, 2013.

⁸² Other parties led by former dictators that enjoyed initial success but then collapsed include Gustavo Rojas Pinilla’s National Popular Alliance (ANAPO) in Colombia and Hugo Banzer’s Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN) in Bolivia (Loxton and Levitsky 2015).

for partisan free agents, or those with the skills and resources needed to win elections in the absence of parties. To the extent that free agents and “coalitions of independents” displace party politicians, the prospects for a “return to parties” are likely to decline.

What can be done to rebuild parties? Although Peruvian observers continue to focus on institutional solutions, such as electoral reform and a stricter Political Parties Law, we are skeptical that parties can be “engineered” in this way. Electoral rules do not create effective party brands or enduring partisan identities. Activist bases cannot be legislated into existence.

One reform that might help, however, is the introduction of a system of public finance.⁸³ Public finance cannot create parties, but as Bruhn’s chapter (Chapter 8, this volume) shows, it may help them consolidate. Peru’s national parties lack effective labels and the resources necessary to induce local-level politicians to join (and remain in) their ranks. Public finance cannot resolve the former problem, but it might help to attenuate the latter one. If national parties possessed resources to offer individual politicians, the incentives to go it alone would likely weaken. Publicly financed parties would not have to rely on candidates who purchase their way onto legislative lists.⁸⁴

There are two problems with a public finance-based solution, however. First, as Bruhn notes, public finance cannot create strong partisan attachments. Thus, in the absence of conditions that give rise to new party-building projects, the contribution of public finance may be limited. Second, given widespread public distrust of parties and politicians, a system of public finance would likely be highly unpopular. And given the notorious weakness of the Peruvian state, it is likely that voters would quickly associate public finance with political scandals and corruption – thereby reinforcing public hostility toward parties. Thus, when systems of public financing are associated in voters’ minds with corruption and “partyarchy,” they may ultimately have a boomerang effect, undermining, rather than strengthening, parties. Given the extraordinarily high levels of public distrust in Peru, it is not difficult to imagine such a scenario.

To conclude on more theoretical terms, our analysis adopts a middle ground between the optimism of scholars who view party-building

⁸³ A 2015 electoral reform introduced a relatively modest system of public funding for parties in Congress, which is expected to begin in 2017.

⁸⁴ The growing practice of candidates purchasing legislative candidacies appears to have opened the door to candidates linked to drug trafficking and other illicit activities.

as highly likely under conditions of stable electoral competition,⁸⁵ and the pessimism of scholars who argue that due to the influence of mass media technologies, contemporary party-building is exceedingly difficult.⁸⁶ The case of *Fujimorismo* suggests that party-building remains possible even where conditions for party-building are unfavorable. However, the Peruvian case also makes clear the incentives for party-building are weaker today, and that electoral competition is insufficient to create such incentives. Rather, strong parties emerge out of structural conditions – such as periods of intense social and political conflict – that emerge only infrequently. In the absence of such conditions, party collapse may indeed have a Humpty Dumpty effect: once parties disappear and politicians develop the means to win elections without them, all of the electoral engineering in the world may be insufficient to put them back together again.

⁸⁵ These include Aldrich (1995), Brader and Tucker (2001), and Lupu and Stokes (2010).

⁸⁶ See, for example, Levitsky and Cameron (2003) and Mainwaring and Zoco (2007).