

The cycling of oligarchic and anti-system electoral coalitions

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Plan

- Six stylized facts
- Three possible outcomes
 - 1. Territorial fragmentation
 - 2. Parallel socioeconomic universes
 - 2. Time compression
- One implication:
Meltdown/Cycling/"Careeing" b/t oligarchy & anty-system spasms
- Extensions

Six stylized facts

- 1. Longest stretch of democratic politics *
recent redistributive impact/social
incorporation
 - Consumption, inter-generational social mobility
aspirations



- 2. Yet, still very high levels of inequality
- → civil oligarquies (rich pursue income defense via legal/institutional claims to property rights) → structural * instrumental power (→merging interests b/t oligarchs and political elites, while escaping authoritarian redistribution)
 - Restricted policy making scope

Six stylized facts...

- 3. Organized crime gaining unprecedented financial edge to either displace or buy (conditional) state coercion at the local level
→ grey zones &/or violence spirals
 - Impossible to reduce illegality, violence, and corruption at the same time in numerous localities. In grey zones, illegality becomes fundamental for financing politics * consolidates as legitimate upward mobility mechanism for youngsters

Six stylized facts...

- 4. Golden and marginality ghettos increasingly segregated due to “fear of crime” / + #5

Six stylized facts...

- 5. Segmented provision of public goods due to exit by upper-middle classes under privatization / quality of public provision and state's arbitration of social conflict still regressively biased (quality more than presence) / → structural entrapment even if more access to consumption and “fixed” upward mobility
- 6. Horizontal accountability relative strengthening * mechanisms of societal accountability (e.g. media) → scandals exposing linkages b/t oligarchs/organized crime/politicians as mechanisms that reproduce social inequality

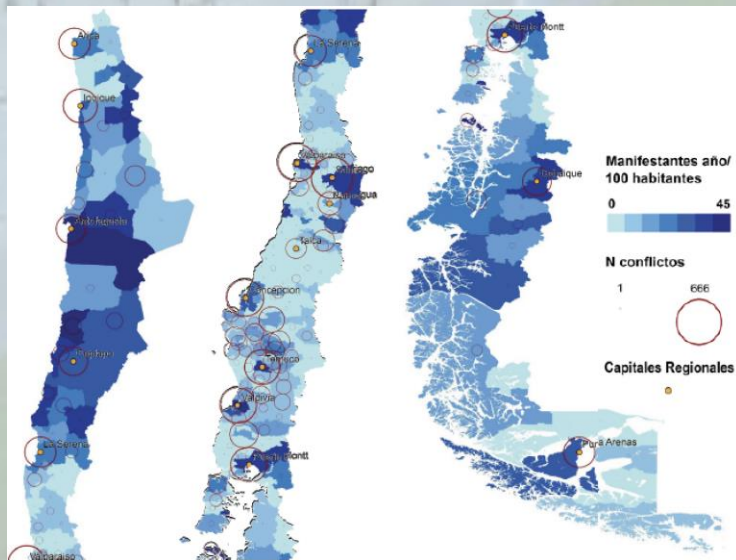
Three outcomes

- 1. Fragmentation (territorial and functional) of conflict + emergence of single-issue citizens → negative political mobilization and discrediting
 - One cause radicals or politically alienated

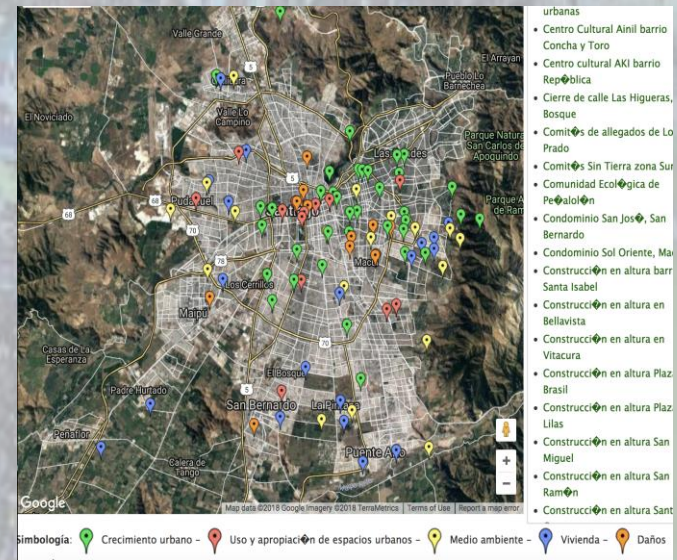


(1) Esta cifra da cuenta de los conflictos que se presentan por una misma causa en 3 departamentos o más.

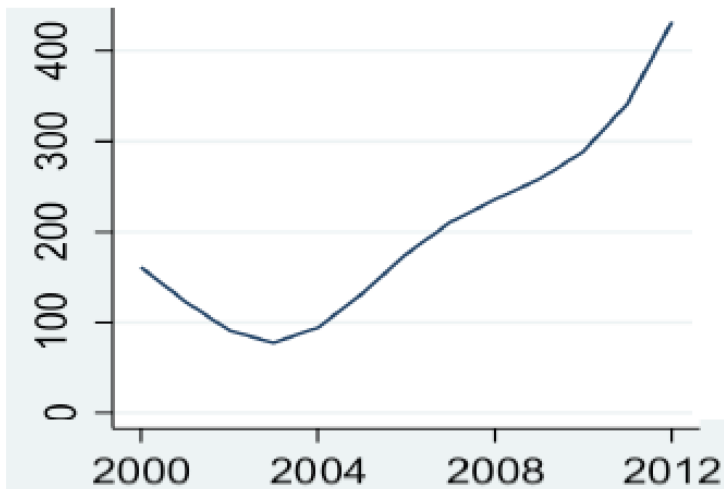
Social conflict



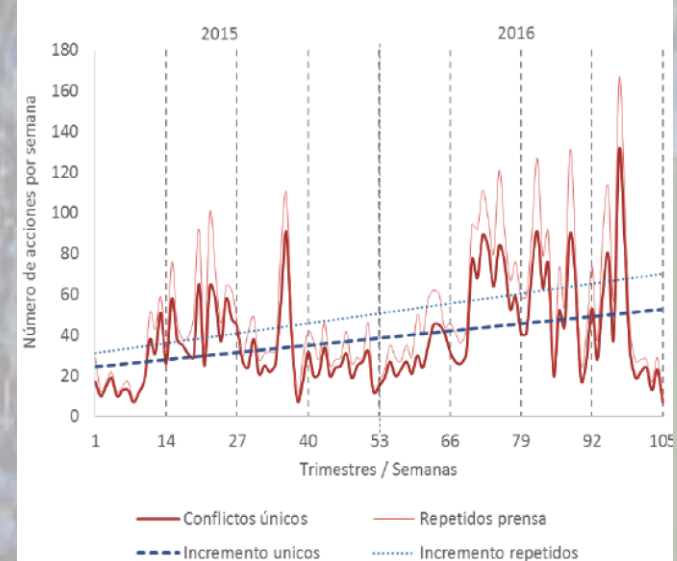
Source:
COES



Nº de episodios de protesta



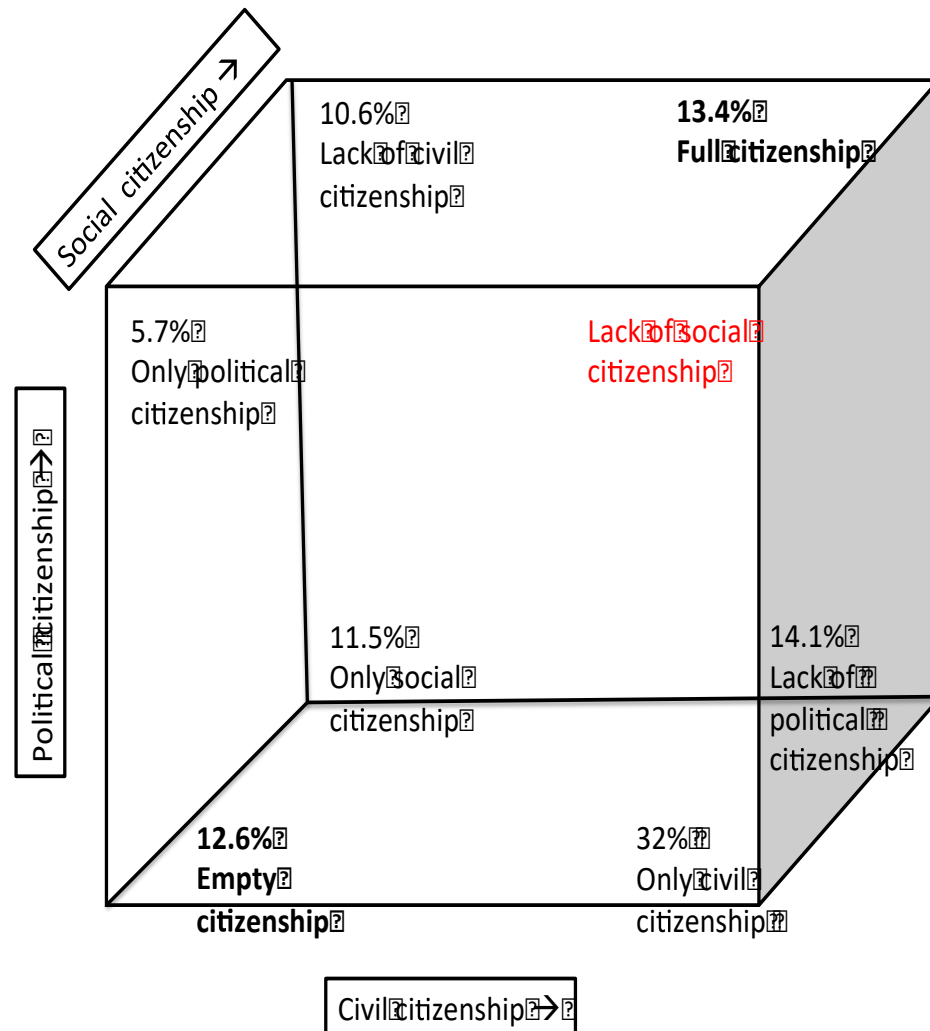
Frecuencia de acciones contenciosas

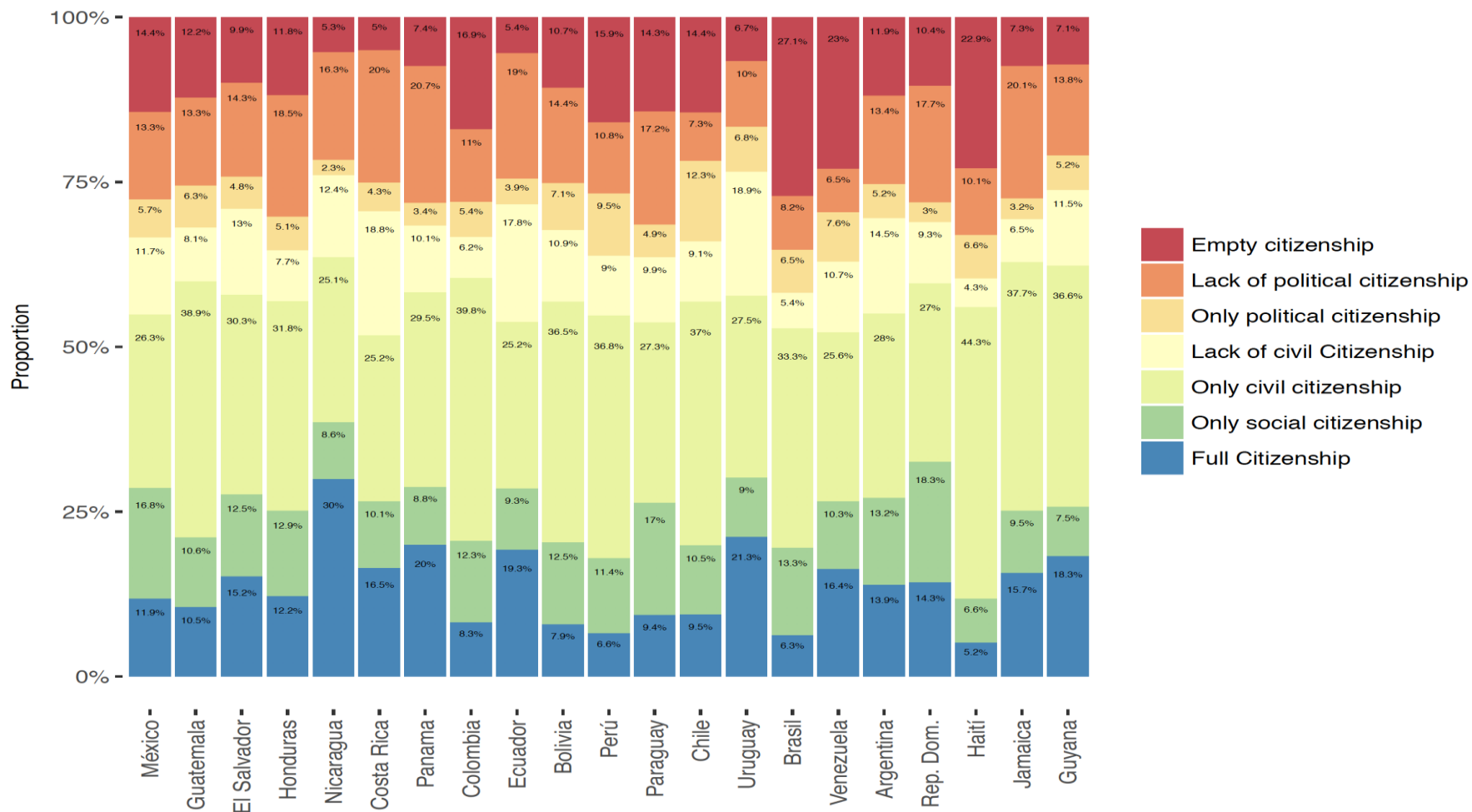


Three outcomes

- 2. Social and territorial segmentation of experience with democratic citizenship (reinforced by decentralization)

Perceived Access to Citizenship Rights





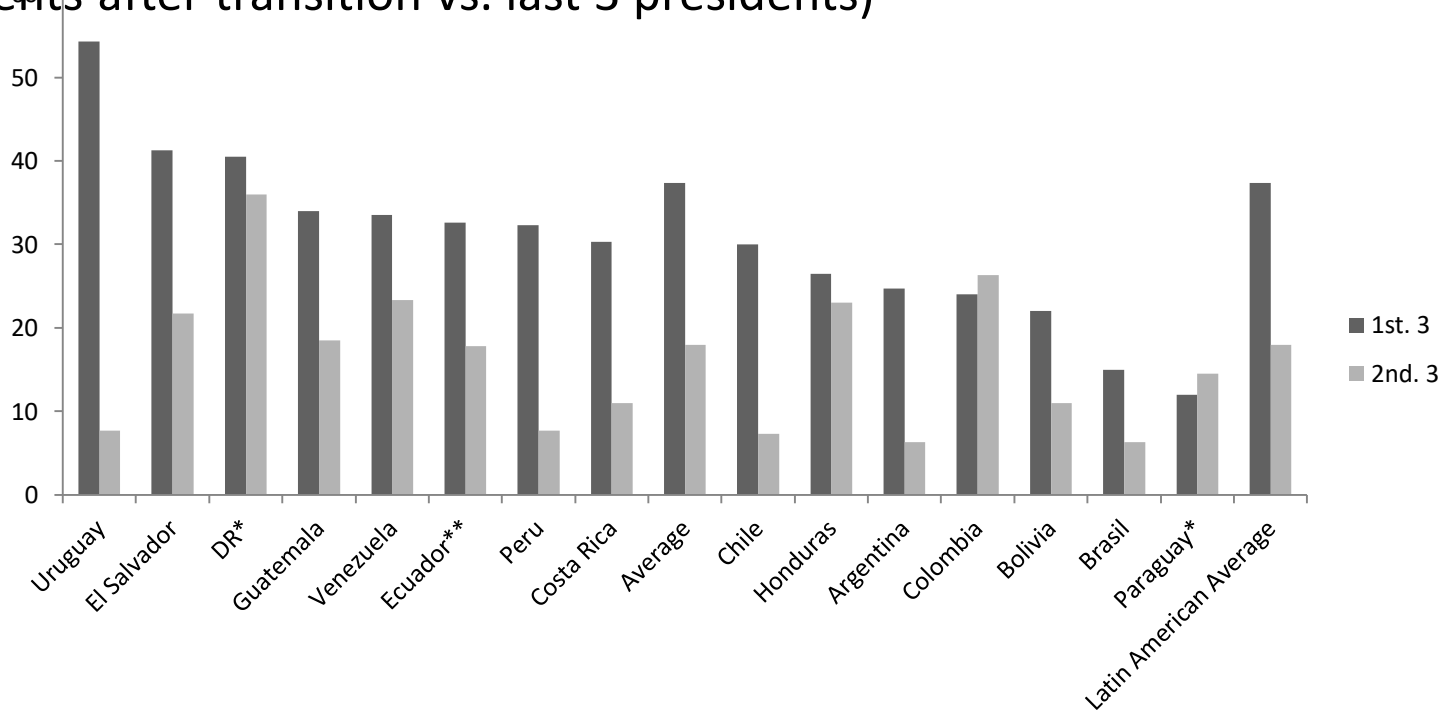
Sub-national variation

	Civil	Social	Political	Average regional unevenness
Costa Rica	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04
El Salvador	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.04
Jamaica	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.05
Nicaragua	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.05
Uruguay	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.05
Panama	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.06
Rep. Dom.	0.06	0.04	0.07	0.06
Paraguay	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
Guatemala	0.06	0.04	0.09	0.06
Guyana	0.05	0.06	0.09	0.07
Colombia	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.07
Honduras	0.06	0.07	0.08	0.07
Bolivia	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.07
Ecuador	0.08	0.08	0.06	0.07
Argentina	0.09	0.07	0.08	0.08
Venezuela	0.1	0.07	0.1	0.09
Mexico	0.09	0.08	0.11	0.09
Haiti	0.07	0.11	0.1	0.09
Peru	0.11	0.07	0.1	0.09
Chile	0.11	0.11	0.09	0.10
Brasil	0.1	0.1	0.13	0.11
Average unevenness by citizenship type	0.07	0.06	0.08	

Three outcomes

- 3. Time compression: legitimacy is structuring time, yet...

How long does presidential popularity take to decline by 10%? (first 3 presidents after transition vs. last 3 presidents)



Parallel universes*time compression: Overarching implication

- Political elites at national and sub-national level (e.g. Revocatorias) increasingly unable to:
 - Structure representation (much easier to win elections than to govern) and sustain legitimacy
 - Then → Either Populism or Oligarchy

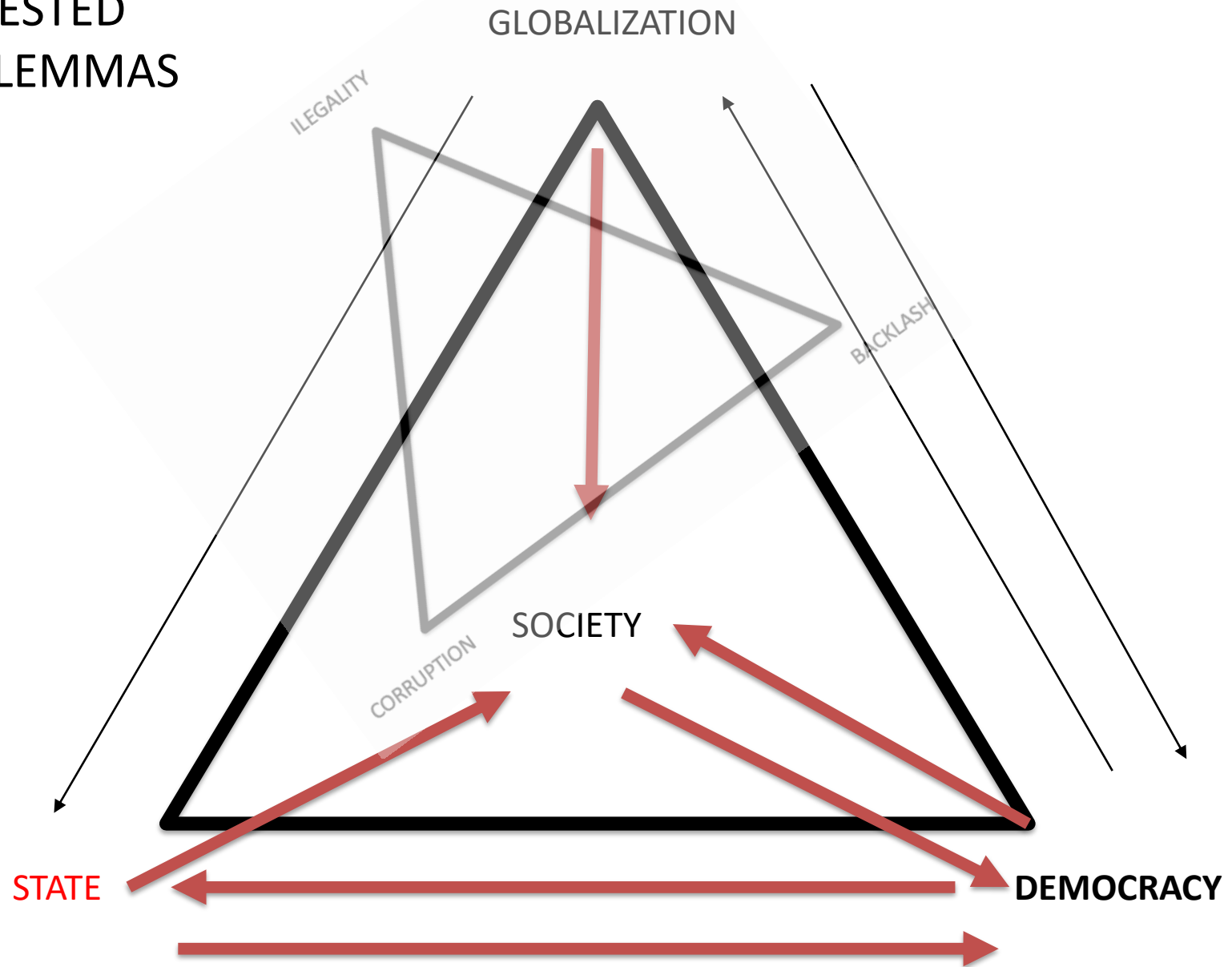
Electoral coalition-making

- Easier to compile than to align for governing
- Low intensity vs. anti-system in every system, pendulum/polarization
 - Subjective evaluations regarding social mobility trajectories/expectations and blame attribution
- Elections in which nothing or everything is at play, tension with liberal democracy

Conventional wisdom

- Careening between:
 - Populism:
 - OK, but even populist leaders suffer from time-compression/complex social preference structures/single-issue citizens
 - Oligarchy:
 - OK, but if markets are socially/institutionally embedded → threat to oligarchs / Oligarchy by default (yet, contested/exposed)
- In LATAM: “WC, left-turn, right turn”
- OK, but dissolution of political power at national and sub-national levels has been probably overlooked.

2 NESTED TRILEMMAS



4 historical factors + 2 emerging ones

- High levels of inequality (top-incomes)
- Functionally and territorially uneven states
- Weak cross-class coalitions for public goods
- Pervasiveness of illegality
- + Relationally weaker states (captured, challenged)
- + Horizontal accountability

Many thanks!

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