

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

## University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

---

Anthropology Publications

Faculty and Staff Scholarship

---

2011

### "Like an Ox Yoke": Challenging the Intrinsic Virtuosity of a Grassroots Social Movement

Donna Chollett

*University of Minnesota - Morris*, [cholledl@morris.umn.edu](mailto:cholledl@morris.umn.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/anthropology>



Part of the [Latin American Studies Commons](#), [Politics and Social Change Commons](#), [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#), and the [Social Justice Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Chollett, Donna, "'Like an Ox Yoke': Challenging the Intrinsic Virtuosity of a Grassroots Social Movement" (2011). *Anthropology Publications*. 7.

<https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/anthropology/7>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty and Staff Scholarship at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in Anthropology Publications by an authorized administrator of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact [skulann@morris.umn.edu](mailto:skulann@morris.umn.edu).

**"Like an Ox Yoke": Challenging the Intrinsic Virtuosity  
of a Grassroots Social Movement**

Dr. Donna L. Chollett  
Associate Professor, Anthropology  
Coordinator, Latin American Area Studies  
Division of Social Sciences  
109 Camden Building  
University of Minnesota-Morris  
600 E 4th St  
Morris MN 56267-2132

(320) 589-6215  
(320) 578-6117 (fax)  
[cholledl@morris.umn.edu](mailto:cholledl@morris.umn.edu)

**Biographical Information:**

Donna L. Chollett is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Coordinator of Latin American Area Studies at the University of Minnesota–Morris. Her research over the past 25 years focuses on sugar cane growers, privatization of sugar mills, transnational agribusinesses, and social movements in Western Mexico.

## **"Like an Ox Yoke": Challenging the Intrinsic Virtuosity of a Grassroots Social Movement**

### **Abstract**

Since the 1980s, neoliberal globalization fostered an upsurge of grassroots social movements in Latin America that sought alternatives to increasing poverty and social exclusion. Social movement scholars often interpret these movements as morally noble models of democracy given their claims to social justice and equity. My research examines the forced seizure of a closed Mexican sugar mill and establishment of a cooperative, worker-run factory by a grassroots movement whose cultural politics aimed at creating more democratic processes. Yet in 2009, after 11 years of success, movement leaders declared the mill bankrupt and shut it down. The façade of unity presented by activists obscured internal divisions and hierarchical control that beleaguered the movement. I argue that a more nuanced and critical analysis that takes into consideration the contradictions and paradoxes that may be present in grassroots struggles reframes essentialist conceptions regarding the intrinsic virtuosity of grassroots social movements.

**KEY WORDS:** Neoliberal Globalization, Social Movements, Social Justice, Cooperatives, Cultural Politics

Massive debt in the 1980s and IMF-mandated structural adjustment prompted many Latin American governments to adopt neoliberal policies (Gates, 1996; Gustafson, 1994; Otero 1996). These policies included privatizations, market liberalization, retraction of the state's role in the economy, and elimination of social guarantees of the welfare state. This new embracing of the neoliberal paradigm represented a political-ideological decision to rebuild the political economy to serve the interests of emergent coalitions of capital. In 1982, Mexico had 1155 state enterprises; 52 of these were sugar mills. By 1992, 886 state enterprises were privatized, including 50 sugar mills. During the Salinas de Gortari administration (1988-2004), seven of the privatized mills closed their doors.

Carton de Grammont (1995), Gledhill (2005), and Phillips (1998) provide evidence that neoliberal globalization contributed to increased economic marginalization across the region, while Edelman (1999) and Rubio (1996) document an upsurge of social movements that sought alternatives to the neoliberal model. Gledhill (1995) examines the marginalization that these processes left in their wake in the state of Michoacán, Mexico—the region of my research. Harvey (2003) refers to privatization of state enterprises as “accumulation by dispossession,” whereby important public resources pass to the hands of private capital. Medeiros (2009) refers to this process in Latin America as a “privatization stampede.” He convincingly argues that it was less the debt crisis than the emergence of a new coalition of domestic private capitalists who pushed for privatizations. This new financier class used its enriched assets to launch an “accumulation through encroachment” on state assets (2009: 126). In 1993, presidential candidate Salinas de Gortari called 27 of Mexico's wealthiest industrialists to a dinner; each of these was asked to donate \$25 million to his election campaign. Many of these were recipients of

state enterprises at bargain-basement prices. In Mexico's sugar industry, all investors were domestic capitalists.

One of these, Mexican industrialist Alberto Santos de Hoyos purchased four sugar mills in 1991, then closed the Puruarán, Michoacán mill in 1992 to consolidate production at his Pedernales refinery, 10 kilometers to the north of Puruarán. Santos claimed the Puruarán mill was unprofitable, thus placing individual profit above social good. He selected Puruarán for closure because workers at the Pedernales syndicate agreed to partial layoffs; those at Puruarán demanded, "If you are going to hang one of us, hang us all." Their commitment to social justice, in effect, sealed their fate. Even members of the workers' syndicate blamed their own leaders for this statement.

Campeños (small-scale farmers) often consider themselves perpetually subjugated and in debt, yet their struggles for liberation seldom extract them from oppression. Indeed, a social movement composed of diverse sectors emerged in Mexico in 1993 to protest the debtors' crisis. Calling themselves "El Barzón" (barzón is the yoke ring for hitching a plow to a team of oxen), the movement protested massive debts owed and their continued economic oppression under the neoliberal paradigm.<sup>1</sup> The question this research raises is whether the formation of an alternative social movement in Puruarán, Michoacán facilitated liberation from the previous "yoke" of the privatized sugar mill.

Privatization of the Mexican sugar industry promised to modernize the sector with new capital as the state withdrew to focus on IMF-imposed structural adjustment and debt repayment. Contrary to expectations, rising interest rates and decapitalization left new mill owners unable to pay off loans for the purchase of mills. By August, 2000, industrialists at twenty sugar mills had

not paid the \$14 billion dollars owed to cañeros (cane growers) for their sugar cane and called on the government for a bailout (Muñoz, 2000a, 2000b).

Debt was not the only obstacle that sugar industrialists faced. Initially supportive of NAFTA, they looked forward to opening of the U.S. market to Mexican cane sugar. “Free trade,” however, proved elusive. After 1994, the U.S. exported high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) to Mexico while it limited imports of Mexican cane sugar—in non-compliance with NAFTA. From 1996-2002, the U.S. exported an average of 180,000 tons of HFCS per year to Mexico (USDA, 2004). Years of World Trade Organization disputes between the two countries ensued. Privatization, debt, and market competition contributed to corporate consolidation and the closure of seven Mexican sugar mills and created unprecedented economic crisis in sugar-producing communities.

Edelman and Haugerud (2005) insightfully argue that transitions in the global economy coincided with post-modernist anthropology, rejection of master narratives, and constriction of intellectual debate regarding people’s resistance to mounting inequality. New social movements (NSMs) theory distinguished NSMs from “old” movements that primarily involved class struggles or sought revolutionary upheaval. Foweraker (1995), Laclau and Mouffe (1985), and Melucci (1989) inform that NSMs no longer engage in traditional conflicts with the state or class-based politics, but rather involve cultural struggles over democracy, autonomy, cultural meanings, and the formation of new social identities. While Escobar (2005) situates the distinctiveness of NSMs in identity politics and privileges discourse, Edelman (1999) rejects NSMs theorists’ ahistorical, post-modern emphasis on identity and discourse and their dismissal of a political economy analysis of structural inequalities. Gledhill’s (1988) incisive historical critique of religious and indigenous movements in Michoacán demonstrates that consciousness,

discursive frames, and political resistance have always been, and continue to be, considerably more complex than NSM theorists suggest. Hellman (1995) argues that NSMs are indeed not “new” but reveal the failure of NSMs theorists to recognize that paradoxical contradictions and cultural politics were always present in “old” social movements or that NSMs may also involve class struggles or challenges to the state.

Several examples illustrate a common interpretation of these movements as morally noble: Issa’s (2008) analysis of the landless workers’ movement in Brazil, Olesen’s (2006) research on the Zapatista movement in Mexico, examination of indigenous struggles illustrated by Albro’s (2005) publication on the water wars in Bolivia, and the closed factory takeovers in Argentina reported by Sitrin (2006). The social movement literature garners much scholarly interest in grassroots struggles for democratization, social justice, and cultural preservation. Scholars enamored with struggles for democratization and social justice often present an overly-optimistic view of contemporary social movements. Indeed, Hellman’s skepticism leads her to claim these movements as “irresistibly attractive” to scholars (2008: 61). White nationalist, supremacist hate groups such as neo-Nazis, skinheads, and resurgence of the KKK could be defined as NSMs, but their intolerant aims also eluded the attention of NSM theorists. Few researchers examine the significance of social movements whose practices contradict their collective values and goals. I argue that a more critical perspective is in order.

Over the past two decades, however, a number of anthropologists returned to questions of political economy to document social exclusion, which Rubio (2006) identifies as the defining characteristic of globalization. More critical, context-embedded analyses of social movements challenge essentialist assumptions that grassroots movements are inherently more democratic, that they empower activists through participation, or that they purge their organizations of

hierarchical relationships. Paoli and da Silva Telles (1998) deconstruct interpretations that presume the intrinsic virtuosity of social movements through analyses that reveal the disorderliness of internal tensions and contradictions.

Several examples point to the relevance of reconceptualizing social movement practice. Ivancheva (2010) examines how the Bolivarian University of Venezuela, founded on principles of resistance to global capitalism, anti-authoritarianism, solidarity, and radical reform reveals the paradox of internal critique and reproduction of traditional hierarchical structures as student radicalism became unacceptable to the socialist intellectuals who founded the university. Schuller's (2010) work with grassroots organizing in Haiti further illustrates the necessity of a more nuanced analysis that takes into account how NGO partners effectively put local groups into conflict with each other and create local turf battles as international actors compete for their loyalty. Rubin (1998) found that the Coalition of Workers, Peasants, and Students of the Isthmus (COCEI) of Oaxaca, Mexico, in its struggle for local political control, moved from domination to democratization, yet the social movement came to represent a political culture characterized by ambiguity and contradiction that fell short of internal coherency. Likewise, Storey's (2010) ethnographic research on witnessing in the West Bank challenges interpretations of anti-globalization movements as less hierarchical, decentralized networks that empower participants. Edelman (1999) documents that in Costa Rica, conflicts over political vision and finances weakened the movement, thus "grassroots" does not always equate with democratization. Hellman (2008), drawing on her research of union organizations in Mexico, cautions social movement scholars that even as social movements challenge domination, they may reproduce existing clientelist systems led by caciques (local bosses). Bryer's (2010) ethnographic research examines worker-recuperated factories in Argentina and challenges researchers who presume

internal solidarity of cooperative organizations. Prompted by the crisis of neoliberalism and a rash of factory closings, workers appropriated abandoned businesses and established cooperative management systems with shared decision making. However, the outcome was internal dissention between those who aspired to profit-oriented management and accounting systems and those who prioritized social good over material ends. Thus, it may be erroneous to assume that cooperatives enable a new form of more democratic social relations.

Stahler-Sholk et al. raise a significant issue regarding social movements: “An important question to consider is whether contemporary social movements are necessarily more internally democratic or progressive than other forms of organizing and whether they necessarily lead to higher levels of empowerment” (2008: 7). Hellman (2008) leaves social movement scholars with an important unfinished task, since we understand little about how the democratization process takes place or why it may fail to materialize.

In challenging the intrinsic virtuosity of social movements, I take cultural politics as a dialectic process wherein cultural meanings condition activities and activities reshape cultural understandings, but always, as Dagnino (1998), Roseberry (1989), and Slater (1998) assert, within a context of unequal access to power. Warren (1998) envisions cultural politics as a cultural practice embedded in materialist praxis just as materialist praxis is infused in cultural meanings. Yet, as Alvarez et al. (1998) contend, insufficient attention has been given to the cultural politics of social movements: “...investigating the relationship between neoliberal renditions of citizenship, social adjustments, and the cultural politics of social movements is an especially urgent task” (1998: 23). Cultural politics reveals insights into how people enact practices and subjectivities as they make culturally-defined claims. This requires, as Melucci

(1989) and Slater (1998) contend, a more nuanced understanding of the internal dynamics and submerged networks of daily life within these movements.

My analysis of the social movement in Puruarán, Michoacán, where privatization and free trade led to the closure of a regional sugar mill and left many in the community unemployed, provides a lens into the contradictions and paradoxes that may be present in grassroots movements. Community members seized the closed sugar mill and put it into operation as a worker-run cooperative from 1998-2009 (Chollett, 1999, 2000, 2003). The “success” of this social movement in rejuvenating the local economy came undone in 2009, when the administrative council declared the factory bankrupt and shut it down, again leaving the town without its main source of income. I analyze a social movement that emerged in the process of contested negotiations between hegemonic actors, whose hegemony was limited by local strategies of confrontation, and the formation of a cooperative, whose members divided into opposing factions, even as they united in a common effort to reopen the community’s sugar mill. Contending factions are part and parcel of the social movement process, yet these did not dampen the common goal of the movement. Despite their internal power struggles, social movements provide political arenas for making collective demands. I accord attention, as Roseberry (1989) and Slater (1998) suggest, to the fissures in capitalist hegemony, internal heterogeneity within marginalized localities, and the dialectical intersection of geopolitics and social movements. As Edelman asserts: “...the politics of economic structural adjustment... is better understood as a complex and eminently cultural process of political and ideological contention within and between policymaking dominant groups and popular sectors” (1999: 40).

Cañeros and mill workers in Puruarán trace back a long genealogy of family members who labored for the hacienda, in the sugar refinery, and in the cane fields. Of symbolic

importance is the plaque commemorating a 1966 presidential decree, when the government rehabilitated the ingenio (sugar mill) and declared the factory, “Ingenio Ejidal Puruarán,” to be given for the benefit of the community. This plaque provided the basis for the community’s challenge to privatization and justification for taking over the mill following its closure. A social movement participant explained:

Well, I see the sale as a great fraud because the mill wasn't even property of the federal government. It has always been considered as the patrimony of the town. At that moment the mill was ripped from the hands of the people.

As in the case of factory seizures in Argentina (Klein and Lewis, 2004), this cultural construction confers ownership of the mill on the community, symbolizes the illegitimacy of its sale to Santos, and asserts the community’s moral right to their source of work in the name of social justice. Not unlike struggles against mining in Ecuador (Kuecker, 2008), theirs was a radical ideology that placed community and the welfare of future generations above corporate profits. The mill directly supported 3,854 cañeros and workers, yet indirectly benefitted the community and surrounding region. Deprived of the community’s primary source of employment, poverty, hunger, business failures, and escalating violence became manifest (Chollett, 2000).

#### Angel Guzmán and the Illegal Harvest

Angel Guzmán (pseudonym), president of the local cane growers’ union, emerged as leader of the social movement. A crowd of 1,000 united in November, 1992 to demand reopening of the Puruarán mill. With no positive response, in May, 1993, they seized the factory, repaired it, and prepared to process 36,000 tons of cane during the “minizafra” (the local term for the illegal harvest). With profits from production of 3,300 tons of sugar, Guzmán made partial payments to cañeros and workers. The minizafra thus inverted the state’s and mill owner’s

objectives, utilizing the illegal seizure to subvert regional development schemes in the name of social justice and autonomy (Chollett, 2003).

The state governor, in support of Santos, used the power of the police to suppress the movement. Judicial police arrested seven leaders of the movement and Santos' personnel began to remove equipment from the mill to prevent operation of the refinery. The police entered and guarded the mill from 1993-1996. Meanwhile, the social movement continued to demand reopening or expropriation of the mill for the common good. Activists seized the Legislative Palace in the state capital of Morelia and set up an encampment of tents along the street facing the palace.

Complex and contradictory processes were at work in this movement as grassroots participants demonstrated unity in their goal to reopen the mill. Political differences, however, threatened this unity as struggle for control of leadership of the movement emerged. As the *minizafra* got underway, a public assembly voted to depose Martín Rodríguez (pseudonym), then president of the *ejido* (landholding unit). Many blamed him for obligating *cañeros* to deliver their cane to Pedernales (Méndez Estrada, 1993; Robles Soto, 1993). Not only would this require extra time and travel costs to deliver cane to a zone they did not identify with, but he was viewed as a traitor to the cause for failure to support the Puruarán mill. The contentious relationship between Angel Guzmán and Martín Rodríguez marked the apogee of factionalism within the social movement as Guzmán and Rodríguez led separate factions to negotiate with Santos for the community's purchase of the Puruarán mill. Those who supported Guzmán praised him for challenging Santos, carrying out the *minizafra*, and restoring their source of work. Others blamed him for robbing *cañeros* of funds paid for social security and for non-payment of workers' wages and thus aligned with Rodríguez. Opponents of Rodríguez asserted that he personally profited from

the sale of timber on ejido lands and for his partiality to Ingenio Pedernales. Both leaders engaged in clientelist practices by claiming to be the one with capacity to negotiate for the sale of the Puruarán mill to the community. Leadership was thus reinforced by a degree of Machiavellianism with promises to restore economic viability to the community. Fracturing of the movement revealed the underlying tensions and dynamics of shifting alliances that Slater (1998) informs often punctuate larger forces for unity.

Ultimately, the sale failed to materialize and other challenges to the movement emerged. Timoteo Lianza (pseudonym), a leader who was jailed after the mill seizure, turned against Angel Guzmán, openly exposing him for usurpation of funds. A letter he authored to President Ernesto Zedillo demanded action against the “pseudo leader” for “taking advantage of the ignorance, the hunger and the needs of this town that was buried in the greatest misery and poverty in memory...” concluding, “...it is better to die reclaiming what legitimately and by rights belongs to us, than to die of hunger under the cacique dictatorship of Angel.”<sup>2</sup> Martín Rodríguez was assassinated after completing his term as ejido president. After two attempts on his life, in 1996 Angel Guzmán left Puruarán; shortly after, he was felled by five bullets.

#### The Priest's Mediation

Local power struggles and fear-instilling violence clarified the need for a mediating influence in Puruarán. In 1995, the community priest, Jesús DíazBarriga, agreed to lead the social movement. He recalled, “Since the beginning I said let's fight, not by violent means, but by legal means, in a civilized manner.” Nonetheless, members of the newly formed Committee for the Struggle to Reopen Ingenio Puruarán determined that they would once again seize the mill. The government then handed it over in custody to the committee.

The state government responded to the crisis of unemployment by proposing 15 micro-enterprises, including a gas station, a fertilizer bag factory, and a factory to manufacture clothing.

As explained by DíazBarriga:

We cannot sacrifice the people who need work to sustain their families, when we continue to run up against a wall with the attempt to reopen the sugar mill. Seeing that reopening it is almost impossible with globalization of the economy, that now with the high fructose the sugar is failing, we have to accept other businesses to give other types of work.

Much criticism was directed toward the committee for abandoning the sugar mill in order to focus on alternative employment projects. Some accused the priest's committee of being "sold" to the government. The growing strength of oppositional political parties in Mexico also played a role in social movement dynamics. Those affiliated with the priest's committee were known as "PRI-istas," and their opponents as "PRD-istas."<sup>3</sup> The PRD had supported the social movement, whereas the PRI mostly had not. Factionalism sharpened as officers of the priest's committee ran for municipal offices on the PRI ticket and won. Dissidents complained of how these committee members used the movement to gain political offices. An oppositional faction coalesced around Juan Soto (pseudonym) who led the new opposition.

#### Juan Soto's Uncooperative Cooperative

As members of the priest's committee guarded the mill in 1998, the Soto faction forced its guards out of the mill and took it over. The influence of the PRD in the Soto faction crystallized with the involvement of key PRD representatives in promoting the organization of a cooperative. Members elected Soto president of the Cooperative Society of Workers of Ingenio Puruarán; its purpose, Soto explained, was to "defend ourselves against the voracity of capitalism." His words would prove to ring hollow in years to come.

In 1998, after five years of abandonment, the Puruarán sugar mill belched forth black columns of smoke and resumed operation. But the results of the 1998 harvest were dismal since workers were able to produce only 20 tons of sugar. Soto justified these poor results with the argument that the 1998 season was merely a test and that enemies had sabotaged the mill. Accusations fed paranoia, creating a very uncooperative environment. Fractioning of the social movement peaked at this time, dividing the town with suspicions and mistrust.

At Pedernales, numerous production and harvest charges, as well as high interest rates reduced cañeros' profits. In 1998, 1466 cañeros from Puruarán delivered cane, valued at \$19,179,073 pesos, to Pedernales. Of these, 63.7 percent earned profits. However, 36 percent were left in debt to Ingenio Pedernales at the end of the harvest. In contrast, cañeros who delivered to received interest-free loans and avoided the multitude of charges deducted at Pedernales. Competition with HFCS caused 60 percent of Pedernales' sugar to be left in the warehouse and the mill lacked cash flow to make final payments to cañeros.

From 1999-2006, the Puruarán sugar mill increased production and cañeros increased their earnings. Much of the success of the Puruarán cooperative derived from a relationship it forged with the Cooperative Society of Workers of Pascual. This cooperative produces natural fruit drinks using only cane sugar. Pascual provided cash advances for operation of the Puruarán sugar mill and purchased all of its sugar production, thus the Puruarán mill enjoyed a guaranteed market and freedom from competition with HFCS.

Despite this progress, opposition to the cooperative administration persisted. By 1999, yet another faction formed to obtain credit for cañeros. Their intent was to circumvent the cooperative and provide credit directly to cañeros via a government trust fund. As one member asserted, "The money will not pass through Soto's hands. The cooperative has to disappear."

Pedro expressed his dissatisfaction: “The cane is ours, but it isn’t for us—it is for the bunch of rats. They don’t give information. The cooperative committee has one harnessed—like an ox yoke.” Complaints concerning lack of information on the mill’s financial status, absence of meetings, and suspicions of fraud mounted. Following the 2008 and 2009 harvests, the administration made no payments to cañeros who delivered their cane and cañeros demanded an audit, upon which, Soto left Puruarán. In early November, 2009, the administration declared the mill bankrupt and claimed it would cease processing cane in the zone, again leaving the community without its main source of employment.

### Challenging Intrinsic Virtuosity

Given the historical relationship between cañeros and mill owners, analysis should detect a clear distinction between the operation of a sugar mill based on capitalist profit making and one that functions as a cooperative with social ends. The former is recognized for contentious, hierarchical relationships between mill management and cañeros:

During centuries, historically, the cañero had the idea that the industrialist wanted to pay him [sic] less. In the historical struggle between cañeros and sugar mills, the cañero never said, ‘They pay me fairly.’ We are brothers, but we are always brothers that they want to screw. Historically, the cañeros have been exploited (interview with Pascual Alvarado, Local Union Coordinador, Nation Union of Sugarcane Producers, 1997).

In an assembly held by the cooperative in 2000, a cooperative organizer spoke of the advantages of cooperative organization:

We are already beginning to see the benefits. In the cooperative, since we are the owners, we do not have the costs like at Ingenio Pedernales. This is the great advantage. It is

difficult because we are in an environment of capitalism. But here in the cooperative we all put on our pants or none of us do. This is a cooperative—not capitalism.

Theoretically, the cooperative sugar mill represents an alternative to Santos' Pedernales refinery; the former involved a community that appropriated power from the grassroots to wrest the mill from the hands of an investment strategy based on private initiative, productive efficiency, and capital accumulation. In essence, those in the cooperative demanded economic and political autonomy from standard neoliberal practice. Cañeros claimed resources formerly denied to them when subordinated to traditional mill management, and as such, asserted their unique place in a social field where they had previously been marginalized. Bryer's (2010) insight into the dialectical relationship between meaningful labor and the requisites for accountability and profitability emphasizes the need to take into account the contradictions and paradoxes of social movement praxis. Other scholars such as Hellman (2008) and Rubin (1998) challenge the assumption that social movement praxis is internally coherent and reveal that hierarchy often trumps the stated democratizing efforts of social movements.

Cañeros at Puruarán premised their cooperative on serving the broader social good and thus rejected traditional management's quest for profit at the expense of cañeros. However, the management council of the newly-formed cooperative replicated traditional vertical relations, closed off transparency in the handling of finances, and outright fraud overwhelmed demands for transparency, democracy, and shared decision making. During interviews, I detected a strong consensus that the mill was not being run as a cooperative, meetings were not being held, and members were not informed of the financial status of the mill. Some accused the mill management of being "caciques."

Holzner (2006) and Olvera (2010) explain that clientelist organizations and practices remain resilient in Mexico despite an upsurge of resistance movements that demanded autonomy and democratic participation (see also Fox, 1994; Hellman, 2008). Olvera stresses the importance of examining state-society relationships. Mexico's transition to democracy has been short-circuited by failure to propose effective democratic reforms and political projects. With the decentering of PRI, PAN reproduced PRI's clientelistic politics, and the PRD followed suit. Where oppositional politics is marginalized, actors seek state resources, thus replicating reliance on a paternalistic, authoritarian benefactor. This phenomenon is mirrored in social movements where struggles for democratization likewise culminate in clientelism (Olvera 2010). As the PRD gained a stronger foothold in Michoacán,<sup>4</sup> social movement leaders sought out their financial and political support. In return for tanks of petroleum, funding to pay workers during shortfalls and to supply fertilizer to cañeros, the PRD enhanced its electoral support during election campaigns. Social movement participants often adhere to clientelism as neoliberal reforms weaken the state patronage system of doling out jobs and social benefits.

For Holzner the explanation for this phenomenon lies in a distinction between weak and strong organizational networks. Movements with weak ties tend to establish linkages with diverse groups across a broad region and thus promote information flows and synergy of the movement. Weak networks, by building coalitions, receive support from national and international solidarity groups that strengthens them. The MST, one of the most successful social movements in Latin America, accomplished this by establishing alliances with transnational support networks, such as churches and charity organizations. In other words, they scale up their organization by creating links to external organizations that provide additional support. These bring international condemnation for social rights abuses. Weak networks expose members to

new innovative ideas through information flows from outside. When grassroots organizations reach beyond clientelistic networks and create bridges with other organizations, "...participation in extensive networks...allows the poor to tap into multiple sources of information about resources, repertoires, and political opportunities" (Holzner 2006: 92). Weak ties provide bridges between social groups and thus establish inter-group connections that foster broader integration. The national-level protest across the country in 2001, indeed, created a coordinated effort among cañeros in 15 Mexican states, whose coordinated protest against lack of payment for delivered cane moved the government to expropriate 27 of the privatized sugar mills.

Unlike the shift toward virtual communities and privatization of social life suggested by Wellman (1999) for Euro-based communities with weak networks, in Puruarán, social life retains dense networks of people connected through a common workplace, with the primary source of external networking expressed through outmigration. The glocalized, networked individualism Wellman (2002) describes is rare in the research community. The movement that formed in 1993 brought in the state-level teachers' syndicate that provided a leadership model and synergy to the movement. The movement also garnered some external support through journalists that strengthened their demands in its early phase. As the movement shifted power structures in subsequent phases, this extensive network contracted and became more reliant on clusters of dense networks with fewer relationships among members with outside supporters. Strong, dense networks build cohesion within local groups, but create intra-community clusters made up of factions that compete for leadership, rather than seeking common goals. Wellman (2002) makes clear that dense networks facilitate control of leaders over members' behavior and also inhibit information flows from outside. This became a primary factor for inhibiting a stronger coalition with other communities to protest mill closings among the seven closed mills in western Mexico.

For those with strong networks, leaders tend to promote close ties with members, gain inordinate personal power through control of members' activities, limit the flow of information, and isolate the movement from networking with other organizations. As leaders mobilize members into action through sit-ins, marches, and demonstrations, they develop collective consciousness and loyalty as they establish legitimacy of the movement. Strategies also include soliciting government support, use of ideological tools of persuasion, and outright repression. In Puruarán, the committee headed by the priest came to rely on PRI-based clientelism, as did those in the Oaxacan squatter movement reported by Holzner (2006). Negotiations with government officials were carried out by leaders who promised future rewards (reopening of the mill and new microenterprises to provide employment) to loyal followers who depended on continued paternalism. The social network became further constrained with the even stronger network created by leaders of the cooperative.

Strong networks prevail where disappearing social services and economic insecurity exacerbate the need for resources. These leaders may be acting within the constraints of established structural inequalities, even at the expense of the cooperative's members (Holzner, 2006). In the case of the cooperative, the initial promise of a return to work and payments for cane provided support among members. Leaders in this case control access to information and may limit or distort information flows to conceal corruption. Soto's excuse that the 1998 harvest was only a test, with promise of a brighter future, and blaming mill failures on sabotage exemplified this process. Likewise, after receiving income from the sale of sugar and syrup, not even the cooperative treasurer had knowledge of the amount earned, explaining to me: "As treasurer, I am responsible for managing finances, but they don't let me because the president manages everything. I don't know, professor, the income or value of the sale of that syrup

because the president of the Administration makes those negotiations directly.” Even so, cultivation of strong ties assured the treasurer’s loyalty and unwillingness to challenge undemocratic practices he disagreed with: “In reality, those of us in the administration lack conscience for valuing what a cooperative is and to not be subject to the customs we were accustomed to under the yoke of the boss [of the privatized mill]. Well I am willing to avoid frictions with others of the administration because these confrontations among compañeros are not convenient.” Although he did not participate in the committees of Guzmán or the priest, his tight relationship with Soto depended on part in his faith that the mill would eventually bring profits.

The cooperative president, for example, constrained information by failure to hold meetings or inform members of the financial status of the mill. His ability to do so shielded him from accusations of pilfering funds. Moreover, he distorted information flows by attributing mill failures to sabotage. The tight personal relationships with members allowed careful observation of behavior and he exerted control by expelling those who appeared disloyal. His access to resources provided from relationships established with PRD politicians (donations of petroleum and cash) fostered perceptions regarding his effectiveness as leader. Retaining monopoly control over resources provided the power to coerce and control by distributing rewards or sanctioning behavior. Members continued to depend on employment and cane payments available only through the cooperative. The administrative council of the cooperative also employed rhetoric intended to ensure conformity among members. At one of the rare meetings in 2000, a council member pointed out the lack of consciousness among members who only wanted to take what they could from the mill; this would lead them to bankruptcy. The president then affirmed, “If we continue supporting this cooperative, we are in the future. This is important because in one or

two more years, we will begin to see the benefits.” This analysis takes some liberty with Holzner’s thesis of clientelist preferences for PRI organizations, yet the movement itself reincorporated practices of clientelism in the form of leadership control of cooperative members. In this case, no networks were forged with other closed mills, and the movement was little known outside its geographically isolated region.

Activists in the social movement presented a façade of collective identity as they premised the seizure of the sugar mill on cultural meanings of social justice and common good. They challenged, as Escobar and Alvarez would claim, “the state’s economic and political models and called into question authoritarian and hierarchical ways of doing politics” (1992: 2). From its inception, fissures surfaced and threatened disunity. The articulation of collective politics as a strategy for managing an illegally seized factory redounded in clientelism and caciquismo (bossism).

## Conclusions

Puruarán is a community whose source of employment met its demise under the neoliberalizing policies of privatization and free-market globalization. People in Puruarán mobilized to confront their marginalization and the crisis of reproduction affecting family and community forms of survival. The community repossessed the closed sugar mill, claiming rightful ownership and demanding social justice even as they initiated power struggles for leadership among contending local factions. By creating the symbolism of the sugar mill as community patrimony, the community united in a common cause; torn by traditional patterns of caciquismo and clientelism, the community fractured again and again. Paoli and da Silva Telles (1998) argue that a dialectic struggle for hegemony reveals the contradictions inherent in demands for public social rights on the one hand, and the market-motivated right to profit at

social expense on the other. Hence, I argue that this transformation in the global-local nexus of relations obliges us to examine the uneven nature of hegemony and power as it is constituted in local communities.

Some would define the social movement in Puruarán as an utter failure. Some struggled for social well-being of the community and a future for upcoming generations; others sought personal gain or political offices. Not only did the Puruarán movement fracture into opposing factions, but Puruarán's geographic marginality, lack of communication and interaction with a half-dozen other closed mills dispersed around the country, and dearth of media coverage limited participants' ability to forge non-hierarchical relationships based on solidarity identity. As Holzner (2006), Olvera (2010) and others have shown, strong networks like those that prevail in Puruarán close off social movements to synergies derived from other movements and supportive networks. Those networks that did lend support tended to derive from political parties whose candidates sought electoral votes in exchange for monetary and legal support. The traditional PRI clientelism became manifest as well in the PRD which maintains a stronghold in Michoacán. These dynamics were clear as the social movement transformed through three distinct phases: the initial effort to illegally seize the mill, the mediating force of the priest's committee, and the formation of the cooperative that ultimately failed.

What, then, is the significance of a failed social movement? Paoli and da Silva Telles go to the heart of my argument:

It is not that social movements are, in themselves, intrinsically virtuous. Rather, social movements are important because they constitute, in the conflictive terrain of social life, public arenas in which conflicts gain visibility and collective actors become valid spokespersons. In these arenas, rights structure a public language that delimits the criteria

through which collective demands are problematized and evaluated in their exigency of equity and justice. This language is the source of the processes that mobilize aspirations to redefine social power by tying together different meanings and practices.... [that] unsettle the dominant political culture by forcing it to confront other cultures and politics (1998: 66).

Certainly, the mill owner and the state government were forced to recognize the strategies and demands of participants, however transient their empowerment. For nine years they accomplished their goal of reopening their source of employment. Regardless of competing factions and divergent strategies for realizing their goals, all groups in Puruarán sought reopening of the sugar mill. Regrettably, other lessons may be gleaned from these 18 years of struggle. We may find glory in grassroots struggles for democratization and social justice, but more attention must be lent to the internal dynamics of social movements and their failures as well as their successes. Cooperativism and unity of purpose can succeed only through flexible, loose networks of individuals who privilege consensus decision making and transparency in management. Even more importantly, the Puruarán social movement lays bare misguided state policies that favor capitalist accumulation over social responsibility.

Furthermore, the structures of transnational capital accumulation and growing impoverishment provide fertile ground for drug cartels whose murderous competition with local economies turns alternative struggles—as it did this one—into battlegrounds.

Without the economic hub of the community, production and trafficking in drugs provided one of the few opportunities for economic survival. As drug-related violence penetrates regions where poverty abounds, it further victimizes social movements' efforts to seek alternative development strategies and social justice. Just as the struggle between Puruarenses and external

interests provides a dynamic that illustrates the way national and international influences shape local developments, likewise, the dramatic impact of the “war on drugs” realigned global and local contexts in the region. As Vulliamy (2011) points out, the drug war is the ultimate expression of capitalism gone mad as cartels specialize in predatory capitalism. While neoliberal globalization creates unfathomable gaps between rich and poor, escalation of the war on drugs resulted in the horrifying violence of the past few years as drug lords retaliate a misguided policy. The battles between agrarianism and neoliberalism, social rights and privatization, guaranteed markets and free trade, form an idiom of contested power, now superseded by narco mahem. Puruarán has become yet one battle field in this larger clash between two illogical systems—capitalism and drug cartels.

## References Cited

Aguiar de Medeiros, Carlos (2009) 'Asset-stripping the State: the Political Economy of Privatization in Latin America', *New Left Review* 55: 109-132.

Albro, Robert (2005) 'The Water is Ours, Carajo! Deep Citizenship in Bolivia's Water War', in June Nash (ed.) *Social Movements: An Anthropological Reader*, pp 237-248. Malden MA: Blackwell.

Alvarez, Sonia E., Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (1998) 'Introduction: The Cultural and Political in Latin American Social Movements', in Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (eds.) *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements*, pp. 1-29. Boulder: Westview Press.

Bryer, Alice Rose (2010) 'The Politics of the Social Economy: A Case Study of the Argentinean Empresas Recuperadas', *Dialectical Anthropology* DOI 10.1007/s10624-010-9190-x (accessed 30 May 2010).

Carton de Grammont, Hubert, ed. (1995) *Globalización, deterioro ambiental y reorganización social en el campo*. Mexico, D.F.: Universidad Autónoma de México.

Chollett, Donna L. (1999) 'Global Competition and Community: The Struggle for Social Justice,' *Research in Economic Anthropology* 20: 19-47.

Chollett, Donna L. (2000) 'Neoliberalism's Elusive Benefits: A Case Study of Puruarán, Michoacán/Los beneficios elusivos del neoliberalismo: Un estudio de caso de Puruarán, Michoacán', *Boletín de Investigación* 9: 1-44. Mexico: Universidad Obrera Mexicana.

Chollett, Donna L. (2003) 'In Defense of Social Justice: From Global Transformation to Local Resistance', in Susan Eckstein and Timothy Wickham-Crowley (eds.) *Struggles for Social Rights in Latin America*, pp. 59-79. New York: Routledge.

Dagnino, Evelina (1998) 'Culture, Citizenship, and Democracy: Changing Discourses and Practices of the American Left', in Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (eds.) *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements*, pp. 33-63. Boulder: Westview Press.

Edelman, Marc (1999) *Peasants Against Globalization: Rural Social Movements in Costa Rica*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Edelman, Marc and Angelique Haugerud (eds.) (2005) *The Anthropology of Development and Globalization: From Classical Political Economy to Contemporary Neoliberalism*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Escobar, Arturo (2005) 'Imagining a Post-Development Era', in Marc Edelman and Angelique Haugerud (eds.) *The Anthropology of Development and Globalization: From Classical Political Economy to Contemporary Neoliberalism*, pp. 341-351. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Escobar, Arturo and Sonia E. Alvarez (1992) 'Introduction: Theory and Protest in Latin America Today', in Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez (eds.), pp. 1-15. *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Foweraker, Joe (1995) *Theorizing Social Movements*. London: Pluto Press.

Fox, Jonathan (1994) 'The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico', *World Politics* 46: 151-184.

Gates, Marilyn (1996) 'The Debt Crisis and Economic Restructuring: Prospects for Mexican Agriculture', in Gerardo Otero (ed.) *Neoliberalism Revisited: Economic Restructuring and Mexico's Political Future*, pp. 43-62. Boulder: Westview Press.

Gledhill, John (1988) 'Agrarian Social Movements and Forms of Consciousness', *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 7(2): 257-276.

- Gledhill, John (1995) *Neoliberalism, Transnationalization and Rural Poverty: A Case Study of Michoacán, Mexico*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Gledhill, John (2005) “‘Disappearing the Poor?’: A Critique of the New Wisdoms of Social Democracy in an Age of Globalization’, in Marc Edelman and Angelique Haugerud (eds.) *The Anthropology of Development and Globalization: From Classical Political Economy to Contemporary Neoliberalism*, pp. 382-390. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Gustafson, Stephen (1994) *Economic Development under Democratic Regimes: Neoliberalism in Latin America*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Harvey, David (2003) *The New Imperialism*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Hellman, Judith Adler (1995) ‘The Riddle of New Social Movements: Who They Are and What They Do’, in Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez (eds.) *Capital, Power, and Inequality in Latin America*, pp. 152-162. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Hellman, Judith Adler (2008) ‘Mexican Popular Movements, Clientelism, and the Process of Democratization’, in Richard Stahler-Sholk, Harry E. Vanden, and Glen David Kuecker (eds.) *Latin American Social Movements in the Twenty-First Century*, pp. 61-76. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Holzner, Claudio A. (2006) ‘Clientelism and Democracy in Mexico: The Role of Strong and Weak Networks’, in Hank Johnston and Paul Almeida (eds.) *Latin American Social Movements: Globalization, Democratization, and Transnational Networks*, pp. 77-94. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Issa, Daniela (2008) ‘Praxis of Empowerment: Mística and Mobilization in Brazil’s Landless Rural Workers’ Movement’, in Richard Stahler-Sholk, Harry E. Vanden, and Glen David

Kuecker (eds.) *Latin American Social Movements in the Twenty-First Century*, pp. 131-145.  
New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Klein, Naomi and Avi Lewis (2004) *Sin Patrón: The Lavaca Collective*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Ivancheva, Mariya (2010) 'Protest Generation/s on a Revolutionary University: The Bolivarian University of Venezuela', Paper presented at the Annual of the Society for Applied Anthropology, Merida, Mexico, March 25.

Kuecker, Glen David (2008) 'Fighting for the Forests Revisited: Grassroots Resistance to Mining in Northern Ecuador', in Richard Stahler-Sholk, Harry E. Vanden, and Glen David Kuecker (eds.) *Latin American Social Movements in the Twenty-First Century*, pp. 97-112. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe (1985) 'New Social Movements and the Plurality of the Social', in David Slater (ed.) *Social Movements and the State in Latin America*, pp 27-42.  
Amsterdam: CEDLA.

Melucci, Alberto (1989) *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Melucci, Alberto (1998) 'Third World or Planetary Conflicts?' in Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (eds.) *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements*, pp. 422-429. Boulder: Westview Press.

Méndez Estrada, Ramón (1993), 'Acusan cañeros de Puruarán a Martín Rodríguez de desvío de fondos ejidales', *Cambio de Michoacán*, October 22: 2.

Muñoz Ríos, Patricia (2000a) 'No rescatará ingenios el plan para el sector azucarero', *La Jornada*, June 8.

Muñoz Ríos, Patricia (2000b) 'Más de \$1,480 millones adeudan ingenios a cañeros de 15 estados', *La Jornada*, August 15.

Olesen, Thomas (2006) 'The Zapatistas and Transnational Framing'. in Hank Johnston and Paul Almeida (eds.) *Latin American Social Movements: Globalization, Democratization, and Transnational Networks*, pp. 179-196. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Olvera, Alberto J. (2010) 'The Elusive Democracy: Political Parties, Democratic Institutions, and Civil Society in Mexico', *Latin American Research Review*, Special Issue: Living in Actually Existing Democracies, 45: 79-107.

Otero, Gerardo (1996) 'Reform and Politics in Mexico: An Overview', in Gerardo Otero (ed.) *Neoliberalism Revisited: Economic Restructuring and Mexico's Political Future*, pp. 1-25. Boulder: Westview Press.

Paoli, Maria Celia and Vera da Silva Telles (1998) 'Social Rights: Conflicts and Negotiations in Contemporary Brazil', in Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (eds.) *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements*, pp. 64-92. Boulder: Westview Press.

Phillips, Lynne (1998) 'Conclusion: Anthropology in the Age of Neoliberalism', in Lynne Phillips (ed.) *The Third Wave of Modernization in Latin America: Cultural Perspectives on Neoliberalism*, pp. 193-198. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources.

Robles Soto, Antonio (1993) 'Detenidas las negociaciones para adquirir los ingenios: Necesario, crear figura jurídica y solucionar disputas internas, asesores', *Cambio de Michoacán*, September 27: 1, 22.

Roseberry, William (1989) *Anthropologies and Histories: Essays in Culture, History, and Political Economy*. London: Rutgers University Press.

Rubin, Jeffrey (1998) 'Ambiguity and Contradiction in a Radical Popular Movement', in Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (eds.) *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements*, pp. 141-164. Boulder: Westview Press.

Rubio, Blanca (1996) 'Las organizaciones independientes en México: Semblanza de las opciones campesinas ante el proyecto neoliberal', in Hubert C. de Gramont (ed.) *Neoliberalismo y organización social en el campo mexicano*, pp. 113-158. México: Plaza y Valdés Editores.

Rubio, Blanca (2006) 'Exclusión rural y resistencia social en América Latina', *Análisis Latinoamericano del medio rural* 4: 1-14.

Schuller, Mark (2010) "'Beautiful T-shirts Aren't Development": NGOs and Turf Struggles in Haiti's Popular Neighborhoods', Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology, Merida, Mexico, March 25.

Sitrin, Marina (2006) *Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina*. Edinburgh, Scotland: AK Press.

Slater, David (1998) 'Rethinking the Spatialities of Social Movements: Questions of (B)orders, Culture, and Politics in Global Times', in Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (eds.) *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements*, pp. 380-401. Boulder: Westview Press.

Stahler-Sholk, Richard, Harry E. Vanden, and Glen David Kuecker (2008) 'Introduction', in Richard Stahler-Sholk, Harry E. Vanden, and Glen David Kuecker (eds.) *Latin American Social Movements in the Twenty-First Century*, pp. 1-15. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Storey, Angela (2010) 'Social Movement Decentralization and Witnessing in the West Bank', Paper presented at the Annual of the Society for Applied Anthropology, Merida, Mexico, March 25.

United States Department of Agriculture (2004) 'USDA Sugar and Sweeteners Outlook', *Economic Research Service*. Available at:

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/erssor/specialty/sss-bb/2004/sss240.pdf>.

Vulliamy, Ed, (2011) 'Ciudad Juarez is all our Futures: This is the Inevitable War of Capitalism Gone Mad', *The Guardian*, June 20. Available at:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jun/20/war-capitalism-mexico-drug-cartels>.

Warren, Kay (1998) 'Indigenous Movements as a Challenge to the United Social Movement Paradigm for Guatemala', in Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (eds.) *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements*, pp. 165-195. Boulder: Westview Press.

Wellman, Barry (2002) 'Little Boxes, Glocalization, and Networked Individualism', in Makoto Tanabe, Peter van den Besselaar, and Toru Ishida (eds.) *Digital Cities II: Computational and Sociological Approaches*, pp. 11-25. Berlin: Springer-Verlag.

\_\_\_\_\_ (1999) 'From Little Boxes to Loosely-Bounded Networks: the Privatization and Domestication of Community', in Janet Abu-Lughod (ed.) *Sociology for the Twenty-First Century: Continuities and Cutting Edges*, pp. 94-116. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

---

<sup>1</sup> A popular song at the time, "El Barzón," begins with the verse: "Those lands in the corner, I planted with the oxen working, the yoke's hitch (barzón) broke, and the oxen continued working," suggested that even when released from the yoke, the oxen were still oppressed. A later section continues: "My shameless boss took all my corn, for his own evil granary, the barzón broke, and the ox continued working."

<sup>2</sup> An original copy of the letter was loaned by a relative of Timoteo Lianza.

---

<sup>3</sup> The PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) formed in the aftermath of the Mexican revolution and held dominance from 1929-2000 (initially under several different names). As a corporatist state, both the national cane growers' union and the national mill workers' syndicate were organized as separate entities under auspices of PRI. These sectors were both controlled by party politics through suppression of strikes and dissidence, and also accorded benefits (workers' rights, guaranteed wages, social security, etc.) by the clientelist state (see also Olvera 2010). PAN, the conservative National Action Party, was founded in 1939, and managed to displace PRI in the national election of 2000. It won again in the highly contested election against the PRD in 2006. The leftist PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) formed in 1989 as a socialist-democratic opposition to PRI and has been particularly strong in Michoacán. Since the demise of PRI, the cane growers' unions and mill workers' syndicates have lost their traditional linkage to PRI and have suffered internal divisions at the national level.

<sup>4</sup> From 1980-86 Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, founder of the PRD, served as state governor. Two other PRD governors served, Lázaro Cárdenas Batel (2002–2008), and Leonel Godoy (2008–2012).