Salvemos Barranco: Contested visions for the city and transportation in Barranco, Lima, Peru

by

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ABSTRACT

Densely populated cities like Lima, Peru, face a complex challenge: integrating mass transit into established urban fabrics. This thesis explores this tension through the case of a World Bank-funded Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system implemented in Lima in 2010. The BRT, built mostly on an exclusive highway corridor, traversed only three neighborhoods–including Barranco, a historic district. Despite promising citywide mobility improvements, the project sparked protests in Barranco due to concerns about reduced pedestrian access, historic preservation, and potential neighborhood segregation. Through historical and spatial analysis, this thesis examines the claims of both residents and stakeholders to understand the root cause of the conflict and propose improved planning processes. The research reveals significant gaps between the planning process and resident concerns, resulting in reduced pedestrian space and unintended traffic impacts. In response, the thesis proposes a three-pronged approach for future World Bank BRT projects: 1) prioritizing local capacity building for meaningful public participation, 2) achieving a balance between city-wide accessibility and neighborhood concerns, and 3) implementing a community-based BRT evaluation framework. The study concludes by offering an opportunity for the World Bank to facilitate a reparative planning process in Barranco, centering residents as decision-makers in shaping their transportation future.

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Finally, I would like to acknowledge the many privileges I enjoy pursuing this journey. I will never stop viewing education as my most prized luxury. I am the product of Georgia and Virginia public schools, YMCA swimming lessons, Peruvian Catholic teachers, need-based financial aid, and professional opportunities I never imagined as a young Peruvian-American. I am forever grateful I can pursue my intellectual passions in a world where far too many are unable to do so due to war, genocide, and poverty. I pray for a world where access to high-quality education is guaranteed.

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Chapter 1 | Introduction

In 2007, transit authorities and the World Bank announced Lima, Peru's first mass transit project in several generations. A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system called the *Metropolitano,* largely financed by the World Bank, would provide relief to decades of deficit mass transportation efforts, including a 1980s abandoned subway[1] effort and an unregulated, informal transit system.[2] A 2015 evaluation report by the Inter-American Development Bank summarized the city's situation well: Lima's public transit vehicles were more than 16 years old, air pollution was "100% above levels considered safe by the World Health Organization" and the "average trip for low-income workers took 90-180 minutes."[3] At the time of the BRT's announcement, 90% of Lima's northern and southern cones lived below the poverty line.[4] Once construction began, a group of residents in the coastal district of Barranco—the smallest of Lima's 43 municipalities--sounded the alarm. The BRT corridor cut directly through a major avenue in Barranco, and the district's residents worried the BRT would produce ripple effects on pedestrian safety, neighborhood integration, and traffic. The stakes could not have been higher for Barranco--one of Lima and Peru's most historic and culturally important districts. In meetings with public authorities, residents demanded answers to a range of concerns: *How would closing a major avenue impact the traffic flow through the district? How would the new system accommodate sidewalks and crosswalks for school children? How would the district's historic buildings be protected?*

Behind these questions were deeper concerns about the future of Barranco, dotted with 19th-century buildings and home at the time to an economically diverse group of lower to middle-class families. In 2007, real estate investors had begun to influence the small municipality to convert nationally protected buildings into luxury condominiums,[5] privatize Barranco's public recreation facility, and lease one of its few public parks to a contemporary art museum. While the BRT could

[1] At the time, the first line of the Lima Metro was not complete. It was inaugurated in 2014.
[2] Crabtree & Durand, 'The Birth of the Neoliberal State' in *Peru in Theory,* (Zed Books, 2017), 81.
[3] Scholl, Lynn, and Oscar Quintanilla, "Comparative Case Studies of Three IDB-Supported Urban Transport Projects: Lima Case Study Annex." (IDB Publications, 2010), 5.
[4] Scholl, Lynn, and Oscar Quintanilla, "Comparative Case Studies of Three IDB-Supported Urban Transport Projects: Lima Case Study Annex," 5.
[5] Malpartida Tabuchi, Jorge. 2017. "Barranco Pierde Su Esencia Patrimonial Por Construcciones Modernas." *El Comercio*, May 29, 2017. https://elcomercio.pe/lima/patrimonio/barranco-pierde-esencia-patrimonial-construcciones-modernas-426832-noticia/.

improve public transportation on a city level, *barranquinos* viewed it as another disrupting force in an already crammed neighborhood. Excluded from the process to design and implement the BRT, these residents organized and penned their cause, *Salvemos Barranco—in English,* "Let us save Barranco."

The *Metroplitano*'s journey started well before its arrival to Lima and Barranco. It was the product of a decades-long effort at the World Bank (WB) and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to use infrastructure as a tool for economic development in the Global South. The Bank had financed transportation projects since the 1940s, but most of this funding was for rail, highway, and port projects. By the 1990s, at least 15 percent of its lending went to urban transport.[6] With these new investments, the Bank's sought to make urban transportation financially sustainable through increased competition and privatization. It called for "radical change in the role of government" and cost-benefit analyses to revitalize the transport sector.[7] In part, this explained the Bank's support of Alberto Fujimori's decision (Peru's authoritarian president) in 1992 to privatize Peru's urban transport system and informalize its operations, with the only regulation being transit operators could not use a motorcycle or truck.[8] By 2002, however, the WB linked transportation sector with poverty reduction, land development, and environmental sustainability. The region's economies would not grow if the poor and emerging middle-class could not get to work or afford vehicles.

Still, the Bank endorsed a competitive market for public transport to avoid fiscal deficits and worried mass urban transit "[could] impose a severe burden on municipal finances."[9] It recommended developing countries "[select]...a system...affordable to users, or to the public budget, or to both."[10] BRTs emerged as a magic bullet that satisfied financing concerns. Curitiba, Brazil inaugurated the first BRT in the 1970s and received praise from global transport policy leaders as an effective and cheap alternative to subterranean mass transit. Although the Bank acknowledged BRTs could be seen as a "relatively primitive technology...not to be adopted when a metro can be afforded or reasonably aspired to,"[11] its weaknesses could be overcome through high-quality vehicles and efficient service

[6] Various Authors, "Development in Practice: Sustainable Transportation – Priorities for Policy Reform" (The World Bank Group, 1996), 5
[7] Various Authors, "Development in Practice: Sustainable Transportation – Priorities for Policy Reform" (The World Bank Group, 1996), 10
[8] Fuller, "Panorama histórico de la regulación del transporte público en Lima" (*Ius Inkarri,* Universidad Ricardo Palma, 2020)
[9] Gwilliam, Kenneth, "Cities on the Move: A World Bank Urban Transport Strategy Review" (The World Bank Group, 2002), 122
[10] Gwilliam, Kenneth, "Cities on the Move: A World Bank Urban Transport Strategy Review," 111
[11] Gwilliam, Kenneth, "Cities on the Move: A World Bank Urban Transport Strategy Review," 111

design. After initial dialogue and exploration in the late 1990s with Lima's centrist and *anti-Fujimorista* Mayor Alberto Andrade, the Bank worked tirelessly to convince his right-wing populist successor, Luis Castañeda Lossio, to support the creation of BRTs in 2006, with significant financial assistance.[12] What the Mayor and development agencies had not foreseen or chose to ignore, however, were concerns from Barranco's residents, one of only three urbanized environments where the BRT would have an environmental impact. Most at risk was the integrity and identity of a district with national and cultural values, which could not be easily quantified. In Lima's popular imagination, Barranco was Peru's center for literature, music, theatre, and art. By the early 2000s, the neighborhood was still characterized by an interconnected set of community relationships that resulted from its density, small *bodegas,* local street markets, and largely lower to middle-class residents that relied on each other through systems of care common in Latin American culture.[13]

What transpired in Barranco is part of a larger story concerning the transformation of cities in the Global South through large-scale infrastructure. Latin America is the world's most heavily urbanized region[14] and one of its most unequal. The region faces the urgent challenge of improving public transportation to make its cities inclusive, healthy, and equitable places to live. In recent years, the environmental imperative to transform transportation has accelerated: the sector is the single largest and fastest-growing contributor to greenhouse gas emissions worldwide.[15] Latin America has received millions of dollars of investment from international development agencies for sustainable infrastructure, the bulk of which has gone to urban transportation.[16] The global and geographic scale of this investment, however, eclipsed smaller scale interests and histories.

As the brief introduction of the BRT's introduction in Barranco demonstrates, transportation infrastructure's design and impact on the built environment also matters. The segregationist legacy of interstate highway construction in the United States serves as a cautionary tale (the US Department of

[12] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project" (The World Bank Inspection Panel Review Board, 2011), 11
[13] Marques, Eduardo, "Urban Poverty, Segregation and Social Networks in São Paulo and Salvador, Brazil," (*International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* 2016)
[14] Various authors, "Habitat III Regional Report: Latin America and the Caribbean - Sustainable Cities with Equality" (UN Habitat 2017), 5
[15] Unknown author "Urban Transport and Climate Change" (The World Bank Blog, 2006)
[16] Various authors, "Promoting Livable Cities by Investing in Urban Mobility" (The World Bank Results Briefs, 2024)

Transportation announced a fund to repair past infrastructure decisions in 2023).[17] There is no guarantee public transportation, particularly above ground with impacts to the surrounding physical environment, cannot also similarly harm communities. Infrastructure projects take time to come to fruition anywhere and, once they do, represent long-term investments with unpredictable effects. In Peru, the timelines and effectiveness of these projects cannot be separated from corruption's embeddedness within the state, which has long existed but was institutionalized by the Fujimori regime through a network of corruption that involved millions of stolen assets.[18] Beyond illegally misused funds, another consequence of corruption is the breakdown of trust in public institutions from the public, and the disdain for policy design based on expertise and research in favor of more opportunistic options. It is no coincidence transit projects in Peru never materialize on time, at all, or with major inefficiencies. When they do, these projects represent millions of dollars in rare public investment.

"Public" urban transport in Lima is elusive; the state has never successfully monopolized the transportation system, nor effectively regulated concessions to private transit operators. In 1976, Peru established ENATRU, *Empresa Nacional de Transporte de Perú*, and granted central government ownership over transportation because of its social importance.[19] In Lima, ENATRU operated a prototype of the *Metropolitano* (and Curitiba's BRT), large buses called *ikarus,*[20] that circulated along exclusive bus corridors in the middle of the city's major highways.[21] ENATRU faced stiff competition from informal transit operators (known as *micros* and *colectivos*), which grew exponentially following the arrival of six million rural migrants during Peru's economic collapse and internal conflict period between the late 1970s and early 1990s. These migrants settled in neighborhoods outside of Lima's traditional central borders and relied on informal transit for connectivity. By 1990, informal transport had taken nearly 80% of the city's demand.[22] ENATRU could not satisfy this new demand. It had run

[17] Various authors, "Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program | US Department of Transportation," (US Department Transportation website, 2023)
[18] Ioanes, Ellen. "Peru Is in Crisis. How Did It Happen?" (Vox, 2022)
[19] Various authors, "El Gobierno crea la Empresa Nacional de Transporte Urbano del Perú (ENATRU-PERU)," (Diario Oficial el Peruano, 1976)
[20] Named after the Hungarian bus manufacturer, *Ikaru*
[21] Orrego, Juan Luis "El transporte público en Lima, siglo XX: ENATRUPERÚ" (Pontifical Catholic University of Peru Blog, 2011)
[22] Poole Fuller, E. "Panorama histórico de la regulación del transporte público en Lima" (*Ius Inkarri*, 2020)

out of public funding due to Peru's severe hyperinflation crisis[23] and in addition, its buses suffered attacks by the then-prevailing Shining Path organized terrorist group.[24]

In line with the larger neoliberal transformation of Peru's economy and society known as *Fujishock*, Alberto Fujimori's regime privatized and deregulated the public transport system. It sold off ENATRU and lifted all restrictions on operations and fare control. Not surprisingly, this decision led to an abundance of private transit services and their *de facto* informality, as the state had little to no role in quality control or service delivery. As Peru's economy grew, the emerging middle-class opted for private vehicle ownership and Lima's poor relied on the reliably available informal transit system. The *Metropolitano's* eventual inauguration in 2010 was thus a milestone for the state's re-engagement in urban transit as essential for social inclusion, public health, and safety.

Lima's current urban transport is a tale of two systems—public and private--increasingly in conflict. Following the BRT's establishment, Lima's municipality (independent of the Peruvian central government) created the *Sistema Integrado de Transporte (SIT)*[25] in 2011 to replace the informal system through publicly operated *corredores*. This effort was soon suspended by a lack of political appetite to confront the powerful and organized informal transit operators, who united against the SIT. In 2018, Peru's Ministry of Transport established the *Autoridad de Transporte Urbano de Lima y el Callao* (ATU), which absorbed the SIT. ATU now administers the operations of the SIT's *corredores,* Lima's two subway lines (inaugurated after the *Metropolitano*), and the BRT itself. Although the ATU is an important step towards rebuilding urban transit authority, integrating these systems has taken time (for example, the city lacks a comprehensive fare policy) and the state's reluctance to reign in informal transit operators has meant ATU still does not serve most of Lima's transit demand.

Peru's overwhelmed and outnumbered public transit enterprise--along with the state's support of an unregulated and informal transport system--offers international development institutions like the World Bank a powerful role in financing, guiding, and formulating transport policy. The low

[23] Poole Fuller, E. "Panorama histórico de la regulación del transporte público en Lima"
[24] Orrego, Juan Luis "El transporte público en Lima, siglo XX: ENATRUPERÚ"
[25] Personal translation: Integrated Transport System

political appetite in Peru among elected officials to introduce even meager reform to the informal transit system, (like a regulated system of concessions), has also meant the WB lacks natural allies with significant expertise in urban transport policy. As a result, it negotiates with politicians focused on maintaining power through corrupt negotiations in the political instability that followed Fujimori's power vacuum in 2000. The legacy of this era has included the emergence of personality-based political parties, weak central state institutions, and institutionalized corruption.[26] This political context represents an enormous obstacle to transforming the country's urban transportation. International development collaborations partnering with government actors in this system thus risk sidelining local community interests from the design and implementation process of complex projects like BRTs. The needs of grassroots local communities become less relevant and harder to capture with so much money, political interests, and development on the line.

Research questions

I am interested in analyzing what lessons a close reading of the BRT's implementation in Lima's smallest districts can offer—at a broad level--for what I view as an essential public interest of transport and planners: to provide access to the benefits of a city a whole and safeguard communities vulnerable to economic, cultural, and social displacement. I am also motivated to pursue this question as a city planning student with a social justice focus. I view the BRT's impact on the district as a potential opportunity to address overdue repair and reparation. In exploring this research project, my goal is to make an empirical case for a deeply contested transportation case, which can hopefully be an opportunity to bring stakeholders back to the table.

My research objective and motivation are predicated on the *right to the city* concept I will explore further in the literature, "to guarantee the right to the city as a fundamental human right."[27] While universal, many interpretations of this concept are deeply embedded in individual societies' political histories. The right to the city is in constant tension in cities, both in terms of the access it demands for everyday people to transportation, basic goods, livelihoods for self-preservation, and

[26] Crabtree & Durand, 172
[27] Angotti & Irazabal 2017, 8

democratic principles of participation. The right to the city asks not just who belongs, but who gets to decide who belongs and who ultimately does belong.

In Peru, the struggle to achieve a right to the city has been shaped by the country's decades of state-sponsored and terrorist violence, authoritarianism, and economic crises that fueled high levels of rural-to-urban migration. Four recent historical events impacted the country's contemporary society in particular: a deadly internal conflict between the military and organized terrorist groups in the 1980s that cost over 70,000 lives, the Fujimori dictatorship from 1990 to 2001 and its accompanying aggressive neoliberal economic experiment (scholars call it the most aggressive since Chile's Pinochet),[28] and the subsequent widespread rural-to-urban migration.

Fujimori's regime left a long-lasting imprint on Peru's economy, society, and urbanization patterns. Perhaps most perniciously, the chronic corruption, political favoritism, and dismissiveness to Peru's intellectual class facilitated a populist party, *Fujimorismo*, and cult of personality that persists today. Technocrats were only useful to the regime in their ability to advance its economic interests and to defend human rights violations. This thesis analyzes the original conception of the *Metropolitano* within this broader political context, as it was conceived by Lima's Mayor Andrade—a member of the *Fujimori* opposition—and inaugurated just six years after the regime's demise following Alberto Fujimori's resignation in 2001. I am interested in how the regime's legacy, specifically its rejection of public participation, played out among divergent stakeholders: the politically remote World Bank, Lima's central municipal government, and a grassroots group of local citizens in Barranco. I focus specifically on the impact of the BRT on Barranco's cultural, social, and historical urban environment, as it was one of the only neighborhoods to experience this impact. Guiding my investigation is a principal question:

1) To what extent did the planning process for Lima's BRT incorporate socioeconomic, cultural, and historic interests at a local scale, specifically in the Barranco district?

I will explore a secondary and more prospective research question in my conclusion:

[28] Crabtree & Durand 2017, 78

2) How could the planning process and design of the BRT in Barranco have been configured differently to achieve greater social and economic inclusion?

Through this thesis, my aim is to reveal the inextricable relationship between transportation infrastructure projects and their socio-political contexts.

Methodology

To explain my methodology, I must disclose I did not arrive at this topic by accident. I seek to contribute to transportation, sustainability, and international development studies using my first-hand, epistemic knowledge[29] of how these topics unfold within Lima. This thesis asks what thinking from specific places in the Global South—even those as small as Barranco—can do for planning and transportation theory.

This topic was born out of the contested memories I have heard throughout my life about what Barranco was, is, and may become. My maternal Peruvian family migrated in 1969 from Huaraz, (a small city in Peru's north-central Andes), to Lima and have since lived at the working-class border between Barranco and neighboring Surco district. My mom and her siblings attended public schools in Barranco. Her family regularly visited the district for its ample public spaces and cultural activities. They have witnessed its transformation from a mixed-income residential community to one with isolated, residential towers with ocean views and overwhelming traffic. Local families like mine feel these changes have come "at them," and blame a mix of factors—from Peru's lack of good governance since the 1980s to what they suspect are bribes Barranco's municipal government receives in exchange for zoning changes and concessions.

As an urban planning student committed to sustainability and public transportation, I am interested in why long-time Barranco residents lamented the *Metropolitano* BRT as having somehow "ruined" Barranco, despite the BRT being an important mass transit project. Parsing this tension out is complex and requires careful attention to both the city-wide and local interests of the BRT. I believe my dual identity as a multi-generational *Barranco* resident and an American outsider gives me

[29] I was born in the United States and spent nearly half of my childhood in Lima, Perú. I have also conducted research multiple times in the country.

credibility to do so. I am motivated to study this tension considering the professed desire by the President of the World Bank to build "BRT in 20 [more] cities in Latin America."[30]

Three specific reasons support the topic, scope, and setting of this research project. In terms of the topic, Bus Rapid Transit systems are a popular and scalable approach to international transportation development due to their safety, reliability, and affordability. Within Latin American studies in the West, Lima receives less attention from urban planning researchers than other major metropolises like Mexico City, Bogotá, Santiago, or Buenos Aires. Barranco is appealing as a case study for mobilization against a BRT, having generated the first Inspection Review Panel[31] from the World Bank for a transportation project. Finally, my focus on a local scale allows me to take a closer lens on the BRT in terms of its neighborhood impact, through traditional BRT evaluation metrics as well as a mobility justice theoretical framework.

Equally important is for me to define what is not within the scope of this thesis. Given my focus on the political process the Bank deployed to implement the BRT, I spend less attention on the granular specificity of the design and engineering details of the system. While I briefly outline the BRT's history and its operational reach in Lima, I do not evaluate the system as a whole or compare it with other BRT systems. Although this thesis touches on broader political and planning challenges in Barranco, Lima, and Peru, my ability to thoroughly place this research in conversation with these topics is limited. Exploring any of these topics would strengthen my understanding of the BRT, but would sacrifice the time I spend "close-reading" Barranco's BRT experience.

I answer this thesis' parting research questions through a mixed-methods historical and qualitative approach. I document Barranco's local interests in the BRT project through primary source documents and oral history interviews with members of the *Salvemos Barranco* movement. Documents include newspaper articles describing the BRT's implementation and a physical as well as digital archive of *Salvemos'* protest materials. I also interviewed World Bank staff with first and second-hand knowledge of the Barranco case. I interviewed transportation policy experts in Peru to understand the broader context of public participation in large-scale infrastructure projects. I reviewed

[30] Lawder, David. "World Bank's new chief Banga to sharpen focus on projects with measurable impact" (*Reuters,* 2023)
[31] The independent complaint process the WB has established for the projects it finances

the World Bank's Inspection Panel Report for a more comprehensive overview of the BRT implementation process. To assess the current state of the BRT in Barranco and understand how the community's fears about the project manifest today, I relied on spatial observation I conducted during multiple site visits across three weeks in January 2024. I evaluate the present state of the system in Barranco using the Institute for Transportation Development Policy's (ITDP) updated BRT standard and apply elements of sociologist Mimi Sheller's Mobility Justice framework.

A quick note on my choice to collect data through oral history interviews: these interviews took place more than a decade following the *Metropolitano's* establishment, so my objective was to understand the narratives they revealed. Oral histories are not intended to be faithful reconstructions of the past. Historians acknowledge oral histories are limited in that "experience is much more likely to be remembered if it is perceived to be significant"[32] and what makes memories significant varies. Memory is also not mechanical; through an oral history interview, subjects find new meanings in their memory, and with the "careful encouragement and gentle probing of the interviewer, more complex and unexpected memories may emerge."[33] What emerges from oral history interviews like those I conducted are "not records of facts...but of a meaning-making system."[34] This does not necessarily make oral historical sources less reliable than other sources, but it does mean "understanding how memory stories have been shaped by the particular circumstances of an event" and thinking critically about memory.[35]

This thesis finds its footing in two sets of literatures: sustainable transportation and critical development studies. Scholarship on sustainable transportation planning focuses largely on evaluating public transportation projects through cost-benefit or multi-stakeholder analyses but has limited engagement in terms of the political processes these projects require and their relationship to the spatial as well as structural inequalities of their surrounding communities. Critical development studies scholars have rigorously outlined how international development institutions reproduce

[32] Thomson, Alistair, "Memory and Remembering in Oral History" in *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History*, ed. Donald Ritchie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 84
[33] Thomson, "Memory and Remembering in Oral History," 84
[34] Thomson "Memory and Remembering in Oral History," 90
[35] Thomson "Memory and Remembering in Oral History," 91

economic inequalities in Latin America but focused less on spatial manifestations of these processes on the urban scale, particularly through transportation. My thesis takes a critical perspective on sustainable mobility to assess whether Lima's BRT reproduces structural and spatial inequities in Barranco and Lima more broadly.

In addition to contributing to this literature topically, the interdisciplinary methodological approach I use to investigate my research questions brings a much-needed historical and critical social theory lens to these two fields. Through a historical lens, I capture the complex confluence of local politics and decision-making otherwise lost in cost-benefit and accessibility analyses. My motivation is also informed by critical urban theory, which evaluates the concept of "urban space" as a social and political construct. In other words, by historicizing, contextualizing, and engaging in a critical analysis of the *Metropolitano* in Barranco, I understand the public opposition it provoked and the lessons it holds for future BRT planning processes.

I organize this thesis as follows. Chapter 1 is a comprehensive literature review that accomplishes three goals. It 1) provides background on the political context of Peru and what a thesis project of this nature can offer planning and development literatures 2) explains why I employ a critical urban theory framework in my methodology 3) and overviews the sustainable transportation and critical development studies literatures where I situate this thesis project. In Chapter 2, I tell the story of *Salvemos Barranco* by placing its claims in conversation with recollections from the World Bank staff and the Inspection Panel Report. In Chapter 3, I offer a framework for community and advocacy-based BRT planning based on my research findings. Finally, in my conclusion, I discuss how Lima's BRT planning process could have been improved and draw lessons for future BRT and planning processes in vulnerable communities within Latin America and the world. I end by proposing a reparative process to address the harms the BRT has caused in Barranco.

Chapter 2 | Literature Review

2.1 Political and Administrative Context

Peru is organized into 24 departments divided into provinces made up of districts. The Metropolitan Municipality of Lima is both a district and a province, independent of any department. Lima has 43 districts, and the metropolitan area encompasses the neighboring independent district and province of Callao, which has seven districts. Below is a map that highlights Barranco's location within the city.

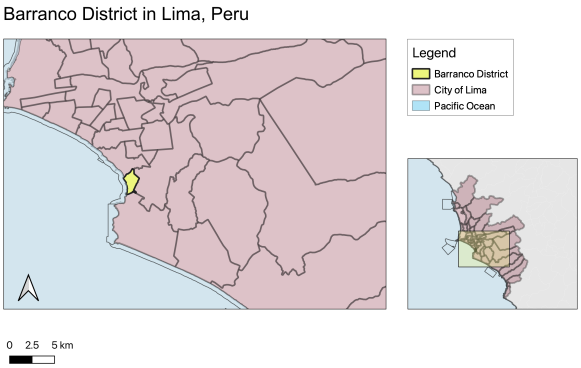


Figure 1: Barranco District in Lima, Peru (Source: original)

Barranco became an incorporated district in Lima in 1874, more than three hundred years after the latter's establishment by Spanish colonists in 1535. It is 13 kilometers from Lima's historic center. Barranco reconstruction following the Pacific War with Chile (1879-1883) made it a sought-after *balneario,* or beach town, for Lima's early 20th-century elite.[36] This status brought numerous public spaces and institutions still present in the district today. Historians, however, note the presence early

[36] Tord, Luis Enrique, "Barranco en la Republica," In *Barranco: Historia, Leyenda y Tradición.* (Universidad de Ricardo Palma Press, 2015), 67

on of a *barrio aristocratico* and a *barrio popular,* with the wealthier section of the district closer to its coastal edge, a spatial organization that persists.[37]

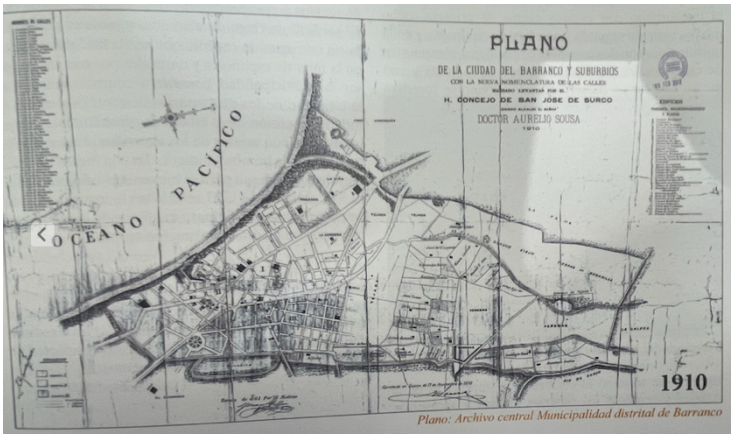
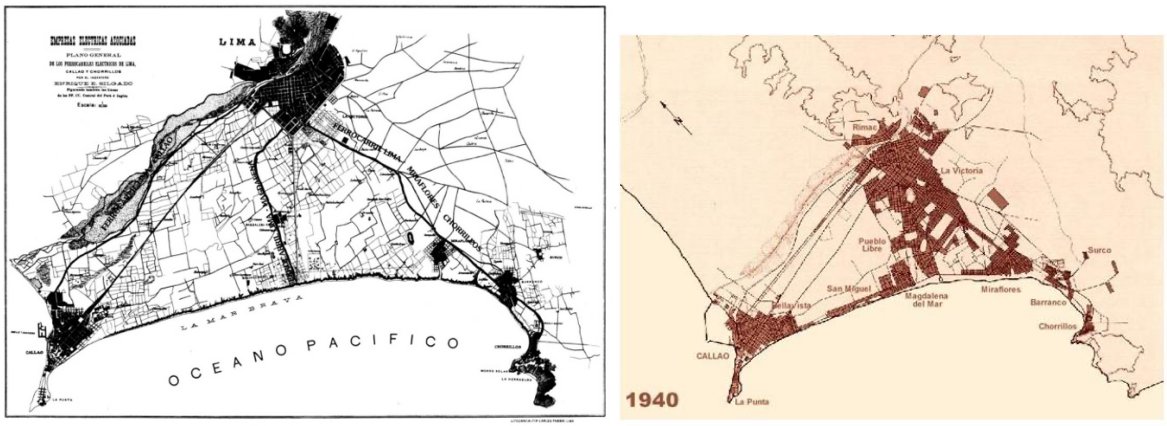


Figure 2: Barranco's urban plan in 1910; Source: Luis Enrique Tord



.[38]

Figure 3: (left) Lima's urban plan in 1903; (right) Lima's urban population centers in 1940; Source: Biblioteca Nacional del Perú

Between 1940 and 2000, Lima's population increased exponentially, and its growth impacted Barranco's relationship to the city. In 1940, Lima registered 630, 173 inhabitants, which increased by nearly 2 million people (about the population of Nebraska) each following decade to reach 8.2 million in 2007, when the BRT launched construction. The most recent census of 2017 recorded 9.3

[37] Tord, Luis Enrique, "Barranco en la Republica," 68
[38] Tord, Luis Enrique, "Barranco en la Republica," 74

million.[39] This population growth was largely due to waves of internal migration from other parts of Peru, which manifested in *barriadas* or illegal land occupations,[40] comprising 14% to 37% of the urban population from 1950 to 2000.[41] Many of these *barriadas* have become urbanized and integrated formally into the city.

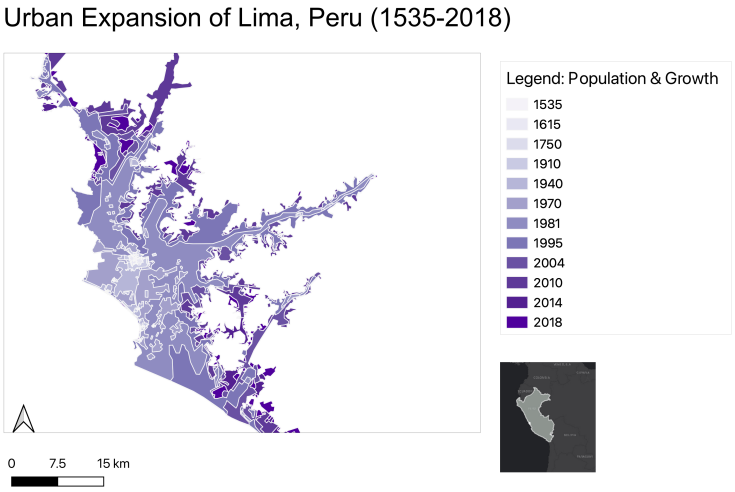


Figure 4: Urban Expansion of Lima, Peru (1535-2018), Source: Original creation

A significant socioeconomically segregated city emerged from this process, between "Central Lima" (where Barranco is located) and "Peripheral Lima" (consisting of the Northern, Eastern, and Southern *conos*). So-called peripheral Lima encompasses the majority of the city and has been influenced by multiple state interventions, laws, and policies. Its built environment reflects the limited resources of its original residents as well as the inaccessibility of state resources to build housing with formal building codes and land zoning regulations. At the same time, many neighborhoods in the periphery are well-planned, as communities have sought to meet state requirements for land titling.

[39] Instituto Nacional de Estadistica e Investigación (Source: https://www.inei.gob.pe/estadisticas-indice-tematico/)
[40] Calderon, Julio, "Barrios Marginales de Lima, 1961-2001" (*Ciudad y Territorio,* 2003), 378
[41] Peters, Paul A., and Emily H. Skop, "Socio-Spatial Segregation in Metropolitan Lima, Peru" (*Journal of Latin American Geography*), 152

The state has granted land titles to these *barriadas* at various stages of the last century to incentivize formalization, grant access to public services, and in exchange for political support.[42]

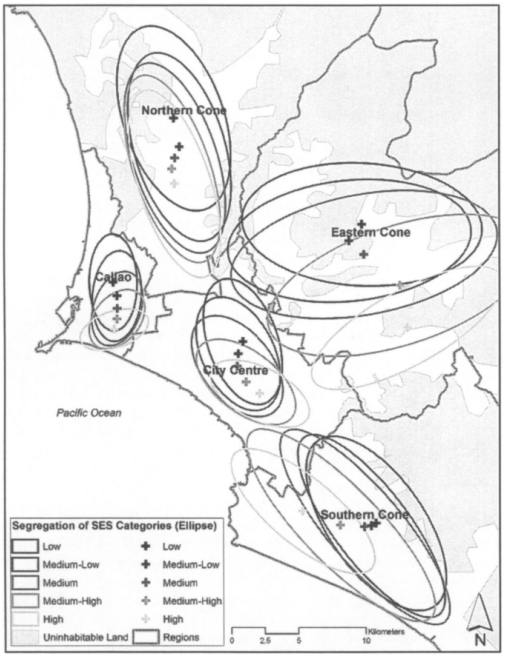


Figure 5: Segregation of Socioeconomic Status Categories in Lima Metropolitan Area (Source: 2007, Peters & Skop)

Peru's economic boom since the 1990s has reduced absolute poverty rates but simultaneously increased socioeconomic inequality, with spatial manifestations in Lima's metropolitan area. Lima's central districts are primarily characterized by medium to high socioeconomic levels. Unlike US-style segregation, wealthier *Limeño* districts are not homogenous but shaped by fragmented urban areas between social classes. This characteristic aligns with Lima's rapid urban development, where aspects of informalized urbanization did not only appear at the city's periphery but also within historically planned districts like Barranco.[43]

Alongside Lima's expansion, Barranco has transformed from a small *balneario* into an unequal and heavily urbanized district. Since 2007, the district has experienced rapid gentrification and acquired the highest prices per square meter in the city, due to a luxury real estate construction

[42] Calderon, Julio, "Barrios Marginales de Lima, 1961-2001," 383-384
[43] Peters & Skop , "Socio-spatial Segregation in Metropolitan Lima, Peru," 166-167

boom.[44] Del Castillo and Klaufus differentiate this gentrification from the US and other parts of Latin America because of two distinct dynamics: 1) verticalization through medium and high-rise constructions and 2) the presence of local middle-class investors purchasing homes to rent for floating populations.[45] The Barranco municipality has historically relaxed construction permits and lacked rules for minimum lot sizes for housing units out of an interest to reduce "so-called deteriorated areas" and make the district more attractive to investors and tourists.[46] Together, these factors have transformed Barranco; "between 2007 and 2017 the population of children…and older adults…declined significantly (19%) …and [a] housing market produced solely to capture rent from floating populations…"[47] emerged. These changes further stratified the district between concentrations of upper-class residents alongside the coast, and middle-class residents further inland, as illustrated by Del Castillo and Klaufas' map below. *Salvemos Barranco* viewed the BRT as a segregating force in the district between its wealthier western and poorer eastern side, making the latter section vulnerable to real estate-driven transformation.

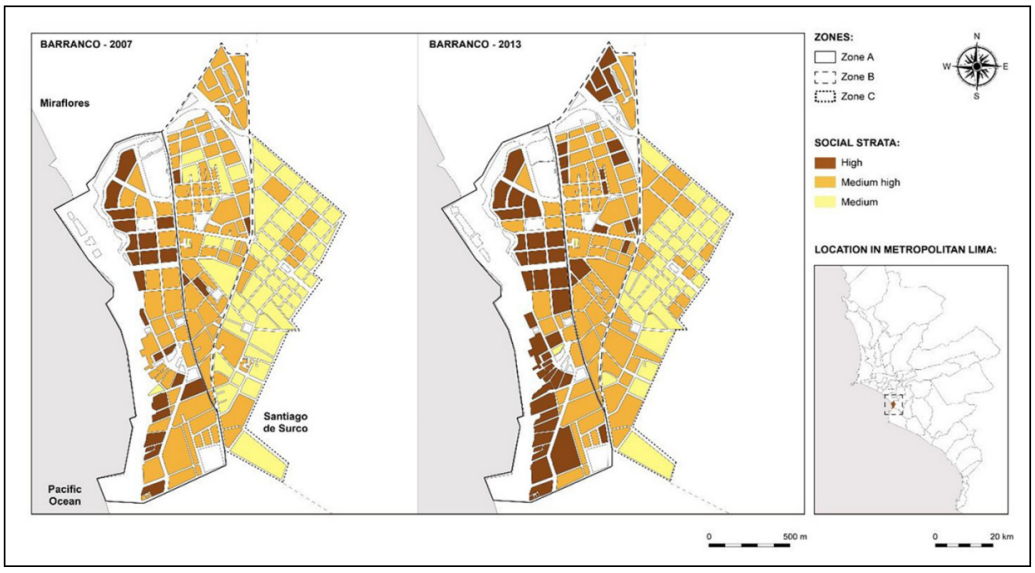


Figure 6: Zones and social stratification in Barranco (Source: del Castillo & Klaufas, 2020)

[44] Del Castillo, Mirtha Lorena, and Christien Klaufus, "Rent-Seeking Middle Classes and the Short-Term Rental Business in Inner-City Lima," (*Urban Studies,* 2020), 2553
[45] Del Castillo, Mirtha Lorena, and Christien Klaufus, "Rent-Seeking Middle Classes and the Short-Term Rental Business in Inner-City Lima," 2558
[46] Del Castillo, Mirtha Lorena, and Christien Klaufus, "Rent-Seeking Middle Classes and the Short-Term Rental Business in Inner-City Lima," 2553
[47] Del Castillo, Mirtha Lorena, and Christien Klaufus, "Rent-Seeking Middle Classes and the Short-Term Rental Business in Inner-City Lima," 2557

2.2 Imagining urban planning in Lima, Peru

The current political moment in Peru is defined by a set "strategic interests of an elite in which income and wealth are highly concentrated," stemming from an "extraordinary ten-year export-led bonanza...from 2002" of the country's natural resources. These elite interests maintain power through the illegal financing of political campaigns and back-door lobbying efforts. Peru's political instability is chronic, with more than six presidents governing Peru in the last five years. This has occurred despite high economic growth, a paradox Western researchers have found rare among capitalist democracies.[48] A driving force behind this instability is the political violence Peru experienced in the 1980s, caused by an internal conflict between an organized leftist terrorist group (the Shining Path) and the state. The *Conflicto Interno Armado* cost thousands of lives and was followed by the decade-long right-wing Fujimori dictatorship. It resulted in the traditional Peruvian left as "fragmented and dissipated" with "public opinion distrustful but largely apathetic" of its ability to fight back against neoliberal policies.[49]

Scholars have focused less on the comprehensive legacy of this period on Peru's, and specifically Lima's, urban planning dynamics and transportation policies. The main spatial consequence of this period was the expansion of Lima's population and land area. In terms of institutional effects, a legacy of this period is a deficient Peruvian state that is highly centralized, lacks "communication between state and society" and "institutions capable of bridging [this] gap" due to the absence of mature political parties. This has meant the state is unable to "mediate properly between diverse interests" due to endemic corruption, given the "Fujimori regime was one of the most corrupt...in the history of Republican Peru."[50] Recovering from this corruption has been challenging since the end of the Fujimori regime, as multiple democratically elected administrations have faced corruption allegations. A deficient state, a lack of stable political parties for citizens to find representation, and endemic corruption have materialized in Lima's urban development through

[48] Cotler, Julio "Paradoxes of Development," In Crabtree, John. 2012, (*Fractured Politics : Peruvian Democracy Past and Present*. London: Institute For The Study Of The Americas, 2012)
[49] Crabtree & Dinot, "Introduction to Political Capture," 27
[50] Crabtree & Durand, "The Deficiencies of a Disconnected State," 164

poorly designed public-private partnerships, the privatization of public spaces, and a scarcity of cogently formulated housing as well as transportation policies.

A confusing governance arrangement for Lima also emerged from competing interests between central and local government. This has made it difficult for the city to enact a comprehensive urban planning vision. Three stakeholders create urban planning policy across the metropolitan area—the Metropolitan Institute for Planning, the Metropolitan Council (equivalent to a city council), and the Urban Development Agency.[51] The effectiveness of urban planning faces numerous obstacles. A central factor is a contradictory legal framework to create, enact, and regulate urban planning ordinances. The Metropolitan Municipality of Lima (MML) has different land use rules for four different "zones," seemingly distinguishing *modern* from *informal* parts of the city, and district-level plans have appeared without metropolitan approval. In addition, Lima's fragmentation makes it difficult for urban planners to sustain a unified vision. The city is organized into 50 municipalities with independent mayors and administrative competencies,[52] making it the second most fragmented city in Latin America.[53] This fragmentation is partially explained by 90% of the city's recent expansion through informal zoning and illegal occupation.[54]

The weaknesses of Peru and Lima's planning institutions have limited the ability of central government authorities to enact strategies to increase the equity, sustainability, as well as habitability of the urban environment. Local municipalities in Lima have not necessarily fulfilled the missing role of these central institutions, as my review of Barranco's gentrification demonstrates. This thesis contributes to the literature regarding Lima's planning institutions by examining how the city responded to complaints regarding the potential urban development consequences of a BRT project envisioned by the World Bank, a multilateral institution.

[51] Ortiz Sánchez, I., Fernández Salas, J. C., & Devoto Ykeho, "Derecho y Planificación Urbana. Problemas actuales de la planificación de Lima Metropolitana" (*IUS ET VERITAS*, 2020), 251
[52] Including the neighboring independent province of Callao, a *de facto* part of the Lima Metropolitan Area
[53] Ortiz Sánchez, I., Fernández Salas, J. C., & Devoto Ykeho, "Derecho y Planificación Urbana. Problemas actuales de la planificación de Lima Metropolitana," 258
[54] Ortiz Sánchez, I., Fernández Salas, J. C., & Devoto Ykeho, "Derecho y Planificación Urbana. Problemas actuales de la planificación de Lima Metropolitana," 261

2.3 BRTs and Sustainable Urbanization in the Global South

Climate change, global urbanization, and the outsized negative influence of the automobility industry have inspired national and local governments worldwide to prioritize decarbonizing the transportation sector. Faced with the urgency to act faster than national governments, many cities have opted for infrastructure solutions with minimal implementation costs. Bus rapid transit systems (BRTs) are a popular solution and operate across 324 cities worldwide. BRTs are a form of sustainable, mass transportation for urban environments. They consist of large bus vehicles operating in exclusive corridors to avoid disruptions from other traffic sources. Variations in the design of roadways and types of bus vehicles impact capacity, safety, and speed.[55] Significantly, BRTs originated in Latin America and are considered a "policy from the South."[56] Curitiba, Brazil introduced BRTs on exclusive corridors in 1972, and established a five-line network that shaped the city's built environment.[57] Following Curitiba, BRTs appeared in most major cities of Latin America, with Quito (1995), Bogotá (2000), Mexico City (2003), and Lima (2007) being just some examples.[58] Their spread is due to several factors: their low cost relative to other transportation mediums, financing from the World Bank and its regional affiliates, and the nature of policy circulation among international development practitioners.

Transportation and development scholars have traditionally focused research on BRTs in terms of cost-effectiveness and transit-oriented development (TOD). As the global development agenda has evolved to incorporate sustainable development goals, researchers assess BRTs as a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Latin America is where most scholarship regarding BRTs is concentrated, as it is "the epicenter of the global BRT movement...[with] nearly two-thirds of [BRT] ridership...in Latin America."[59] More recently, some scholarship has emerged to evaluate BRTs in terms of their social and equity impact.

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[55] S.C. Wirasinghe, L. Kattan, M. M. Rahman, J. Hubbell, R. Thilakaratne & S. Anowar, "Bus rapid transit – a review", (International Journal of Urban Sciences, 2013), 8

[56] S.C. Wirasinghe, L. Kattan, M. M. Rahman, J. Hubbell, R. Thilakaratne & S. Anowar, "Bus rapid transit – a review," 3

[57] Rodriguez & Tovar, "Sistemas de transporte público masivo tipo BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) y desarrollo urbano en América Latina" (Lincoln Institute of Land Policy 2013), 17

[58] Hidalgo, Darío, "BRT and BHLS around the world: Explosive growth, large positive impacts and many issues outstanding," (Research in Transportation Economics, 2020), 9

[59] Cervero & Dai, "BRT TOD :Leveraging transit oriented development with bus rapid transit investments," (Transport policy, 2014), 129

A large body of work focuses on the equity and accessibility impacts of BRTs, particularly in metropolises of the Global South, where public transportation drives socioeconomic mobility and access to job opportunities. The relationship between equity and accessibility is indirectly related to the BRT's impact on land use and TOD, as proximity to stations is mediated by real estate prices. In general, transportation scholars evaluate the accessibility of BRTs with location-based measures, such as access to work and education opportunities.[60] Accessibility varies widely among BRT systems. Scholars have found BRTs increase access for the very poor to more urban areas, such as in Lima.[61] At the same time, BRTs do not always reach the extremely poor who live far from BRT stations and find fare costs inaccessible.[62] Other BRT systems, like Cali, Colombia's, maximize accessibility for lower income groups in their approach to service delivery design by including feeder systems like cable cars, leaving at least 92% of Cali's poor 15 minutes from the nearest BRT station.[63]

As BRTs have dispersed and aged, recent scholarship has been more critical of the long-term accessibility of BRT systems. Part of the inaccessibility is due to the inadvertent impact of TOD-driven strategies on real estate value around BRTs, as they require a thoughtful approach to guarantee accessibility and benefits across a broader city's ecosystem. In Curitiba, Brazil, for example, "most passengers do not live along the main BRT corridors, as repeatedly proposed and believed possible by the city's master plan" and the very principle of TOD.[64] Overcrowding on BRT systems has also led to challenges to their supposed accessibility. In Colombia, Bogota's celebrated *Transmilenio* has faced strong criticism from the public due to overcrowding, which is primarily the cause of high demand, low frequency of buses, and overestimates of bus capacities. The systems' operators set a maximum of six people per square meter on *Transmilenio*, but the system regularly accommodates 14 people.[65]

[60] Vecchio, G., Tiznado-Aitken, I., & Hurtubia, R, "Transport and equity in Latin America: a critical review of socially oriented accessibility assessments". (Transport Reviews, 2020), 367.
[61] Oviedo, D.; Scholl, L.; Innao, M.; Pedraza, L, "Do Bus Rapid Transit Systems Improve Accessibility to Job Opportunities for the Poor? The Case of Lima, Peru," (Sustainability, 2019), 11.
[62] Scholl, Lynn, "Comparative Case Studies of Three IDB-Supported Urban Transport Projects," 31
[63] Scholl, Lynn, "Comparative Case Studies of Three IDB-Supported Urban Transport Projects," 32
[64] Duarte & Ultramari, "Making Public Transport and Housing Match: Accomplishments and Failures of Curitiba's BRT," (Journal of Urban Planning and Development, 2012), 187
[65] Hunt, SL "Conflict and Convergence between Experts and Citizens," (Latin American Perspectives, 2017), 100

Overcrowding issues lead to passenger delays, even leaving buses when boarding or disembarking, challenging so-called accessibility gains based on absolute reductions in travel times.[66]

2.4 Unraveling the politics of BRTs

Less attention, however, has been placed on the political and spatial interventions BRTs represent within cities, where this thesis intervenes. Part of the low scholarship on the spatial and political dimension of BRTs may be related to how governments and international development scholars frame BRTs as apolitical and technocratic endeavors. Political scientist Stacey Hunt questions the technocratic vision of the *Transmilenio* as a "fairly uniform image...[that is seen as] revolutionary" by urban planners, as this repeats narratives by experts who dismiss "citizen participation...and contestation over [*TransMilenio's*] meaning and use."[67] BRTs are often financed and promoted by institutions like the World Bank and regional development banks. While these have mechanisms for public participation, they are nonetheless unelected bodies that "depoliticize policy decisions, demobilize civil society" and "disregard the knowledge of citizens" who are the primary users of *Transmilenio.*[68] Consequently, when citizens organized against the *Transmilenio* and presented "their knowledge of the system as inefficient, expensive, crowded, and confusing," the BRT's operators not only dismissed their concerns, but influenced Bogotá's mayor to respond with riot gear.[69]

Hunt's work draws attention to the role of experts in "mediating between local knowledge and the state," and their increasing influence on transportation policy across a variety of political contexts in the Global South and specifically, Latin America. Global development banks and think tanks "facilitate access or resources that local authorities normally consider difficult to get,"[70] including critical financing. Their privileged role gives these institutions power in the political arena with specific interests and motivations, even if they profess a nonpartisan or apolitical stance. In an analysis of the circulation of sustainable mobility policy, Silva argues BRTs emerged as the paramount mobility

[66] Hunt, SL "Conflict and Convergence between Experts and Citizens," 100
[67] Hunt, SL "Conflict and Convergence between Experts and Citizens," 99
[68] Hunt, SL "Conflict and Convergence between Experts and Citizens," 99
[69] Hunt, SL "Conflict and Convergence between Experts and Citizens," 104-105
[70] Ardila, Diego. "Global policies for moving cities: the role of think tanks in the proliferation of Bus Rapid Transit systems in Latin America and worldwide" (Policy and Society, 2020), 71

solution following the success of the *Transmilenio model,* which "offered a comprehensive package that reduced complicated processes and gave international players a…policy capable of replication in multiple locations."[71] What made the BRTs seemingly replicable was their low cost and high capacity. However, by simplifying their implementation, these global institutions miss the "the complications of bringing packaged financial, administrative and operational policies that do not necessarily respond and adjust to local contexts."[72] I seek to delve into these complications.

Other scholars have also called out the limitations of global institutions driving the shape of urban planning policy in Latin America. The critical theorist Thomas Angotti has been critical of the unelected and unrooted nature of "best practice-driven" urban policy in the region. Angotti objects to the non-participatory setup of "panels of professionals and executives" who determine what is *best* and "obscure the agency of urban residents---their everyday lives and struggles."[73] He argues best practices in planning (including transportation) should be applied only when needed and "critically…understood within their local and national context."[74] Otherwise, city planners in Latin America fall into a modern version of dependency on "[urban development] models and technocratic straitjackets."[75] As an alternative, Angotti offers the strategic planning framework, which involves a group of diverse stakeholders and "open[s] up the process to wide public participation."[76] Given the shift among the World Bank and other development institutions from *Washington Consensus*-driven market privatization of Latin American economies to the sustainable development and poverty alleviation goals, Angotti's work speaks to the new tensions this evolution has produced on the ground.

2.5 Bringing a critical urban theory lens to transportation research

A large portion of my thesis is dedicated to understanding the motivations and demands made by a social movement that emerged in response to a BRT project. To incorporate these broader

[71] Ardila, Diego. "Global policies for moving cities: the role of think tanks in the proliferation of Bus Rapid Transit systems in Latin America and worldwide" 72
[72] Ardila, Diego. "Global policies for moving cities: the role of think tanks in the proliferation of Bus Rapid Transit systems in Latin America and worldwide," 85
[73] Angotti, T., & Irazábal, C., "Planning Latin American Cities: Dependencies and "Best Practices"" (Latin American Perspectives, 2017), 6
[74] Angotti, T., & Irazábal, C., "Planning Latin American Cities: Dependencies and "Best Practices,"" 6
[75] Angotti, T., & Irazábal, C., "Planning Latin American Cities: Dependencies and "Best Practices,"" 10
[76] Angotti, T., & Irazábal, C., "Planning Latin American Cities: Dependencies and "Best Practices,"" 14

dimensions, I embrace a critical urban theory framework. Critical urban theory has only recently been applied to the field of transportation studies. Its late emergence is likely due to the tendency of transportation scholars to focus squarely on system efficiency and effectiveness.[77] This lens reduces insight into how transportation reflects political values and existing spatial inequalities. The renewed urgency of transportation as an instrument for greenhouse gas reductions and economic mobility is an opportunity to engage more critically with transportation as a practice embedded within economic systems, political histories, and social dynamics. I apply this framework to inform the questions and claims I make in this thesis.

The term "critical" has become ambiguous and flexible in academic and colloquial discourse, so it is important to define and explain why I want to apply it to transportation research. Critical social theory is an approach to social analysis with origins in Marxist social theory as well as radical political philosophy. It reached its pinnacle through the Frankfurt School, a group of philosophers and social scientists heavily inspired by Marx that included Walter Benjamin and Herbert Marcuse.[78] Unlike its colloquial meaning, critical in this context means "reflexive, it involves a critique of instrumental reason…focused on the disjuncture between the actual and the possible."[79] A reflexive practice is a mode of inquiry conscious of its historical and political context and concerned with interrogating the "social context being investigated."[80] In other words, critical social theory begins one step before output-driven research—it questions the *ends* of a *means to an end.* By engaging in this mode of inquiry, the goal of critical theory is to "excavate the emancipatory possibilities…embedded" within the system it analyzes (typically capitalism).

If critical social theory is not practice-focused or results-driven, how can it be applied to urban planning —which so often is? The sociologist Neil Brenner provides one pathway. In the influential text, *Cities for People, Not for Profit,* Brenner defines the role of critical urban theory in urban studies and planning, arguing it "emphasizes…the malleable character of urban space…its continual

[77] Keblowski & Dobruszkes "Moving past sustainable transport studies: towards a critical perspective on urban transport" (Transportation Research, 2022)
[78] Celikates & Flynn, "Critical Theory (Frankfurt School)" in *Stanford Encycloopedia of Philosophy (online)* (Stanford University Plato, 2023)
[79] Brenner, Neil, "What is critical urban theory?" in *Cities for People, Not for Profit,* edited by Neil Brenner & Peter Marcuse (Routledge, 2012), 14
[80] Brenner, Neil, "What is critical urban theory?" (Routledge, 2012), 14

(re)construction as a site, medium, and outcome of historically specific relations of power."[81] Critical urbanists view urban space in tandem with historical trajectories, political decisions, and economic systems. They question the policies and infrastructures behind the production of policies and designs within a city to insist that "another, more democratic, socially just, and sustainable urbanization is possible."[82] Brenner ultimately views critical urban theory as a mode of inquiry to inform a new, not-yet-seen form of urbanization predicated on a more egalitarian and just society.

An interconnected concept that shapes critical infrastructure and transportation studies is the "right to the city." The term has spanned generations of academic scholarship since French philosopher Henri Lefevre first articulated it in 1968.[83] At the time, it was part of the 1960s explosion of social discontent around civil rights, gender, and sexuality expressed through the appropriation of urban space in Paris, New York, and San Francisco. Since then, the right to the city has undergone multiple iterations, but in the contemporary context, it is a response to neoliberalism and its impact on governance in the city. The right to the city embodies protests against the diminishing presence of the state at an urban and local scale, concerned with "more governing decisions...being made by actor[s] not directly accountable to the local electorate."[84] It is a powerful but flexible term that is an effective entry point to evaluate BRTs, when considered in an expansive definition: the right to participate equitably in the creation, development, and design of a city.

To this end, I draw from more precise approaches to the right to the city. The drive to refine the term comes from what urban political theorist Mark Purcell describes as the "great gulf [that] exists between the frequency with which the right to the city is mentioned and the depth with which it is explored."[85] Instead of defining it outright, Purcell points out that the right to the city imagines a politics that does not currently exist: centered on the needs of its inhabitants (including those without citizenship). As such, "it is not clear what social and spatial outcomes the right to the city would

[81] Brenner, Neil, "What is critical urban theory?" (Routledge, 2012), 11
[82] Brenner, Neil, "What is critical urban theory?" (Routledge, 2012), 11
83 King, Loren. "Henri Lefebvre and the Right to the City," Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of the City edited by Sharon M. Meagher, Samantha Noll, and Joseph S. Biehl, (Routledge 2018), 76-86.
[84] Purcell "Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant," *GeoJournal 58,* (GeoJournal, 2002), 101
[85] Purcell "Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant," 101

have...it is not a completed political architecture but a door to a new and contingent urban politics."[86] Purcell's analysis of the term reveals the stakes involved in the claims of urban social movements, particularly in Latin America, where power is increasingly camouflaged by unelected institutions, private actors, and local politicians vulnerable to moneyed interests.

Like most critical urban theorists, Purcell stops short of expressing what the term can offer to urban practitioners. Peter Marcuse ambitiously deems the right to the city as the "goal" of critical urban theory, defining it as "an exigent demand by those deprived of basic material and legal rights...and an aspiration...by those discounted with life as they see it around them." By *right*, Marcuse specifies, the term does not imply an enforceable legal claim, but instead "multiple rights: not just one, not just a right to public space, or a right to information and transparency in government...but the right to a totality, a complexity, in which each of the parts is part of a single whole, to which the right is demanded."[87]

By framing the right to the city in terms of a collective vision of multiple rights, Marcuse translates critical urban theory to practice. Using the term *critical planning*, he calls for planners to expose the roots of a problem using critical urban theory, propose in tandem with those most affected proposals that address it, and politicize, or to "clarify the political action implications of what was exposed" and "supp[ort] organizing around the proposals."[88] In short, Marcuse asks planners to defend the right to the city by addressing the core issue of an urban problem through political action alongside those directly impacted by the problem. This thesis, using a critical urban theorist lens, applies the right to the city concept to analyze the claims of the *Salvemos Barranco* movement that arose in direct response to Lima's *Metropolitano* BRT.

2.6 The legacy of so-called progressive planning in Latin American cities

This thesis is concerned with how ideas to improve cities and specifically their transportation systems, travel across contexts and lead to unexpected outcomes. A brief understanding of how city planning has evolved in Latin America in response to broader historical and economic changes is

[86] Purcell "Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its urban politics of the inhabitant," 106
[87] Marcuse, Peter, "Whose right(s) to what city?" in *Cities for People, Not for Profit,* edited by Neil Brenner & Peter Marcuse (Routledge, 2012), 35
[88] Marcuse, Peter, "Whose right(s) to what city,?" 37

necessary, however, to place my analysis of Barranco in the proper context. Revealing how urban planning in Latin America has recently been shaped by national political agendas and foreign, transplanted ideas from Europe and the US contextualizes the role of development institutions in influencing the urbanization of the region. Foreign ideas shaped early urban planners of Latin America. While offices centered on *urbanismo* emerged in the 1920s as Latin American capital cities increased in size, Arturo Almandoz traces the evolution of *planning* in the post-World War II period of the "search for development"[89] among most Latin American countries. Across the region, foreign (and foreign-trained) architects and engineers shaped the orientation of the planning discipline. Authoritarian governments like Getulio Vargas in Brazil and Porfirio Diaz in Mexico were sometimes the strongest proponents of planning, which may partially explain the region's embrace of modernist instead of functional as well as participatory approaches.

More recently, the influence of foreign actors has taken the form of *best practices* that circulate through development banks and international NGOs. Critical geographers call these best practices a new iteration of progressive planning. Evolving from an earlier version of progressivism that emphasized a radical form of public participation, progressive planning as these geographers define it encapsulates a series of ideas to make cities more sustainable and livable. However, these ideas often miss an equity or anti-capitalist focus. Lederman and Whitney identify progressive urbanism as a dominating force that has shaped cities in Latin America and criticize it for purporting seemingly progressive planning values like green cities, sustainable mobility, and walkable streets without a "redistribut[ing] or democratizing agenda."[90] They successfully demonstrate both right and left-leaning governments in Buenos Aires and Mexico City have perpetuated inequities by adopting planning interventions exclusively in areas with the potential to attract tourism and investment. This leads to "different urban realities that further…the city's long history of socio-economic and racial stratification" with global design norms instead of the local context.[91] Despite these limitations, both

[89] Almandoz , Arturo, "Introduction" in *Planning Latin America's Capital Cities* edited by same author, (Routledge, 2002), 93
[90] Lederman & Whitney, "What is progressive city building? Global expertise and local entanglements in Latin America," *Urban Geography* (2023), 11725
[91] Lederman & Whitney, "What is progressive city building? Global expertise and local entanglements in Latin America," 11737

cities inspire leaders across Latin America through an intricate network of global conferences, think-tanks, and universities.

How can planners bring progressive planning back to its equitable and social justice foundation? Returning to Paul Davidoff's arguments for pluralistic and values-driven planning in "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning" might provide a reorientation.[92] Davidoff envisioned an advocate planner as "making more apparent the values underlying plans, and by making definitions of social costs and benefits...explicit."[93] He argues against planning by special interest groups, not unlike the unelected international agencies shaping transportation and other urban interventions in Latin America.

Scholars in urban planning invested in the intersection of international development and climate change view transit infrastructure and BRTs specifically through a narrow lens: a universal solution for cities with car-centric histories to reduce environmental pollution and increase connectivity quickly and cheaply. Their focus is less on BRTs as spatial interventions in communities and as potential catalysts for place-making. Being of Latin American origin, BRTs and their positive impact on public transit in the region has been widely researched and praised by academics as well as leading politicians. However, scholars have less to say regarding the impact of BRTs on the built and social environment. For practitioners concerned with creating economically resilient and interconnected urban communities in Latin America as well as the global south, the dearth of research on this topic leaves many crucial questions answered. If BRTs are to be the transport infrastructure of choice by cities without the fiscal wealth to build trains or other mediums of mass transit, can their wider implications as significant spatial interventions be acknowledged in the planning process? How can transit projects like BRTs be designed to contribute to social and equity outcomes at a local level?

[92] Davidoff, Paul, "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning," in *A Reader in Planning Theory* ed. A. Faludi, (Elsevier Science, 1975), 335
[93] Davidoff, Paul, "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning," (Elsevier Science, 1975), 335

2.7 Chapter conclusion: mobility justice and international development in Peru

The obstacles to improving public transportation in Latin America are heterogeneous and complex. Broadly, three dimensions of urbanization in Latin America make it difficult for governments to make large-scale and long-term improvements in transportation. The first is the limited capacity for municipalities to finance transportation projects. This is due to the precarity of municipal finance in Latin American cities, where more than half of housing in urban areas has been built "informally" or through insurgent planning practices, and a lack of access to global finance institutions.[94] The second is cities in the region have not adequately met the subsequent rapid pace of urbanization and population growth, relegating a range of public services like transportation to small and informally organized private companies or associations, particularly in peripheral urban areas. Finally, the third aspect is limited state and municipal capacity to address urban public transportation challenges. This limited capacity is due to the legacy of neoliberal economic practices the region's governments, which I have reviewed in this chapter. Overall, market-driven economics has led to catastrophic consequences for urban transportation as the limited presence of "bureaucratic experiences, mechanisms for citizen input, and coordinating bodies"[95] has stagnated the capacity for cities to meet the transportation needs of their citizens.

Lima and Barranco provide a captivating setting to analyze a bus rapid transit system at a micro level. Across my research, I heard one commonality: a project at the scale of the BRT plays a central role in Barranco and Lima's urban environment, and its initial design as well as assessment did not fully account for this. Mimi Sheller's path-breaking mobility justice framework introduces the concept of "kinopolitics," which asks planners to conceive of movement beyond transportation, but also within a society, and thus incorporate the values and desires of communities in transportation development.[96] My research uncovers the limitations of orthodox approaches to BRT planning, which

[94] Gilbert, A., & Ward, P. Housing, the State and the Poor: Policy and Practice in Three Latin American Cities. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985)
[95] Bersche, Katherine, "Neoliberal Reform of Transport Institutions in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile: The Tortoise Beats the Hare," in State and Nation Making in Latin America and Spain, ed. Augustin Ferraro, (Cambridge, 2018), 292
[96] Sheller, Mimi, "Chapter 1: What is Mobility Justice" in *Mobility Justice: The Politics of Movement in an Age of Extremes,* (Verso Books, 2018), 23

isolate transport as "efficient movement…disconnected from the wider meanings of streets, neighborhoods, and communities."[97] My informants from the World Bank revealed the limitations and compromises multilateral institutions make when balancing Bank policies and local politics, while leaders from the *Salvemos Barranco* movement shared the challenges of being heard by Peru's transit agencies.

[97] Sheller, Mimi, "Chapter 1: What is Mobility Justice" (Verso Books, 2018), 24

Chapter 3 | Salvemos Barranco *(Let's save Barranco)*

3.1 Context

Between December 2023 and February 2024, I traveled to Lima in search of a research question I had not arrived at alone. It was the product of stories I had heard over the years, from my family (that has resided in Barranco for two generations) and people I met in local bars, markets, bookstores, and other places where the few remaining *Barranquinos* converged. Collectively, the message I gleaned from these encounters was clear: Barranco had changed for the worse, and one of the key triggers many people remembered was the *Metropolitano* ripping through the district. I pursued a diverse set of methods to answer why *barranquinos* felt this way, what happened, and the lessons the BRT's implementation in Lima offers other cities seeking to transform through transportation. In this chapter, I approach the first part of this question (why and what) by tracing the emergence of the *Salvemos Barranco* grassroots movement, its claims, and the response it received from key institutional stakeholders.

In early 2009, neighborhood activists and everyday residents self-described as the "Neighbors and Representatives of Social Organizations of the Civil Society of Barranco" shared a public letter titled *Salvemos a Barranco*, or Let's Save Barranco. The letter[98] identified nine central challenges the district faced:

1. *Barranco is primarily a historic, monumental zone under threat*
2. *The construction of the Metropolitano impacts the main avenues and streets of the district*
3. *Pollution is unsustainable in the district*
4. *[The Metropolitano] lacks an environmental review*
5. *The National and Community Police is absent in traffic regulation*
6. *The infrastructure [of the district] is Destroyed*
7. *The Municipality of Barranco Should Support Neighborhood Action against the Municipality of Lima*

[98] Multiple authors, "Savlemos a Barranco" in *Paloma Duarte's personal archive,* (Scribd, 2009), https://www.scribd.com/document/11520741/Salvemos-Barranco?doc_id=11520741&order=632678177

8. *The Summer season will bring more problems and exacerbate the existing ones [due to increased traffic through the district]*

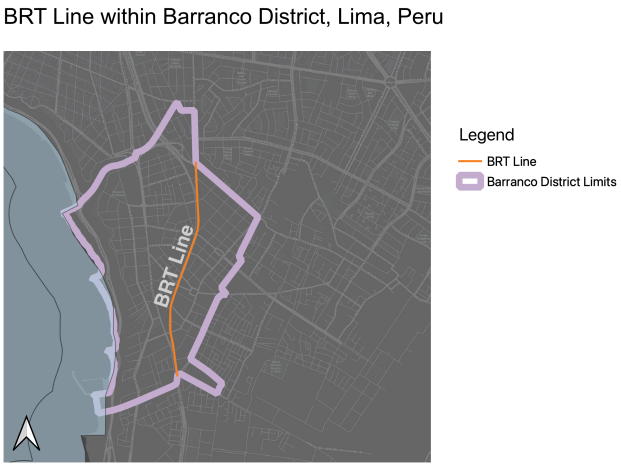

Figure 7: Map of BRT Line placement within Barranco, Lima, Peru, Source: original authorship

The *Metroplitano* kicked off construction in 2007 and, in 2009, it was still in construction. This delay disrupted the district and ironically provided the first grounds for large-scale community-level protests. Across the first half of 2009, *Salvemos Barranco* escalated its demands. The above manifesto reveals the importance of the *Metropolitano* BRT to neighborhood residents. While *Salvemos Barranco* was relatively short-lived and after 2010, evolved into a political party that encompassed center-left ideology, it was a critical moment of citizen activism for a generation of urban advocates tired of the city's top-down planning decisions that prioritized political interests. More importantly for this thesis, the movement revealed what motivated the community's opposition to the BRT.

Overall, *Salvemos'* members lamented the BRT as a wasted opportunity. They felt Lima's mayor steamrolled the project in Barranco, reflecting his desire to just get the project done rather than wrestle with more complex structural challenges. In the next two sections of this chapter, I will narrate the history of *Salvemos Barranco* and document the sources of opposition to the BRT, based on research of the group's personal archives as well as interviews I conducted with its main founders. The

group's claims were the following: 1) the BRT lacked meaningful forums for public participation and a solid environmental review 2) the BRT would lead to increased traffic in Barranco 3) the BRT would lead to the social and economic segregation of the district. I will follow this section with an overview of the response from the World Bank, the project's main financier, using data from interviews and official policy documents from the time.

3.2 Notes from the archive: *Salvemos Barranco* seizes popular discontent

An eager group of relatively young and educated Barranco residents started *Salvemos Barranco.* They were tech-savvy and, fortuitously for this research project, documented the group's progression on a *Blogspot* called *Todos Salvemos Barranco.* I reviewed the blog's entries in their entirety. Blog entries corresponded to the period of most activity for the group, from January 29th to March 23rd, 2009. The BRT had been in construction since 2007, and several delays in the process were taking a toll on Barranco. As the original members of *Salvemos* later recounted, the delay allowed the community to take a step back and unravel the neighborhood impact of the BRT. Here, I will carefully reconstruct the group's claims about the BRT, which given *Salvemos'* grassroots nature, were naturally dynamic.

The blog's first post, dated January 29th, 2009, articulates three concerns: the BRT divided the neighborhood into two segments, it impacted pedestrians as well as drivers, and it deviated traffic to San Martin Avenue, ill-equipped for extensive traffic. Before a planned February 4th protest, the group promoted their cause on national media. A *Peru21* (a Peruvian daily) article from February 3rd reprinted on the blog described traffic increases in Barranco from the closure of Bolognesi Avenue as the group's main motivation. On the same date, *Salvemos Barranco* published a letter to Lima's Mayor, Luis Castañeda Lossio, highlighting their concerns. This letter announced the February 4th protest, where the movement would call for the "suspension of the *Metropolitano corridor* [BRT] and its reinstalment with citizen participation" as well as the "reduction of low-quality vehicles along Barranco's main avenues."[99]

[99] Multiple authors, "February 3rd, 2009," *Salvemos Barranco Blog,* February 3rd, 2009

My conversations with *Salvemos Barranco's* founders enhanced my understanding of the source for the group's claims and explained why the group had conflict with the local government. José Rodriguez Cardenas' recalled his first awareness of the project:

> "I was at my father's office—who was an architect—and was consulting a part of the *Metropolitano plan*...and as I waited for him to have lunch, I searched the proposed map...and understood Bolognesi Avenue would disappear. And, not knowing where to channel my concerns...I forgot about it, but I knew it would change the entire neighborhood"[100]

Despite Rodriguez' relative privilege in access to information, he continued not knowing where to channel his concerns. The lack of effective forums for public engagement prevented community members from being heard. As a result, the BRT's proponents heard their concerns too late in the process. They framed the benefits of the BRT in terms of its impact on Lima, but missed the reality that communities saw their concerns from specific, localized vantage points. Rodriguez recalled his first confrontation with the city's transportation agency of the time, Protransporte:

> "Sometime later, Protransprote convenes a meeting to talk about the project. I saw the announcement and went, it was at *La Candelaria* [a bar] ...and the representative spoke about all the benefits of the project, he was a salesman of course..."[101]

Rodriguez, benefiting from his previous knowledge of the project, told the representative "Everything that would happen with the district. That they were going to cut Barranco in half...that the already peripheral neighborhood next to Surco was going to be even more isolated because they would not have access to services..."[102] Before the meeting ended, more architects from Barranco stood up to point out flaws in the *Metropolitano's* design. What followed was just the start of *Salvemos.* After the meeting, Rodriguez remembered a woman invited him to meet with a group of concerned *Barranquinos.* From there, *Salvemos Barranco* formed, starting with a press conference, until a march where "more than 2000-3000 people participated, which was well beyond our expectations; from this

[100] Jose Rodriguez Cardenas, interview by author, Lima, February 2024
[101] Rodriguez Cardenas, interview.
[102] Rodriguez Cardenas, interview.

march, we started *Salvemos Barranco*...benefiting from the talent of the small world that is *Barranco...*"

This February 4th march demonstrated the group's prowess and the widescale support they enjoyed. A couple thousand *Barranquinos* joined--a sizeable number for a district with a little over 30,000 residents. The protest crisscrossed the district and brought together neighbors of all social classes, ranging from wealthy residents with houses overlooking the *malecón* (seaside park) to working-class residents who lived past Bolognesi Avenue and close to Raimondi Park, or more colloquially, *parque alto*. Participants also included the intellectual bourgeoisie: the artists (writers, painters, and actors), architects, academics, and others who called the district home. A reflection a member of *Salvemos* published on the blog described the march as "multinary" and having "achieved consciousness-raising among citizens who finally realize[d]...the right to protest against the abuse of authorities."[103]

The movement's sudden growth and diversity meant some of the demands were unwieldy and expanded to real estate pressures on Barranco's long-term residents and historic preservation. A YouTube journalist, Henry Spencer, published a video of interviews with the protests' attendees.[104] One man told Spencer he demanded the reopening of Bolognesi Avenue to traffic to release Barranco from its traffic chokehold. Another attendee complained about the Mayor of Barranco, Antionio Mezzarina, and his indifference to the district's inherent value to Lima and Peru. Others called the BRT a lie, ("*Metropolitano no es más que un engaño"),* because of its construction delays and the chronic traffic issues destroying the neighborhood. One of the leaders, standing in front of *Salvemos Barranco* placards, explained the city of Lima had performed an environmental review of the BRT at a city but not a district scale. At the end of the interview, a man exclaimed the government had divided Barranco in half, with the BRT and the construction along Bolognesi Avenue nothing more than the "extension of the *Panamericana*," Lima's main highway.

[103] Multiple authors, "February 12th, 2009," *Salvemos Barranco Blog,* February 12th, 2009

[104] Spencer, Henry, "Salvemos Barranco, La Marcha," in *La Habitación de Henry Spencer,* (Youtube, 2009), https://www.youtube.com/Watch?V=3xqBDXXVTgI. February 9, 2009.

National media figures framed *Salvemos Barranco's* demands as chronic planning and governance issues in Lima. A Peruvian journalist, Marco Sifuentes, in a February 5th entry of his popular blog *Utero.pe*, asked:

> "why did *Barranco's* neighbors march yesterday? Some may ask. If Lima is semi-destroyed, what is Barranco's deal? In this district in particular, the current chaos of its streets is astounding, incredible and a good example of the total improvisation spread throughout the capital."[105]

Sifuentes placed Barranco's struggle within Lima's wider challenges. Another reputable journalist and writer, José Alejandro Godoy, also highlighted the severity of Barranco's issues to those unfamiliar with them in Lima: "one of the worst treated districts of the city is Barranco. It has had to withstand mayors with a criminal record, it now has an inefficient mayor...and as a result...it has poorly maintained beaches, buildings that should have never been constructed...a lack of vision for the district."[106] Social scientist Roberto Bustamente and Barranco resident describes the dramatic changes the exclusive corridor of the BRT caused to Lima's southernmost historic districts:

> "The most expensive urban roadway has strangled Barranco. The route of the Metro de Lima [BRT], that will traverse all of Bolognesi, has cut many pedestrian pathways...old ones, used still by traditional fishers...[This is] the wrong way to see the city—[to] cut neighborhoods and historic population paths. And of course, heavy cars have moved to San Martin Avenue...this is a problem without a short-term solution, besides the reconstruction of several streets, new contracts with transportation companies, etc. That is, a *problemón* [a huge problem].[107]

Salvemos Barranco tried to maintain the February 5th momentum by escalating their demands, attracting more media attention, and organizing another protest. *Salvemos* sent a second letter to Lima's mayor on February 13th, asking him to suspend BRT construction until the city held consultations with community members. Throughout the rest of the month, they produced visual

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[105] Sifuentes, Marco,. "Salvemos Barranco, Chorrillos, Lima...." in *Útero.Pe,* February 5th, 2009,. (Utero, 2009), http://utero.pe/2009/02/05/salvemos-barranco-chorrillos-lima/.

[106] Godoy, José Alejandro. "Los Medios Y Los Problemas Ciudadanos" *Un Blog de Análisis Político e Información*, February 12, 2009. https://josealejandrogodoy.wordpress.com/2009/02/page/3/

[107] Godoy, José Alejandro. "Los Medios Y Los Problemas Ciudadanos" *Un Blog de Análisis Político e Información*, February 12, 2009. https://josealejandrogodoy.wordpress.com/2009/02/page/3/

material to build public awareness, including videos of major traffic issues as well as a series of posters displayed throughout Barranco.

Figure 8: Salvemos Barranco Poster. personal trans: I'm congested! San Martin avenue has become a congested and unsafe street. How did we let this happen? Why did nobody consult us? Let's save Barranco. Source: Salvemos Barranco

Was the protest successful in improving the challenges caused by the BRT? According to articles in the country's two papers of record, *La República* and *El Comercio,* the protest achieved the movement's short-term demands. To alleviate the traffic issues the delays in the BRT construction were causing, the Municipality of Lima temporarily reopened Bolognesi Avenue to public transit.[108] This relieved the capacity of San Martin Avenue, which was overwhelmed with 34 public transit routes (due to Lima's informal transit system) and "nearly 837 vehicles per hour."[109] However, the *Salvemos* movement warned this decision would not solve the long-term challenge of street and traffic organization in and around Barranco, calling for the "implementation of a public forum…where the possibility of…reformulating the Metropolitan project is evaluated."[110]

[108] Multiple authors, "Alcalde de Barranco pide abrir corredor vial por exceso de vehículos," *La Republica*, February 1st, 2009
[109] Villar & Silva, "Consejo de Lima cede ante la presión de los barranquinos," *El Comercio,* February 1st, 2009
[110] Villar & Silva, February 1st, 2009

3.3 Challenging the state's low capacity to address systemic urban planning challenges

The capacity of city and national authorities to anticipate and address the root cause of transportation chaos in Lima while still completing the BRT was limited. A striking aspect of the *Salvemos* movement, however, was their ability to do just that and use their knowledge to lobby against its proposed design. This was largely due to the presence of multiple architects in the movement. All the members of the movement I interviewed were architects with an interest in urbanism (in Peru, there are no urban planning backgrounds at the graduate level and at the time, none at the undergraduate level). This enabled them to act early, quickly, and channel their demands as effectively as possible. Their professional identities also meant they could access a network of similarly minded professionals, including communication experts critical to disseminating their cause.

Miguel Barrientos, another architect co-founder of the movement and current leader at the Ministry of Transportation, summed up the state's limited capacity to me this way: "in Peru, if you want to move projects forward, you have to do [them] quickly."[111] In our interview years after these events, he recalled the *Salvemos* movement was not opposed to the BRT---a point all my interviewees reiterated—but desired a broader traffic management plan that addressed its insertion into the urban landscape: "the *Metropolitano* was not part of a larger urban plan...[the original study] was just about the corridor...if they would have used technological tools they would have realized the technical and traffic impact of [the BRT]."[112] The futility of the attempts by city officials taught Barrientos "public dialogue forums are to kill time" until an already approved project is complete.[113]

Barrientos felt a broader public consultation process before construction of the BRT started would have resolved many of these issues. José Rodriguez echoed this perspective, and specifically blamed the Mayor of Barranco at the time, Antonio Mezarina, for not spearheading his district's interests in conversations with Lima's city mayor before the project was signed-off. "It was not necessary to explode the district given the money available for this project," Rodriguez shared. From

[111] Miguel Barrientos, interview with author, Lima, January 2024
[112] Miguel Barrientos, interview.
[113] Miguel Barrientos, interview.

Barrientos' point of view, the project was a "missed opportunity" to improve major mobility and connectivity challenges in the neighborhood.

Tereza Montoya, another early *Salvemos* organizer and architect, joined the movement as a college student in 2009. She also recounted a lack of long-term vision from local authorities. Her family lived on San Martin Avenue, the residential street where traffic detoured following the BRT's construction. She was no stranger to activism, however, as her dad was a long-time activist invested in protecting Barranco's artistic and historic identity. An intern at an architecture studio in Barranco, Montoya learned about the BRT's arrival through an invitation her job received to hear about the project. In addition to the protests, she recalled organizing participatory workshops with Barranco residents to generate alternative proposals that could reformulate the BRT but still accomplish its goals of moving people through the city. When they brought the proposals to the Municipality of Barranco, "we weren't met with necessarily a refusal, but an incapacity to do anything about fixing the issues the BRT caused." Barranco's refusal to help was frustrating, but likely a sincere reflection of the municipality's isolation from the municipality of Lima.

Eventually, the salvo the city of Lima had given the movement by opening the BRT corridor to public transit ended, and traffic once again streamed to Avenida San Martin. On March 11th, the *Salvemos* movement met with Mayor Castañeda to address the BRT's poor planning. The meeting appeared unsuccessful, as an article published March 23, 2009 in *Peru21* by the Peruvian journalist Fritz Du Bois lamented the project had "no end date and not even a specifically allocated budget for its execution" and called for the *Metropolitano* to be transferred to the national government, where it might be better managed. The city never suspended the construction of the BRT, nor did it implement plans to reorganize the city's roads and traffic flows once the system was finally inaugurated in 2010. According to my interviews, the group nonetheless continued to protest at stations even as the city responded aggressively with instances of alleged police brutality. They demanded the city implement a series of alternative solutions, including a tunnel for the BRT and converting San Martin as well as Grau Avenue (another street that crossed the district) from one-way to two-way streets. According to Montoya, the city "lied" and "told us that in Barranco only the

Metropolitano would run and not any other public transit,"[114] but as of my last visit to the city, this promise was never realized.

Figure 9: Salvemos Barranco protest poster; trans: the Metropolitano will not go like this! Source: Salvemos Barranco

3.5 Chapter Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to describe how the *Salvemos Barranco* formed, developed its claims, and attempted to lobby against the proposed creation of the BRT. Using a mix of written primary sources and oral history interviews, the chapter narrates the history of the movement and evaluates its main claims. Looking back, *Salvemos* was a grassroots movement of architects and Barranco residents with a seemingly humble request for officials with much greater institutional power: to ensure the *Metropolitano* did not exacerbate and worsen existing threats to Barranco's historical and cultural identity. The group did not want to necessarily stop the BRT, but at the very

[114] Teresa Montoya, interview with author, online via Zoom, February 2024

least instead pleaded with public authorities to take mitigating measures for the impact of its presence within the district.

A portion of *Salvemos* eventually morphed into a political party called *Decision Ciudadana,* led by José Rodriguez. Rodriguez would run for Mayor of Barranco several times until ultimately winning the 2019 election. His desire to enter politics was born from his experience in *Salvemos,* and while mayor, he attempted to correct the exigencies of the *Metropolitano* by redirecting traffic on Grau Avenue and San Martin Avenue in 2019. He was ultimately stopped by the then Mayor of Lima, Jorge Muñoz, who ultimately caved into protests from unregulated bus operators and car owners alike regarding the disorienting nature of the changes.

In the next chapter, I will document the response the group received from the main financier and proponent of the BRT: the World Bank. The Bank was forced to respond given the public nature of the *Salvemos* protests. It also stepped into crisis management mode due to the ineffective and indifferent response Barranco's residents received from Lima's new transportation agency, *ProTransporte* (which the Bank had stood up), and Mayor Castañeda. The Bank's response would ultimately, however, be unsatisfactory to *Salvemos* in remedying the negative impact of the BRT, and so the group would use its considerable expertise to request a formal evaluation of the project by the Bank's Inspection Panel review board.

Chapter 4 | "The Benefits outweigh the Costs," Institutional Responses to *Salvemos Barranco*

4.1 Institutional and organizational structure of the World Bank

As much as I wanted to capture the experiences of *Salvemos Barranco* members, I was equally interested in understanding the perspective of the movement's opposing stakeholders. *Salvemos* channeled its demands across multiple audiences---the Municipality of Barranco, the Metropolitan Municipality of Lima through its transportation agency, ProTransporte, and the Ministry of Transportation and Commerce. However, I was most interested in understanding how *Salvemos* positioned its claims to the World Bank. My interest was for two reasons: 1) the World Bank (and its sister agency, the Inter-American Development Bank) was the main financier of the *Metropolitano* BRT, having contributed $90 million of its total $141.8 million cost and 2) BRTs are a central piece of the World Bank's urban transportation policy. To understand how the Bank and its close partners on the ground responded to *Salvemos*, I interviewed members of the Bank as well as close institutional partners. I also reviewed the World Bank's Inspection Panel Report, an independent investigation *Salvemos* requested from the Bank.

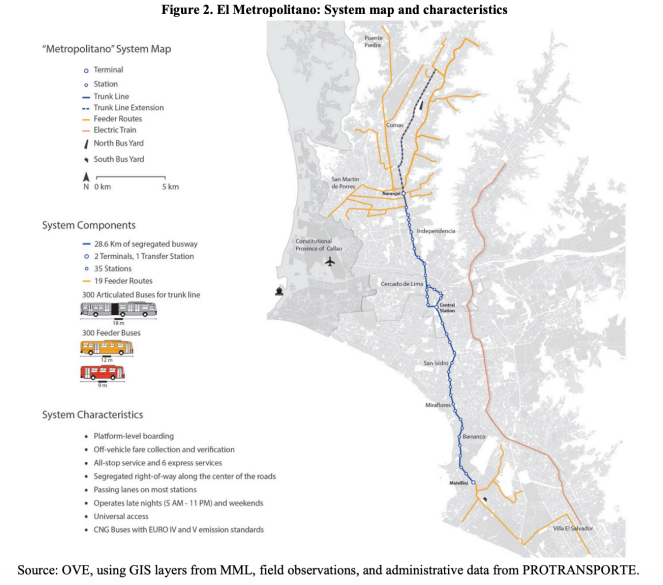

Figure 10: Metropolitano Map System (Source: Inter-American Development Bank, 2015)

It was not easy to find individual members involved in the BRT. The variety of institutions and government agencies behind the BRT's implementation meant individual identities on project documents I reviewed were rarely public. However, I relied on my professional network to source contacts both at the World Bank and in Lima. It was nearly impossible for me to obtain contacts from the city of Lima, due to several unanswered messages as well as political upheaval in the last several decades that has made members of previous governments less accessible. I interviewed four World Bank staff, both current and former, who participated in the Lima BRT project. All members of the Bank with first-hand knowledge of the BRT requested anonymity in terms of direct attribution. I accomplish their requests by thematically summarizing the interviews and including only some language from some of the interviews themselves.

The World Bank operates on a project-based model, organized by region and topic area. Lima's BRT fell within the Sustainable Development Department for the Andean region (Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, and Peru) under Latin America and the Caribbean. The team in Lima consisted largely of economists with expertise in development and transportation financing. Consultants are an important part of support to the Bank, but records of these individuals are harder to find as they are not included in project scoping documents. In Peru, the staff consisted mostly of foreign development experts.[115] The Vice President of the Bank's Latin America and Caribbean division, Hasan A. Tuly, is an American economist, as was Peru's Country Director, Susan Goldmark. The Transport Sector Manager for Latin America, Aurelio Menendez, is Spanish, and finally, the Project Team Leader, Arturo Ardila, is a Colombian economist and urban planner.

4.2 Reflections from the Bank 20 years later

In my interviews with World Bank staff, I learned they did not necessarily view Barranco's residents' complaints regarding the BRT credibly. One member of the team remembered "wealthy car owners" as protagonists at public forums facilitated by the Bank and ProTransporte, preoccupied with the closure of car lanes.[116] In my interviews, the Bank's staff defended the project on the grounds it

[115]Various authors, "Implementation Completion And Results Report (IBRD-72090 TF-52877 TF-52856)," (2011), page ix

[116] Anonymous, Interview by the author, Boston via telephone, March 2024. The interviewee chose to remain anonymous due to confidentiality requirements at the Bank.

increased access to transportation for Lima's large working class and characterized Barranco's complaints as being too focused on one district at the expense of an entire city. If anything, one interviewee viewed the four stations of Barranco as disproportionate to the district's size and population. This further proved the district's privileged position when compared to more populous neighborhoods with fewer stations per capita in the system. However, this perspective disregarded the reality Barranco was only one of three urbanized areas where the *Metropolitano* intervened, so its concerns did not necessarily outshine other neighborhoods. In addition, the data I reviewed earlier indicates Barranco was more mixed income than the Bank perceived. Whatever adverse impact the BRT did have was due to its lengthy construction period, and as one team member put it, the "limitations of Peruvian democracy" that did not privilege public consultations.

The interviewees also emphasized the limited scope of the World Bank, in terms of its own environmental and social standards as well as in its ability to influence Lima's government to rectify negative aspects of the project. One World Bank staff member who continues to work on BRT projects worldwide told me that environmental and social standards are extensively applied to BRT projects now, but at the time "the understanding about BRTs was limited" and it did not have the same degree of social as well as environmental standards.[117] Another team member clarified to me the Bank viewed the Mayor of Lima as a client and it could not necessarily dictate the terms of implementation; its role was to supervise the BRT but it could not necessarily engage in every decision.

The local Bank team members I interviewed remembered the *Salvemos* movement suspiciously, characterizing them as "not just any residents," who—they claimed-- as evidenced by their Inspection Panel request, clearly had political and economic interests at stake. All my interviewees emphasized the fact that José Rodriguez, one of the *Salvemos* founders I interviewed, became mayor—demonstrating his political appetite from the beginning somehow made him a less credible informant.

My interviews with these institutional actors contribute to the literature on policy tourism in the planning field at an international scale.[118] Scholars exploring this space have called attention to how

[117] Lincoln Flor, interview with the author, Lima, January 2024.
[118] See Hunt & Anghotti

policies like BRTs are implemented by development agencies irrespective of local context. However, my interviews show an added dimension to this process. In this example, the Bank seemed willing to negotiate various aspects of a traditional BRT, including its own institutional policies, to keep its "client"—the city of Lima—committed to the completion of the BRT. The Bank did this even if it meant sacrificing implementation standards it had applied in previous experiences with the same policy (one interviewee told me the experience in Lima was "not how they [the Bank] worked in Quito or Bogota"). Thus, while the Bank claims a universal standard for BRTs---a source of critique by critical geographers—it does seem willing to adopt to local contexts if this serves the successful completion of a project.

4.3 The World Bank's Inspection Panel Review

Dissatisfied with the response they received from local government institutions and the World Bank team in Lima, *Salvemos* formally requested a review from the Bank's Inspection Panel, an entity established in 1993 as an "independent complaints mechanism for people and communities who believe they have been…adversely affected by a World Bank-funded project."[119] To qualify for an Inspection Panel review, the Bank has 21 days to determine if a requester's complaint cannot be resolved otherwise (such as through a domestic legal process). On average, inspections occur over roughly six months and focus on determining if a requester's complaints constitute a violation of Bank policies. Inspection Panels are rare; out of the thousands of projects the Bank finances worldwide, to date (2024) there have only been 169 Inspection Panel cases, and only a fraction of these have been eligible for inspection.[120]

On September 9th, 2009—well-after the first *Salvemos* march--14 members of *Salvemos Barranco* requested a formal review from the World Bank for the "ill treatment suffered by the district of Barranco during the process of implementation of the Lima Urban Transport Project, (PO35740)" the project title and code the Bank had classified the *Metropolitano*. [121] In their letter, the residents

[119] Mutliple authors, "About the Inspection Panel | Inspection Panel." (The World Bank Group, unknown year), https://www.inspectionpanel.org/aboutus/about-inspection-panel.
[120] Mutliple authors, "Panel Cases" (The World Bank Group, unknown year)
[121] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project" (The World Bank Inspection Panel Review Board, 2011)

outlined 17 damages caused directly by the BRT's construction. In summary, the damages the residents claimed were focused on 1) perceived violations of Peruvian law by the project's implementers regarding public consultation mechanisms and environmental impact assessments; 2) quality of life deterioration as a result of deviations of heavy traffic from the BRT corridor to other avenues 3) irreparable harm to Barranco's cultural and architectural heritage 4) the undermining of the way of life for Barranco residents, including long-standing urban systems, sociocultural dynamics, and social relationships.[122]

In this section of this chapter, I will focus on the findings from the Inspection Panel that support my research question. I will review the Panel's finding that there was an inadequate level of citizen outreach in the project's initial design, a sound environmental review that considered community-level impacts, and overall, that the project had an overly narrow focus on the bus corridor's operation and did not sufficiently address impacts to urban development. Following this section, I will place the Panel's findings in conversation with interviews with members of the World Bank that were part of the BRT's project.

The final report from the World Bank's Inspection Panel is a 50 page document authored by three panel members entirely independent of the BRT project, Roberto Lenton—an Argentine water and sustainable development expert—Alf Jerve—a Norwegian social anthropologist with wide-ranging experience in rural development—and Eimi Wataabe, a Japanese sociologist who specializes in poverty reduction. The Bank Panel followed a standard procedure to investigate and response to the requester's claims; they first directed the local team to establish a *Mesa de Dialogo,* or a formal dialogue forum, with municipal stakeholders and residents, facilitated by a neutral party. Secondly, after confirming the eligibility for the request, the Panel visited Lima December 7-9th 2009, three months after the letter was submitted. Finally, following the fact-finding visit, the Panel extensively reviewed the project documents the local team assembled throughout the project's iteration.

The requesters included a written timeline of 37 instances that led up to the Inspection Panel, including letters they previously sent to public authorities and a record of *Salvemos'* public protests.

[122] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," 1-3

Their request for an inspection came from a refusal by the local government to consider the "negative impacts that have occurred" and focus instead on the *Metropolitano's* benefits for Lima.[123] The Inspection Panel was *Salvemos'* final opportunity for the Barranco community to be heard and potentially receive relief for their claims.

During their visit, the Bank interviewed the *Salvemos* members and conducted a tour along the corridor. Although the Inspection Panel Report was published in 2011, a year after the *Metropolitano's* operations, it is a rare window into the Bank's internal decision-making procedures and response to public complaints. The Panel categorized the requesters' complaints into two categories and organized the report accordingly: "Environmental Assessment and Consultation" and "Traffic and Cultural Property Issues in Barranco." Each chapter includes a fact-based analysis and resident as well as local team perspectives on the complaints the community submitted to the Panel, before providing conclusions.

The Panel's investigation acknowledged Lima's BRT was a worthwhile and necessary project for Lima given the significant traffic challenges that particularly impact low-income residents of the city's periphery,[124] but admonished the local team for several gaps in terms of environmental assessment, cultural, historical as well as traffic analysis, and mitigation plans to address these challenges. While it did not agree with *Salvemos* regarding the legality of the environmental assessment review (the group had claimed it was illegal because it was certified by the Municipality of Lima, and not the Peruvian Ministry of Transportation), and recommended they take the claim to Peruvian courts, it did agree the project had inadequately analyzed the BRT's impact on traffic, pedestrian accessibility, and Barranco's cultural as well as historic value. It found the assessments the project did complete regarding the BRT's impact to traffic at the neighborhood level were of a "general nature with no precise indication of what streets [in Barranco] will suffer." The assessment also had "very poor scoping, ignoring the possible change in the character of some streets." More conclusively, the

[123] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," 4
[124] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," page x

panel found the BRT's environmental assessment included "little concern and analysis of impacts beyond the busway on...pedestrian flows, vehicular traffic re-routing, and economic livelihoods."[125]

The Panel identified basic flaws in the project's traffic assessment—including a major sticking point by the *Salvemos* group regarding the environmental and cultural consequences of rerouting traffic from Bolognesi to San Martin Avenue. The local team commissioned a 2005 study and recommended traffic be rerouted to Grau Avenue, a commercial street more suitable for heavy through traffic, but the Panel confirmed this step was never completed. In the Panel's own words, this recommendation was inexplicably ignored, and the traffic was deviated to San Martin Avenue (where it currently flows) despite it being "much longer, go[ing] through residential neighborhoods on streets not prepared for a rapid through traffic."[126] The Panel acknowledged this decision was partially ProTransporte's responsibility, the city transit agency created by the Bank as part of its loan package.[127] However, finding no written explanation to explain this change, the panel characterized this decision as symptomatic of the "apparent lack of detailed engineering design" in the BRT, "with solutions 'on the site'" of an (implied) improvised nature.

The local team's oversight of key details in the project's implementation at a neighborhood level extended to community outreach, which the Panel deemed insufficient throughout the project. Its investigation found Barranco residents did not have "a chance to provide inputs on the design of the *Metropolitano*" and only after the project launched were they consulted. Information available online included "abstracts of the environmental studies...the full version only released much later, under pressure."[128] The low level of commitment to public engagement the panel observed validates what I heard from *Salvemos* through interviews and observed in their publications. The panel viewed low public engagement as part of the reason Barranco's residents escalated their demands and opposition to the project. However, this low public engagement was a structural challenge; residents were interested in participating, but were not actively included in a participatory or scoping process.

[125] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," page xiv
[126] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," 39
[127] Scholl, L et al. "Comparative Case Studies of Three IDB-supported Urban Transport Projects" *Lima Case Study Annex,* (IDB Publications, 2015), 10
[128] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," 27-28

This absent public engagement prevented the team from understanding the risks the project represented to the district's historical, cultural, and urban fabric.

It is not surprising the project also did not sufficiently address the potential damage it could cause to the district's historic and cultural resources. Its initial environmental assessment "determined no sites would be affected;" however, the Panel rightfully points out the local team had no way of making this determination as "no adequate survey was prepared of historic 19th century buildings in Barranco."[129] As a result, the local team did not consider the impact rerouting traffic onto San Martin Avenue--which is surrounded by a majority of Barranco's historic heritage sites--would have on 19th century structures and a residential community. While the panel could not fully assess this claim at the time of the report, it did find the lack of an "adequate analysis of the historic neighborhood or monuments or of the potential impacts of the project on them"[130] violated the policies of the Bank about cultural preservation. The outcome of this was heavy traffic circulation through San Martin Avenue, which the Panel identified as the worst possible option to manage the traffic closure caused by the BRT, as the avenue is much "longer...[and] goes through residential neighborhoods on streets not prepared for a rapid through traffic."[131] It concluded this decision would likely "cause permanent negative impacts to [Barranco's] historic area,"[132] therefore substantiating one of the main claims by the *Salvemos* movement.

The Panel did not agree with one major claim the *Salvemos* made regarding the segregating nature of the BRT. In response to the residents' claim the BRT acted as a "wall" between the western (wealthier) and eastern (lower income) parts of Barranco, the Panel agreed with the local team that it would improve the pedestrian experience as traffic safety at major intersections would increase due to the reduction of vehicles on Bolognesi avenue. However, it did not find limitations to this claim in terms of sidewalk design. On the western side of Bolognesi Avenue, "access to homes and businesses...is permissible with a mixed-use lane for pedestrians and (slow-moving) cars" but the east

[129] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," 47
[130] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," page xxii
[131] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," 39
[132] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," 47

side of Bolognesi Avenue is "rather narrow" and "needs further attention."[133] These limitations further exemplified that "solutions were adopted on site rather than after a careful review of possible alternatives."[134]

Although the Panel Inspection Report employs a neutral and objective tone throughout the document, its report validates *Salvemos Barranco* claims regarding the BRT project's threat to Barranco's physical, social, and cultural integrity. Throughout their investigation, the Panel identified a narrative among the local World Bank team and its implementation partners that made it difficult for them to hear *Salvemos'* claims—for many of these actors, the benefits of the BRT outweighed the costs communities like Barranco might suffer. This attitude, coupled with Mayor Castaneda's push to complete the project within his second and final term, meant the project would give "priority to speed of execution, with what appeared to be a dismissive attitude towards several factors that might cause a delay,"[135] including the concerns residents raised.

As I read the Inspection Panel report, I wondered how much of the report was an attempt by its writers to either defend the Bank or influence its development agenda. The Panel repeatedly emphasized BRTs are complex projects with significant social, technical, and urban consequences the local team should have considered in their planning. Were there internal factors at the Bank that made it challenging for local teams to consider and plan for these varying levels of complexity? The Panel did not explicitly address this point, but it did try to raise the importance of clearly defining the spatial area of influence for a project, even mentioning this was also a challenge in other projects. They claimed the local team did not sufficiently consider the scope of this area and, "had the Barranco community been 'on the radar…' from the outset, later tension and conflict could have been avoided."[136] However, was the local team incentivized by the Bank to consider this wider impact? Did the local team have multiple demands on their time, and was considering the "area of influence" even an important requirement for the Bank?

[133] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," xxi
[134] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," xxi,
[135] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," 49
[136] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," page xxv

4.4 Chapter Conclusion

The historical evidence I collected from Barranco illustrates infrastructures like BRTs are serious interventions in the built environment with significant long-term aftershocks to a community's quality of life, social equity, and connectivity. This remains the case even when there are benefits on one scale and harms on another. The *Metropolitano* benefits Lima by reducing traffic congestion, offering safe and reliable public transit to lower-income commuters, and improving environmental impacts. However, the evidence demonstrates planners overlooked key impacts the BRT could have on Barranco and prioritized benefits the system would bring to Lima.

How has the BRT fared since its establishment and what is the district's current experience with its negative externalities? Throughout my visit to Lima in January 2024, I completed comprehensive field observations along both the BRT corridor itself and throughout the district. As my guide to evaluate the BRT and its surroundings, I used the Institute for Transportation Development and Policy's BRT scorecard.[137] The scorecard is extensive, so I selected the most relevant measurements and created metrics to evaluate community-level impact and integration. I added a dimension to support my research project: community-level impact. I illustrate my findings in the accompanying photos below.

[137] ITDP, "The BRT Standard - Institute for Transportation and Development Policy." I*nstitute for Transportation and Development Policy - Promoting Sustainable and Equitable Transportation Worldwide,* (ITDB Blog, 2024), https://itdp.org/publication/the-brt-standard/

Figure 10: ***left side image:*** *Limited sidewalk along the corridor's eastern side that is well-below ITDP's guidelines. Jiron Salaverry & Bolognesi Avenues (Google Maps);* ***right-side image****: unprotected pedestrian refuge on crosswalk intersecting with BRT (Source: original photographs)*

Figure 11: "Sidewalk" on the west side of the BRT corridor, shared by vehicles and pedestrians (Original photos)

Figure 12: Street-level pedestrian view of BRT corridor in Barranco with yellow gate barrier (left: original photograph; right: Google Maps)

To better illustrate the community-level impact, I am also including multiple images of traffic congestion on San Martin Avenue caused by the closure of Bolognesi Avenue and the absence of effective sustainable mobility efforts at a district and city level to reduce vehicle use and enforce traffic-calming strategies.

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Figure 13: Traffic on San Martin Avenue, deviated from Bolognesi Avenue; Source: Original photographs

At the same time, some of the complaints the Barranco community made were less about the BRT itself and more about broader planning challenges the district and the city continue to experience. The BRT's closure of Bolognesi Avenue has certainly deviated southbound traffic through Barranco on the more residential and ill-equipped San Martin Avenue. However, car reduction efforts

at a city and district level could reduce the impact of the street closure. As the literature review I provided points out, Lima's public transportation reform has stayed in limbo, with local elected officials paralyzed by opposition from unregulated concessions to be reined in. Barranco has also faced broader urbanization challenges, with increased high-rise residential buildings, sustained parking minimums, and increased tourism also contributing to increased neighborhood traffic. At the same time, all of this was not entirely unforeseen. As the Panel Inspection Report notes, Bank officials could have supported Barranco and Lima in foreseeing these challenges through a detailed traffic analysis and by developing an urban mobility plan the district could implement in the future.

The impact of the BRT's construction on Barranco culturally, historically, and socioeconomically is harder to measure quantitatively. While the complaints from *Salvemos* in this regard are valid—especially considering the neighborhood's segmentation—its relationship with the BRT opens a wider debate regarding the role transportation infrastructure should play in an urban setting and goes beyond what the Bank perceived as its scope at the time. The Bank's priority in this regard was to reduce traffic and offer a public transit solution for the periphery so more *limeños* could access opportunities. A 2012 report by the Federal Transit Administration offers an alternative dimension for BRT planners to consider, by placing greater attention to their role in "creating and revitalizing the public realm" which can both solidify the permanence of the system and "reflect the unique culture and history of the communities they serve."[138] Though these two goals might on the surface appear to be competing, the long-term viability of a BRT system depends on its ability to create permanence and obtain goodwill from the communities it occupies.

Throughout this chapter, I have reviewed interview and archival data regarding the claims made by *Salvemos Barranco* and responses from the World Bank. I placed these claims in conversation with the Bank's Inspection Panel report, which I used as both a primary source document (being an inside-look into how the Bank responded to the protest movement) and a comprehensive source of data regarding the design and planning of the BRT. In this next chapter, I will offer a framework to

[138] Flynn, Jennifer, "Community-oriented BRT: Urban Design, Amenities, and Placemaking" (2012) https://doi.org/10.21949/1503571

specifically address how BRT and transportation infrastructure projects more broadly could incorporate community impacts during the evaluate phase for BRT projects.

Chapter 5 | Conclusion: Imagining repair, place-making, and the future of BRT

Improving mass public transportation in a city as large as Lima is important and urgent. A lack of reliable, high-quality, and safe urban transportation policy has led to an automobile-centric vision for mobility. Lima has one of South America's worst traffic rates, with negative consequences to public health, social integration, gender inclusion, economic opportunity, and more. The *Metropolitano* serves a critical function by mobilizing thousands of *limeños* from the city's northern and southern cones. Given the recent history of the Peruvian state's disinvestment in urban transportation, it is nothing short of remarkable that Lima's BRT came to fruition. Despite its successful completion, its construction left many open questions and criticisms that impact the state's future ability to transform transportation in Lima as well as other cities in Peru.

In this thesis, I have examined one principal research question: *To what extent did the planning process for Lima's BRT incorporate socioeconomic, cultural, and historic interests at a local scale, specifically in the Barranco district?* I have explored this question through a mixed-methods qualitative methodology, that has primarily involved a close reading of primary sources and oral history interviews. I used my knowledge of Barranco to guide my instincts as I pursued different avenues to collect these research materials and access resources. The outcome of this process is a detailed analysis of the stakeholders involved in the creation of the *Metropolitano* and the character of its opposition in Barranco.

The *Metropolitano* is a story of stakeholders with seemingly good intentions that fell short in terms of accountability when bad outcomes emerged, and citizens complained. The stakeholder with the most money and expertise regarding BRTs was the World Bank, and if it is to play a key role in improving urban transportation in Lima, it must grasp the political, social, and spatial context it enters to serve the public interest. Otherwise, the Bank risks reinforcing ineffective and inequitable local practices in urban and transportation planning. The Inspection Panel report identified several aspects of the project that made it unable to respond to concerns from residents, not least of which was the Bank's internal structure. However, the Inspection Panel blamed the Bank's local and regional team in

Peru, instead of reflexively asking how the institution facilitated an environment where ignoring central Bank policy is commonplace and early-career staff is unable to confront country clients in powerful positions, like Lima's Mayor Castañeda.

The next most involved stakeholder in the BRT's development was the city of Lima. Mayor Castañeda was interested in completing the project during his first term in office, from 2003 to 2010, to ensure it was part of his political legacy. The city of Lima was indifferent to the complaints Barranco residents raised about the *Metropolitano,* responding to the group's protests with short-term measures it would eventually lift to move forward with the BRT. Videos of the *Salvemos* marches feature protestors lamenting Mayor Castañeda labeling their complaints as anti-modern when, from their perspective, they were promoting a more sustainable vision for the city. By refusing to listen to their demands, the mayor abdicated his responsibility to constituent demands and relegated them to the World Bank.

Other government stakeholders with a more marginal role in the BRT were the national government and the local Barranco municipality. Although it now administers the *Metropolitano* through the *ATU,* the Peruvian central state was never involved in its original formation and has yet to review the design and implementation of the BRT corridor in Barranco. The Municipality of Barranco failed to represent the interests of Barranco residents early in the BRT's development. Although Mayor Mezarina eventually protested the project alongside his fellow residents, he had forfeited his maximum leverage against the central Lima municipality by not intervening before they signed off on the BRT.

The BRT's development in Barranco represents a microcosm of the difficulty the Peruvian state has experienced since the Fujimori regime to address social challenges and demands of wide-ranging scope. In this case, a Robert Moses-like mayor—Luis Castañeda—was more concerned with his personal vision for Lima versus how people would live in such a city. This concern dictated the terms of the BRT's implementation, which neglected public outreach and lacked a coherent agenda for broader, comprehensive urban transport reform to support the new BRT's success. In large part, the World Bank's support of Castañeda's vision for the city in exchange for his endorsement of the

Metroplitano, granted him these concessions, even if they violated the Bank's own social, environmental, and historical preservation policies. As the Inspection Panel noted in its review of the BRT, the project had an improvised character that mirrored Castañeda's "big-man" governance style.

Why else did the Bank fail to respond effectively when Barranco residents raised unanticipated issues? One obstacle was the Bank's reliance on foreign experts who lacked local cultural, historical, and geographic knowledge rooted in lived experience. These experts tried to build Lima's capacity to handle urban transport policy by helping to establish ProTransporte as part of the BRT loan package, but they underestimated how Lima's political fragmentation and lack of support from the national government would make it difficult to deliver such a complex project equitably and effectively. This left the Bank and Mayor Castañeda solely accountable for the success of the country's first form of mass urban transport infrastructure.

To evaluate the present state of the BRT stations within Barranco, I used the Institute of Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP)'s current Gold Standard framework, and combined it with metrics I created myself, focused on community integration. The result of that evaluation is below:

Table 1: Evaluation of BRT Corridor along Avenida Bolognesi, Barranco, Peru

Criteria	Metric Description	Justification
Universal Access (ITDP)	Accessible to all customers and staff, including those who are physically, visually, and/or hearing impaired, as well as those with temporary disabilities, older people, younger children, caregivers, and any load-carrying passengers.	Multiple stations lack sidewalk access with ramps sufficiently wide for wheelchair users. No audio accessibility is available at any of the Barranco stations.
Public Transport Integration (ITDP)	The BRT corridor should integrate with the rest of the public transport network.	None of the stations in Barranco are integrated with other forms of public transport, formal or informal
Pedestrian access and safety (ITDP)	• At-grade pedestrian crossings where pedestrians cross a maximum of two lanes of traffic before reaching a physically protected pedestrian refuge (e.g., sidewalk, median). • In built-up areas, the corridor has safe pedestrian at-grade crossings at least every 200 meters. • Signalized crosswalks where pedestrians must cross more than two lanes at once. • Table-top crossings or speed bumps to slow down traffic when approaching unsignalized crosswalks. • Signals timed so that pedestrian waiting time is not excessive; Wide (at least 2 meters), well-lit, well-demarcated crosswalks where the footpath remains level and continuous, or ramps exist to ensure accessible crossings. • Dedicated and protected sidewalks along the corridor that are at least 3 meters (10 feet) wide and unobstructed.	• Pedestrian crossings are not safe because a car lane has replaced the sidewalk on the Western side of the corridor. • Sidewalks are not protected alongside the corridor and sidewalks on the eastern edge of the corridor are less than three meters. • Sidewalk ramps are not wide enough. • BRT pedestrian refuges are dangerously thin between BRT corridor.

	• Direct station access, with no time-consuming detours and other delays. • Posted speed limits set to prioritize safety (e.g., below 30 kilometers per hour in dense urban centers). • Design that matches posted speed limits to prevent speeding and help with enforcement.	
Community integration (Original to author)	• BRT incentivizes the creation of accessible public spaces, including expanded sidewalks, adjacent waiting areas, green spaces. • BRT supports other transit sustainable transit modes, such as walking and cycling. • BRT is visually integrated to the urban environment through penetrable infrastructure. • BRT offers sufficient waiting areas to avoid overcrowding onto surrounding public sidewalks. • BRT mitigates impacts to surrounding traffic.	• I observed one public space the BRT created, but it is surrounded by cars and is not protected from traffic. • As mentioned in the third category, sidewalk space is limited; there is also no infrastructure to support cycling. • The yellow gate "protecting" the buses inside the corridor are not only visually unappealing, but they do not promote community integration. They also make businesses and services on either side of the street impenetrable. • The waiting areas inside each station are limited in terms of size and have no seating. • San Martin Avenue continues to experience high congestion, at all hours, due to the closure of Bolognesi Avenue and lack of accompanying transport reform.

The ITDP BRT scorecard was not as comprehensive of pedestrian and accessibility concerns in the late 2000s as it is today. However, employing it reveals critical limitations of the *Metropolitano's* station accessibility, integration with other forms of transport, and pedestrian experience. Unsafe pedestrian refuges in crosswalks and unprotected small sidewalks alongside the corridor on Bolognesi Avenue demonstrate a basic level of insufficient thinking concerning the BRT's surroundings as well as its impact on Barranco residents with other transport needs.

Citizens in Barranco and representatives from *Salvemos* thus continue to feel the *Metropolitano* project owes them, in the words of the *barranquino* architect Miguel Barrientos, "*una deuda pendiente*"—a pending debt. This thesis took a critical urban theoretical approach to unravel what characterizes this debt. To this end, I centered the claims of the *Salvemos Barranco* movement, the stakeholder with the least amount of political and institutional power. I placed their claims in conversation with responses and recollections I gleaned from interviews with institutional actors. By following this methodological approach, I tried to accomplish two goals. The first was to bring the voices of *Salvemos Barranco* into the official historical record and narrative of the BRT. I place "local"

and "grassroots" expertise on equal footing as government and institutional narratives. The second goal was to bring precision and clarity to the community conflict the BRT generated, parsing through what happened, how the conflict is remembered, and the possibilities to repair and repay the damage caused by the "debt."

The Bank's Inspection Panel considered the project's flaws as a matter of the local team not following World Bank policy. This thesis reflects on a more foundational flaw of the BRT. Instead of limiting my recommendations to technical improvements, I address the fundamental flaw in the approach to BRT in Barranco: The World Bank and its government allies' vision for the BRT focused narrowly on its effectiveness as a form of transportation, and not enough on its role as a physical presence shaping the urban form and morphology of Lima. They used a blunt and affordable solution that had been proven in neighboring countries, the BRT, to try to fix a systemic transportation issue. Despite its significant presence within the urban landscape, the Bank and city government did not consider how the BRT would contribute to the city's existing urban form. Instead, they evaluated the BRT solely in terms of its financial sustainability and designed it to maximize its capacity for high passenger demand.

On the other hand, the *Salvemos* movement was deeply concerned with the BRT's presence in the urban landscape. Its preoccupations were smaller in scope, but no less important. The group wondered how the BRT would impact Barranco's sense of place. They asked how the city would address traffic problems, damage to historic buildings, and the breakdown in community relationships a segmentation of Lima's smallest district could provoke. *Salvemos* rightfully wondered if the city had considered alternatives—ranging from a tunnel to an alternative route for the BRT bypassing Barranco altogether. When *Salvemos* raised these concerns with city officials and the Bank, these actors cast them as pro-car, anti-public transport, and anti-modern. It is easier to accept this premise, however, than engage with the possibility many of these activists had expertise rooted in both their experience as architects—thus considerably preoccupied with the city's form—and as *barranquinos.* The *Salvemos* movement did not object to the BRT as an improvement to the city's public transportation. If anything, many of its members craved solutions to the city's traffic issues. Their

traffic concerns reflected an awareness that Lima's congestion challenges needed a comprehensive urban transportation plan that could not be fixed by a single BRT line alone. Their knowledge of Barranco's historical value was not a superficial appreciation for dated aestheticism but instead rooted in their experience with this history through the district's many cultural activities. They craved the respect and care from public authorities a historic and culturally meaningful district like Barranco deserved.

Transportation planners could mitigate and account for the ripple effects a BRT presents to a local community and reduce potential harm. The Inspection Panel astutely identified a core belief among the local World Bank team and its partners: the goodness of the project for Lima's many transportation problems and the city's poor. This belief made it difficult for the team to consider the system's relationship with the rest of the city and adapt its implementation strategy accordingly. This was not just an isolated incident in Peru—the Panel Report noted a similar situation concerning a sanitation development in Ghana.[139] While the Inspection Panel noted part of the challenge was the local team did not meet some of the Bank's internal policies, it seems clear there were nonetheless institutional gaps in the planning process.

The possibility for repair

When the *Metropolitano* was announced, the World Bank and the city of Lima refused to seriously respond to Barranco resident concerns. As the BRT extends[140] into other parts of Lima and the Bank promotes it as an essential policy for cities around the Global South, there is an opportunity for stakeholders to come back to the drawing board and reconsider the *Metropolitano's* existing design. At this critical juncture, stakeholders could move forward by acknowledging—taking a cue from the mobility justice framework—urban space is not sedentary, and that BRTs "do not just take place, but also make place."[141] How could this inform a re-evaluation of the *Metropolitano* now? The path forward requires negotiating political dynamics inherent to Peru and asking the World Bank to take the rare step of repairing a completed project. This repair is urgent and critical; as the evaluation I

[139] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," page xxv
[140] Various authors, "Lima Metropolitano BRT North Extension (P170595)," *The World Bank,* (2019)
[141] Sheller, Mimi, "Chapter 1: What is Mobility Justice" (Verso Books, 2018)

provided in Table 1 indicates, the *Metropolitano's* gaps have left Barranco with high traffic congestion, increased air and noise pollution, pedestrian deaths, and deteriorated historic buildings.[142]

To support my second thesis research question—*how could the planning process and design of the BRT in Barranco be configured differently to achieve greater social and economic inclusion?* —I have designed the following framework based on concerns I heard on the ground in Lima. My proposal is a BRT design and place-making framework responding to different societal values and public interests. This framework asks planners—in this case, development agencies—to consider the city and neighborhood scales simultaneously in the planning as well as design of a BRT that spans a metropolitan area. It could be used by practitioners in partnership with local communities when designing a BRT's configuration and placement throughout a city. While this framework should have been adopted from the start in Lima, it can still offer a starting point for policymakers to re-engage in repairing the harms caused by the *Metropolitano's* construction in Barranco.

Table 2: BRT Design & Place-making Framework

Category	*City scale*	*Neighborhood scale*	*Planning and design strategies*
Opportunities for place-making	1.Access to safe, accessible, and reliable transit 2.Increased spatial justice as greater diversity of people can circulate 3.Incentivizes mode shifts to reduce car ownership, congestion, and improve air quality	1.Traffic-calming effect from reduced cars on streets replaced by bus corridors 2. Source for community integration by including greater public space and cycling / pedestrian infrastructure 2. Improved accessibility for local public transit users 3. Incentivizes mode shift among local community from cars to public transit	1.**Vehicle reduction:** Prioritize vehicle reduction around BRT corridors by eliminating parking minimums, creating cycling lanes, and including green spaces 2. **Use BRTs to increase public space:** Increase sidewalk width near BRTs for overflow capacity and to increase public space for community users 3. **Embed city and cultural identity across all elements of BRT design:** Represent community cultural identity through station design (art panels, native plant growth) and infrastructure (bus shelters, thematic design, bicycle parking, public restrooms)
Risks to Place-making	1.Pedestrian accidents along rapid bus corridors 2.High congestion on service if projected demand is underestimated 3.Potential design challenges for areas of the city with dense built environments	1. Damage to cultural and historic assets 2.Widened streets and large distances between stations impacts walkability, commerce, and community relationships 3.Traffic deviations from the BRT installation could cause traffic in other parts of the neighborhood 4.Decreased neighborhood-level connectivity due to reduced crosswalks between stations to allow for "rapid" circulation	1. Prioritize placing BRT corridors in areas with large land plots and minimal impact to historic neighborhoods 2. Partner with sub-metropolitan government entities, neighborhood associations, etc. to co-design route placement and configuration 3. Identify positive changes a BRT can offer at a local level, including increasing public space, green areas, and improving pedestrian walkability as well as building cycling infrastructure 4. Decrease BRT speed in areas with high pedestrian populations by installing multiple crossings

[142] Various authors, "The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, Peru: Lima Urban Transport Project," page xxv

This exercise of outlining opportunities and risks for place-making forces international agencies and local planners alike to consider their spatial as well as urban design impact. Grounding this framework is the following proposition: the planning and design of a BRT should be centered within a holistic mobility ecosystem, that includes safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, connectivity to other transportation modes, and impact on the traffic as well as circulation of surrounding streets. This expands on tools that evaluate BRTs with respect to the surrounding urban system. The following illustration depicts the relationship between BRTs and this mobility system:

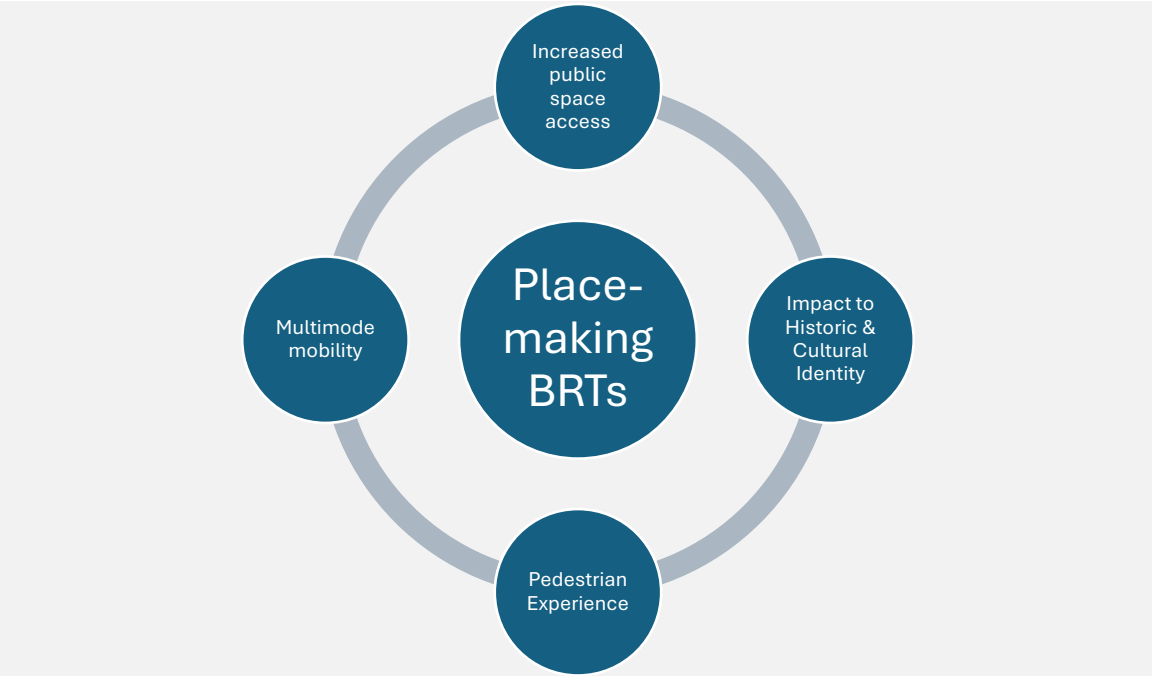

Figure 14: Place-making BRTs (original authorship)

If stakeholders in Lima were to revisit the BRT in Barranco, they would need to find ways to bring common ground to as many conflicting stakeholder interests as possible. To accomplish this, a less top-down and more participatory process would be necessary. Here, I will sketch out a vision for evaluation and a pathway for repair inspired by existing ideas in contemporary planning theory. These are embodied in two critical steps stakeholders in Lima must take if they were to come back to the table and repair the harm done to Barranco. The first is to implement a planning process based on

advocacy and pluralism, and the second is to generate a participatory design process that centers Barranco's residents and adjacent communities.

To realize the first step, the central role of the *advocate planner* is imperative. The stakeholder with the greatest financial responsibility and stake in Lima's BRT success is the World Bank, and so it could take the role of an *advocate planner* (as defined by Davidoff) focused on bringing stakeholders and providing financing for solutions generated by local actors on the ground. Of course, this would involve the Bank's partnership with national and metropolitan-level government entities. The Bank would offer an opportunity for the Peruvian Ministry of Transportation, the city of Lima, and the ATU to work with Municipality of Barranco as well as local organizations to create a diagnostic about how the *Metropolitano* has impacted the district.

As the facilitator and financier, the Bank would step back from its traditional role as an expert on BRTs and allow experts as well as communities on the ground to assess the failures of the *Metropolitano.* It would need to engage with communities along the existing corridor implicated in any possible changes to the entire system through research conducted by local leaders and representative organizations. This process would also involve collecting data from districts adjacent to Barranco in Lima's southern corridor, including but not limited to the districts of Santiago de Surco (to Barranco's east) and Chorrillos (to Barranco's south), that would be most impacted by the BRT. The Bank could then facilitate negotiations between all stakeholders and define a concrete set of planning and design principles for changes to the BRT focused on repairing the harms done to Barranco and improving the system overall.

The second part of the repair process would be to establish a participatory design process for a better BRT, in partnership with Barranco and surrounding local communities. This would build upon the early work *Salvemos Barranco* performed in organizing community workshops for residents to visualize ideas that could improve Barranco. The Bank could rely on local experts in Lima it likely already has relationships with, such as *Lima Como Vamos*[143]*,* the country's leading urban advocacy organization, to facilitate these workshops. It could also involve homegrown expertise, particularly

[143] https://www.limacomovamos.org/

among the many architects I interviewed that led the movement These professionals have the right technical expertise and historical knowledge of Barranco and the city's mobility landscape to offer the Bank valuable insights for repair.

Following these consultations, the Bank's considerable leverage as a global funder would allow it to influence its government clients and incorporate any proposals generated by the participatory design process. Engaging participation from all levels of government would be indispensable to this process—which was missing from the original iteration of this project. Within Peru's central government, this would specifically mean the Ministries of the Economy, Transportation, and Defense—the latter of which owns significant plots of land throughout Lima. Having this support would enable the Bank and the city of Lima to pursue creative solutions for Barranco's repair. For example, one alternative *Salvemos Barranco* founders recollected in their interviews was placing the BRT corridor in the adjacent district of Surco, along Jorge Chavez Avenue and through an existing air force base separating Surco from Chorrillos. This would require relocating the air force base. Connecting Chorrillos and Barranco was a driving force behind the original design of the BRT along Bolognesi Avenue, so finding an alternative that still achieves this connectivity is critical. The final step in this process would be for the Bank to create best practices based on the repair of the *Metropolitano* and embed it internally as a standard operating procedure for BRT-related transport planning.

Significance for future BRT planning

The pathways for repair I have expanded upon in this conclusion are not just important for Barranco but have global resonance. Since the late 2000s, the World Bank has moved on from this chapter in its history and continued pursuing the introduction of BRTs throughout the Global South—its next frontier being African cities (the fastest growing worldwide). In recent publications, the Bank positions BRTs as an "innovative form of urban transport" that can "carry large amounts of people quickly and efficiently."[144] In the city of Dakar, Senegal, the Bank emphasizes the BRT will

[144] Various authors, "With Bus Rapid Transit, African Cities Are Riding Toward a Better Future" (2022), https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2022/11/28/with-bus-rapid-transit-african-cities-are-riding-toward-a-better-future

"pass through many of the city's busiest and most populous districts" and offer residents access to essential services as well as opportunity.

The movement of BRTs from South America to Africa occurred intentionally, facilitated through exchanges and visits between professionals in Bogotá, Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Mexico City in a process scholars deem as "policy tourism."[145] What is missing in this transnational journey is an acknowledgment by the Bank of the social, technical, and political complexity BRTs represent as highly visible forms of infrastructure. For example, Cape Town has struggled to both meet ITDP's gold standard—which requires significant financing to build high-quality infrastructure—and the long-term financial sustainability of the system. To address the ITDP Gold Standard, the city prioritized building the BRT in middle-class White and Black areas to attract ridership from higher-income earners, unintentionally reproducing Apartheid-era spatial inequalities.[146] Balancing global standards and interests with local realities is critical for the long-term success of BRTs.

Transforming transportation to reduce greenhouse emissions and promote a radically different vision for car-centric cities like Lima is one of this generation's greatest tasks and responsibilities. The process of transformation should not mean completely (or in some instances even partially) doing away with the past. Instead, planners should consider how urban transport can complement a community's cultural and historic assets as they design and implement sustainable urban infrastructure. Otherwise, planners risk transforming cities into places devoid of histories and places. Finally, new mobility infrastructure should consider how it can support positive changes in the city and not exacerbate existing spatial inequities or create new harms. By pursuing sustainable transportation thoughtfully, and through a comprehensive, community-centered framework, planners and development agencies like the World Bank will ensure these projects are catalysts for a better, greener, and more equitable urban future.

[145] Wood, Astrid, "Learning through Policy Tourism: Circulating Bus Rapid Transit from South America to South Africa" (2014)
[146] Diallo, Fabio, "Conflicted translations: an analysis of the bus rapid transit policy adoption process in Cape Town": (2022), https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21622671.2022.2099967

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Appendix

Sample oral history interview questions

1. Tell me about who you are, where you are from, and your current role or profession.
2. Can you share how you first learned about the *Metropolitano*?
3. Could you share how you first got involved at the World Bank or *Salvemos Barranco*?
4. What do you think the main challenges of the BRT were? Did you think Barranco residents were right to complain?
5. What are your reflections looking back, nearly 20 years later? What did the BRT offer Lima and what is still missing?