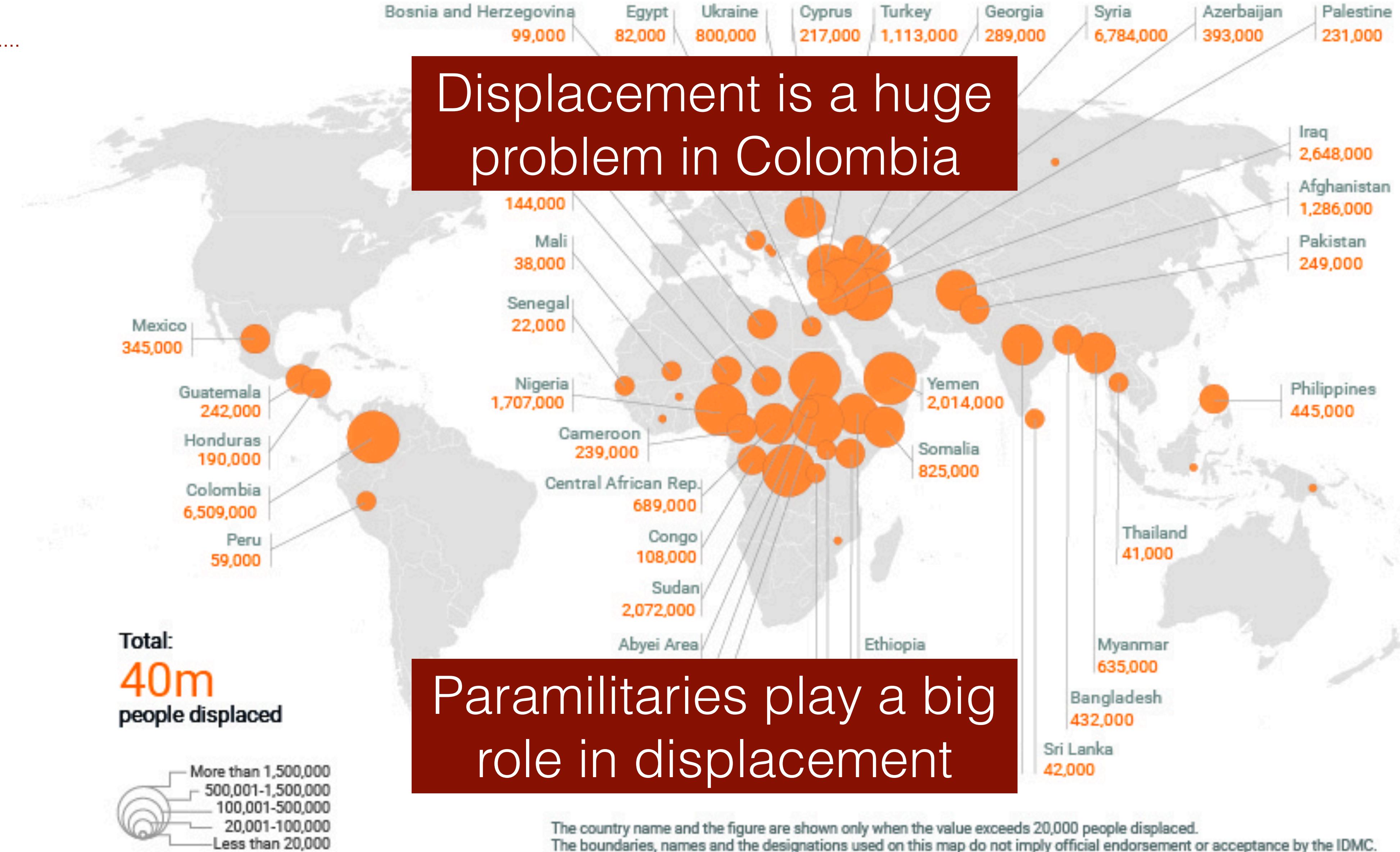


Poli-416: REVOLUTION & POLITICAL VIOLENCE

DÉDIE
AU GOUVERNEMENT
de la
CONFÉDÉRATION GRENADE

TODAY'S AGENDA

- 1 The land question (in Colombia and elsewhere)
- 2 Political sources of displacement
- 3 Economic sources of displacement



The land problem: informality

Who owns what land is a contentious issue
all over the developing world

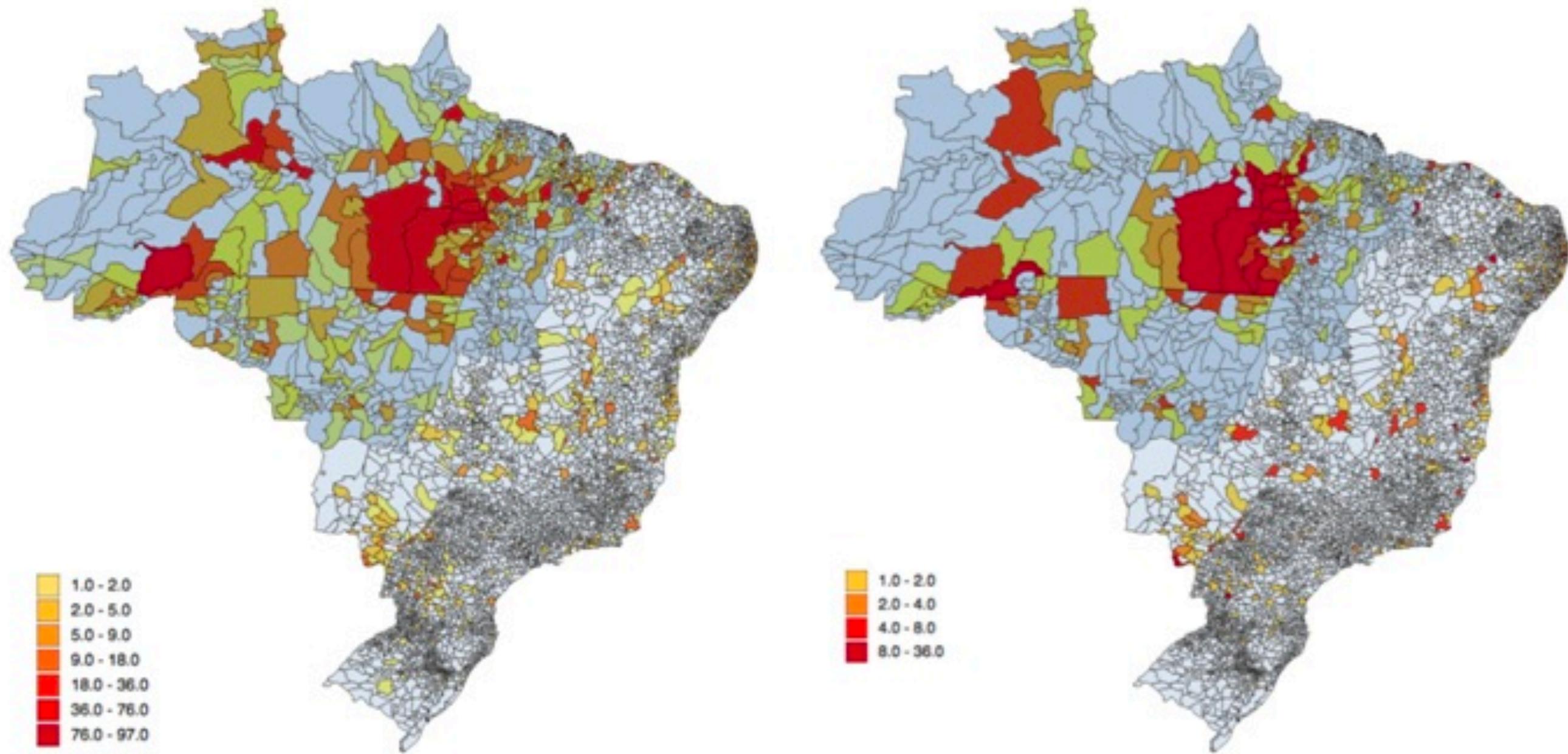


Figure 1: Municipality level counts of *escalations* (left) and *violence* (right) over 1997 to 2010: land related conflict was concentrated in the Amazon states (shaded).



Why is **land** so important
in the developing world?

The land problem: informality

In many parts of the world,
people own land **informally**

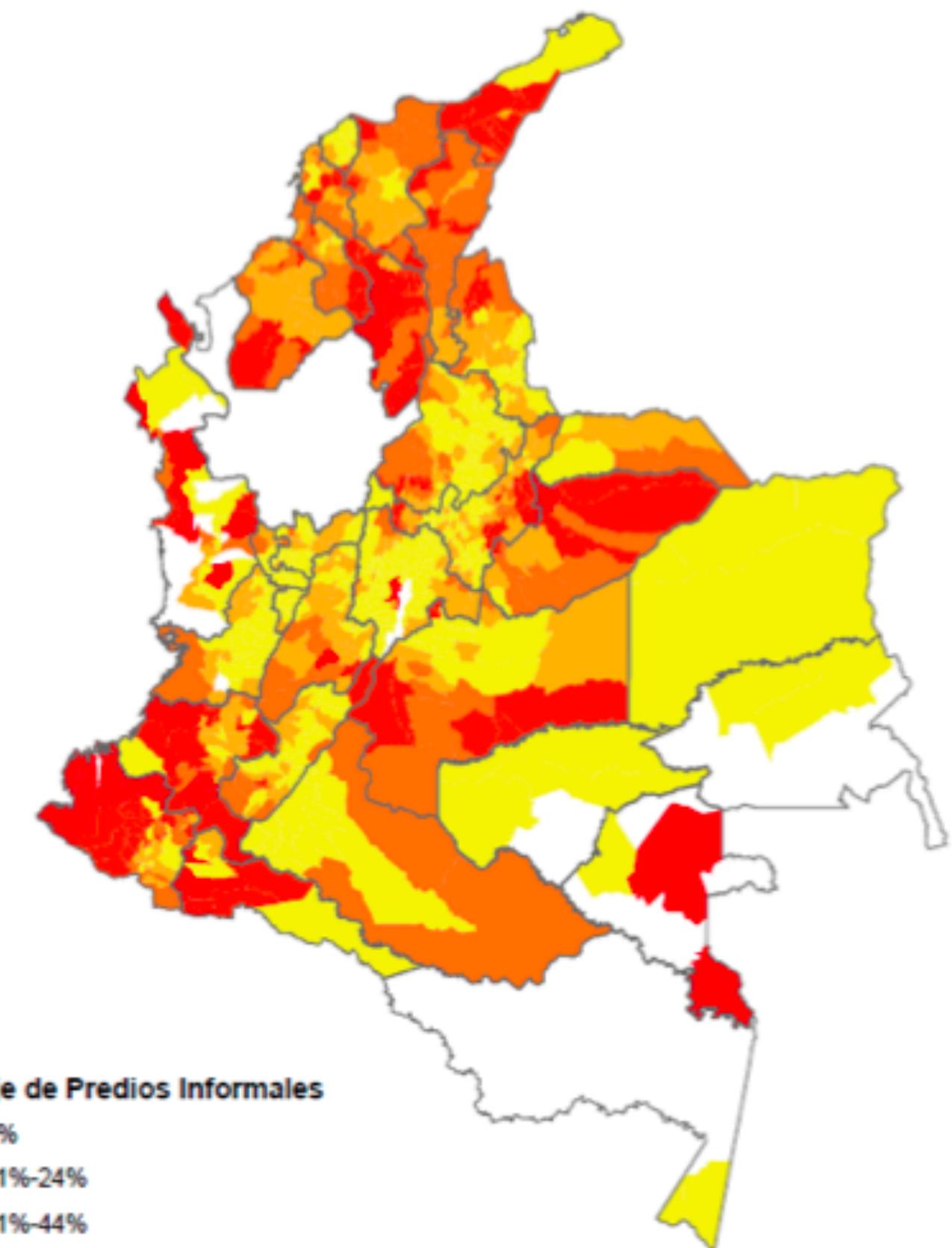
Why?

Titling is expensive, local custom,
Avoid taxes (wealthy)

Result: state has no idea who owns what or how
to **adjudicate competing claims**

Often this is to the **benefit** of the rich and the
detriment of the poor

Porcentaje de Predios Informales
2012

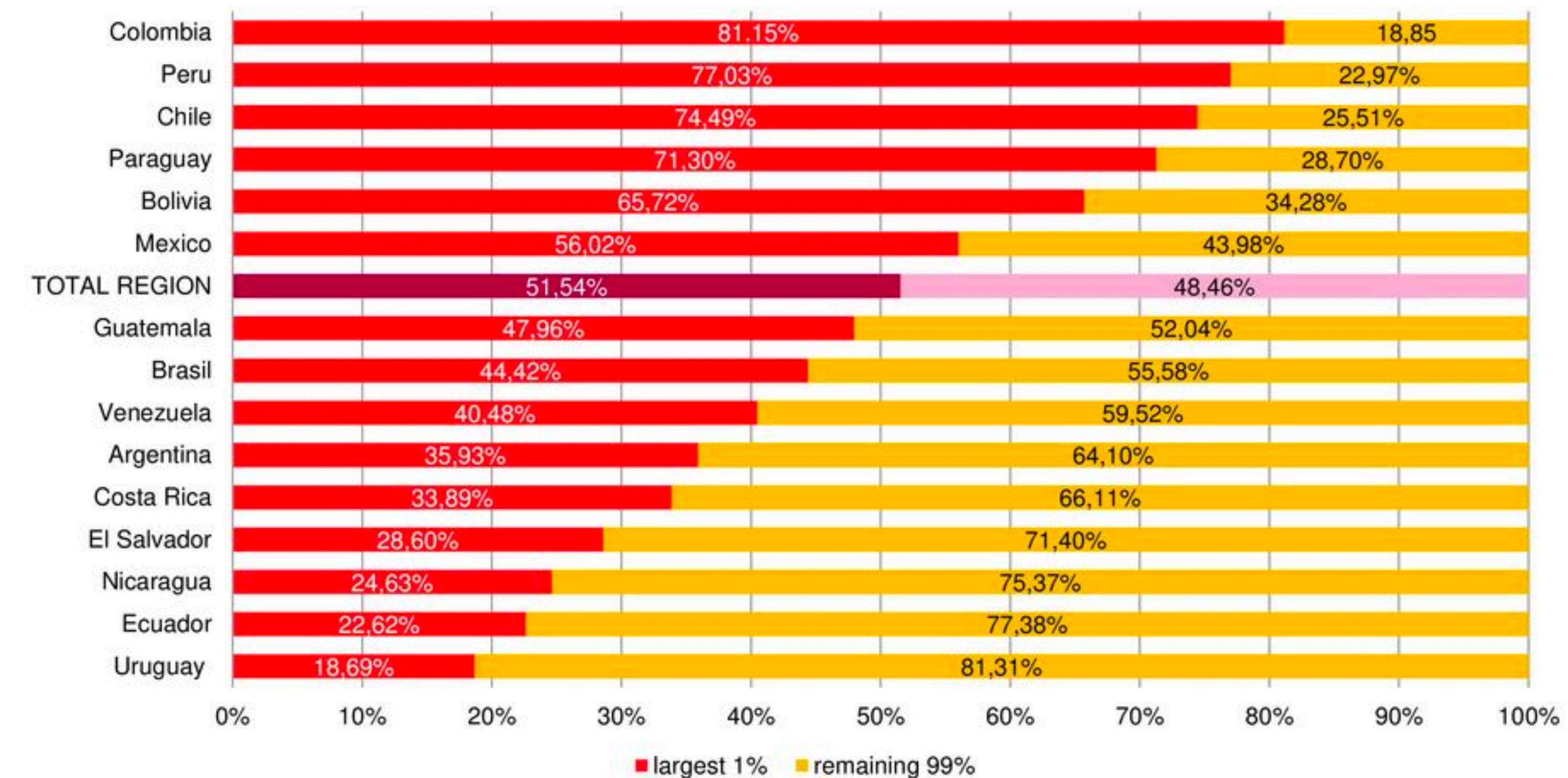


The land problem: inequality

Land ownership is also **highly concentrated**, especially in Latin America

What consequences might weak access to land have?

% OF LAND HELD BY LARGEST 1% OF FARMS IN LATIN AMERICA



The land problem: inequality

Inequality produces demand for **redistribution**

But elites are often able to **resist** these efforts
(how?)

This in turn undermines the **legitimacy of the state**, producing grievances and **conflict**

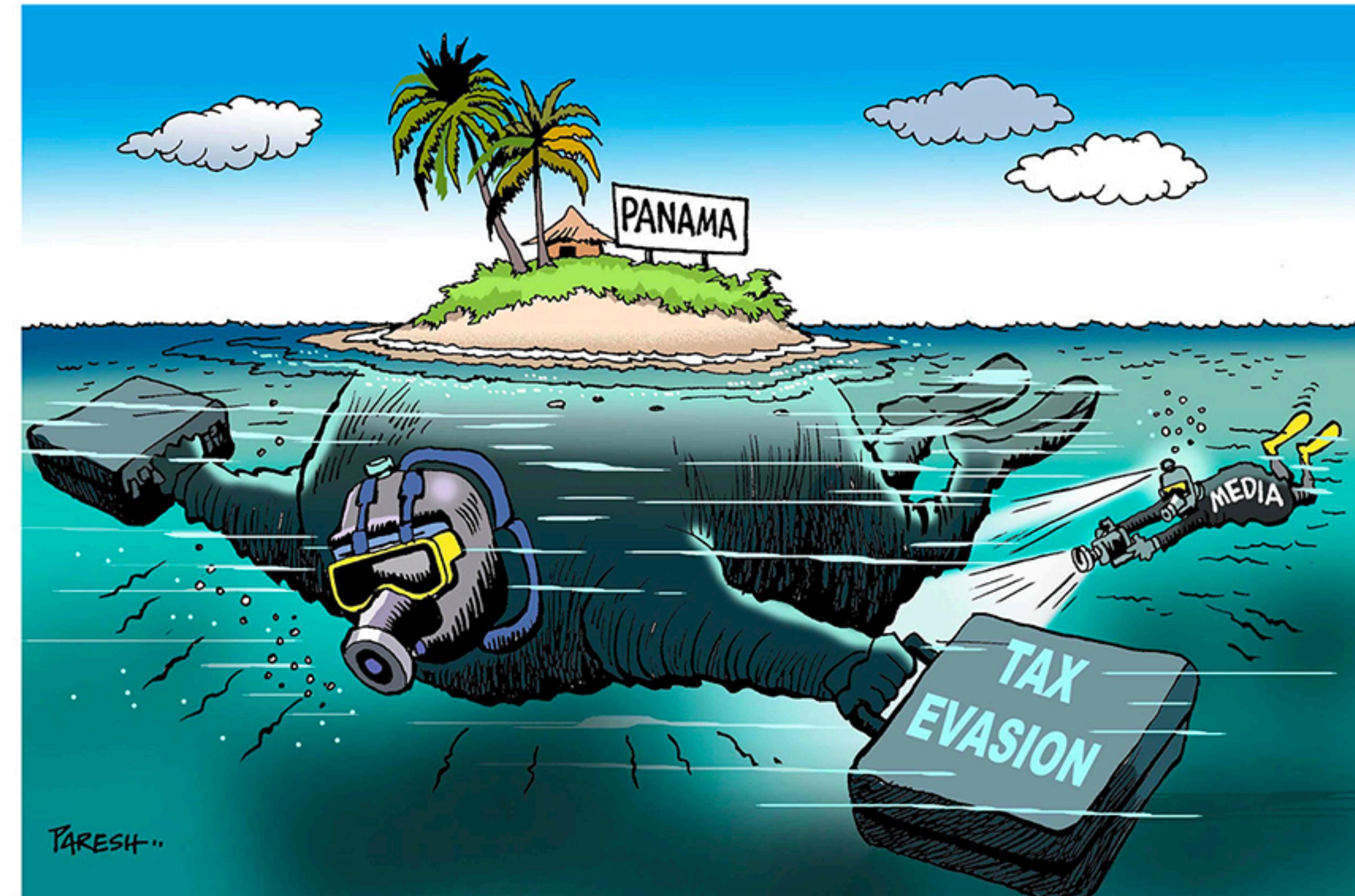
Why land?

Strong association between
land inequality and conflict

Why **land** inequality, as
opposed to other assets?

Elites can avoid
redistribution by
moving assets
overseas

Land is **immobile**
and not going
anywhere



Land and conflict in Nicaragua

USA basically puts Somozas in power in aftermath of “Banana Wars”

Family owned 23 percent of land in Nicaragua, resisted redistribution

Sandinista National Liberation Front wages rural insurgency against state, overthrows regime in 70s



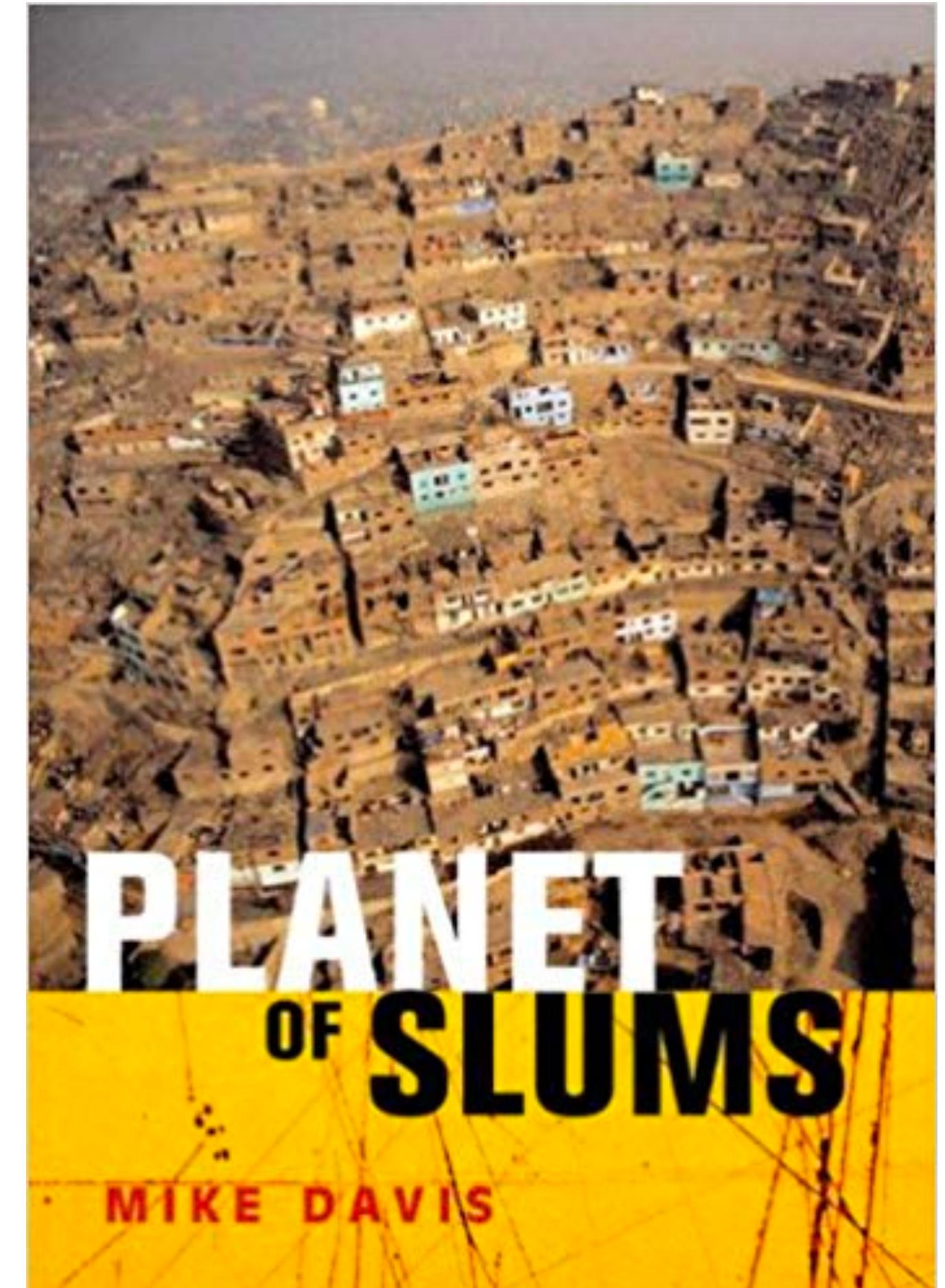
“Tacho” Somoza,
Dictator of Nicaragua
1937—1979

Land invasions

Lacking access to land, peasants often **invade** or **squat** unproductive or empty land

Sometimes this land is privately owned, or elites are able to **formalize** ownership from under peasants' feet

Local officials meant to adjudicate are in elites' pockets



Land and conflict in Colombia

Long cycles of **squatting** and **expulsion** in Colombia

Legislation to redistribute land
thwarted or **ignored** by large
landholders

FARC **protect** squatters and
organize invasions



Why would the FARC do this?

Land and displacement

These problems exacerbated by
conflict-driven **displacement**

Colombia =
largest IDP population
(7.7 mil in a country of 49 mil)



People either fleeing for **safety** or being
deliberately pushed out

Challenges with IDP return

Fear, risk

“social fabric” destroyed

often rural, poor; no **proof** of ownership

IDP pushed into new areas, often **squatting**

Sources of displacement

Strategic displacement, loyalties, and elections (Steele reading)

Economic sources of displacement (me!)

Strategic displacement

What is *strategic* displacement?

An armed group
deliberately expelling an
individual or community

People fleeing to avoid
~~cross fire~~

Strategic displacement

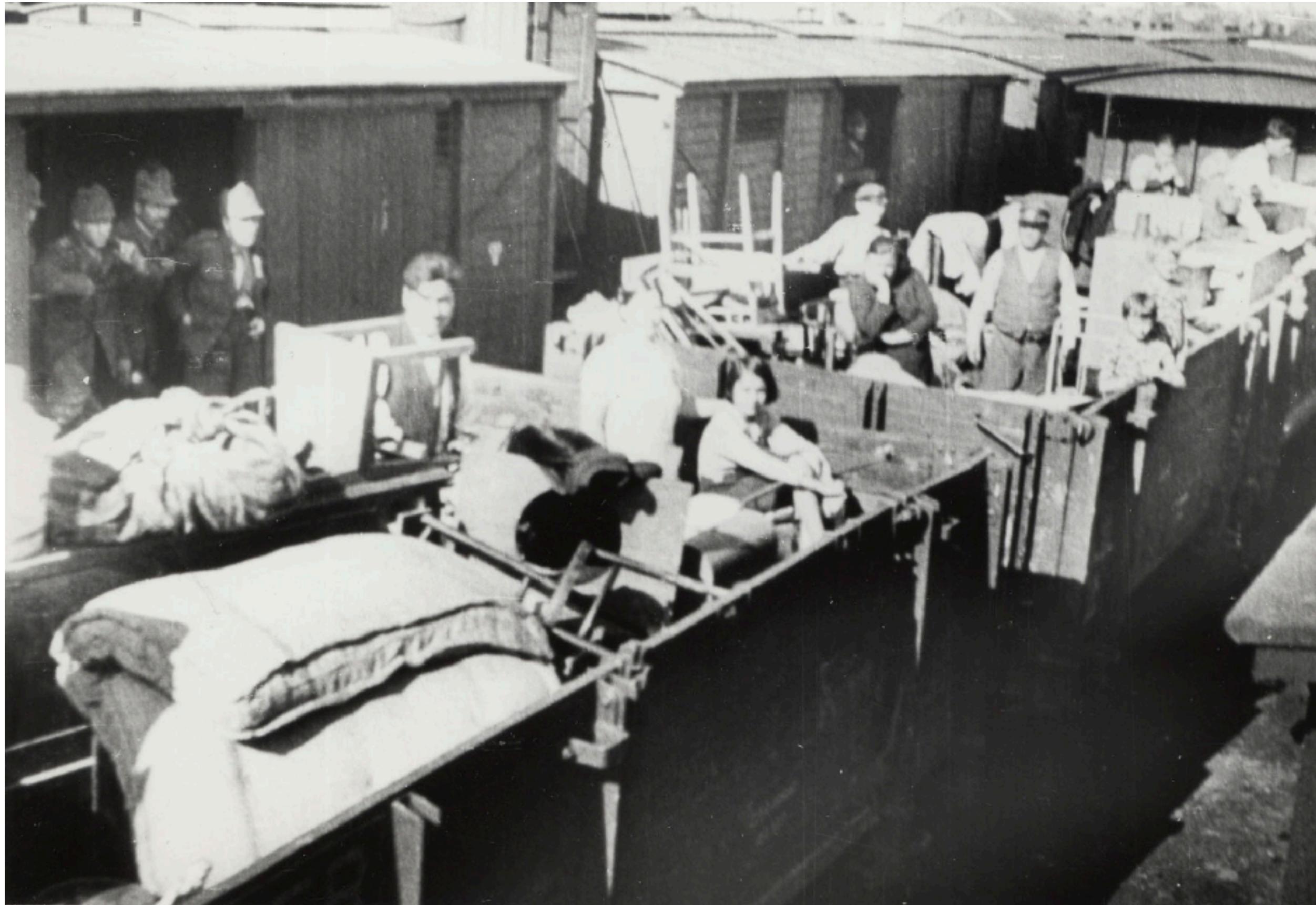
Why do armed groups strategically displace?

Converting locals is unlikely (why?)

Civilians are loyal to other side and information
is scarce

Stalin and population resettlement

Stalin forcibly relocated millions



No need to win over “hearts and minds”

Strategic Hamlet Program

US relocates Vietnamese to physically separate them from Vietcong



"Each strategic village will be protected by a ditch and a fence of barbed wire. It will include one or more observation towers...the area immediately around the village will be cleared for fields of fire and the area approaching the clearing, including the ditch, will be strewn with booby-traps...and other personal obstacles..."

Strategic displacement

Easier to establish control

Those who remain more likely to cooperate
(why?)

Less need to monitor

Credible threat against
future defection

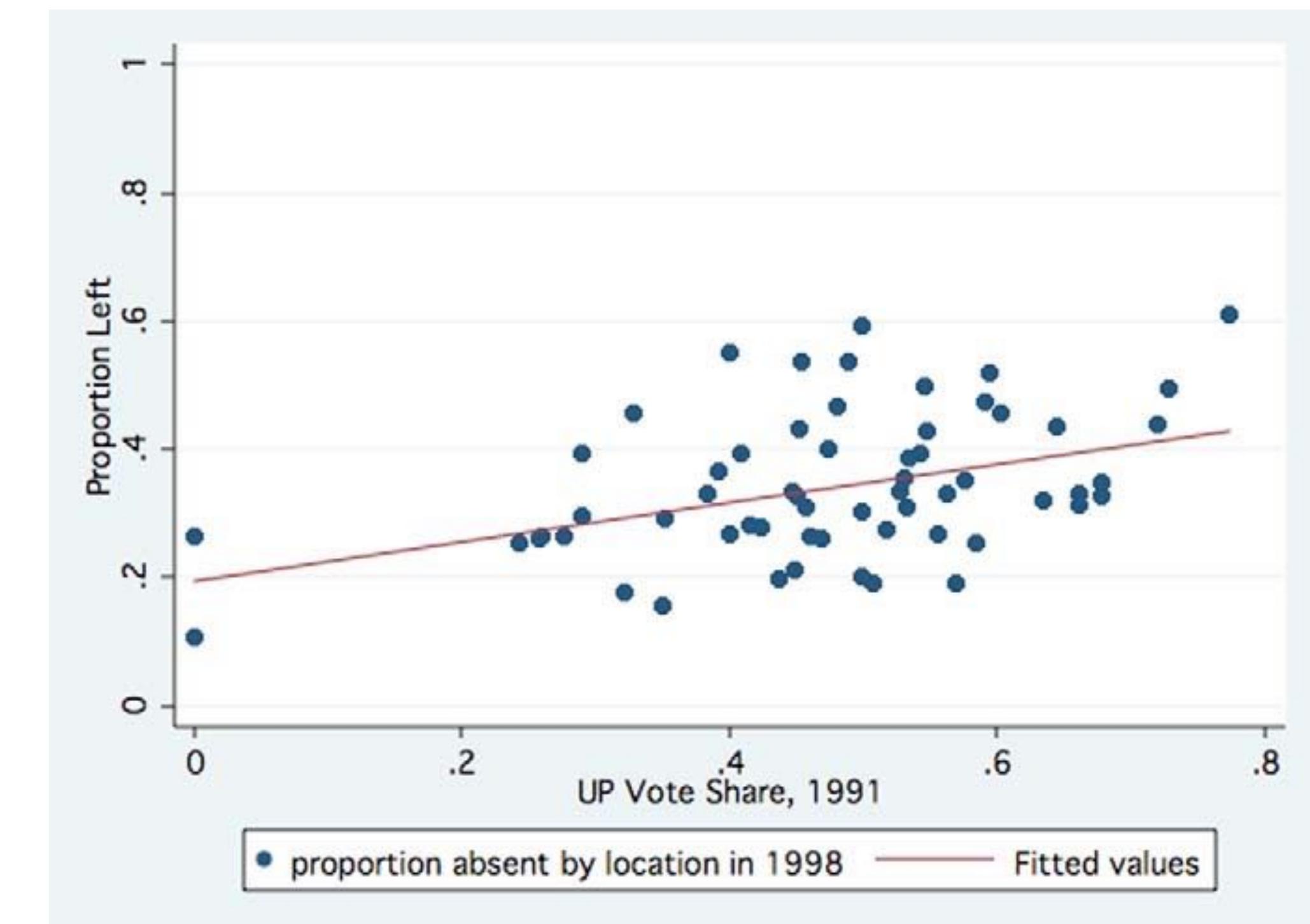
Elections

What role do **elections** play in this process?

Used by ***paras*** to identify civilian loyalties

Source of intel on civilian loyalties

This is, btw, (part of) why secret ballots exist!



Economic sources of displacement

Steele story is one about displacement for strategic purposes, i.e., **conquest**

What if armed groups displace civilians for reasons unrelated to conquest?

“Violence often appears more related to local and private issues than to the war’s driving cleavage” — Kalyvas (2003)

Mining and looting in Africa

Companies pay off or encourage armed groups to extract minerals

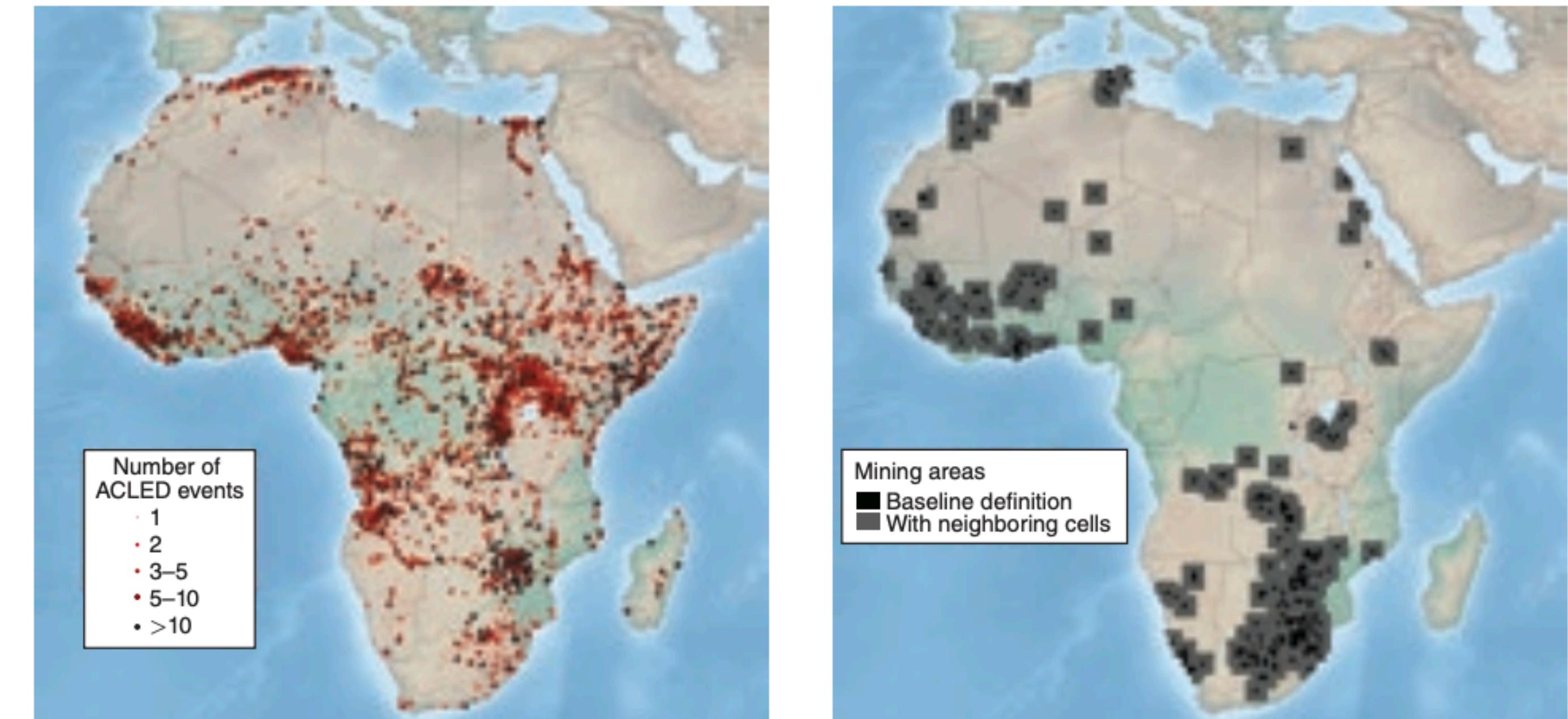


FIGURE 3. CONFLICT EVENTS AND MINING AREAS

Sources: Geolocation of conflict from the Armed Conflict Location and Event dataset (ACLED 2014). Geolocation of active mining areas from Raw Material Data (RMD).

Nothing new here



Same story as before: elites taking advantage of weak property rights + impunity to advance their interests!

Recap

Conflict **displaces** millions all over the world

Displacement **interacts** with pre-existing land problems

Armed groups displace strategically as a tool of **conquest** or **private gain**

Next week:

Why some indigenous communities **supported** while others **opposed** the Shining Path in Peru