

Collective Action, Violence, and Clientelism during Argentina's 2001 Crisis

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In a context of an economic, social, and political crisis that resulted in widespread food riots and uprisings, what explains the absence of collective violence and lootings in a district with a legacy of intense mobilization? I argue that the answer to this question lies in a specific combination of patronage politics and collective action. Far from dominating their clients and preventing horizontal ties, brokers in the poverty-stricken district of Florencio Varela in Argentina mobilized the population to act together and suppress violence. Drawing on in-depth interviews, newspaper reports, and secondary sources, I posit that during the peak of the revolts in December of 2001, brokers in this district appeared to validate collective mobilization seeking to prevent violence and lootings. The primary significance of this work is the differential way in which patron-client ties unfold to promote participation and collective actions. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2020 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

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INTRODUCTION

In December of 2001, Argentina was undergoing an economic, social, and financial crisis that led to an explosion of mass protests and riots and the resignation of the president. Thousands of poor and unemployed

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