- Book chapter

The impact of activism on self-management programs

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Introduction

The current scholarly attention being given to the outcomes of social movements stems from the capacity of these movements to transform policy or political institutions. Social movement literature has been moving from explaining how social movements rise and fall to focusing on analysing their influence (Amenta, 2014). Urban social movements in Brazil have concentrated their efforts on addressing inequality and historical injustices, which are common themes when it comes to popular organizations in the area of housing rights in the country. They emerged from the context of expanding cities and the lack of adequate housing. Housing activists demand the provision of decent housing for the urban poor, access to housing as a right, and citizen participation in the formulation and management of urban policies. Encompassing different segments of society and diverse in their organizational mechanisms, Brazilian housing movements play a significant role in the creation of self-management (*autogestão*) housing programs via a long process of negotiation and pressure on governments. Self-management in this research is understood as participatory governance in the provision of housing. National housing movements have obtained relative success in housing production through self-management processes, an experience now observed in many capital cities, including São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Belém, and Fortaleza. The impact of housing movements in self-managed housing programs is the focus of my inquiry.

The central aim of this study is to shed light on the causal mechanisms that propel housing movements. While a variety of definitions of the term 'causal mechanism' have been suggested (see Mahoney, 2001, pp. 579–580), this chapter understands causal mechanisms as the underlying social processes that connect inputs and outcomes in close interaction with context (Falleti and Lynch, 2009). The focus is on major nationally organized housing movement members of the National Forum for Urban Reform (*Fórum Nacional da Reforma Urbana* – FNRU), which are: the National Union of Popular Housing (*União Nacional por Moradia Popular* – UNMP), the National Movement for the Struggle for Housing (*Movimento Nacional de Luta pela Moradia* – MNLM), the National Confederation of Neighborhood Associations (*Confederação Nacional das Associações de Moradores* – CONAM), and the Center for Popular Movements (Central de Movimentos Populares – CMP).[1] These are community movements oriented toward social justice, the right to the city, and the struggle

for decent housing, health, and environment, among others. In combination with unions, NGOs, and research institutions, these organizations influence policy outputs directly linked to self-managed housing. Therefore, the activities of the movements are the focus of this research. This task requires examining causality between a certain cause (a particular X) and a defined outcome (a particular Y), taking into consideration multiple causal mechanisms which substantially influence the outcome of interest (Beach, 2016; Stefanovski, 2017; Collier, 2011; Vennesson, 2008). The main question I aim to answer is: which factors contribute to the generating of self-management housing policies at the federal level? The level of complexity of the outcomes leads to a search for explanations, with a view to clarifying how urban movements influenced the mass housing program *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* (MCMV) and how it has provided direct resources for selfmanaged house construction, the My House, My Life – Entities (*Minha Casa, Minha Vida – Entidades* or MCMV-E).

While some noteworthy research has investigated the outcomes of housing movements (Listerborn, Molina and Åse, 2020; Martinez, 2018; Barba and Blanco, 2011), including in Brazil (Tatagiba and Teixeira, 2016; Lago, 2012), there have been fewer empirical investigations into the causal mechanisms that lead to specific housing outcomes, and this study intends to narrow this knowledge gap. In addition, the methodological approach taken in this study is based on process tracing, which is instrumental in analyzing the temporal boundaries of the specific causal claims that lead to an outcome (Cunha and Araújo, 2018; Vennesson, 2008).

This chapter begins by examining the literature on social movement outcomes and its implications for both theory and research. Central to the subject is the production of a wide and very influential literature on the political consequences of social movements. I then move on to analyze the explanatory factors behind policy outcomes. Empirically, I collect and combine data from policy documents, interviews, public statements, legislation, and secondary literature to trace and analyze the outcomes of housing mobilization for self-managed housing programs. I conclude the text with a discussion on the relevance of my findings to the current literature and suggestions for future research.

How to analyze the impact of the movements: a brief literature review

Research on the impact and consequences of mobilization has become an important niche in the field of social movement studies. Research on the political outcomes can expand the theoretical framework by adding in the factors (variables, to use the 'variable' language) required to reconstruct the causal chain playing a relevant role in the observed result. As noted by Amenta and Caren (2004), conceptual investigations of the consequences of social movements have to address the meaning of success or influence when it comes to challengers making state-related claims, while theoretically, scholars need to focus on what matters in explaining the state-related impacts of challengers. Methodologically, the challenge consists of assessing the impacts and potential influences on state outcomes. These conceptual, theoretical, and methodological challenges explain the slow progress being made in understanding the outcomes of social movements. Nevertheless, research on

the impact of activism on policy is developing into a prominent and well-studied area of social movement outcomes (Earl, 2016).

In defining what can be viewed as outcomes of mobilization, I take into account Amenta and Caren's (2004, p. 462) interpretation that we can only make a convincing claim of movement impact through sustained analysis of the political contexts that favor a specific course of action, that favor action in some times and places rather than others, and that favor certain forms of organization which vary over time. In particular, studies focused on state-related consequences have made significant contributions to policy changes, including state-level policy adoption (Ahikire and Mwiine, 2020; Carlos, Dowbor and Albuquerque, 2017; Strang and Soule, 1998), agenda-setting activity (King, Bentele and Soule, 2007; Johnson, 2008; Tatagiba, Abers and Silva, 2018), legislative impact (King, Cornwall and Dahlin, 2005; Olzak and Soule, 2009), policy implementation and monitoring (Arelaro and Maudonnet, 2017), and also the unintended (positive or negative) outcomes of mobilization (Martinez, 2018; Suh, 2014). However, as highlighted by Earl (2016, p. 381), even with these advances, the field often lacks conclusive proof that most of the movements we study 'matter' when it comes to policymaking.

Studies focused on the state-related consequences of social movements usually identified success when the goals or claims of social movements were realized (Gamson, 1990). Later on, Burstein, Einwohner, and Hollander (1995) and Kolb (2007) argued that movements are successful to the extent that they are able to approve legislation based on their policy agenda, influence policy change, and ensure legislation is implemented. Other scholars have suggested the existence of incremental gains in power or slowly changing norms (Mahoney and Thelen, 2009). Yet, others offer an explanation based on gains in representation, meaning access to the state in the form of institutional access – as is often discussed in the literature on the institutionalization of social movement (Cress and Snow, 2000; Burstein, Einwohner and Hollander, 1995). In general, the very idea of consequences goes beyond a movement's stated goal, such as passing an abortion bill or including housing as a constitutional right. Outcomes also include 'changes of political rules and procedures (…) effects on agenda-setting, public opinion, changes of daily behavior, and biographies of activities' (Rucht, 2017, p. 48).

There are some areas in the field of outcomes of social movements that remain less common – though not totally lacking – which are scholarly analyses of the processes and mechanisms (Giugni, McAdam and Tilly, 1999; Rucht, 2017). In moving to the causal mechanisms (identifiable social dynamics leading to outcomes) that allow movements to have an impact on policy (Bosi, Giugni and Uba, 2016), I tackle the issue of impact by focusing on the causal chains leading to housing activism outcomes, in relation to self-management programs. Causal mechanisms are complex and generate observable processes and results built around social processes and historical events that bring about social change (Silva and Cunha, 2014; Sewell, 2005).

Particularly in Brazil – but also in other Latin American states such as Colombia and Mexico – state-society interaction is an institutionalized policy that offers some relative permeability of the state to movements via policy councils and the incorporation of activists in

institutional settings with obvious variations among movements and historical periods. Second, the presence of allies in the institutional space supporting social movements is found to be a significant factor in facilitating the voice of movements being heard and included in the political debate (Ferreira, 2012; Tatagiba and Teixeira, 2016). Relatedly, opponents present challenges to movements (e.g., blocking bills, state repression, co-option). The presence of strong opponents/allies has the potential to shape outcomes. And third, the broader political context has a crucial role in facilitating or constraining the mobilization and the potential outcomes of movements (Giugni, 1994). The contextual dependency of the outcomes of social movements, and the politicalinstitutional context, in particular, is conditional on political opportunity (e.g., choice of political repertoires, institutional allies, political regimes, state structure) (Bosi, Giugni and Uba, 2016; Uba, 2009; Cress and Snow, 2000). I argue the interactive influence of those factors influences the results as part of the causal chain in which each factor and related events contribute to the outcomes.

Together, those studies provide important insights into the advances made by studies on the consequences of social movements – a significant area of inquiry. As Giugni, McAdam, and Tilly (1999) observed, the consequences of social movements are of the utmost importance in understanding social actors active in the process of social and political change. In the next section, I present the methodology and briefly discuss the use of process tracing as a relevant method for tracing the consequences of social movements, as well as the challenges involved in using it as a tool of analysis.

Methods and research design – process tracing in social movement analysis

The methodological design of the research uses a process-tracing method (Cunha and Araújo, 2018; Bennett, 2008; Beach, 2016; Beach and Pedersen, 2013) to analyze the causal factors that led to the implementation of self-management housing programs at the national level in Brazil. The process-tracing approach is a relatively new methodological and analytical tool. It entered the field of social movement studies after the innovative work of McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001) and later Tilly and Tarrow (2007). Ever since, social movement scholarship has employed this approach to studies designed to identify social movement outcomes (Rodríguez, 2018; Bosi 2016; Hazen, 2009; Kolb 2007).

Process tracing has proved to be very useful in analyzing complex and historically situated phenomena whose explanations demand the articulation of different structural, institutional, and social factors (Silva and Cunha, 2014). Looking at processes, dynamics, and events allows researchers to observe the overarching patterns leading to specific outcomes. Two important factors make process tracing a superior choice for this research. First, process tracing not only is a powerful inferential tool for tracing complex interactions between the movement and state actors in case study research (Vennesson, 2008), but also allows for the reconstruction of a causal chain of mechanisms linking the movements to outcomes. Second, process tracing facilitates the systematic analysis of evidence based on four causal tests as important inferential tools (Collier, 2011; Silva and Cunha, 2014; Bennett, 2008). These tests

guide and enable the researcher to produce studies where the causality can be obtained with a greater margin of confidence.

When process tracing is employed in within-case analysis, the researcher examines multiple features of the case of interest to assess causal and constitutive relations between factors (Vennesson, 2008). The choice of the FNRU and its respective members is based on two rationales. First, the outcomes of the work carried out by the FNRU represent a critical and unique case of success. As noted by Amenta (2014), success is a relatively rare phenomenon, and selecting positive cases remains crucial in identifying the causal pathways (Amenta, 2014, p. 43). Second, in analyzing an atypical phenomenon, in this case, a positive outcome in federal housing policy worth documenting and analyzing, the available data accessible to the scientific investigation supports in-depth data analysis with a view to establishing the causal relationship between a series of concatenated events.

The reconstruction of the processes linking a set of actions and events to a particular outcome is based on four sources of evidence: (1) policy and legislative documents (e.g., legislation, reports, governmental programs); (2) semi-structured interviews with key informants;[2] (3) news media content and website materials produced by and about housing movements from the 1970s to the 2010s available in the *Centro de Documentação e Pesquisa Vergueiro* archive collection; and (4) secondary literature describing the political trajectory of the movements. All the pieces of evidence are relevant to central arguments, ensuring the relevance and accuracy of the contents, an essential condition for tracing causal mechanisms (Cunha and Araújo, 2018; Gerring, 2007).

Results – tracing the causal mechanisms

This section looks at the mechanisms producing self-management housing policies at the federal level. In general, data analysis has identified three main causal mechanisms connected to major events. I detach those causal mechanisms into three main parts (agenda setting, institutional activism, and achieved outcomes) as I systematically present and discuss results.

Origins and self-management agenda

UNMP, MNLM, CONAM, and CMP are four popular urban movements nationally organized and in dialogue with each other. Since their origin, in the 80s and early 90s, they have engaged with other organizations – NGOs, research institutions, unions, and class representation entities – interacting with and complementing each other (Ferreira, 2012). Over their more than 30 years of existence, they have focused on: self-managed housing, the right to housing and the city, popular participation in public policies, and the fight to end evictions and against the criminalization of social movements. Self-management in housing is a central demand of housing movements, which denounce not only the lack of support for this model, but also the near exclusivity of the private production of social housing financed with public resources (Mineiro and Rodrigues, 2012, p. 19). These organizations were members of the (now extinct) National Council of Cities[3] as well as part of the FNRU which

unites other popular movements, unions, NGOs, and research institutions. Different in terms of origins and internal organization, FNRU, UNMP, MNLM, CONAM, and CMP connect individual and collective actors in order to influence housing production by means of selfmanagement with public financing based on the principle of the right to the city and linked to the perspective of participatory models of housing policies (Lago, 2012; Castro, 2013; Tatagiba and Teixeira, 2016).

When, in 1987, in the vibrancy of the re-democratization process, the National Urban Reform Movement (*Movimento Nacional de Reforma Urbana*) started to mobilize around urban issues, it marked the beginning of mobilizations against the decline of the housing policy formulated and implemented by the military regime. In that period, there had been no public housing financed by the state, and a systematic housing policy was nonexistent due to the closing of the National Housing Bank (*Banco Nacional da Habitação*) as a consequence of the severe economic crisis affecting the country in the 1980s (see Cardoso and Jaccoud, 2005). The end of BNH and the constituent assembly for the elaboration of a new constitution opened up the possibility for citizens to present proposals for popular amendments to the Constitution. Diverse groups reunited to discuss and present proposals for the 'Urban Reform Popular Amendment', especially in the area of self-managed housing and urban reform, resuming the debate interrupted in the 1960s by the authoritarian regime (1964–1985) (Mineiro and Rodrigues, 2012). The demands posed to the constituent assembly made their way into the new 1988 Constitution, with an 'Urban Policy' chapter addressing the social function of property, the control of real estate speculation, and the regularization of informal settlements among others. This was achieved via intense lobbying and organized caravans going to the capital, Brasília, where the National Congress is based.

The new Urban Policy chapter was only a partial victory for the movements, considering only some items of the proposed amendment were included and complementary laws were still needed (articles 182 and 183). However, it is important to note, that it represented a policy and an institutional change. As noted by Ferreira (2012), the proposal ended up directly influencing state constitutions and municipal organic laws in the states and municipalities, such as with the inclusion of requirements regarding the elaboration of city master plans. A detailed interview with the academic Heloísa Costa, who actively participated in the process of approving the Amendment for Urban Reform in Belo Horizonte, offered insights into how movements and elected representatives were able to sit together and negotiate common interests. It included several meetings and assemblies for negotiating more progressive bids, some of which did not enter the final draft of the proposal. This deradicalization, as explained by Costa, was a consequence of the institutionalization of the Urban Reform proposals. An example of this is the change in focus by urban movements in the 1960s and movements in the 1980s: 'in the constituent assembly process, what become the Urban Reform amendment, you will see that there are mechanisms for land expropriation (1960s), but there are also a number of urbanistic mechanisms now (1987–1988)'.[4] While the political context was somewhat open to citizen proposals and depended on the capacity of participants to find common ground on important issues, the caravans to Brasília were also important in highlighting the popular

support for amendments linked to the expansion of social rights. Paz (1996) pointed out the use of caravans as an important tool adopted by urban and housing movements during the 1980s and 1990s that gave visibility to the demands of the movements.

The results of the constituent assembly incentivized the creation of the FNRU with MNRU turning into a forum platform focused on fulfilling the social functions of property and the city, redistributive urban policy, and participatory city management (Ferreira, 2012, p. 122). FNRU encompasses the already mentioned four movements plus housing and neighborhood associations, trade unions, universities, and NGOs. Motivated by successful experiences and initiatives around self-managed housing in cities such as Fortaleza, Porto Alegre, Diadema, Belém, among others, these movements engaged with elements in the Catholic Church and universities created the first bill of popular initiative after the Constitution of 1988, the National Popular Housing Fund (*Fundo Nacional de Moradia Popular* – FNMP) (Comarú and Barbosa, 2019).

The first popular bill initiative by the National Fund for Popular Housing (FNMP) co-existed with proposals for self-managed housing programs financed directly by the federal government. Tatagiba and Teixeira (2016) explain that self-management has been on the agenda of popular movements since 1988, when groups linked to São Paulo's Union of Housing Movements (*União dos Movimentos de Moradia* – UMM), inspired by a successful experience in Uruguay and motivated by an increasing number of land occupations and self-constructions, incorporated self-management as a fundamental part of their agenda (Paz, 1996, p. 107). The proposed bill provided for self-managed forms of housing production. Approved in the plenary of the movement in December 1990 by the Meeting of Popular Movements (*Encontro dos Movimentos Populares*), the proposed fund established fixed budget allocations, priority for low-income families, and the delivery of housing through a self-management model. The proposal of a National Fund 'traveled' across the country as part of the preparation of a bill draft at state and local levels (Gusmão, 2018). At the same time, movements started to collect the one million signatures necessary for a popular initiative bill. The bill was delivered to the National Congress on November 19, 1991 (see Figure 9.1), during the IV Caravan in Brasília, which brought together approximately 5,000

Fundo Nacional de Moradia espera aprovação do Congresso

Movimento foi à Brasília entregar projeto

O ano de 91 foi marcado por um acontecimento histórico inédito para o movimento de moradia de todo o país. Foi entregue ao Congresso Nacional o primeiro projeto de iniciativa popular, desde que foi instituída a lei, que cria o Fundo Nacional de Moradia. Este projeto foi elaborado por milhares de contribuições anônimas de militantes, especialistas e técnicos que conseguiram colocar suas experiências a serviço de um projeto comum.

O texto aborda duas questões fundamentais: a primeira é a possibilidade de grupos populares assumirem a gestão e o controle das iniciativas habitacionais, com recursos provenientes de diversas fontes como o FGTS e parte das loterias. A segunda é que os projetos deverão atender grupos organizados em associações ou cooperativas, cuja edificação das casas será concretizada através de regime de ajuda mútua ou mutirão.

Esperamos que o projeto seja logo aprovado pois tem o peso de mais de um milhão de assinaturas de trabalhadores de todo o país.

Figure 9.1 4 th Caravan in Brasília. *Source*: Jornal da Pastoral da Moradia (October, 1992, p. 4).

people. The delivery of a 'Popular Initiative Project' of this magnitude painted housing movements as active subjects in the debate on housing policy (Paz, 1996). As noted by a UMM leader, '(…)if there was a debate on housing policy, the movement was invited',[5] as movement members started to establish a closer dialogue with policymakers at the federal level.

Institutional activism and MCMV-E

The election of the Workers' Party's Lula da Silva in 2002 to the office of President generated great expectations in terms of the possibilities for advancing the housing agenda due to the historical ties between social movements and the party (Dagnigo and Teixeira, 2014; Lima, 2018). Up to that point, the achievements of housing movements at the national level were almost nonexistent. During Lula's administration, the state began to play a central role in promoting urban development, in contrast to the neoliberal policies of the 1990s (Ferreira, 2012). The creation of the Statute of the Cities in 2001 and the Ministry of Cities in 2003 – as a direct result of the urban reform movement (see Rolnik, 2011)– allowed movements to resume conversations with the Workers' Party administration and push for self-management as part of a national agenda for housing. During this administration, various members of social movements were invited to join the government. This marked a new phase for housing movements, which combined disruptive protest strategies with institutional action. This combination of actions characterized and defined the course of action over the following years. As noted by Tatagiba and Teixeira (2016), this process is not just about having allies in

government but also involves multi-affiliated actors that share goals and can now contribute to the design and implementation of public policy.

Since there was no specific budget for self-managed housing in the short-term, the UNMP proposed changes to the Residential Leasing Program (*Programa de Arrendamento Residencial* – PAR), a program focused on low-middle income households and created by the previous administration of President Cardoso, in which private developers acquired and constructed housing with direct state subsidies. In a letter sent to the newly-created Ministry of Cities, the UNMP said:

We propose that the organized housing movements themselves be the agents of the enterprise, so that they can develop the projects, make the purchase of the property, undertake the construction or renovation, and manage the lease agreements.

(UNMP letter to Ministry of Cities, in Mineiro and Rodrigues, 2012, pp. 22–23).

Some changes were implemented in the PAR, such as the expansion of the program to low-income families with the lowering of the income threshold, but self-management was not included in the program. Despite incorporating some aspects of urban reform in its political agenda, the Workers' Party (PT) administration did not commit to more radical change. But it is important to note that the participation of civil society in decision-making processes has been a central feature of the PT, and since the election of Lula, the 'architecture of participation' has been a feature of Brazilian democracy, with the creation of several policy councils, policy conferences, and public audiences directly involving excluded groups in the policymaking process (Dagnino and Teixeira, 2014).[6] The four housing movements analyzed, for example, had members appointed to the Ministry of Cities (*Ministério das Cidades*) and the National Council of Cities (*Conselho Nacional das Cidades)* together with research institutions, government representatives, and professional entities. The participation of housing movements in those spaces has enabled advances in the recognition of self-management as a valid form of cooperation and autonomy in decision-making processes. An analysis shows that it was against this background of the political system being highly permeable to social movements that housing groups had key successes (Tatagiba and Teixeira, 2016; Ferreira, 2012). The UNMP in particular, but in conjunction with the FNMP, used the space of the Ministry of Cities and the National Council of Cities to advocate for self-management as a central principle of housing policies. This is supported by documents (e.g., *texto base*) from the 1st Conference of the Cities (*Conferência das Cidades*) in 2003. The final text of the conference was an important milestone in defining self-management as a housing policy model to be discussed and expanded with financial incentives (Ministério das Cidades, 2003). In that same year, the UNMP conveyed a letter to the Ministry of Cities stressing the need for self-management programs and emphasizing its significance for citizenship and housing justice:

The UNMP defends self-management as a way not only of building houses, neighborhoods or community facilities, but as a way of building popular power. By controlling public resources and processes, we fight against clientelism and the manipulation of public power

over the population and social organizations. We build management alternatives where we are owners of our history. (Letter to the Ministry of Cities 2003 by UNMP, in Rodrigues, 2013, p. 64)

In 2004, the Solidarity Credit Program (Programa Credito Solidário) was created, responding to the long-time demands of housing movements for self-management in federal housing policies. The Solidarity Credit Program was the first entirely new housing program in Lula's Government. It was managed by housing associations and cooperatives and focused on families with an income of less than three minimum wages. Interestingly, some academic works have noted the 'double paternity' of Solidarity Credit. For example, Moreira (2009), Rodrigues (2013), and Ferreira (2012) claim the program results from pressure by housing movements over the years. More specifically, Mineiro and Rodrigues (2012) argue that the proposal for the program came from a series of street protests and land occupations in April 2004, followed by several rounds of negotiation with Caixa Econômica Federal (CEF), the bank managing federal resources and the Ministry of Cities. Instead, Naime (2009) suggests that Solidarity Credit was created by CEF to dispose of the unused resources accumulated by the Social Development Fund (*Fundo de Desenvolvimento Social),* and CEF technicians were unaware of the self-managing proposal. It is unclear whether CEF technicians were oblivious to housing movement demands for housing management programs.

This new program presented serious operational challenges due to bureaucratic issues, leading to several protests and meetings demanding that the complex criteria be made more flexible and that resources be provided for training and technical assistance for participating entities (Rodrigues, Pessino and Barbosa, 2008). In the words of a staff member at the Ministry of Cities, interviewed in 2009, the Solidary Credit program was conceived as a pilot program to test whether the self-management model as a housing policy was feasible: (…) The Solidarity Credit Program 'has much more of a demonstrative effect, and shows what is possible, beyond merely being effective in facing the housing deficit'.[7]

The passing of a new law in 2005 – the National Social Interest Housing System (SNHIS) and its respective management Fund (FNHIS) – to guarantee social control over the allocation of public money (Law 11.124/2005) was a watershed event for Brazilian housing movements (Ferreira, 2012; Paz, 1996). The law is often regarded as a key element of an effective national policy aiming to provide decent housing for the low-income population and combat real estate speculation. Initially, the SNHIS did not include provisions for the participation of associations and cooperatives as promoters of housing policies. Proposed in 1991 as the FNMP, this law was only approved 14 years later – being altered in 2007 to support housing production under the self-management model. Documentary analysis showed that this legislation was only possible due to concerted pressure from housing movements at the 3rd National Conference of Cities (3ª *Conferência Nacional das Cidades*) and the International Day of Struggles for Urban Reform (*Jornada Nacional de Lutas pela Reforma Urbana*) in October 2007. Particularly during the *Jornada*, organized by the FNRU, several events and protest rallies took place in 15 states and 18 cities, demanding the alteration of the FNHIS law to include the transferring of resources directly to associations

and cooperatives (HIC, 2007). At the UNMP's 10th National Meeting of Popular Housing (10th *Encontro Nacional de Moradia Popular*) in 2008, participants perceived the legislative change as a great success for the movement:

After our National Occupation Day in 2007, President Lula, in a historic moment for the struggle of movement, sanctioned Law 11.578/2007, which amended the Law 11.124/2005, enabling direct access to resources of the SNHIS'. (Rodrigues, Pessino and Barbosa, 2008, p. 23)

Although the process for the approval of funding was lengthy, this process kept the housing movements unified and centered around the urban reform movement, which enabled them to advance their agenda of a national policy for housing and urban development (i.e., conferences, participation in national councils, the creation of the Solidarity Credit Program, legislative change) (Ferreira, 2012; Moreira, 2009). In 2008, the federal government launched the Social Housing Production Program (*Programa Produção Social da Moradia*), utilizing the now available resources from FNHIS. According to Mineiro and Rodrigues (2012), creating this program to succeed Solidarity Credit took most of the attention from housing movements since resources for the Solidarity Credit would no longer be provided. The new *Programa Produção Social da Moradia* had its first round of selections concluded in March 2009, but it was interrupted by the launch of *Programa Minha Casa Minha Vida* (MCMV), which started to concentrate the resources in this field (Tatagiba and Teixeira, 2016).

MCMV-E as an alternative proposal for housing production

MCMV is a mass housing program created to support the construction industry in response to the financial crisis of 2007–2008. This program stands out for its wide territorial coverage reaching thousands of Brazilian municipalities and its political, economic, and social impacts. With an initial target of one million new homes and a budget of R$34 billion (US$15 billion), the program has created an unprecedented amount of investment in social housing in Brazil and indeed the world (Nadal and Linka, 2018). Currently, MCMV is the main national housing program, concentrating resources in the area. As noted by this social worker in an interview: 'I used to work with the slum clearance, but most of these programs were slowly closed down to give way to MCMV. Other programs are barely mentioned, the future is MCMV – that is what I tell my colleagues'.[8]

MCMV encompasses sub-programs with different sources of funding and income ranges served. As a subprogram within the main MCMV, the MCMV-E directs resources for self-managed housing construction to the lowest family income brackets[9]. It is the materialization of success after many years of struggle for the incorporation of social movements in the management of national housing policy programs.

The scholarship agrees that social movements and the Ministry of Cities did not participate in the creation of MCMV. It was created by the Chief of Staff office and the Ministry of Finance (Tatagiba and Teixeira, 2016; Serafim, 2013; Mineiro and Rodrigues, 2012) without consulting civil society. The first phase of MCMV (2009–2010) did not include

self-management. To guarantee their participation in the new program, the FNRU organized several protests and events, culminating in another International Day of Struggles for Urban Reform (*Jornada Nacional de Lutas pela Reforma Urbana*) in November 2008, involving rallies and building occupations in several states. With the UNMP statement 'while living is a privilege, occupation is a right' (direct translation, 'Enquanto morar for um privilégio, ocupar é um direito'), the organization demanded the inclusion of self-management in MCMV, one million houses constructed via self-management and effective social control of public funds for the program (HIC, 2007). The events forced negotiations with President Lula and Chief of Staff Dilma Rousseff in which the FNRU conveyed their demands. Out of this negotiation process originated the MCMV-E. Both the literature and FNRU participants agree that MCMV-E is the result of pressure and action by social movements from inside and outside political institutions (Lago, 2012; Balbin, Krause and Lima Neto, 2015).

The MCMV-E is the first not-for-profit national housing program encompassing a participatory process in which future residents are involved from the outset in the planning, acquisition of land, design, selection of families, and management of projects. Nevertheless, less than 1% of the resources were directed to this program, which is very different from the initial target of 3% (Tatagiba and Teixeira, 2016). While it is possible to argue that the creation of the program was a success, its implementation was a relative failure. From 2009 to 2018, 550 projects were contracted under MCMV-E, involving the construction of 78,597 housing units and totaling approximately 13,959 housing units delivered.[10]

Over the years, the entities involved have faced many challenges, and the program has gone through several changes and adaptations. The main challenges relate to the ownership of land and the different levels of capacity among participating associations and cooperatives. As noted by Camargo (2020) and Balbin, Krause, and Lima Neto (2015), the level of professionalization necessary to operate the program has increased, suggesting a reconfiguration of social movements, including elevated knowledge of the technical aspects of housing production. As an example, a member of the UNMP became a CEF advisor (2011-2013), which shows the level of influence and legitimacy acquired by the housing movement. Along the same lines, changes in the program to facilitate land acquisition in more central locations indicate a permanent capacity to influence the design of the program. In 2011, MCMV-E 2 was launched, including the expansion of upper limits for families in low-income brackets and an increased budget per housing unit. Similar to other countries, the Brazilian house construction environment is heavily dominated by the interests of private construction corporations, and housing investments are cyclical, with large variations in the level of investment over time. Since 2014, resources for the program have been reduced, and many projects suspended. The value of new construction contracts increased from R$23.3 billion in 2009 to R$77.2 billion in 2013 (around US$12 billion). From 2014 to 2016, the annual value of new contracts dropped to between R$40 billion and R$50 billion but increased again between R$60 billion and R$70 billion in 2017 and 2018 (MDR, 2021). This recovery was caused by an increase in the number of new contracts in the higher income band.[11]

Under Bolsonaro's administration, both MCMV and MCMV-E have received less attention and have gone through bigger changes, with the cancelation of contracted projects, fund retraction, and a new name to disassociate the program from previous administrations. In August 2020, Bolsonaro's administration launched the *Casa Verde e Amarela* program (direct translation, green and yellow house) as a substitute for MCMV. At the time of writing – December 2020 – the program had just over 100,000 units under contract (MDR, 2021) and faced serious criticism for being vague as well as for having excluded social movements from its formation process and for having been created for electoral purposes.[12] Housing movements continue to protest and demand for the continuation of the program, but with the Ministry of Cities now closed and the decline in participation in the National Council of the Cities, housing and urban movements have lost an important space for discussion and policymaking.

Conclusion

Self-managed housing programs were adopted as part of the national housing policy as a result of political mobilization by self-management advocates and were converted into public policy by political leaders. This study has shown that housing movements in Brazil have a long history when it comes to the campaign for the right to housing and the incorporation of community-led governance at the national policy level. In investigating the mechanisms involved in the generation of self-managed housing, it was found that social movements are an indispensable element when it comes to the consolidation of inclusive policymaking and the success of the self-management approach. Tracking the FNRU and its members' activities and main events indicates how social movements standout as political actors in continuous interaction and conflict with the state. As previously noted by Ferreira (2012), the long-time government resistance to implementing self-management was slowly demolished by social movements. The political pressure exerted in formal public spaces – the Conference of the Cities, the National Council of Cities, lobbying in Congress – and informal spaces, such as protests, occupations, national rallies, and public meetings, were key causal mechanisms leading to the creation of self-management housing as a national policy.

The influence on the results of the channels of interaction between the state and society cannot be minimized. The successful trajectory of the movements analysed here is the outcome of interactions between the movements and a leftist-leaning federal administration, which at the time was more open to popular demands than previous administrations. These interactions were essential mechanisms in understanding the possibilities explored by activists involved in public administration, and they acted as a thread between institutional and noninstitutional policies. These state-society channels, the participation in the National Council of the Cities, and the intense cooperation among different movements contributed to the consolidation of self-management as a compelling alternative proposal for the delivery of housing. An analysis of the mechanisms showed a relative alignment of interests between governments and movements. However, the Workers' Party administration had a double agenda, one that was aligned with urban reform

and involved social participation and self-management and another involving the private construction sector. It is obvious that for-profit interests prevailed – in the end, more than 97% of MCMV resources went to the private sector – but it is also possible to affirm that the diversified repertoire that combines institutional activism and direct action ensured the legitimation of a community-led housing policy in the public agenda, in addition to concrete policy results. That government officials and representatives were (at times) allies indicate the ability of movement leaders to articulate and form networks of contacts with important allies in positions of power.

The conditions and context in which MCMV-E was created are the results of greater attention being paid to the need for effective and inclusive urban and housing policies. Even when the sitting president was inclined or sympathetic toward the demands of housing movements – some have argued that MCMV would only have been possible under a PT administration – movements had to deal with a high level of bureaucratization and institutional resistance. The key mechanisms of the observed outcomes are strongly related to (1) the capacity of the movements to mobilize inside and outside institutions, (2) the presence of allies, and (3) the presence of a progressive party in power, as suggested in the literature. As soon as the progressive government was over (i.e., the controversial impeachment of President Rousseff in 2016), self-managed housing programs were reduced or suspended, which denotes the firm connection between the three elements above.[13]

A final important point relates to the unintended outcomes of mobilization. The creation of a large housing program such as MCMV is permeated with contradictions. First, the program was created to benefit the construction sector, as well as to promote access to housing for low-income families. While MCMV-E was largely based on the Solidary Credit Program, MCMV was created behind closed doors and only adapted to self-management after several rounds of negotiation and protests. All things considered, despite years of mobilizing for inclusive and decent housing for all, MCMV has proved highly profitable for the civil construction market and the real estate sector, with heavy resources funneled toward middle and upper-income households. Housing mobilization in the era of financialization is an overwhelmingly difficult struggle.

An analysis of the outcomes of social movements incurs methodological challenges, and this study is not immune to that. In examining the causal mechanisms that lead to changes in national housing policy, it was possible to disentangle events from the different actors and actions connected to them. Process tracing allowed for a systematic and lucid analysis of the process involved, but in a similar way to other methodological approaches, process tracing is also fraught with pitfalls and has limits (Vennesson, 2008). I tried to overcome the obstacles by including and checking as many sources as possible in order to reconstruct causal chains linking movements to outcomes. To develop a full picture of the consequences of activism for housing, additional studies will be needed that focus on movements in the north and northeast of Brazil. Being less developed regions facing serious social problems such as extreme poverty and violence, housing movements in the region have also had some

local success in policy implementation. Chapter 10 by Lara Furtado in this volume is a great step in that direction.

Notes

1 See Ferreira (2012) for more detailed information about each movement.

2 Including interviews conducted by myself between 2014 and 2015 and interviews from secondary literature.

3 The National Council of Cities (*Conselho Nacional das Cidades* - ConCidades) was created in 2004, during Lula's da Siva administration. It involved representatives of government and civil society and its aims were to formulate and monitor policies for housing, environmental sanitation, and urban mobility policies via participatory governance. In 2019, Jair Bolsonaro's administration extinguished ConCidades (decree 9.759/2019). As a consequence, housing groups lost this key space of monitoring and policy formulation.

4 Interview in Souza (2016, p. 33).

5 Interview in Paz (1996, p. 137).

6 However, since 2018 the Brazilian architecture of participation is under attack and several spaces of participation have been extinct or remodeled to attend to the needs of Michel Temer and Jair Bolsonaro's administrations. This trend is analyzed in detail in Lima (2019).

7 Interview conducted byMoreira (2009).

8 Interview conducted by the author on 14 August 2015.

9 Households with income of three standard minimum wages or lower per household, approximately R$1,800 or US $750/month in 2018.

10   Data obtained via Open Data request (Freedom of Information Act) to Secretaria Nacional de Habitação. Updated in September 2020.

11   Observatório da construção, FIESP

12   'De olho na reeleição, Bolsonaro mira em programas que marcaram os governos do PT'. HuffPost Brasil. 26 de agosto de 2020.

13   It is important to note that part of the housing movement that participated in the MCMV-E campaign faced opposition within the housing movement itself because some movement members defended housing provision through the expropriation of abandoned properties.

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