



**Land, Windmills and Social Difference:  
Twenty Years of Change in La Venta, Mexico  
Gerardo Torres Contreras**

This research project asks how patterns of social differentiation, centred on land ownership, have evolved over 25 years in La Venta – first town to host a wind farm in Latin America - as a result of wind energy investments. By analysing data on de-regularised land and by drawing on 40 interviews, this research will argue that wind energy has accelerated patterns of social differentiation in two respects: among landowners and between landowners and landless people. Wind energy has exacerbated social differentiation because it relies on previous land inequalities. While landowners with more than 20 hectares are able to combine windmills with investments in agriculture and cattle grazing, those with less than 20 hectares utilise the income from wind energy for basic needs, while others have been obliged to sell some of their land to support the household. By contrast, those without land have benefited from the investments, depending on their engagement with the urban economy. The wind energy industry has resulted in a local boom in non-farm activities and opportunities for employment and service provision. Again, this pattern is differentiated. While some have been able to explore successful business ventures in town, others have been forced to migrate. The research will therefore argue that wind energy development in La Venta has resulted in different material and social relationships between local people and wind energy, with actors benefitting (or not) in various ways, linked to patterns of social differentiation.



**The park where dancing is forbidden Newly arrived residents versus long-term residents competing for the use of public space, Lima - 2018  
Mirtha Lorena del Castillo**

Lorena's research examines the process of gentrification, not from the perspective of residential expulsion, but from the capture and resignification of public space. Specifically, it addresses the struggles between different social groups seeking to gain control of public space in the central areas of Lima in the wake of the real estate boom (2007-2017). The study analyzes the case of the Castilla Park, located in Lince, an inner-city district traditionally inhabited by middle and lower-middle income sectors. A change in zoning regulations allowed the construction of high-rise luxury condominiums around the park triggering the arrival of more affluent residents who began to share the public space with their less affluent neighbors. The study reveals the conflict that followed the municipal authorities' decision to prohibit recreational activities in the park (such as dancing). In the conflict, two opposing rationales prevailed over the use of the park: the first, which advocated the preservation of green areas and the imposition of greater public order for the so-called safety and tranquility of all residents; and the second, which claimed the right to use the park as a multifunctional free public space. The aim of the research is to explore the arguments that underlie these rationales as well as the strategies of multiple social groups to compete for control of public space after processes of real estate renewal. The study examines how gentrification processes affect daily activities of less affluent social groups in Latin American cities and also reveals new ways of redefining citizenship and confronting dominant urban logics through the vindication of spatial rights.