

Not that *chimba* of an institutionality

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As you can see, I have resorted to a word from popular slang to find a more or less appropriate title for this article. Just like in Ecuador or Colombia, and according to the Dictionary of Americanisms of the Royal Spanish Academy of Language, the word “*chimbo*” is used in Venezuela to denote that which is distinguished by its lack of quality or, simply, by its poor craftsmanship.

The harsh ring from such a word allows me to address in all its glory, or with complete ease, a question that could be posed in these terms: Was the Venezuelan institutionality of the recent past a construction as *chimba* as it is usually thought of (or, worse, expressed)?

In any case, I do not intend to engage in an exercise of candor nor would I like for my notes below to be interpreted as if I was detaching myself from reality or, in short, referring to a non-existent country, only present in my imagination.

I really intend to talk about Venezuela based on its historical experience or, in other words, in real and concrete terms. I have set myself to do so, among other things, in order to distance myself from any ideologized interpretation or to politicize what has been done during a far from remote past, such as the dynamics of the country between 1958 and 1998.

During those forty years, and with all its imperfections, imbalances, dissonances, and dysfunctions (which were not few), Venezuela was able to start building an institutional fabric or generating institutional responses beyond what we have commonly been able to admit.

What is interesting about this process is that some of its aspects predate the period in question, which puts in evidence the continuities that we were able to sustain throughout the 20th century, which is, in my opinion, the best of over two centuries that we have lived until now as a republic.

Therefore, I will try to limit myself to three “spheres” to substantiate the notion that, ultimately, we are not quite as isolated when it comes to navigating the challenges of institutional construction.

First sphere: The comptrolling institutional

No one in their right mind could fail to admit that corruption is the worst plague afflicting a society. But the phenomenon is not new, much less exclusive to democracy nor Venezuela. The fact that it is not new nor exclusive to Venezuela is demonstrated by the venal nature of some of the positions held when Venezuela was still a Capitanía General, by the fact that it has also found its way in Saudi Arabia, and by the fact that even France, England, Norway, and the United States have been victims of notorious cases of improbity, and more than once.

In this sense, in complete agreement with historian Manuel Caballero, a republic is not virtuous because it is full of honest men. If that were the case, it would be quite easy since, contrary

to what James Madison once maintained, we would assume men were capable of behaving like angels.

In reality, a republic is virtuous –according to Caballero– when institutional structures protect it even if a band of highway robbers were to suddenly seize control.¹ In other words, even if they wanted to break into the safe, they would find that they were not allowed to do so.

However you want to see it, if quantifying or gauging the extent of corruption turns out to be quite complex, a supervisory policy devised within institutional channels is what at least tries to keep the plague at bay.

This allows to explain how, in the case of Venezuelan, the experience of the patrimonial power management by Gomecismo and the scandalous discretionary use of the public treasury during that almost endless administration prompted the regime of Eleazar López Contreras to devise the first modern fiscal control mechanism with Gumersindo Torres at its helm in 1938.

It is worth emphasizing this idea once again: Although López Contreras might not have embodied the full essence of a democrat, his administration introduced the first control mechanisms to try to reduce the extent or occurrence of behaviors that could be qualified as embezzlement.

Obviously, just as so many other things that were denaturalized during that period (many of which were a result of either the policies initiated by López in 1936 or the subsequent

1 Manuel Caballero, *Historia de los venezolanos en el siglo XX*. Caracas, Editorial Alfa, 2010.

democratic expansions between 1945 and 1948), the Military Junta's regime during the decade between 1948 and 1958 managed to stop the Comptroller's Office from operating as a control entity and instead had it act as a simple cooperator in the administrative work of governing bodies.²

In other words, the Comptroller's Office stepped away from controlling practices that could have been classified as illegal or damaging to public assets, and rather functioned, during the military interlude between 1948 and 1958, as an accounting body simply called upon to manage the administration's records.

We are, therefore, talking about something that could not have been further from the original institutional purposes for which the Comptroller's Office was conceived in 1938. Even though the responsibility of reporting irregularities in the management of public funds remained a norm, it was hardly ever more than a mere formality during that decade, for reasons that, despite obvious, should not be mentioned.

The fact is that starting in 1948, the Comptroller's Office completely lost its autonomous character granted until then in

2 See Elery Cabrera: "La Contraloría General de la Republica, 1938-1948", in: VV.AA. *Historia de la Contraloría General de la República (1938-1988)* (Caracas: Colección Medio Siglo de la Contraloría General de la República. Serie Historia, 1988, Tomo 2): 9-47.

Pedro Vicente Sosa Llanos: "La Contraloría General de la República, 1948-1958", in: VV.AA. *Historia de la Contraloría General de la República (1938-1988)* (Caracas: Colección Medio Siglo de la Contraloría General de la República. Serie Historia, 1988, Tomo 2): 51-94.

Sosa Llanos: "La Contraloría General de la República, 1948-1958", in: Elery Cabrera, *Historia de la Contraloría General de la República (1938-1998)* (Caracas, Fondo Editorial 60 Años de la Contraloría General de la República, 1998, Tomo 1): 159-206.

constitutional terms, leading it to be directly accountable to none other than the Executive Branch itself.

To summarize, and as one author expressed it, the maximum responsibility of the Comptroller's Office, which was to examine illegal actions by public officials, was diminished as much as the Comptroller body was reduced, from then on, to serving as a mere appendix of the political-military regime that would manage to deploy its maximum discretions in administrative matters from the Marcos Pérez Jiménez administration (1953-1958).

Furthermore, and for whatever reasons, the ruling Juntismo practically deactivated the *Ley contra el Enriquecimiento Ilícito de los Funcionarios Públicos*, a law against the illicit enrichment of public officials, which was not only approved during the provisional government of Rómulo Betancourt but also incorporated the novel figure of the sworn declaration of patrimonial assets upon taking office and then again when stepping down. Although the obligation was not completely extinguished, the military regime encouraged big apathy toward this practice, as demonstrated by the increasingly small number of sworn statements as the 1948-1958 decade progressed.

Naturally, this doesn't imply that there were no objections raised within the controlling body when exposing administrative irregularities. This speaks of the discipline and professionalization achieved then by its technical staff. However, this was more of an exception than the rule in the stifling atmosphere that was creating a de facto regime. Precisely because it operated as such, it believed itself to be exempt from any form of fiscal control regarding purchases, procurement of goods, or contracts for projects and services by autonomous ministries, institutes, or public spending in general.

As if the attempt to remain in the shadows was not enough (or, rather, as if the effort to strip the Comptroller's Office of all fiscal control had not reached its peak), the regimes of 1948 to 1958 also succeeded in centralizing State security finances into other organizations operating under a "special regime." This was equivalent to exempting expenditures related to military and police matters (including the secret police, which operated like a multi-headed hydra during that time) from any scrutiny (except that of these specific organizations).

The early resignation of Carlos Sosa Rodríguez, who had been directly appointed by the members of the Junta, not only revealed the disagreements that had emerged between the Comptroller and the Military Junta but also paved the way for the Comptroller's Office to become more subservient to the opinion of the Executive Branch. To make matters worse, the designation of his successor was entrusted to a member of one of the families most closely associated with what evolved, in just a few years, into the one-man regime of Pérez Jiménez.

In fact, Pérez Jiménez took on the responsibility of not only further reshaping the Comptroller's Office into an accounting department with minimal involvement in fiscal control duties but also reducing it to a mere caricature. This was so since the emergence of the regime between 1953 and 1958, which coincided with the implementation of a notably perverse mechanism, even within the standards of irregularities such as the so-called "extraordinary budget."

As a result, and because of the massive increase in tax revenues beginning in the mid-1950s, the practice of preparing a kind of parallel budget became commonplace, especially with investments in public infrastructure.

Thus, and apart from being exempt from any approval, even formal, by a Congress as submissive as the one that had emerged from the 1952 elections, this considerable portion of public expenditure was converted into additional credits approved in multiple Council of Ministers accounts, which could have been, in many cases, simple commission payments disguised as unforeseen needs.

In summary, the Comptroller's Office not only saw its authority be drastically reduced, effectively becoming a mere extension of the Executive Branch, but it faced significant obstacles in attempting to control any irregularities in the management of public funds by a regime characterized not only by its refusal to pursue a sound investment plan, but also by its complete disregard for any oversight effort that could restrict the irrational acts of its members or their avid associates.

It was the task of the governance agreements established since 1958 to once again give order and functionality to such an institution, starting with having the Comptroller's Office recover its duties in overseeing all public administration accounts and operations in the event of any lapses experienced during a period marked by all kinds of irregularities, million-dollar overpricing, and public contracts of questionable legitimacy.³

3 See P. Acosta: "La Contraloría General de la República, 1974-1988", in: VV.AA. *Historia de la Contraloría General de la República (1938-1988)* (Caracas, Colección Medio Siglo de la Contraloría General de la República. Serie Historia, 1988, Tomo 2): 127-160. P. Acosta: "La Contraloría General de la República, 1974-1988", in: Erly Cabrera (ed), *Historia de la Contraloría General de la República (1938-1998)* (Caracas: Fondo Editorial 60 Años de la Contraloría General de la República, 1998, Tomo 1): 241-272.
Erly Cabrera: "La Contraloría General de la República, 1988-1998", en: Erly Cabrera (ed). *Historia de la Contraloría General de la República (1938-1998)*

A significant development in this regard was that, at the outset of the democratic recovery experiment, the Comptroller was once again appointed by the National Congress, no longer acting as an official directly appointed by the Executive, as it had been during the 1948-1958 decade.

Another noteworthy occurrence was that, following the end of the political repression during the military decade (and, especially, of Pérez Jiménez's one-man regime), opposing groups emerged, capable of using the Comptroller to hold the government accountable for adhering to fiscal regulations. Starting in 1958, these congresses operated contrarily to exclusivist and exclusionary approaches, even including dissident voices, sometimes even from the ruling party itself.

To revitalize the Comptroller's Office again, and transform it from a mere accounting office, one of the initial priorities was to recover widespread recognition throughout the country as part of the broader institutional recovery following the downfall of Pérez Jiménez.

The first and most crucial step was reestablishing the autonomy of the Comptroller's Office, achieved through the Constitution of 1961. It reinstated the practice of appointing its

(Caracas: Fondo Editorial 60 Años de la Contraloría General de la República, 1998, Tomo 1): 273-281.

C. Yépez: "La Contraloría General de la República, 1958-1973", in: VV.AA. *Historia de la Contraloría General de la República (1938-1988)* (Caracas, Colección Medio Siglo de la Contraloría General de la República. Serie Historia, 1988, Tomo 2): 95-126. C. Yépez: "La Contraloría General de la República, 1958-1973", in: Erly Cabrera (ed). *Historia de la Contraloría General de la República (1938-1998)* (Caracas: Fondo Editorial 60 Años de la Contraloría General de la República, 1998, Tomo 1): 207-239.

head through Congress, reaffirming its role as its auxiliary body, as had been articulated in the 1947 Constitution.

In addition to modifying or updating a series of legal instruments to make the comptroller entity more effective, another important institutional achievement was the intensified professionalization of personnel through admissions and training workshops, and the adoption of modern promotion mechanisms within its organizational structure. This included the creation of the Fiscal Control School in 1970, whose impact was measured by the variety and quality of the courses offered and the number of officials from the Comptroller's Office who took them.

Another equally important factor in improving the performance of the Comptroller's Office was the introduction of the concept of permanent registration of contracts in the early 1960s. This concept had been non-existent until then and enabled the accountability of all State-signed contracts, including any subsequent modifications.

Whether it seems implausible or not, the truth is that the post-1958 era also saw, for the first time, the permanent registry of all national assets, including, from then on, a routine inventory of their incorporation and disincorporation.

There were two challenges that the Comptroller faced after the onset of democratic consolidation. On the one hand, the sustained increase in State revenue and expenditure. On the other hand, the accelerated growth experienced by the central administration, not only in the form of autonomous ministries and institutes but also organizations or foundations and companies attached to the public sector.

Shortcomings and bad habits were certainly not absent, especially given the increasing resources and agencies managed by the state apparatus. However, the balance of fiscal control speaks favorably of an increasingly professionalized and technically capable institution that was able to enforce prior and subsequent controls, including punitive measures when overseeing expenditures, revenue, and national assets. This means that not everything went only as far as simply condemning what should have been punishable offenses.

There were specific situations of particular notoriety in the eyes of the public. Paradoxically, the fact that these complaints were followed up on and those responsible were prosecuted was often not seen as a sincere attempt to tackle corruption. In many cases it was rather seen as a sign of what seemed to be an unstoppable growth in misconduct that was plaguing the nation or as further proof of the republic's deepening "moral breakdown". This perception greatly benefited those who, long before, had voiced their opposition to democracy.

This would become all the easier to voice since what was referred to as "administrative morality" had in reality taken place in complete silence (or under the threat of severe repression) during the military regime.

As if that were not enough or, rather, to understand the essential role of the Comptroller Office within a democratic framework, starting in 1958 no Comptroller General ever refrained from publicly denouncing the failures that may have continued to affect public administration resources in their annual reports to Congress, which would have been unthinkable in another context.

Of course, none of this means that, in a country that had reported moderate rates of interannual growth during much of the 1960s, the comptroller was not suddenly faced with the challenge of dealing with the astronomical increase in oil prices on international markets since the seventies, driven by an external phenomenon. Especially given the greater fiscal participation obtained by the State, this required adapting the controlling bodies, which was not easy in practice.

Given the prosecution of high-profile cases of corruption, it can be argued that the institutional action of the Comptroller's Office continued to be characterized by high levels of apoliticism.

It's worth highlighting that one of the supervisory instruments that, although informal, remained effective during the democratic period was public opinion, operating within reasonable margins of freedom. This allowed the controlling body to receive positive evaluations from the press or through surveys designed to judge the quality and effectiveness of public institutions during the period under consideration.

In this sense, the institutional integrity of the Comptroller's Office was notably far from scandals or signs of deterioration until well into the end of the 20th century. This was possible thanks to the staff's specialized training and the accumulation of practices deeply rooted in institutional behavior.

Besides this professionalism –which would be a mistake to not bring up–, there was also a growing computerization of the controller's management, the development of a corporate policy that enhanced employees' sense of belonging, and, last but not least, the articulation of technical cooperation mechanisms in supervisory matters with the outside world.

However, it has been difficult to value this achievement precisely where it originated: on the one hand, institutionally speaking, the country came to have a Comptroller's Office characterized by the autonomous nature of its actions and, on the other, there was a system of diverse representation at the political and parliamentary level, as well as a free press environment that also acted independently.

Second sphere: The electoral institutionalality

As obvious as it may seem, a competitive electoral system with not necessarily predetermined results, such as the one that was installed after 1958, eventually led to the country having a technical electoral body.

Although the Venezuelan electoral tradition started in a more or less institutional sense immediately after the Gomecismo era, it was actually during 1946 and 1947 that the basic principles of the electoral system –which resumed regulating the democratic exercise once again in 1958– were formulated.

After the bleak period between 1948 and 1958 which was, from the electoral-institutional point of view, dominated by different boards and by the one-man regime of Pérez Jiménez, the recovery of the democratic experiment was once again anchored in the principle of proportional representation of minorities, as well as in the needs dictated by the growing voting population in the country (this time even more pronounced since 1958).

The electoral laws of 1959, 1964, 1973, and 1977, in addition to the reforms introduced since the 1990s as a result of the actions of the Commission for the Reform of the State (COPRE, or *Comisión para la Reforma del Estado*), highlighted the commitment of the

Supreme Electoral Council to address the demands made by political parties and the need for the electoral institution to adapt to the demands made by society itself regarding the adoption of modifications that would allow revitalizing the democratic system.⁴

Such claims spanned various aspects, from the diversification of the vote (introducing, for example, the separation of municipal from presidential elections since the 1980s) to the shift towards nominal representation or even the consecration of the direct election of mayors and governors.

The truth is that, the more persistent the demands in favor of accommodating alternative options (such as the parties that were resurfacing from the insurrectionary adventure of the 1960s), the more mechanisms were adopted through the different electoral statutes mentioned above to promote the presence of minority parties within the electoral spectrum.

At the same time, the greater the proposals made by organized citizens in support of greater voter participation in the selection and control of their representatives, the greater the institutional-electoral effort to leave behind closed electoral systems for legislative bodies.

4 See Carlos Delgado Chapellín: “Intervención del Dr. Carlos Delgado Chapellín, Presidente del Consejo Supremo Electoral, en la Casa de Bello, el día 27 de abril de 1987, con motivo del ciclo de conferencias que sobre la reforma del sistema electoral auspiciara la Academia de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales” en Publicaciones del Consejo Supremo Electoral (Caracas: Dirección General de Relaciones Institucionales, s/f.)
Diego Bautista Urbaneja: “La cultura electoral del venezolano” in Edgardo Mondolfi (coord.), *La política en el siglo XX venezolano* (Caracas: Fundación para la Cultura Urbana, 2021): 38-78..

In contrast to what we observe today, there was nothing that encouraged the consolidation of a hegemonic presence of a majority party through this electoral institutionality. On the contrary, if there was any positive aspect to the design adopted after 1958 it was that no party, no matter how large, could exclusively claim the function of political representation.

Municipality revitalization was another effective achievement from the Supreme Electoral Council. Until then –that is, since López Contrer spoke about the necessity of municipalities as a primary unit of political organization in his *February Program*– the municipal power had only been losing prestige. So much so that, in practice, the deficiency or ineffectiveness of municipal authorities had been replaced, plain and simple, by supplementary institutions of municipal action, such as neighborhood associations.

In any case, far from being abolished (as some factions of the opinionated country clamored), municipalities were rather reinvigorated through what was meant to be the last important modification introduced to the electoral system in the 20th century. This would have been unthinkable without the technical and logistical support offered by the Supreme Electoral Council to these new local initiatives.

The relevance of these developments I have brought forth does not even take into account the fact that Venezuelans at some point stopped voting manually and found themselves voting through machines. This shift sparked the debate about whether such a change raised doubts regarding the reliability of electronic devices (as if similar doubts had not always been raised with manual processes).

Although the fate of Venezuelan democracy did not depend exclusively on electoral matters, Venezuelans did “learn to vote”, and even acquired a high degree of political rationality. This called into question the expressed underestimation of common and ordinary citizens by the radical left (and also the neo-positivist right). However, that same rationality, nurtured by years of electoral institutionality, also called into question whether the vote had become a mere product of persuasive advertising campaigns.

To the extent that the political culture of Venezuelan voters continued to evolve during the period after 1958, the electoral institutionality had to adapt to the increasingly growing demands for reform, at the risk, otherwise, of falling into total discredit before society.

The existence of clientelism, inflated payrolls, and even minimal control over expenses within the Supreme Electoral Council does not have to be discussed. However, we must consider what, institutionally speaking, was an increasingly greater professional and technical preparation of its civil servants.

Were it not for the latter, members of the Supreme Electoral Council would not have been summoned as observers or electoral advisors during various democratization processes that took place in the region. This included the notable participation that the Supreme Electoral Council of Venezuela had in South American elections during the 1980s and Central America from the 1980s through the 1990s.

There is no doubt that the implementation of many of the reforms recommended by COPRE was limited in practice due to a lack of political will. However, it would be unjust not to emphasize that the Supreme Electoral Council made significant technical

advancements, and reached quite respectable levels of credibility, historically speaking.

Third sphere: The professionalization of the State

Just as many things changed in Venezuela during the 20th century, the State came to have a professional apparatus to carry out duties that required high levels of expertise. We are referring to something different and novel, such as the professionalization of bureaucracy, using this last word in the best way possible, one that we generally associate with the frustration of filling out over and over and over the same questionnaire in some public agency.

Let us begin by recognizing how a good part of the information remains scattered across the archives of different official organizations or within ministerial reports. Incidentally, this can be interpreted as an open invitation to examine what these documentary repositories could reveal about the implications of the increasingly sustained and growing investment made by the Venezuelan State for the technical development of its professionals throughout the 20th century.

For now, for a lack of better options, we can establish a series of clarifications about the State's institutional growth, which mirrored the complexity achieved in the development of public administration.

One way to appreciate this evolution is to compare the relatively small number of standing ministries from the 19th century up until 1936 with the gradually expanding list that emerged over time. This list precisely reflected the new areas of action that emerged in response to the demands placed by society on a State striving to modernize itself.

Consider, for instance, the issue of oil and the implications of the growing national involvement in the operations and products of this economic sector. Even after the physical disappearance of Juan Vicente Gómez, the oil industry continued to be managed as a department within the Ministry of Development (*Ministerio de Fomento*).

Or think about what the creation of CORDIPLAN at the end of the 1950s represented, or how ultimately, at a certain point in the 20th century, the Office of the Attorney General (or *Fiscalía General*) and the Office of the Solicitor General (*Procuraduría General*) became completely separate entities. The first, a representation of the Public Ministry and, the second, the representative body of the Nation.

This all means that a specific State structure was emerging. A structure that, while also subject to a series of operations demanded by modern life, included the creation of autonomous institutes and public sector-affiliated foundations.

From an institutional standpoint (which is, ultimately, what we are interested in highlighting here), this had two important implications.

First, starting at least from the 1970s, having an important body of doctrine on this matter after the approval of the Administrative Career Law meant “stability” for the professional civil servants assigned to the State, but also ensured “continuity” in State actions and plans, regardless of changes in government.⁵

5 See Allan Brewer: *El estatuto del funcionario público en la Ley de Carrera Administrativa* (Caracas, Comisión de Administración Pública, 1971).

This “stability” shielded the professionalized bureaucracy from the fluctuations and political circumstances of the time, guaranteeing respect for their positions and promotions within the ministerial ranks. Equally important was the provision that civil servants could only be withdrawn for specific, legally established causes, and not for refusing to sing praises, or participate in parades or loyalty demonstrations, as was characteristic of regimes known for such displays of vanity, such as that of Pérez Jiménez.

It cannot be denied that, during an important stretch of the 20th century, there were a series of disperse laws and regulatory provisions relating to public servants, something that in a way spoke of the continuities that were built in this matter. However, the Administrative Career Law had been a long-standing commitment since the restoration of democracy in 1958. In fact, the Constitution of 1961 eventually mandated its enactment.. Until the point where this reality, which had been haphazardly regulated from a legal standpoint, the only sector that operated on the basis of a certain degree of administrative career was the personnel assigned to the foreign service.

Second, “professionalization” was something closely linked to offering the public sector, as a basis for its improvement, access to mechanisms that could provide the necessary training and technologies to apply to their different fields of action (e.g., a statistician assigned to the National Information Technology Office, a geographer in the National Cartography Service, a civil engineer in the Ministry of Public Works, or a chemical engineer assigned to one of the entities with jurisdiction in the hydrocarbon sector).

This would also entail the State’s sponsorship of training programs and improvement courses to benefit its professional

staff, both domestically and internationally. These initiatives aimed to contribute to a greater institutional responsiveness by updating the skills and knowledge of its human resources.

There was certainly much more that could have been achieved if, for example, a professionalization program abroad, such as the *Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho* Scholarship Plan, had included better reintegration mechanisms for those who had received training and education thanks to such opportunities, especially in the technical and scientific fields. Nevertheless, a group of engineers did graduate from this scholarship program and went on to participate in the construction of significant infrastructure projects characterized by their endurance, such as the underground transportation system in the metropolitan area.

Even with its imperfections, the approval of the Administrative Career Law marked the end of the precariousness in the public service. Nonetheless, the appropriate incentive system to make certain functions more profitable by that professionalized bureaucracy was never adopted. Still, it is fair to recognize that the final result was a much better trained civil service, technically speaking. Therefore, despite all shortcomings, this important change had a positive impact within the structure of the State in terms of institutional development.

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I have had to focus on the past and, therefore, on what could be defined as the institutional fabric that Venezuelan society came to rely on at some point. As long as this can reveal how much we were able to achieve on our own along the way, the challenge that this type of exercise imposes seems more than justified, despite the ever-present limitations.

No one should be surprised that institutional legitimacy has been severely affected, among other things, as a result of the open as well as undercover dismissal of a significant number of professionals in public administration. Not to mention the electoral aspect –while at some point we were able to proudly boast of having been summoned to advise on the Spanish transition after the death of Franco, now we can only look the other way when we realize how far from that we are today. And it is almost not even worth mentioning the reduction of all regulatory actions.

Ultimately, I think it would be difficult to specify which of these three spheres (comptroller, electoral, or bureaucratic-professional) is the one that has experienced greater bankruptcy. What I can at least advise is to be more careful when assessing actions here discussed. One never knows if we might ever find , from that experience that we gained in the not-so-distant past, some useful guidelines for the future.

There were limits, and many, in the capacity for institutional construction during the second half of the 20th century. However, I must insist that it is still valuable to weigh what was built, even if it did not last.⁶

6 See Ramón Guillermo Aveledo: *La cuarta república, la virtud y el pecado. Una interpretación de los aciertos y errores de los años en que los civiles estuvieron en el poder en Venezuela* (Caracas: Editorial Libros Marcados, 2007).

Edgardo Mondolfi: “Venezuela y el discurso de la modernidad en el siglo XX” in Mondolfi (coord.), *La política en el siglo XX venezolano* (Caracas: Fundación para la Cultura Urbana, 2021): 288-339.