

**Participation
and State Power
in Latin America
and the Caribbean**

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Participation and State Power in Latin America and the Caribbean

A Review of the Participation and Public Policy
Experimental Activity of the
International Development Research Centre

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INTRODUCTION

This document contains the results of a review of the research projects supported by the Participation and Public Policy experimental activity (PPP) of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Latin America and the Caribbean between 1987 and 1991.¹ The purpose of this review was to extract the most important lessons learned from the overall experience of the PPP and to make recommendations for its future development.²

The analysis, conclusions and recommendations presented in this report center around the projects' contribution to assessing the PPP's formal rationale. Directly considering the PPP's theoretical foundation was not an objective of these projects. Therefore, using the researchers' findings and conclusions for this particular purpose required the selective use of their information and ideas. It involved extracting from their research those lessons that were considered central to a critical assessment of the PPP's theoretical foundation. As a result, the wealth of information and ideas produced by the projects was reduced to those central insights that were deemed pertinent to the task at hand. Needless to say, the responsibility for this exercise is mine and its results do not compromise the researchers.

It should also be noted that the projects supported by the PPP were designed as independent research initiatives rather than as parts of a comparative research network.³ The projects differed in terms of the national contexts within which the

¹ The experimental activity was originally named **Representative Institutions, Participatory Processes and Public Policy (RIPP)**. The name of the activity was changed several months after its inception to **Participation and Public Policy (PPP)**. In this report I use the second name only. Moreover, PPP began as an **experimental program** and was later transformed into an **experimental activity**.

² This report is based on an extensive review of the literature on political participation, along with an intensive reading of the projects' research results and discussions with the IDRC's staff and the researchers.

³ The Jamaican, Costa Rican, Nicaraguan and Cuban projects were formally organized as a research network. However, the four projects pursued different objectives and lacked common conceptual and methodological frameworks (See Kaufman, 1992, pp. 14-15).

phenomenon of participation was studied, the levels of analysis used, and the political actors and institutions selected for study. Nevertheless, they all explored the relationship between participation and the state and engaged (implicitly or explicitly) the formal rationale that justified the creation of the PPP.

The report is divided into four chapters. Chapter one analyzes the evolution of the concept of political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean. This analysis sets forth the historical and theoretical contexts which shaped the formulation of the Participation and Public Policy experimental activity. Chapter two summarizes the history of the activity and introduces its rationale, objectives, and operational strategy. The results of the projects supported by the PPP activity are summarized in chapter three of the report. Finally, chapter four contains an analysis of the projects' results, a critical assessment of the theoretical foundations of the PPP, and recommendations for opening new lines of research centering on politics and participation in developing countries.

I. PARTICIPATION AND THE STATE

Introduction

This chapter of the report characterizes the evolution of the concept of political participation. Specifically, it examines the history of two theoretical traditions which inform the study of state and society relations in Latin America and the Caribbean: the **structuralist** tradition which conceptualizes political participation as liberation; and the **modernization** tradition which is fundamental to the notion of political development in its different versions (see Randall and Theobald, 1985, pp. 178-199).

To characterize the evolution of a concept is to make explicit the changes in assumptions and arguments that mark the turning points in the life of the concept. The following discussion of the concept of political participation then, does not intend to provide the reader with a detailed "review of the literature."⁴ Rather, it attempts to identify and explain the most salient characteristics and changing ideas in the study of political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean from the 1950's to the present.

The review of the concept of political participation presented herein "makes arguments that urge the reader to see old problems in a new light" (Skocpol, 1981, p. xi.). Specifically, it contends that both the modernization and the structuralist approaches to political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean are guided by the assumption that Eurocentric explanatory models for state-society relations can be used as normative models in Latin America and the Caribbean. This assumption ignores the fact that the relations between time and space that created conditions for the emergence and development of the state and society in developing countries, are different from those that engendered the rise and evolution of the state and society in Europe. Different time-space relations have created different types of states,

⁴ For detailed reviews of the literature on political participation in Latin America and other areas of the Third World see Randall and Theobald, 1985; Higgott, 1986; Weiner and Huntington, 1987). These three works, especially Higgott's and Randall and Theobald's provide the chronological framework for analysis of the evolution of political participation in Latin America presented in this article. See also Booth, 1979.

different types of civil societies, and different types of state-society relations. Understanding these differences is essential for assessing the framework of limitations and possibilities within which democracy and participation can be promoted in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Time, Space, and State Power: The European Experience

The phenomenon of political participation in Europe has been historically conditioned by the emergence and evolution of the modern principle of sovereignty. Sovereignty represents a conceptualization of social life that assumes the centrality of the state as an autonomous territorial and symbolic arena. In this context, conflict over the distribution of economic and political power takes place according to legal rules and regulations that are enforced and institutionalized by a bureaucratic machinery. With the emergence of the sovereign state, politics became a struggle over the distribution of power within the boundaries of a legally established sovereign territory. It is not an accident, then, that the development and consolidation of the theory and the practice of national sovereignty was closely associated with the development and consolidation of political participation and democratic theory (Hinsley, 1986, pp. 158-235; Beloff, 1962, pp. 170-182; Macpherson, 1977). Modern democratic theories, it has been noted by Reinhold Niebuhr, "almost without exemption assume the autonomy of the national state" (Niebuhr, 1959, p.64).

The emergence of sovereign states constituted the point of departure for the conformation of "political spaces": that is, of geographical areas "where the plans, ambitions, and actions of individuals and groups incessantly jar against each other -- colliding, blocking, coalescing, separating-..." (Wolin, 1960, p. 16). Sovereignty, then, allowed territories to contain the main determinants and accumulated consequences of their political evolution, within certain legal and geographical boundaries. As such, the principle came to express what David Gross calls the "spacialization of time and experience." This implies: "the tendency to condense time relations -- which are an essential ingredient for personal and social meaning -- into space relations" (Gross, 1981-82, p. 59).

Spacialization created the conditions for the emergence and consolidation of national political histories, along with national political actors and institutions. Furthermore, it involved the concentration of political power within the geographical boundaries of a national territory. This power originally resided in the machinery of the state; however, with the development of civil society, it had to be distributed between the state and the community. Transfer of power from the state to society marked the beginning of the modern principle of democracy and political participation (see Hinsley,

1986, p. 222). Even today, the principle of democracy assumes the subordination of the state to society.

The concentration of political power, within the geographical and political boundaries of a national territory, constitutes a fundamental assumption of Marxist, elite, and pluralist theories of state-society relations (see Held, 1989, pp. 56-78). These theories view state power as determined by societal forces that operate within the legal container of a sovereign territory. State power is defined here as the capacity of the state to formulate and execute public policies *vis-a-vis* domestic political and social forces.

From a Marxist perspective, state power is: "a relation between social class forces expressed in the content of state policies" (Therborn, 1980, p. 34). From an elite perspective, state power is a relation between the groups that control the main institutions of society. These groups "determine policy by occupying the command posts of public and private power" (Koenig, 1986, p. 14). Finally, from a pluralist perspective state power is a relationship between interest groups. Policy making is, according to pluralism, "an arena where groups compete for ascendance" (Koenig, 1986, p. 18). State power is seen from any of these perspectives as residing within the legal and territorial boundaries of a sovereign state. Sovereignty, in this sense, does not simply regulate relations among states, but it also conditions the competition for power within states by establishing legal and territorial limits on the resources available to domestic power contenders. Sovereignty, therefore, constitutes the foundation of political order at the national level. It is the legal container in which the turbulence of domestic political competition finds a balance. The balance of power among domestic power contenders, determines the role of the state and its capacity to formulate and implement public policies.

The principle of sovereignty expresses a correlation between time and space that corresponds to the Newtonian view of temporal-spatial phenomena. From this perspective, space and time are "ordering dimensions of reality" (Giddens, 1987, p. 140). Time and space contain each other and, together, contain reality. Stephen W. Hawking points out that under Newton's influence, "space and time were thought of as a fixed arena in which events took place, but which was not affected by what happened in it" (Hawking, 1988, p. 33). Linguistically, the Newtonian relationship between time and space is expressed by "the imposition of the vocabulary of space on the parallel conception of time..." thus, we think of "spaces of time" (Bochner, 1973, pp. 300-302).

Western social sciences have been challenged to reconceptualize the time-space dimension of politics that inform modern social analysis (Adam, 1990, p. 13). Most notably Anthony Giddens has argued that the Newtonian interpretation of the relationship between political time (history) and space (sovereign states) is inadequate (see Giddens, 1984, p. 110). According to Giddens, this interpretation does not take into consideration the changes in the relationship between time and space that have

been brought about by the globalization of modernity. This process is defined by Giddens as: "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (Giddens, 1990, p. 64). Globalization destroyed the correspondence between time and space that social sciences take for granted. It also invalidated the notion of sovereignty as the enclosing of political phenomena within geographical boundaries that contains a national history. The globalization of modernity, according to Giddens, brought about the "disembedding of social systems". By this he means "the 'lifting out' of social relations from local contexts of interaction and their restructuring across indefinite spans of time-space" (Giddens, 1990, p. 21). Multinational corporations, for example, operate within their "own space economy -- a corporate rather than a geographic space" (Clarke, 1985, p. 25).

Globalization, then, penetrated the walls of the sovereign states linking domestic political processes with international forces. The result of this penetration is the end of politics as a domestic activity and the restructuring of national and political processes at a supra-national level.

Some crucial political and economic institutional consequences of globalization has been identified by Immanuel Wallerstein who argues that capitalism originated a power structure in sixteenth-century Europe, which eventually evolved into a "world-economy" (Wallerstein, 1985, p. 13). This world-economy conditions the patterns of economic development in individual nation-states. As Wallerstein argues, the analysis of the causes and particularly, the consequences of this historical evolution should constitute a central component of social sciences analysis. Thus, he calls for the development of a "world-system analysis" which is, according to him, not a social theory, but a "protest against the ways in which social scientific inquiry was structured for all of us at its inception in the middle of the nineteenth century" (Wallerstein 1987, p. 309). Since then, social analysis has been "a prisoner of the word 'state'" (Wallerstein, 1985, p. 28). From this perspective,

we live in states. There is a society underlying each state. States have histories and therefore traditions. Above all, since change is normal, it is states that normally change or develop. They change their mode of production; they urbanize; they have social problems; they prosper or decline. They have the boundaries, inside of which factors are 'internal' and outside of which they are 'external'. They are 'logically' independent entities such that, for statistical purposes, they can be 'compared'" (Wallerstein, 1987, p. 316).

Wallerstein's and Giddens' criticisms of modern social sciences are relevant for the reconceptualization of the state, not only in developed countries but also in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, some words of caution apply. The globalization

of modernity explained by Wallerstein and Giddens, should not lead social scientists to imply that the world is inevitably moving towards a homogeneous state. The globalization of modernity is a force to be reckoned with, but it is a force that confronts the resilient variety and heterogeneity of the human condition (see Migdal, 1988). In this sense, the capitalist mode of production, as Eric R. Wolf points out, "may be dominant within the system of capitalist market relations, but it does not transform all the people of the world into industrial producers of surplus value" (Wolf, 1982, p. 297). This important distinction between belonging to a "capitalist world market", and operating within a "capitalist mode of production" is essential in order to understand the specificity of the internal conditions of peripheral political societies (see Kazancigil, 1986, pp. 119-142). Therefore, as David Slater points out, the adoption by social scientists of a "global level of analysis" could be damaging

if it leads to trends in internationalization being seen as somehow superimposed on peripheral societies rather than as a penetrative process interwoven with the internal specificities of capitalist development and state-society relations within given social formations of the periphery (Slater, 1989, p. 20).

Slater's warning is a very important one because globalization has a differential political effect on developed and on developing countries. Developed countries carry with them a "reservoir" of political sovereignty that they began to accumulate in the seventeenth century. This created the condition for patterns of political conflicts and institutions that resulted in the liberal democratic tradition that we know today. The globalization of modernity might have reduced this reservoir, but it has not depleted it. Furthermore, those countries that are located at the center of the world-economy have found ways of protecting their political autonomy by exerting their influences in the international forums that constitute the organizational infrastructure of the world-system (Faletto, 1989).

Giddens's and Wallerstein's criticisms of Western social analysis, then, should not be taken as calls to abandon the study of social phenomena at the level of nation-states. Instead they should be interpreted as an invitation to re-contextualize that phenomena. This is especially important for students of political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean who are influenced by Eurocentric theories of relations between the state and society. In the following section, the two main theories of political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean -- the modernization and the structuralist traditions -- will be reviewed. Despite the significant differences that separates them, they both assume that state power in Latin America and the Caribbean can be nationally determined. That is, they both assume that the capacity of the Latin American and Caribbean states to formulate and implement public policies can be determined by local political and social forces that operate within the

boundaries of each sovereign nation-state. Political participation is viewed by these two intellectual traditions as a process oriented towards the definition of the role of the state. From their perspective, politics is predominantly a domestic activity.

Political Participation and the State: The Modernization and the Structuralist Traditions

Latin America and the Caribbean, like the rest of the Third World, was caught between the hegemonic forces of the United States of America and the Soviet Union in the aftermath of the Second World War. These circumstances provided the context within which the theory of modernization emerged and flourished in American universities, before it was adopted by many Latin American and Caribbean intellectuals as an adequate explanation of social, political, and economic phenomena in the region.⁵

Modernization worked to promote and explain the historical evolution of the developing South, according to the historical experience of the capitalist industrialized countries of the North. Theoretically, it was conceptualized as

the process of change towards those types of social, economic and political systems that have developed in Western Europe and North America, from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth and have then spread to other European countries, and, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to the South American, Asian, and African continents (Eisenstadt, 1963, p. 98).

Modernization is based on the assumption that "there is a law of historical necessity that impels every society to try to attain the stage occupied by the so-called developed or modernized societies" (Guerreiro-Ramos, 1970, p. 22). From this perspective, developed societies "reveal to the so-called developing societies the image of their future" (Guerreiro-Ramos, 1970, p. 22).

In its early stages, modernization was predominantly equated with economic growth, as it was measured by traditional indicators such as GNP and income per capita (Nugent and Yotopoulos, 1979, p. 542). The promotion of economic development was to be facilitated by the parallel diffusion of modern values such as universalism, achievement, future orientation, and social trust (Nun, 1991, p. 6). Together, economic growth and the internalization of modern values by the people of developing countries, were supposed to produce stable and democratic forms of political participation. Initially, the people of developing societies would participate as

⁵ See for example Germani, 1981.

producers and consumers within the framework of developing market economies (Wolfe, 1984, p. 158). Later, they would participate as "citizens capable of reconciling their narrower interests and controlling the development activities of the State through democratic political procedures" (Wolfe, 1984, p. 158). Both civil society and the state would develop in a peaceful and harmonious balance that would mirror the formation of the relationship between civil society and the state in the developed countries of the West. Development, then, was expected to "enhance autonomy at the national level and thus the capacity of people to influence its pace and the distribution of its fruits" (Wolfe, 1984, p.158; see also Hettne, 1990, p. 28).

In the early 1960's many scholars began to question the assumption that economic growth and the diffusion of "modern values" would create conditions for the emergence and development of democratic state-society relations in developing countries. The proliferation of authoritarian regimes in the Third World made evident to many observers that modernization does not necessarily translate into order and democracy. Thus, proponents of modernization theory advocated the need to "externally induce" the evolution of developing countries "in the direction of freedom rather than tyranny" (La Palombara, 1963, p. x; see also Braibanti, 1969). Their argument involved the need to articulate strategies for liberal-democratic political development that would accompany existing strategies for capitalist economic development.

Political development was conceptualized as an orderly process designed to facilitate the evolution of both the state and civil society toward the formation of liberal democratic regimes. Central to this evolution was the development of the state's capacity to respond to social and political pressures and demands. Political development, then, was viewed as "a continuous process of growth which is produced by forces within the system and which is absorbed by the system" (Eisenstadt, 1963, p. 96). The main assumption behind this concept continued to be the desirability and the feasibility of replicating in the developing world the pattern of state-society relations that facilitated the formation of liberal democracies in the West. However, in the late 1960's, the simultaneous promotion of democracy and capitalism in developing countries "appeared to be paradoxical". Irene L. Gendzier explains:

...capitalism generated the very social and political instability that was most feared. Moreover, although it was associated historically with the emergence of liberal and liberal-democratic states, its subversive tendencies were unacceptable in the present context as far as Development theorists were concerned. The expansion of capitalist market system had the effect of delegitimizing the very class differences that it promoted (Gendzier, 1985, p. 155).

In these circumstances, a group of scholars from within the modernization camp began to challenge those proponents of political development who argued for the possibility of promoting both democratic change and social stability. They proposed that political order should take precedence over the promotion of democracy in developing societies (see Scaff and Williams, 1978; Seligson and Booth, 1979). Consequently, modernization theory began to emphasize political stability rather than democratic change (Randall and Theobald, 1985, pp. 67-98; Higgott, 1986, pp. 18-21).

This pessimism gave rise in the early 1970's to the emergence of policy oriented studies of political participation as a much less ambitious variation of the modernization approach (Higgott, 1986, pp. 21-44). The main objectives of the policy approach were "1) to learn more about the nature of policy making and that means, in the last analysis, about the nature of state, society, and politics; and 2) to contribute to improvements ('reform') in policy making in the specific area that is being studied" (Hirschman, 1981, p. 64).⁶

Like the theoretical approaches that preceded it, public policy studies emphasized a fundamental concern for order (Randall and Theobald, 1985, p. 181). However, it changed the focus of analysis from "macro-politics of an analytic kind to micro-politics of an experiential and contextual kind" (Higgott, 1986, p. 26). Political participation, from this perspective, is studied in connection to the process of public policy formulation and implementation within specific policy cases and areas. Historical, macro-sociological, and international variables are ignored or underplayed in favour of situational analysis of specific case studies that stress "problem-solving, management, and maintenance" (Higgott, 1986, p. 29). These characteristics of the public policy approach are expressed by Robert L. Rothstein's view of politics and policy making in the Third World:

...no policy-making system that threatens the security of the existing regime or that promises only long-term benefits is likely to win elite support. The initial point, then, is the need to devise a policy-making system that takes account of elite fears, but also attempts to go beyond obsessions with security and self-interest. That suggests a policy-making system that does not seem too radical, that does not promise to transform society massively and rapidly, and that seeks steady and persistent change in a desired direction (Rothstein, 1976, p. 695).

⁶ The development of policy studies in Latin America was also facilitated by the emergence of public choice theory and policy analysis in the United States. See Higgott, 1986, pp. 26-30.

Two different, but complementary, approaches to the study of participation emerged in the 1980's -- democratization and governance. Democratization is a theoretical approach for the analysis and interpretation of the processes of "transition to democracy" which have taken place in the region during the 1980's and 1990's, while governance represents a more instrumental and practical approach to the same phenomena. Democratization and governance do not substitute for the public policy approach. Rather, they complemented it by moving the study of participation from the micro-level of analysis favoured by policy studies to a macro-level of analysis that covered the political systems of entire countries and regions.

Four factors contributed to the emergence of the democratization and governance approaches to political participation. First, the demilitarization of political regimes in the region during the 1980's. Second, the replacement of economic nationalism by neo-liberalism as the predominant economic paradigm in the region. Third, the replacement of populism by a "semi-corporatist 'pact of elites' to manage and make governable otherwise uncontrollable demands". Finally, an international trend that promotes the idea of democracy in developing countries (Nef, 1991, pp. 2-3).

Democratization, with its emphasis on national consensuses, political pacts and the "resurrection of civil society", shares with the political development approaches of the 1950's and 1960's the assumption that Latin American states constitute political entities which are capable of generating the political capacity to balance state-society relations in a manner that resembles the European experience (see O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead, 1986). Thus, democratization theory assumes that state power in Latin America, or the capacity of the state to formulate public policies vis-a-vis domestic pressures, resides within the national territory of the state. Political participation, from this perspective, is seen as a process designed to democratize the uses and instruments of state power.⁷

While democratization theory represents an attempt to explain the processes of "transitions to democracy" in Latin America, governance is an instrumental approach to politics and the state that tries to identify the institutional mechanisms that can facilitate the consolidation of democracy in developing countries. This concept of governance was given political life by the World Bank, and first referred to in the report *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth*. In this report, the World Bank pointed out that:

underlying the litany of Africa's development problems is a crisis of governance. By governance is meant the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs. Because countervailing power has been lacking, state officials in many countries have served their own interests

⁷ For an analysis of the relationship between Modernization and democratization theory see Nun, 1991.

without fear of being called to account. In self-defense individuals have build up personal networks of influence rather than hold the all-powerful state accountable for its systemic failures. In this way politics becomes personalized, and patronage becomes essential to maintain power. The leadership assumes broad discretionary authority and loses its legitimacy. Information is controlled, and voluntary associations are co-opted or disbanded. This environment cannot readily support a dynamic economy. At worst the state becomes coercive and arbitrary (The World Bank, 1989, pp. 60-61).

To understand and confront the political problems that are perceived by the report as obstacles to the development of "dynamic economies", the Bank has explored the role that it can play in the promotion of "good governance." Governance is defined by Pierre Landell-Mills and Ismail Serageldin of the World Bank, as "the use of political authority and exercise of control over a society and the management of its resources for social and economic development" (Landell-Mills and Serageldin, 1991, p. 3). "Good governance", according to the same authors, includes, government accountability, the rule of law, governments' responsiveness to the public's needs, availability of information, and freedom of association and expression (Landell-Mills and Serageldin, 1991, pp. 6-7). These characteristics are seen by the authors as contributing factors for the formation of "competent and accountable government dedicated to liberal market economic policies" which are willing to invest in infrastructure and human resource development (Landell-Mills and Serageldin, 1991, pp. 8-9). The formation and consolidation of this type of government constitutes, according to Landell-Mills and Serageldin, "the challenge of good governance" (Landell-Mills and Serageldin, 1991, p. 9).

It is not clear yet what direct role, if any, the Bank is ready to play in the promotion of "good governance". The official mandate and objectives of the institution prevents it from directly interfering in the political affairs of sovereign states. However, it is conceivable that the Bank can establish, as part of its *modus operandi*, requirements for legal and institutional arrangements in the public administration systems of developing countries if they are deemed necessary for the efficient management of financial resources (see George, 1992, pp. 73-79). Indirectly, these requirements would constitute an important form of political involvement by the Bank in the definition of the role of the state and of state-society relations in developing countries.

To sum up, the conceptual links between different versions of modernization theory that developed from the 1950's to the 1990's include an implicit, and sometimes explicit, definitional consensus on the meaning of modernity as a concept representing the forms of social, political, and economic organization used in Western developed capitalist societies. This conceptual common denominator also assumes the

universal desirability of modernity and the possibility of replicating in Latin America and the Caribbean the type of state-society relations that created conditions for the emergence and evolution of liberal democracy in Europe.

The structuralist tradition that conceptualizes political participation as liberation has its origins in Marxist theory. More specifically, it derives from the Marxist-influenced interpretations of the theory of "peripheral capitalism", which was developed in the 1950's by the Economic Commission of Latin America under the leadership of Raul Prebisch (see Vuskovic, 1987, pp. 409-413; Love, 1990). Marxism did not have a serious influence on Latin American and Caribbean politics until after the Russian Revolution of 1917 when Communist Parties began to organize throughout the region (Aguilar, 1978, pp. 10-15). The themes of "exploitation" and "American Imperialism" were, in this initial period, the main focus of Marxist political and intellectual activism throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. The monopoly of Marxist ideology by the communist parties of the region began to crumble after the Second World War when Marxism began to find expressions in literature, art, and the political programs of revolutionary organizations that functioned outside communist party structures (Aguilar, 1978, pp. 34-42). With the victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 (a movement organized outside the scope of the Cuban Communist Party) the predominance of communist parties as official expressions of Marxist ideology in the continent came to an end.

Theoretically, Marxism in Latin America and the Caribbean found its most sophisticated expression in the 1960's with the emergence of dependency theory. This theory constituted an alternative to modernization theory, specifically in its critique of the assumption that European-like democratic state-society relations could be developed in Latin America without first altering the international context that condition the domestic political and economic structures of the countries of the region. Dependency theory argued that the emergence and development of the Latin American states never paralleled the European pattern (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, p. 24). From this perspective, the study of the Latin American state and analysis of possibilities for its economic, social and political transformation had to take into consideration "its insertion into the worldwide political-economic system which emerged with the wave of European colonizations of the world" (Valenzuela and Valenzuela, 1990, p. 421). This world-system "makes development possible for some countries, but renders it highly unlikely for others" (Allahar, 1989, p. 85). Thus, "both underdevelopment and development are aspects of the same phenomenon, both are historically simultaneous, both are linked functionally and, therefore, interact and condition each other mutually" (Valenzuela and Valenzuela, 1990, p. 421). The impact of this interaction on the Latin American state is, according to dependency theory, overwhelming. First, the power of the dependent or peripheral state is not contingent on support by civil society, but on its linkages with the central or core states. Secondly, its main function is not to respond to the needs of society, as articulated

by a domestic political process, but to the needs of the capitalist world-economy (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, pp. 16-28). From this perspective, "the nation and the state have become separated (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, p. 202). The nation that is officially represented by the dependent state is that of the civil society elites whose interests overlap with those of the developed or industrialized states. Such a structure of dependency promotes the political exclusion of the masses and makes it impossible to replicate in dependent states the democratic relation between state and civil society that developed in Europe. Thus, the development of democratic forms of participation in dependent political societies requires breaking the relations of dependency within which peripheral states operate. In turn, the possibility for breaking these relations depend, according to dependency theory, on the particular relationship that develops in each country between "the international economy, the nation-state and the alliance of social classes within the state" (Randall and Theobald, 1985, p. 126).

Dependency theory did not formulate explanatory or normative models of political participation. As Gabriel Almond has pointed out, "the internal politics and policies of hegemonic and dependent nations have no explanatory power [in dependency theory], except by implication" (Almond, 1987, p. 454). Nevertheless, dependency theorists provided intellectual support to popular, revolutionary, and anti-imperialist movements throughout the continent (see Frank, 1970; Edelstein 1981; Stavenhagen, 1981). These movements were generally viewed by proponents of dependency theory, as a form of struggle for the "nationalization" of the state. This process involved the construction of the state as an institutional representation of the interests of society, rather than of the interests of the developed capitalist countries represented by the ruling elites of the periphery. From this perspective, Latin American revolutionary movements in the 1970's were generally perceived by dependency theorists as positive steps toward popular control of the state.

The lack of proper attention to domestic politics and participation by dependency theory was noticed in the 1970's by sectors of the left who were influenced by the emergence of Neo-marxist interpretations of politics and the state. Dependency, these critics argued, propagated a form of analysis in which the political dynamic and structure of dependent societies appeared to be mechanically determined by external economic forces. Ruling elites were viewed by dependency theory simply as "agents of foreign domination", while the state was perceived as "a security agent for international capital" (Higgott, 1986, pp. 66-67).

Such criticism of economic and political determinism did not negate the concept of dependency *per se*. Rather, it was an argument in favour of more explicit explanations of the domestic political dynamic of dependent societies. More important for the purposes of our discussion, the criticisms that emerged in the second half of the 1970's provided theoretical legitimacy and political support to strategies of political participation as liberation and empowerment. These strategies were oriented

toward enabling the political power of the masses and their liberation from domestic and international structures of domination.

Conceptualization of participation as liberation and empowerment is evidenced by the "Popular Participation" project formulated in the late 1970's and implemented in the 1980's under the sponsorship of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). This project was conceived of as "a response to a critical review of the previous two 'development decades'" (Pearse and Stiefel, 1979, p. 3). According to UNRISD,

the central issue of popular participation has to do with power -- exercised by some people over other people and by some classes over other classes....It must be accepted, therefore, that the struggle for people's participation implies an attempted redistribution of both control of resources and of power in favour of those who live by their own productive labour (Pearse and Stiefel, 1979, p. 62).

Within the context of this project, participation was defined as "the organization of efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations, on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control" (Pearse and Stiefel, 1979, p. 8). The emphasis of the project was on participation at the micro level, rather than at the national level: it focused on peasant and rural workers, urban marginal populations, ethnic movements, and worker participation in management. Nevertheless, the ultimate objective of participation, as envisioned by UNRISD, was the redistribution of political power at the national level. Therefore, the project was based on the assumption that state power as the object of political struggle and competition exists within the national territories of the region, and it is susceptible to domestic political pressures. Political participation, from this perspective, can be oriented toward the achievement of a more equitable **distribution** of that power.

UNRISD's decision to emphasize the study of participation at the micro level reflected the distrust of formal political processes and institutions that prevailed among proponents of the structuralist approach in the late 1970's. However, in the late 1980's the research results of the Political Participation program made evident the need to pay more attention to formal and national structures and processes of participation. This did not represent a fundamental change in the structuralists' conceptualization of political phenomena in developing countries who continued to view political participation as a process designed to redistribute state power within national territories. Denis Goulet, for example, criticized students of political participation for failing "to link participation at the grass roots or in micro arenas of action to the core decision-making processes which shape national development strategies at higher, macro, levels" (Goulet, 1987, p. 132). However, Goulet

continued to conceptualize political participation as domestic competition for the redistribution of state power. In his view, participation "is capable of penetrating into the inner sanctum of developmental decision-making by conferring to previously impotent communities a new voice in macro arenas of decision-making" (Goulet, 1987, p.132). From this perspective, the challenge of political participation was, to "seek entry into larger, more macro, arenas of decision making" (Goulet, 1989, p. 176).

A different approach to political participation as liberation is offered by proponents of the New Social Movement theory of political participation that attempts to transcend Marxist class reductionism and explain the existence of non-class based sources of conflict and political actors in capitalist societies (See Laclau 1987; Oszlak and Piscitelli, 1989, pp. 9-17; Canel, 1991). Orlando Fals Borda, for example, calls for the reinvention of power and the state in Latin America. His arguments are based on the assumption that "power emanates from the people" (Fals Borda, 1990, p. 123). From this perspective, political participation should create new forms of popular power as the foundation of a new state "in the stages of reconstruction of society" (Fals Borda, 1990, p. 124). Like his predecessors in the structuralist tradition, Fals's view of power, participation, and the state are based on the assumption that the political reconstruction of Latin American societies can be determined by domestic forces operating within the boundaries of national territories. These territories are viewed as political spaces capable of sustaining and containing the formation of national political institutions. In turn, these institutions are viewed as political expressions of the people living within sovereign national territories.

In summary, the conceptual common denominator that links different versions of the structuralist approach includes a rejection of the argument that Western-like patterns of state-society relations can be replicated in Latin American and Caribbean countries because of their economic dependency; and, the assumption that the condition of dependency and its political consequences can be overcome through people's mobilization, empowerment, and the "nationalization" of the state.

Political Development and Liberation: A Comparative Assessment

Political development represents an approach to political participation that assumes the possibility of replicating European patterns of state-society relations in developing countries. The structuralist approach criticized that assumption and argued that democratic state-society relations can not be established in the Third World without first altering the structure of international relations that conditions the political and economic development of dependent political societies. Dependency, according to the

structuralist approach, could be overcome through people's mobilization and empowerment.

Structuralists' support to the notion of participation as empowerment and liberation was incompatible with their analysis of the international economic conditions of the countries of the region. Liberation and empowerment are based on the assumption that popular participation can achieve a radical redistribution of state power and overcome the dependent condition of Third World countries. However, according to dependency theory, the power of dependent states does not reside within national territories but it is based on its linkages with the Centre; consequently, state power in dependent political societies is not always susceptible to domestic social, and political pressures.

Modernization and structuralist perspectives differ in terms of the scope, form, and final objective of political participation. However, they both assume the existence of, or the possibility of building, state power within the national territories developing countries. Thus, they regard the national territories of Latin America and the Caribbean as political spaces capable of containing the causes and accumulated consequences of their internal political dynamic. Both the modernization and the structuralist approaches ignore the fact that the relations between time and space, that created conditions for the emergence and development of the state and society in Latin America and the Caribbean, are fundamentally different from those that conditioned the evolution of state and society in Europe. The legal principle of sovereignty that was formally attached to the Latin American and Caribbean states by international law in the 19th and 20th centuries, lacks the historical, social, and political significance that it had for the European states. Latin American and Caribbean states are not capable of containing the causes and accumulated consequences of their political evolution. They are not able to create and institutionalize political power according to their internal processes of political competitions.

Rapid economic international integration and interdependence and the configuration of an oligopolistic world-economy over the last two decades (Panic, 1988, p. 283) have had different effects on the modernization and structuralist views of political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean. The current transformation of the political and economic world structures are seen by many proponents of modernization as confirmation of their main theoretical assumptions. Thus, descriptive accounts of "transitions to democracy" have replaced the most serious, skeptical, and sophisticated analyses of the nature of politics and the state in Latin America articulated by the initiators of democratization theory.⁸ At the same time, these changes have produced a re-conceptualization of the structuralist approach. For neo-structuralists, the globalization of the world economy has accentuated the dependent and transnational nature of the Latin American state (see

⁸ Compare, for example, O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead, 1986 with Booth and Seligson, 1989.

Cardoso, 1991; Tomassini, 1991; Hettne, 1990, pp. 26-28). This is expressed, according to them, in the Latin American state's increasing economic dependency and in its decreasing capacity to regulate the national economy (Faletto, 1989, p. 71). The declining economic power of the Latin American state "affects the foundations of political systems, their autonomy and sovereignty" (Faletto, 1989, p. 71). With globalization, neo-structuralists argue, the classic relationship between state and civil society disappears. The state, the market, and civil society are intertwined and intimately connected with an international political and economic structure that shapes them (Tomassini, 1991, p. 44). In this context, the Latin American state can no longer be conceptualized as "a synthesis of civil society" (Lechner, 1991, p. 58).

Globalization represents for neo-structuralists, the radicalization of dependency in Latin America. The dependent state of the 1960's was constrained in its economic options, but retained some political capacity to respond to domestic political processes and demands. This capacity was facilitated by the Cold War and the political space created by the tensions and contradictions between the United States and the Soviet Union. The internationalized state of the nineties, on the other hand, is overdetermined both economically and politically by external influences. In these circumstances, "the effectiveness -- and at times the very existence -- of a regime depends more on external than on internal constituencies" (Nef and Bensabat, 1992, p. 162). Enzo Faletto explains:

In contemporary capitalist societies, the economic sphere is undoubtedly shaped by the world market, and, in that context the dependent countries are "subordinate." They generally have relatively little power to take certain basic economic decisions, especially those concerning the production and marketing of goods. On the other hand, the "political sphere" still has the nation-State as its principal referent. This does not mean that "international politics" does not exist, but rather that it is carried out as a function of the nation-state. The result is that while the economic logic, purposes, objectives and orientations of the world market can in some cases agree with [the] political logic [of the Latin American State], it can also frequently oppose it" (Faletto, 1989, p. 71).

The potential contradiction identified by Faletto is viewed by neo-structuralists as a central source of tensions in the current processes of economic and political development in the region. These processes involve the parallel institutionalization of democracy as a political systems that is inclusive and neo-liberalism as an economic system that is exclusive (Calderon and Dos Santos, 1991, pp. 19-20). The rationality behind both processes is not national, but is international.

The neo-structuralist position does not offer explicit alternatives for political participation in Latin America. However, it offers the possibility to unthink the

traditional understanding of politics and the state that have guided the political development and the liberation approaches (see Faletto, 1989, p. 81).

Globalization and the transnationalization of Latin American and Caribbean economies have further reduced state power in the region, rendering conventional understandings of political participation obsolete. Conceptualized as the struggle for the redistribution of state power, political participation makes sense only when state power resides within national territories, capable of containing the causes and accumulated consequences of their internal political processes. In the absence of such nationally contained state power, participation loses its focus and its objective.

II. THE PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC POLICY EXPERIMENTAL ACTIVITY OF IDRC

The review of the evolution of the concept of political participation presented in chapter I of this report provided the intellectual context that conditioned the formulation of the Participation and Public Policy experimental activity (PPP) of the Social Sciences Division of the IDRC. The IDRC did not support research in the field of political studies until the establishment of the PPP in March of 1987. This is not to say that the IDRC was not aware of the political implications and consequences of social sciences research; however, politics was treated by the Centre as an implicit variable affecting research and social development. The establishment of the PPP represented a significant change in the Centre's treatment of political phenomena and expressed an emerging willingness to promote the study of politics in an explicit and systematic way.

The Centre's decision to support political research was facilitated by the emergence of parallel processes of demilitarization and democratization which took place in several Latin American countries during the 1980's. These changes necessitated an investigation of the role and the functions of political institutions, actors, and processes within the framework of transitions to democracy. Moreover, demilitarization and democratization made it feasible, and relatively safe, to support research in the sensitive area of Latin American politics.

In 1983, the Centre supported a small research project whose objective was "to examine the structure and performance of the two houses of parliament in Peru in order to propose ways in which their effectiveness can be increased in the policy making process" (IDRC, 1983, p.4). The project leader was Luis Bustamante Belaunde, the research and planning director of the Universidad del Pacifico in Lima, Peru. He would later become one of Mario Vargas Llosa's principal advisors during the last presidential campaign in Peru.

Anthony D. Tillett, the Associate Director of the Science and Technology Policy Program of the Social Sciences Division was the IDRC officer responsible for developing the project proposed by Bustamante. The project faced considerable

resistance within the IDRC because it was considered to lie outside the scope of the Social Sciences Division.

Bustamante visited Ottawa in September of 1983 to discuss the project. On this occasion, Tillett arranged a meeting between Bustamante and Robert Miller, a senior researcher from the Parliamentary Centre for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. They discussed the possibility of collaboration between the Parliamentary Centre and the Universidad del Pacifico in the area of parliamentary studies.

Bustamante's project was finally approved due to Tillett's insistence that the study of political institutions was vital to understanding the obstacles and opportunities for democracy in Latin America. Furthermore, in May 1984 the Centre invited Miller to visit Peru and Argentina for the purpose of reviewing the progress of Bustamante's project and further exploring cooperation between Canadian and Latin American organizations engaged in the study of parliamentary institutions.

The results of Miller's visit to Latin America were contained in the report, *Canada and Democratic Development*. The main conclusions of this consultancy were the following:

- Political development is a vital, though often neglected, part of development.
- Legislative development is an important, though often neglected part of political development.
- There is a strong case for international cooperation in political development, provided programs are clearly defined and carefully circumscribed....
- There is strong support in Canada for cooperation in political development, provided it is based on the philosophy of sharing...(Miller, 1985, p. 69).

On the basis of these conclusions, the report recommended the following:

- a) to invite projects in legislative development for consideration by the IDRC;
- b) to strengthen the Canadian cooperative base for collaboration in democratic development which was to include, not only academic institutions but also the Canadian Parliament; and
- c) to build a Canadian political development network (Miller, 1985, pp. 68-72).

According to the report,

The interest of the proposed network would be far broader than legislative development and far more diverse than research alone, but the network can serve as a constituency and sounding board for IDRC programs in legislative development. It can also serve to develop a consensus on such questions as CIDA funding of programs of cooperation in political development (Miller, 1985, p. 72).

The specific operational proposal for continuing the exploration initiated by Miller's visit to Latin America was to organize a conference on "Canada and Democratic Development". The main purpose of this conference was to bring together a small group of key people from the federal government, universities, media, business, and labour for the purpose of promoting the establishment of a Canadian program of cooperation in democratic development (Miller, 1985, p. 72).

The Centre and Miller discussed the feasibility and desirability of this conference from July 1985 to July 1986 when the discussion came to a standstill. For political and administrative reasons, the IDRC was reluctant to endorse the proposed initiative. Politically, the Centre opposed the idea of democratic development as a process designed to promote and facilitate the transferring of political experience from Canada to Latin America. The report *Canada and Democratic Development* did not endorse the export of Canadian political experience and institutions. However, it did not successfully dispel the IDRC's concerns that, in the final analysis, democratic development meant replication in Latin America of the political processes and institutions that exist to organize the political life of developed liberal-democratic societies. Further, the report *Canada and Democratic Development* did not make explicit the operational connection between the promotion of democratic development and the official mandate of the Centre, thus leaving some doubts as to the appropriateness of the IDRC's involvement in this area. Nevertheless, Miller's thinking, greatly influenced the IDRC's decision to set up the Participation and Public Policy experimental activity.

A new internal round of discussion started in September of 1986 in hopes to find a feasible way of establishing a research experimental activity that would deal with political issues and institutions in Latin America. The main participants in these discussions were Jim Mullin, Vice-President, Steve Rossell, Special Advisor to the President, and Andres Perez, officer with the Social Sciences Division. These discussions focused on identifying relevant themes in the field of political studies that could constitute the basis for an experimental research activity within the Centre. It was also necessary to ensure that the design of the new activity would account for the mandate and mission of the IDRC. In summary, the challenge was to establish a research activity that a) responded to real research needs in the field of politics, b) had

a theoretically sound foundation, and, c) responded to the mandate and mission of the Centre.

For almost three months, Centre staff worked to design the new research activity. After many discussions and consultations, a proposal was made to and accepted by the IDRC's authorities. The following is the complete text of this proposal.

Introduction

During the last two years the Centre has critically reviewed its own experience to further develop its capacity to contribute to the social and economic advancement of developing countries. During this process of reflection, the Centre has consistently expressed concern in regard to the impact of the research activities it supports on the problems of the most disadvantaged social groups of developing countries. In the Program and Policy Review VIII (1987/88-1990/91), for example, it is stated that:

The Board's desire for increased emphasis on implementation of research results is shared by Centre management. Greater efforts should be made to ensure that promising technologies or approaches resulting from Centre-supported work are followed through to introduction and implementation.

Since public policies are key mechanisms for the implementation of research results, the Centre considered that the discussions of research impact should include an analysis of the nature of the process of public policy formulation and implementation in developing countries.

Most well-informed experts in the field of policy studies recognize that the public policies are not only the results of technical choices among alternatives but also the outcome of the interaction of different bureaucratic and political groups with different interests and political power. Some experts even argue that it is the process of implementation of public policies and not the process of policy formulation that constitutes the most important focus of political and bureaucratic competition in developing countries.

Rationale

a) The capacity and willingness of public institutions to formulate and implement public policies is limited by political and bureaucratic factors. Consequently, research projects that attempt to have a maximum early impact should realistically ascertain the political, organizational and administrative environment in which their recommendations pertain.

b) The capacity or willingness of social institutions to formulate and implement policies that address the problems of the most disadvantaged social groups of developing countries largely depends on the capacity of these groups to influence the processes of formulation and implementation of public policies. The influence of these groups is made effective through a variety of mechanisms of political representation such as social parties, unions, interest groups, etc.

Objectives

The objectives of our program are to support research projects that:

- a) analyze the political and administrative factors that condition the processes of formulation and implementation of specific public policies;
- b) identify political and administrative strategies which maximize the opportunities for research results to have an impact on the process of formulation and implementation of public policies with the objective of improving the distribution of social resources; and,
- c) explore the possibilities to facilitate the participation of the most disadvantaged sectors of developing countries in the processes of formulation and implementation of public policies.

Operational Strategy

Research Areas

The operational strategy for the experimental phase of the program does not establish specific areas of concentration. It is expected that at the end of the experimental phase, the Division will be able to define and specify certain areas of concentration based on the experience gained during the experimental period of the program. Bearing this in mind, initial exploration of research in the field of participation, representation and public policies will commence along two general areas.

a) Political Analysis of Processes of Formulation and Implementation of Public Policies

In collaboration with other parts of the Centre, the program will develop research projects that attempt to analyze the role of different political and

bureaucratic actors in the processes of formulation and implementation of specific public policies at the national, regional and social levels. The general objectives of these projects will be to formulate feasible alternative public policies to improve the distribution of social resources.

b) Political Actors and Institutions

Within this area, the program will concentrate on the analysis of the function, structures and evolution of key actors and institutions involved in the formulation and implementation of public policies. The understanding of the nature of these actors within various levels of government, is essential to understand their role in the process of formulation and implementation of public policies. Examples of these key actors are: the state apparatus, political parties, and unions and associations.

Levels of Analysis

During its experimental phase, the program will develop projects that analyze the linkages between political participation/representation and public policies at various levels of government.

For example, at the micro level, the program could support the analysis of grass-roots organizations in the formulation and/or the implementation of specific public policies by local governments, or the analysis of NGO's as mechanisms of aggregation of popular demands. At the macro level, the program could support the analysis of formal political institutions such as unions and parties in the formulation of national policies or the analysis of the structure, functions and evolution of party systems.

Inter-Regional Cooperation

There is growing interest in the Third World on the study of the linkages between political participation, political representation and public policies. An institution like IDRC can effectively facilitate the production of knowledge in this area by promoting the exchange of ideas and information among researchers from Asia, Africa and Latin America. For this reason, the program will actively promote the establishment of channels of communication among the researchers supported by the Centre (IDRC, 1986).

The above proposal had three advantages. First, the rationale, objectives and operational strategy for the proposed program responded to the mandate and mission of the IDRC. Second, its objectives reflected an existing concern of the Centre's Board of Governors for increased emphasis on the implementation of research results (IDRC, 1986). Third, the proposal identified a feasible, legitimate and relevant research area. Most importantly, it did not advocate any single notion of democracy, nor did it imply the possibility to transfer the democratic experience of Canada to developing countries.

After the opening of the PPP, Centre staff engaged in a series of discussions for the purpose of developing support for the Division's new experimental program and for gathering ideas for its implementation. As a result of these discussions, it was decided that the experimental program was to develop three types of operations: project development activities; a world-wide review of research issues and priorities in Asia, Africa, and Latin America; and, the identification and establishment of links with other programs of the Division of the IDRC. This report concentrates its attention on the project development activities carried out by the PPP from 1987 to 1991 in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The PPP was designed within the theoretical frameworks for the study of political participation and the state predominant during the 1980's. In this decade, the modernization approach to participation advocated both a public policy orientation towards the study of participation and politics in developing countries and the study of national processes of transition to democracy. At the same time, the structuralist approach was emphasizing the study of the state, political institutions, and class conflict in reaction to the absence of explicit analysis of the internal political dimension of the state in dependency theory.

Elements of both the modernization and the structuralist approaches shaped the formulation of the PPP. The program's rationale combined the public policy research orientation of modernization, an interest in facilitating the consolidation of democratic institutions, and, the social emphasis of the structuralist approach. The last focused on facilitating the participation of the popular classes in defining the power structures that affected their lives. This eclectic approach would not have satisfied intellectuals of rigid structuralist or modernization persuasions; however, development organizations function within a framework of possibilities and limitations that is different from that of individual researchers and academics. These organizations are constrained by both the need to respect their official mandate and objectives and the needs of their clientele. An eclectic approach to participation was advantageous for the IDRC because it made possible the articulation of the Participation and Public Policy experimental program within the mandate and objectives of the Centre, while preserving the flexibility to include the diverse theoretical orientations of the research community which the IDRC serves in developing countries. Moreover, the IDRC's experimental program did not have as its ultimate goal the promotion of any particular

type of institutional political arrangement or system. Rather, the program's underlying assumption was that definition of political institutions and processes in developing countries is the sole right and responsibility of the people of those countries. For this reason, research projects that explored political participation in policy-making and policy-implementation were supported in countries which represented a wide range of political systems. These included countries that had recently moved from military to democratically elected regimes (Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil), a country that was undergoing institutionalization of a socialist-oriented revolution (Nicaragua), a country with a long tradition of liberal-democratic practices and institutions (Costa Rica), a socialist country with a political system based on the principle of democratic centralism (Cuba), and finally, the largest functional democracy in the world (India). Researchers in these projects, were free to select the intellectual foundation and orientation of their projects, the level of analysis (national policies or local policies), and the policy area that they wanted to study. Researchers from Argentina and Brazil analyzed the role of corporations in the formulation of national policies. Those from Chile, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Jamaica concentrated their attention on the study of participation at the community level. Analysts from Uruguay studied the phenomenon of participation at the level of the city of Montevideo.⁹

The eclectic nature of the PPP was also an advantage for the development of the program itself. The PPP needed to have the flexibility to explore the variety of social, political, and economic situations within which the phenomenon of political participation takes place, as well as the different intellectual perspectives from which this phenomenon is studied. This exploration and the lessons derived from it was to constitute the foundation from which the IDRC would decide on the future of the PPP at the end of its experimental phase.

⁹ Given the social, political and economic importance of Montevideo in Uruguayan politics, we consider that this case represents the study of participation at a middle level of analysis.

III. THE PROJECTS

The research projects supported by the Participation and Public Policy experimental activity combined theoretical richness with political realism. They were not simply designed as theoretical explorations with no concern for practical politics, nor were they developed as technocratic exercises with no regard for understanding of the many tensions and contradictions that plague Latin American and Caribbean politics.

The projects' practical dimension was reflected in the policy approach that most of them followed. This approach allowed researchers to deal with participation as a political problem that affects concrete relations between state and society. This policy approach also explains why the results of several projects influenced policy debates in the countries where they were carried out. The theoretical dimension of these projects is reflected in the analysis of the possibilities for, and limitations on participation in Latin America and the Caribbean contained in their final reports and expressed in personal interviews which I conducted with the researchers in preparing for this report.

The following analytical summaries of the projects' findings and conclusions are based on the final reports submitted by the researchers to the IDRC. Occasionally, they are complemented with relevant background information taken from the general literature. The reader is reminded that the summaries of the PPP projects center around their contributions to assessing the formal rationale of the Participation and Public Policy experimental activity, and do not attempt to synthesize all the issues and problems covered by the researchers.

Representative Institutions and Public Policy in Brazil

The military revolt that overthrew the government of Joao Goulart on March 31, 1964 initiated in Brazil the institutionalization of a "bureaucratic-authoritarian" system of political domination. Emergence of bureaucratic-authoritarianism derives, according to Guillermo O'Donnell, from "the social and political tensions produced by

industrialization and by changes in social structures at both the elite and mass level" (Collier, 1979, p. 25). More specifically, bureaucratic-authoritarianism results from a) the *profundizacao* or "deepening" of capitalism; b) increasing political mobilization of the popular sectors; and, c) the increasing technocratic orientation of both the public and the private sectors of society (Collier, 1979, pp. 25-30). The main characteristics of the bureaucratic-authoritarian state, according to O'Donnell, include the following:

- a) higher governmental positions usually are occupied by persons who come to them after successful careers in complex and highly bureaucratized organizations -- the armed forces, the public bureaucracy, and large private firms;
- b) political exclusion, in that it aims at closing channels of political access to the popular sector and its allies so as to deactivate them politically, not only by means of repression but also through the imposition of vertical (corporatist) controls by the state on such organizations as labor unions;
- c) economic exclusion, in that it reduces or postpones indefinitely the aspiration to economic participation of the popular sector;
- d) depolitization, in the sense that it pretends to reduce social and political issues to "technical" problems to be resolved by means of interactions among the higher echelons of the above mentioned organizations; and
- e) it corresponds to a stage of important transformations in the mechanisms of capital accumulation of its society, changes that are, in turn, a part of the "deepening" process of peripheral and dependent capitalism characterized by extensive industrialization (O'Donnell, 1978, p. 6).

In the mid-1970's, following a resurgence of popular activism, the military initiated a process of liberalizing the political regime. This involved a carefully controlled transition from the bureaucratic-authoritarian structure of political domination established by the military after 1964, to the re-establishment of direct presidential elections in 1989.

The Brazilian research project explored the limitations on, and the possibilities for the institutionalization of democracy in Brazil after the re-establishment of democratic elections. The project was based on the premise that "the installation of a democratically-elected government opens the way for a 'second transition'". That, is, a transition "from a democratically-elected *government* to a democratic *regime*" (O'Donnell, 1990, p. 1). The possibility for a "second transition", according to the researchers, depends on the country's capacity to build "a set of democratic

institutions which become important decisional points in the flow of political power" (O'Donnell, 1990, p. 1). The development of this capacity is presently constrained by various inherited social, economic and cultural structural conditions and, by governmental policies and political strategies promoted by agents that are not willing to work in the promotion of democratic institutions (O'Donnell, 1990, pp. 1-2).

The first transition generated, according to the researchers, a "delegable democracy". This is a form of democracy that allows governments a considerable degree of autonomy vis-a-vis domestic political pressures and demands. According to O'Donnell, "delegable democracy" entails "the advantage of swift (and, often, surprising and spectacular) policy making, but at the expense of a high likelihood of gross mistakes, of hazardous implementation, and of concentrating responsibility for the outcomes on the President" (O'Donnell, 1990, p. 13).

The institutionalization of a democratic regime that transcends the practice of "delegable democracy" in Brazil requires a drastic transformation of the policy making process at all levels of government. At the present, this process is based on clientelistic relations between sectors of the state and political groups, as well as individuals that represent private interests (see Faria and Filho, 1990). This pattern of relations between state and society promotes the fragmentation of the state and of the Brazilian structure of political representation.

Political parties are internally divided by their leaders' clientelistic relationships with segments of society and with sectors of the state (Faria and Filho, 1990, p. 31). This fragmentation prevents political parties from formulating general visions of the Brazilian society. At the same time, unions operate under a short-term perspective and demand concrete and immediate economic benefits for their members. Their leaders practice a *sindicalismo de resultados* and claim to be apolitical (see Moreira Cardoso, 1990, p. 5). The *modus operandi* of political parties and the pursuit of short-term economic goals by unions reinforce rather than counterbalance the system of delegable democracy that prevails in the country.

The fragmentation of the structure of political representation in Brazil constitutes a major obstacle in the transition from an democratically-elected government to a democratic regime. Fragmentation promotes an exclusionist process of elite-agreement and prevents the consolidation of institutions of representation capable of aggregating the demands of the popular sectors of society. The exclusion of the masses from the policy making process that affects their lives represents a contradiction with regard to their formal incorporation in the electoral process -- the most important characteristic of the "first transition" that O'Donnell has previously identified (see Faria and Filho, 1990, p. 5). Electoral participation without an effective party structure capable of facilitating people's participation in the country's policy-making process perpetuates a system of "delegable democracy" and has had the effect of "freezing" the Brazilian democratization process.

Representative Institutions and Public Policy in Argentina

The Argentinean project analyzed the phenomenon of participation and public policy at the national level. Its main objective was to understand the role of economic corporations in the formulation and implementation of public policy in Argentina during the government of Raul Alfonsin between 1983 and 1989.

At a theoretical level, the project explored the relationship between the *Regimen Social de Acumulacion*, or Social Regime of Accumulation (SRA), and the *Regimen Politico de Gobierno*, or Political Regime of Government (PRG). The Social Regime of Accumulation was defined as "a construction that refers to the complex and changing structure of institutions and practices that have a direct impact on the process of capital accumulation" (Nun, 1990, p. 6). The Political Regime of Government refers to "the institutions, processes, and practices that are conventionally called 'political' such as public administration, parties, elections etc..." (Nun, 1990, p. 8).

The study of the relationship between the Social Regime of Accumulation and the Political Regime of Government was focused on the examination of the relationship between economic corporations and the state in the period 1983-89. This relationship is seen by the researchers as "one of the central forms of articulations between the PRG and the SRA (Nun, 1990, p. 2). The researchers' central argument was that the democratization of Argentina requires the transformation of both the Political Regime of Government that was inherited by the elected government of Raul Alfonsin in 1983, and the Social Regime of Accumulation that has operated in the country since its emergence in the 1930's. Furthermore, it requires the democratic re-articulation between the two.

Prior to 1983, Argentina had developed a Political Regime of Government that left little room for mechanisms of political participation and political representation to develop and function, and allowed corporations to negotiate about defining the government's public policy agenda directly with the state. The process of transition to democracy, that was formally inaugurated in 1983, had the potential capacity to open a range of possibilities for the democratic re-articulation of the relationship between the PRG and the SRA. However, Alfonsin's attempt to democratize this relationship was hampered by both the weakness of the Argentinean state and the fragmented nature of the corporatist structure of representation in the country. Although the Argentinean state permeates the entire social structure of the country, it is unable to formulate and implement policies in a relatively independent manner. It is "central" to the life of the Argentinean society, but not "strong" because it is "colonized" by corporations (Nun, 1990, pp. 11-12). This condition fragments the state's actions and limits its capacity to formulate and implement public policies in response to social demands formulated outside the corporatist structure of representation. Those policies dealing with fundamental issues such as land tenure,

resource allocation, and income and surplus distribution were systematically blocked by the corporations and could not be implemented by the Alfonsin government. Only those policies that were considered neutral and that did not significantly affect the power structure of the country were implemented. An example of a neutral policy is the one formulated by the Alfonsin government to restructure the Instituto Nacional de Tecnologia Agropecuaria (Lattuada, 1991, p. 168).

Thus, the "colonization" of the state by corporations, and the consequent fragmentation of its power rendered the Alfonsin government unable to redefine and democratize the relationship between the Political Regime of Government and the Social Regime of Accumulation. The weakness of the Argentinean state was further accentuated by the crisis in the public finances of the country and expressed in its low administrative capacity.

The fragmentation of the structure of representation of corporate interests was another impediment for the democratic re-synchronization of the relationship between the Social Regime of Accumulation and the Political Regime of Government. The researchers highlight this fragmentation in their study of the corporatist structure of representation in the Argentinian economy's agricultural and industrial sectors.

The structure of representation of corporate interests in the agricultural sector of Argentina is divided into four main entities: the *Sociedad Rural Argentina* (SRA), the *Federacion Agraria Argentina* (FAA), the *Confederaciones Rurales Argentinas* (CRA), and the *Confederacion Intercooperativa Agropecuaria* (CONINAGRO) (Lattuada, 1990, p. 17). These organizations differ among themselves in terms of their constituencies, levels of organization and ideological orientation (Nun, 1990, p. 17).

The corporatist structure of representation includes national organizations such as the *Union Industrial Argentina* (UIA), the *Consejo Argentino de la Industria* (CAI), and the *Confederacion General de la Industria* (CGI); chambers and associations organized by product, industrial branch and region; associations of big enterprises; and, multisectorial fronts (Lattuada, 1990, pp. 3-13).

The weakness of the Argentinean state, combined with the fragmentation of the structure of representation of corporate interests in the private sector, renders difficult the formulation of either "meso-corporatist" or "macro-corporatist" pacts that can open the door for the democratic re-synchronization of the relationship between the Social Regime of Accumulation and the Political Regime of Government (Nun, 1990, p. 21). This is illustrated by four case studies of government attempts to achieve corporatist pacts. These include: the *Programa Nacional Agropecuario* (PRONAGRO), the *Comision de Concertacion de Politica Lechera* (COCOPOLE)/ the *Fondo de Promocion de la Actividad Lechera* (FOPAL), the pharmaceutical industry, and the micro-electronic industry.

The project also studied the possibility of building corporatist pacts at the regional level in the study of social concertation in the provinces of Cordoba and Rio Negro. The problem of the fragmentation of the state and of the corporatist structure

of representation identified by the researchers at the national level reemerged in these regional studies. However, the researchers argue that the formulation of meso-corporatist pacts is an avenue that requires more exploration.

The conclusions of the study are not very optimistic: the Alfonsín government's failure to democratize the relations between the Social Regime of Accumulation and the Political Regime of Government in Argentina, "confirmed the existence of corporatist citadels that are immune to the vote of the popular majority" (Nun, 1990, p. 16). The researchers argue that the Alfonsín government should have strengthened the capacity of those state agencies central to the concertation efforts to penetrate these citadels and to democratize the relationship between the PRG and the SRA. The state should also have mobilized political support from inside and outside the corporations to support the government initiatives (Nun, 1991, p. 16). Jose Nun explains:

The point was to define the game and to initiate it while reserving the right to admit into the game only those participants that were willing to obey the rules. Rather than doing this, the government opened a discussion about the game itself....(Nun, 1991, p. 10).

Behind this conclusion, lies the assumption that what the Alfonsín government could and should have done was to enhance the power and the independence of the state. This assumption is in accordance with the view presented by Alfonsín himself in his inaugural speech. According to Alfonsín, "*el protagonismo popular*" is a fundamental condition to achieve the independence of the state: "Where else, if not from the leading role of the people, could the state derive its independence?.." (Alfonsín, 1983).

Participation and Public Policy in Chile

The Chilean project had two components. The first involved an assessment of the formulation and implementation of public policies and programs oriented towards the eradication of extreme poverty in Chile during the military regime of Augusto Pinochet from 1973 to 1990. The second component explored the nature of popular participation in the formulation and the implementation of these policies and programs.

The first component of the project analyzed 10 of the 15 most important government programs for the elimination of extreme poverty in Chile. It evaluated the mechanisms of implementation used in the delivery of these programs and assessed the impact they had on the population. The programs examined by the project include the following: *Programa de Alimentación Escolar* (PAE), *Programa Nacional de Alimentación Complementaria* (PNAC), *Subsidio Unico Familiar* (SUF), *Pensiones*

Asistenciales (PASIS), Programas de Atencion Preescolar de la Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles (JUNJI), Educacion Pre Basica (Ministry of Education), Centros Abiertos (C.A.), Subsidio de Marginalidad Habitacional (SMH), Lotes con Infraestructura Sanitaria, and Atencion de Salud Gratuita a Indigentes y Personas de Escasos Recursos.

During the period under study, Chile's policy-making and policy-implementation processes functioned in accordance with the economic and sociopolitical principles of the "historical project" promoted by the Augusto Pinochet government after the military coup that put an end to the socialist government of Salvador Allende. From an economic perspective, this project "implied reorienting production toward primary sectors and natural resource exports, drastically reducing the state's economic role as regulator and manager, and granting a preponderant role to the private sector" (Garreton, 1989, p. 25). From a sociopolitical point of view, Pinochet's project:

involved reversing the democratization process and replacing state control of opportunities with new patterns of distributing and concentrating them through the market. The effect was to enshrine a conception of society and a market in which stratification and segmentation appear to be a natural order, the principle of organized collective action is systematically rejected as leading to "politicization" and the state loses its identity as the focal point for social demands. Market principles would be enthroned in various social spheres, the regulative and redistributive role of the state would be reduced (although a vertical, authoritarian system of decision making would be maintained), and social demands would be fragmented and segmented in order to keep them from spreading (Garreton, 1989, pp. 125-126).

Poverty was perceived by the Pinochet government not as a structural phenomenon, but as a market distortion that could be corrected by selective policies designed to restore the people's capacity to participate in the market (Vergara, 1990, p. 36). In this context, the state plays a "subsidiary" role "assuming only those responsibilities that individuals and intermediate organizations can not adequately fulfill" (Vergara, 1990, p. 37). The subsidiary role of the state was, according to the philosophy of the Pinochet government, compatible with the principle of liberty and equality of opportunities. Liberty was viewed as "the capacity of the individual to choose in the market the goods and services he or she requires", while the principle of equality of opportunity referred to the absence of discrimination within the market (Vergara, 1990, p. 39).

According to the government's philosophy, the main objective of social policy was the "eradication of extreme poverty" (Vergara, 1990, p. 21). The achievement of this objective required the formulation and implementation of "selective policies"

specifically designed to cover the basic needs of the poorest of the poor. Selectivity, in the implementation and formulation of social policy was viewed as necessary to avoid spill over effects on the other sectors of society who should be able to pay for the services that they receive.

Municipal governments were given the responsibility to identify "the extreme poor" and to administer the programs designed for their assistance. Subsidies to be provided to the target population were to be direct, progressive, and integral (Vergara, 1990, p. 51). That is, they were to be given directly to the persons that qualified for the subsidy and be calculated according to the magnitude of the need of the beneficiary. Finally, the subsidies were to cover all of the interrelated needs that created the condition of extreme poverty (Vergara, 1990, p. 52).

Identification of the target population was based on the stratification of the poorer classes of the country, in accordance with the information collected through the *Ficha de Estratificación Social* or *Ficha CAS*. The researchers estimate that the number of potential beneficiaries of the subsidies represent approximately 776.000 homes or almost 3.900.000 people (Vergara, 1990, p. 64).

The project studied the programs previously listed and identified failures, limitations, successes and opportunities in regard to their scope and selectivity. It reviewed mechanisms for identification of beneficiaries and allocation of subsidies, the selection of goods and services distributed, the role of the market in the provision of these services, the social consequences of the programs, and the administrative capacity of the state.

Some forms of popular participation were allowed, and even promoted, by the government, to facilitate the success of these programs. As reviewed by the researchers, the type of popular participation tolerated in the formulation and implementation of government programs for the eradication of extreme poverty in Chile was not designed to challenge or threaten the foundations of the regime or the rules that regulated political competition and policy making. From this perspective, it is valid to say that this participation was not political. The Pinochet government itself distinguished between "social participation" and "political participation" (Pozo, 1989, p. 107). The concept of "social participation" refers basically to the mobilization of people in support of government policies. This mobilization is not intended to change, or even to question, "the rules of the game", but only to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the state. Examples of this type of participation are provided by Hernan Pozo in his analysis of the implementation of four programs: self-construction in some communities of Talagante; the Centre for Mental Health in the community of La Granja; Educational and Nutritional Community Centres in the community of La Florida; and the Health Centre of the O'Higgins Villa in La Florida. Participation within the context of these four cases had a functional and instrumental orientation, rather than a political one. Furthermore, the type of participation allowed and promoted by the Pinochet government was based on a depoliticized structure of community

organization. The depoliticization of this structure began in 1973 and found legal expression in the state law on "community, territorial, and functional organizations" that replaced the *Ley de Juntas de Vecinos* promulgated in 1968 (Pozo, 1990a, p. 1). Pozo indicates how, in the old law, the *Juntas de Vecinos* were defined as "the expression of solidarity and organization of the people within a territorial context.." (Pozo, 1990a, p. 3). In the new law, territorial organizations are those "that have as an objective the promotion of the development of the community and the interest of their members..." (Pozo, 1990a, p. 3). In this context, development does not include a political dimension.

The depoliticization of participation, and of community organization in Chile was reenforced by the depoliticization of the process of administrative decentralization promoted by the Pinochet regime. Decentralization is generally perceived as a mechanism conducive to the achievement of democracy and efficiency. Within the context of the neo-liberal and authoritarian structures and practices promoted by the Pinochet government, however, decentralization was used to achieve efficiency without democracy. Decentralization, in this context, had two results: it reproduced and enforced inequalities by creating rich and poor municipalities and by eliminating the capacity of the central state to compensate or reduce imbalances, and it reproduced the structure of authoritarian domination at the local level (Pozo, 1990b, pp. 33-34).

The depoliticization of participation and community organizations are components of the larger transformation of Chilean society promoted by the Pinochet government from 1973 to 1990. This process represented an attempt to eliminate the autonomous spaces of civil society by expanding the roles of the state and the market.

Any attempt to re-politicize community participation in Chile, according to the researchers, involves an effort to create free spaces for public association that are not functionally dependent on either the state or the market. This, in turn, requires a reexamination of the role and scope of the market and of the state in the Chilean society. Otherwise, democracy and participation in Chile will remain frozen within the economic model inherited from the military regime and protected by the existing constitution (see Galleguillos and Nef, 1992).

Participation and Public Policy in Uruguay

The Uruguayan project explored the possibilities for, and limitations on political participation in the formulation of public policies at the level of the city of Montevideo during the period 1988-1990.

Uruguay developed as an "urban country" where more than 70 percent of the population lives today in the capital city of Montevideo (Rial and Kłaczkó, 1981). This

configuration of the country gives the Municipality of Montevideo the character of a parallel state. Thus, to study the phenomenon of participation and public policy at the level of the Municipality of Montevideo is to study this phenomenon at a quasi-national level.

An expansive economy based on abundant land and cattle, low levels of population, and British capital provided Uruguay with the opportunity to develop the economic and political power of the state. The concept of state power refers to the capacity of the state to formulate and implement public policies that respond to domestic pressures and demands.

The power of the Uruguayan state was best expressed by the two governments of Jose Batlle y Ordóñez (1903-1907; 1911-1915). Batlle institutionalized the welfare state in Uruguay and initiated a style of government designed not only to respond to domestic social and political demands but also to anticipate them (Panizza, 1990, p. 28). M.H.J. Finch explains:

The phenomenon of *batllismo* was a liberal, humanitarian, middle-class settlement of the political and social tensions which resulted from these processes. Though at times it may have taken a radical form, particularly in protection by the state for the economically and socially weak, the underlying design of batllismo was fundamentally conservative -- it was to expand the functions of the state in order to secure an equilibrium of class forces, while enhancing the role of the political system (Finch, 1981, p. 10).

In Uruguay, social legislation preceded political suffrage (Panizza, 1990, p. 28). Thus, the extension of social rights did not have, as in Europe, a democratizing effect. State power allowed the formation of a ruling class and a welfare state that effectively controlled social and political conflict. In this context, participation emerged as an activity designed to "ask" from the state (Rial, 1990, p. 33). As such, it did not have a political connotation nor did it involve competition among different sectors of society for the articulation of a social contract. This political dynamic engendered in Uruguay a political culture that is "*estatista*" and "beyond political preferences" (Panizza, 1990, p. 29; Rubino, 1991, pp. 69-107).

The economic depression of the 1930's diminished the state capacity to respond to the demands of the population until the economic boom resulting from the high prices of Uruguay's export products during World War II and the Korean War "replenished" this capacity. State power decayed again after 1955, creating favorable conditions for the emergence of the military regimes of the 1970's. The democratic election of Julio María Sanguinetti in 1984 opened the way for the redemocratization of Uruguay. Today, this process confronts a situation of high levels of expectation and low state power.

During the life of the project, the *Intendencia Municipal de Montevideo* (IMM) - the government of the city -- struggled to change the popular view of the state as "the provider" and of political participation as a pragmatic act of demand. For this purpose, it promoted a difficult and sometimes contradictory combination of two models of participation: the "community participation model" and the "efficiency-oriented liberal model" (Panizza, 1990, p. 46). In the first model neighbors participated in *Comisiones de Fomento Barrial* to improve the conditions of life in the *barrios* "beyond ideologies and individual creeds" (Panizza, 1990, p. 48). The IMM created the *Unidad Asesora de Proyectos Especiales* (UAPE) to facilitate the formation of the *Comisiones* and to coordinate government programs designed to support them. UAPE was successful in promoting the creation of more than 700 Comisiones between 1985 and 1989.

The "efficiency-oriented liberal" model also promoted an apolitical form of participation. Municipal problems were seen as administrative problems devoid of ideological and political connotations (Panizza, 1990, p. 54). From this perspective, community participation had the potential to contribute to the solution of these problems as long as it was based on pragmatic attitudes towards community issues. In this model, the subject of participation was not the neighbor but the **tax-payer**, who cooperates with the government in the rationalization of public services and who demands efficiency in the delivery of those services.

The IMM's promotion of the "community participation" and the "efficiency-oriented liberal" models of participation confronted not only the statist political culture of Uruguay, but also the absence of a national vision of the goals towards which participation should be oriented. In Chile, the Pinochet regime promoted a pathological version of the "efficiency-oriented liberal" model of participation in support of a neo-liberal economic project that was explicit and clear. In Nicaragua, the Sandinistas promoted a radical version of the "community participation" model in support of a political and economic project that was expressly socialist. In both cases, the costs of the proposed transformations were fairly evident and so was the distribution of that cost among different sectors of the population. In Uruguay, on the other hand, the social goals of participation are not clear. According to the researchers, this lack of clarity is not accidental. The Uruguayan political elite is reluctant to openly discuss and make explicit the model of society that is pursued or should be pursued by Uruguay in the next century. The tendency for this elite is to promote gradual changes that makes invisible the social cost derived from them (Panizza, 1990, p. 55). The researchers propose a "medium range strategy" that avoids both global redefinitions of the state-society relations of the country and the political inertia produced by the excessive form of gradualism promoted by the IMM.

Participation and Public Policy in Costa Rica

The Costa Rican project explored the limitations of, and possibilities for participation and popular democracy in Costa Rica. Specifically, it analyzed the emergence and evolution of the housing committees, and their impact on the struggle for housing in the communities of Guarari, Carmen Lyra, Oscar Felipe and El Nazareno.

The housing committees emerged in Costa Rica in the late 1970's as popular political responses to the shortage of affordable housing for low-income families (Lara and Molina, 1991, p. 4). During the early 1980's they developed into effective pressure groups operating in association with traditional political parties under the name of "fronts for housing". The project analyzes the impact and evolution of the following four housing fronts : the *Coordinadora Patriótica Nacional* (COPAN), the *Frente Democrático de la Vivienda* (FDV), the *Frente Costarricense de la Vivienda* (FCV) and the *Asociación Nacional para la Vivienda* (ANAVI). According to the researchers, these housing fronts were successful in pressuring the state to respond to popular demands for housing. However, by the late 1980's, the role and orientation of the housing committees and the housing fronts had been depoliticized. They had been transformed from "pressure groups and sources of conflict into organizations constructing houses in close collaboration with the government" (Lara and Molina, 1991, p. 7).

To understand the phenomenon of participation in Costa Rica, it is necessary to understand the evolution of the pattern of state-society relations that emerged in this country after the civil war of 1948. The winning political force in this conflict had as one of its central objectives the diversification of the productive base of the country to avoid dependency on coffee and to allow new social groups to participate in the economic and political life of the Costa Rican society. As Rovira explains,

the power structure [of Costa Rica] was altered after the civil war of 1948. From that moment the middle bourgeoisie, in close alliance with the urban bourgeoisie, began to occupy a better position in the national power structure. The old fractions of the ruling class --composed of the agro-exporting elements of society that emerged in the 19th century were then forced to make concessions to other social groups during the second half of the present century (Rovira, 1982, p. 177).

The organization of the new social relations emerging from the war of 1948 required a strong state with the capacity to "manage the regime", and respond to contradictory social demands (Rovira, 1982, p. 43). To achieve these objectives the government introduced three fundamental changes in the organization and functioning of the Costa Rican society: the elimination of the army, the nationalization of the banking system, and expansion of the scope of the state. These changes gave the

Costa Rican state the capacity to define the rules of economic competition and to manage political conflict within the boundaries of the established regime (see Molina and Lara 1990, pp. 27-31).

The pattern of state-society relations that Costa Rica developed after 1948 has been significantly reshaped since the early 1980's when the government began to promote the internationalization of the national economy beyond the traditional scope of the Central American region. This decision was to a considerable extent, the result of pressures and recommendations of international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to reduce the scope of the state and to strengthen the capacity of the market to lead the national economy (see Molina and Lara, 1990, pp. 32-34).

The redefinition of the role of the Costa Rican state was reflected in the creation of the *Sistema Financiero Nacional para la Vivienda* (National Financial System for Housing) in 1986. The new organization was created in response to the challenge posed to the government by the housing committees and the housing fronts. It established that the state would only be responsible for the financing of housing facilities for needy families. The beneficiaries of the state financial assistance would absorb the cost of design, planning, and building of the houses (Molina and Lara, 1990, pp. 34-37).

The same year, the newly elected government of Oscar Arias signed a pact with COPAN, FDV, and FCV -- three of the most important housing fronts. According to this pact, the government would begin massive construction of housing for those represented by the fronts. In return, the fronts would depoliticize their activities. Popular participation in the implementation of the housing programs would be oriented toward practical purposes rather than political ones.

In this context, the housing committees and the housing fronts were transformed into instruments of government policy. COPAN for example, began to operate as a "private construction enterprise working directly with the government to develop state housing projects" (Molina and Lara, 1991, p. 7). Participation, then, was transformed into what Denis Goulet has called "a form of 'do-it-yourself' problem solving in small-scale operations" (Goulet, 1989, p. 176). This type of participation is not designed to question or challenge the rules of the game, but simply to survive within those rules. In the final analysis, the housing committees became, according to the researchers, "a strategy for survival" (Lara and Molina, 1991, p. 19).

The redefinition of state's role that took place during the 1980's represented a fundamental change in the organization of social and political life in Costa Rica, and, more specifically, in the nature of state-society relations that developed in this country after 1948. The main function of the Costa Rican state is no longer to "manage the regime", but to support the development of a market oriented economy (see COREC, 1990, pp. 29-31). Participation in this context is increasingly viewed as the

mobilization of people's energy to support the state, and through it, the development of a transnationalized market-regulated economy.

Community Councils and Popular Participation in Jamaica

The Jamaican project studied the experience of community councils in Jamaica during the government of Michael Manley from 1972 to 1980. In this sense the project tried "to recreate a sociopolitical process" (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 2). More specifically, the objective of the project was to find out: how the councils were formed; how they carried out their mandate; what links they established with the community; and, what was their legacy (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 26).

The history of community participation in Jamaica can be traced back to 1937 when the Jamaica Welfare Ltd. was founded to do "anything which would improve the lives of the people (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 15). Central to the work of this organization was the assumption that "progress can only be achieved by a community if the members of the community themselves have the desire for self-improvement and will take steps to do so" (Henry-Wilson et al., p. 15).

Community participation was strongly promoted in the 1970's as part of Manley's socialist project. In 1975 his government announced its intention to promote the formation of community councils to "facilitate popular participation, self-reliance, the provision of local services and the monitoring of the community's development..." (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 14). By 1978, the councils began to play a crucial role in economic development, since the government defined them as "instrument[s] for fashioning and and managing change" (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 20).

The project indicates that the formation of the community councils from 1975 to 1979 did not rigidly follow either a top-down or a bottom-up pattern. That is, the initiative to form a community council originated sometimes in the community and sometimes in the government. Existence of a felt need in the community was the most crucial incentive in the formation of the councils (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 27).

Most former members of community councils interviewed by the researchers stated that the affairs of the councils "were conducted in a democratic manner". By this they meant that,

- i) ordinary members were allowed to raise matters and these were given the same weight as those raised by leaders;
- ii) discussion was allowed on all matters; and

- iii) decisions were taken by vote -- a show of hands (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 33).

The democratic functioning of the councils, however, did not ensure the establishment of an organic relationship with the community. The researchers indicate that the councils generally failed to respond to collective demands and initiatives emerging from the population, especially when they touched complex community problems like the economy. The councils' inability to respond to the population affected their capacity to develop their authority vis-a-vis community members: "As the council seemed increasingly unable to tackle more complex tasks and simultaneously improve the individual welfare of community members (provide a job), the legitimacy of the council began to waver" (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 36).

Furthermore, the organization of community councils did not necessarily translate into a process of community building. This is because, very often, the formation of councils emphasized "the product -- the council -- and not enough... the process -- community building" (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 30). This catalyzed the development of a top-down relationship between the state and the councils in the everyday functioning of the organizations.

According to the researchers, the effectiveness of the community councils was limited by the centralized decision making government structure within which they operated. Empowerment was supposed to take place through decentralised decision making. According to Manley, "this would mean the transferring of decision-making authority to previously wider represented or marginal groups" (Henry-Wilson, et al., 1991, p. 40). However, according to the researchers,

the institutional facilities to give effect to this objective never seemed to have been put in place. There were minimal links between the activities of community councils and the broader goals of political and economic development. The formal and informal rules of economic and social organization in the society were incompatible with the collective endeavors and approaches of the councils (Henry-Wilson et al, 1991, p. 40).

Two important factors -- the perception of a communist threat among voters, and the high social cost of the economic policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund on the Jamaican government after 1977 -- explain the defeat of Manley's People's National Party in the 1980 elections. The Jamaica Labour Party's electoral victory put an end to Jamaica's socialist experiment and returned the country to its traditional model of dependent capitalism (Huber and Stephen, 1986, pp. 249-251; see also Kaufman 1985). The end of the Manley government had a negative effect on the evolution of community councils, many of which simply stopped

functioning. The incumbent government of the Jamaica Labour Party was "at minimum non-supportive, and by other accounts, openly hostile to the concept and activity of community councils" (Henry-Wilson et al., 1991, p. 36).

Participation in Cuba's Local Governments

The Cuban project offered a unique opportunity to study the phenomenon of participation within the context of a socialist regime. The project was designed to evaluate local governments both as mechanisms of popular participation and as structures of government (Dilla and Gonzalez, 1991, p. 7). The evaluation was based on an detailed study of the organization and functioning of local governments in four municipalities: Bayamo, Centro Habana, Santa Cruz del Norte and Chambas.

The study of participation in Cuba requires an understanding of the historical context of the Cuban political system since the revolution in 1959. This historical context can be divided into two periods: The period of charismatic authority covering the 1960's and early 1970's and the period of revolutionary legal-formal authority from the mid-1970's to the present.

The first period was characterized by high levels of centralization of power in the Communist Party and, more specifically, in its leader, Fidel Castro. During this period, "the essence of the political system was the direct relationship of Castro with the people (Ritter, 1980, p. 33). According to A.R.M. Ritter,

The political system throughout the 1960's, and especially in the latter half of that decade, can be considered to be "democratically representative" neither in the sense that mechanisms were used or even existed for the popular selection of the leadership, not in the sense that people were able to influence policy making through formal mechanisms. It is very important to emphasize, however, that despite this, policies were formulated which were highly beneficial to the large majority of the population. With surprising success, these policies redistributed income, reduced urban-rural disparities, virtually eliminated "open" unemployment and achieved universal access to education and public health as well as sports (Ritter, 1980, p. 35).

This situation changed dramatically during the 1970's after the leadership of the revolution announced the beginning of a process of institutionalization of the political regime (Dilla and Gonzalez, 1991, p. 4).

From the researchers' perspective, the process of institutionalization during the 1970's represented a significant step toward the consolidation of participatory

democracy in Cuba. This position was corroborated by Ritter in 1980 when he wrote that

despite the position of the Party, I conclude, tentatively that at the local level, where citizens directly elect neighborhood leaders, and at the municipal level, where citizens select candidates and directly elect their representatives, "democracy" defined in terms of control over leadership selection exists to some degree (Ritter, 1980, p. 64).

Through interviews, direct observation, and the study of documents, the project concluded that the election of municipal authorities takes place "in a climate of liberty" (Dilla and Gonzalez, 1991, p. 35). The accountability of the municipal government authorities is facilitated by *Reuniones de Rendicion de Cuenta* (RRC), which also function as mechanisms of aggregation and transmission of popular demands. However, problems such as excessive formalism, individualism, and bureaucratization seriously limit the capacity of the RRC to function as effective mechanisms of popular control on local governments. Furthermore, the Municipal Assemblies, that function as the expression of state power at the municipal level, are viewed by the researchers as important mechanisms for participation in the municipal decision making process. However, they can not be characterized as the center of state power at the local level. Lack of administrative capacity and inexperience are some of the factors that limit the role and potential development of the Municipal Assemblies.

The capacity of the municipal governments to govern is also limited by the centralist tendencies of the national and provincial governments within which municipal authorities operate (Dilla and Gonzalez, 1991, p. 54). The enhancement of this capacity would require a redefinition of the state-society relations that were established by the revolution in 1959. In this relation, civil society is seen as a monolithic body functioning in an harmonious relationship with the state. The researchers argue in favour of a reconceptualization of this relation in order to come to terms with the issue of diversity within civil society. Their recommendation is not to adopt the liberal conception of pluralism, but to adopt a socialist interpretation of the concept. This involves the need to provide "more autonomy to the political associations that operate within civil society and a redefinition of their obsolete role as 'transmission belts' from the people to the state" (Dilla and Gonzalez, 1991, p. 59).

Community Organizations and Popular Participation in Nicaragua

The Nicaraguan research project had as a central objective "to characterize the contribution of the popular urban sector to the construction of popular democracy in Nicaragua" (Mora, 1991, pp. 25-26). To achieve this objective, the researchers examined the historical evolution of the *Comites de Defensa Sandinista* (CDS's), and the particular experience of these organizations in Barrio Monimbo (Masaya) and Barrio Ariel Darce (Managua).

Community organization and popular forms of participation were practically non-existent during the Somocista regime that preceded the Sandinista revolution. The overthrow of Anastasio Somoza in 1979 by a popular insurrection led by the *Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional* (FSLN), opened a process of radical transformation of the social, political and economic structures of the country. Formally, the new regime was based on the principles of political pluralism, mixed economy and the principle of non-alignment. In practice, however, the attempt was to centralize political power in the FSLN, while leaving space for private business within a state-dominated economy. The centralization of political power by the FSLN was achieved through the party's control of the armed forces, the state, and the organizations of popular participation. The most important of these organizations were the CDS's that have their origin in the *Comites de Defensa Civil* (CDC's) which emerged in 1978 during the popular insurrection against the Somoza government in the city of Esteli. After the defeat of Somoza, the CDC's were transformed into CDS's and became mechanisms for the organization and promotion of popular participation under the direct control of the FSLN. The CDS's were organized "at the level of blocks and square blocks, and these base groups, in turn, elected members to serve on neighborhood committees called 'Executive Neighborhood Committees'" (Mora 1991, p. 4). The CDS's function was "to defend the revolution (according to the Cuban model of Committees in Defense of the Revolution), to support state tasks, to carry out the political program of the FSLN, and to organize the urban communities around their perceived needs" (Mora, 1991, p. 3).

The project divided the evolution of the CDS's in Nicaragua in three phases: the organization of popular hegemony (1979-81); the "*estatizacion*" of popular hegemony (1982-84); and the search for Community (1985-89) (Mora and Valdez, 1991, part 1, p. i). The first phase (1979-81) corresponds to the construction of the revolutionary power structure that would replace the one inherited from the Somoza regime. This new power structure was to be popular and democratic. Within it, the CDS's were to function as mechanisms for aggregating popular demands, as spaces of participation, and as organs of popular power.

The second phase (1982-84) was marked by the state control of the role and functions of the CDS's. This control, according to the researchers, distorted the

organization's community orientation and reduced "its organic social base..." (Mora, 1991, p. 6). The civil war and the United States' aggression against the Nicaraguan government, accelerated the "*estatizacion*" of the CDS's that became "of utmost importance for the state, fundamentally to guarantee the control of the distribution of foodstuffs through 'popular storehouses' and 'ration cards' and the control of the population to ensure defense" (Mora, 1991, p. 6). The state control of the CDS's, according to the project,

created an image of the organization as an appendage of the state and of the FSLN, and its leaders practically became unpaid state functionaries, establishing a vertical relation between the leaders and their bases, and depleting the democratic content of the organizations, all of which provoked a gradual detachment between the leaders and the masses (Mora, 1991, p. 7).

The third period (1985-1989) corresponds with a new phase in the process of institutionalizing the Sandinista Revolution. The beginning of this period was marked by the inauguration of Daniel Ortega's presidential term after the FSLN's electoral victory of 1984. During this period, war pressure and economic crisis continued to play a major role in the formulation and implementation of government policies and in the definition of the role of organizations for community participation controlled by the FSLN. However, a significant change in the orientation of these organizations took place in 1985 when a "search for community" was introduced as a central objective of the CDS's. The search for community represented an attempt to reestablish community development as the principal objective of the CDS's and to regain popular support for the revolution. This attempt was accompanied by measures to democratize the organization and functioning of the Committees.

The reconceptualization of the role of the CDS's, according to the researchers, came too late and was introduced in difficult conditions that included, not only the intensification of the civil war, but also the implementation of unpopular economic measures by the Sandinista government. By 1989, the CDS's were in a state of stagnation and disorientation (Mora and Valdez, 1991, part 2, p. 127).

The aftermath of the Sandinista electoral defeat in 1990 left the field of community participation in a state of crisis. After the election, the new government tried to organize its own basis of support while the Sandinistas struggled to preserve and recover the structure of community participation that they initiated in 1979. Competition for popular support between the Chamorro government and the FSLN still goes on.

The project views the "*estatizacion*" of the committees as the main reason for the failure of the CDS's. Partial measures introduced in the mid 1980's by the FSLN to reverse this process were not sufficient to reactivate these organizations amid a

crisis that demanded nothing less than a radical change in the overall political system of the country. The loss of support among the population for the Sandinista project was translated into resentment and loss of support for the CDS's that had been transformed by the FSLN into "shields of the revolution" (Mora and Valdez, 1991, part 2, p. 234).

IV. ANALYSIS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis

The study of political participation in developing countries has been "a prisoner of the word state" (see Wallerstein, 1985, p. 28; see also Nef and Bensabat, 1992). Influenced by the historical experience of the emergence and evolution of the state in Europe, social sciences have assumed the existence of state power within the national territories of the countries of the Third World and, consequently, view political participation as an activity designed to democratize the distribution and uses of that power. From this perspective, "the struggle for power **within** each state is still seen as the real stuff of politics" (Luard, 1991, p. vi). This "state-centred" view of politics and participation is clearly reflected in the rationale that constitutes the theoretical foundation of the PPP:

- a) The capacity and willingness of public institutions to formulate and implement public policies is limited by political and bureaucratic factors....
- b) The capacity and willingness of social institutions to formulate and implement policies that address the problems of the most disadvantaged social groups of developing countries largely depends on the capacity of these groups to influence the processes of formulation and implementation of public policies. The influence of these groups is made effective through a variety of mechanisms of political representation such as social parties, unions, interest groups, etc. (IDRC, 1986).

This rationale regards the national territories of Latin America and the Caribbean as political spaces capable of containing the causes and accumulated consequences of their internal political dynamic. However, the legal principle of sovereignty that was formally attached to the Latin American and Caribbean states by international law in the 19th and 20th centuries, lacks the historical, social, and political significance that

it had for European states. Latin American and Caribbean states were never capable of containing the causes and accumulated consequences of their political evolution. Rather, they constitute formal-legal arrangements designed on the basis of European interpretations of politics and society.

Furthermore, globalization and the transnationalization of the economies of the region have severely reduced state power in the region, rendering conventional understandings of political participation obsolete (see Nef and Bensabat, 1992). Conceptualized as the struggle for the redistribution of state power, political participation makes sense only when state power resides within national territories capable of "spatializing" the political history of a nation (see Gross, 1981-82). In the absence of such nationally contained state power, participation loses its focus and objectives.

The Eurocentric assumptions about politics and participation contained in the PPP's rationale limited the scope of enquiry of those research projects supported by the experimental activity in Latin America and the Caribbean. As a result of this theoretical limitation, researchers concentrated their attention on the internal dimension of politics and participation in the region. Nevertheless, both the views expressed by many of the researchers during the course of my discussions with them and a critical interpretation of the projects' results indicate the need to study the way in which globalization has affected the capacity of the Latin American and Caribbean states to formulate and implement public policies that respond to domestic political pressures and demands.

State power in highly transnationalized countries like Brazil, Argentina and Chile is conditioned and limited by external forces that very often force governments to give priority to international economic pressures rather than domestic ones. This situation promotes the exclusion of domestic political actors from the national policy-making process, and facilitates "the extreme insulation of the decision making arenas crucial for the formation of economic policy from the pressures of competitive politics" (Sola, 1991, p. 172; see also Silva, 1991). In countries like Brazil, Argentina and Chile, where systems of dependent capitalism are highly transnationalized, the state does not constitute "an active synthesis of the nation (O'Donnell, 1982, p. 35). Rather, it is transnationalized through the linkages established between foreign capital and the national elites (see Faletto, 1989). Phenomena associated with the transnationalization of the Latin American economies "were noted already twenty years ago and are now more pronounced than ever" (Nun, 1991, p. 15).

In Uruguay, state power has been depleted by the declining prices of its exports in the international market since the mid-1950's. In this country, an exhausted and highly vulnerable state confronts a population that still views it as "the provider". This view, researchers claim, is derived from Uruguay's experience during the first half of this century, when favorable international economic conditions allowed the state to respond and even anticipate social demands.

The Costa Rican project represents another example of the withering away of state power in Latin America, along with the increasing irrelevancy of political participation. In this country, the transnationalization of the economy constitutes a challenge to traditional notions of political participation that assume the existence of state power within the boundaries of a national territory.

In Jamaica, researchers attribute the failure of the participatory experience represented by the community councils to the Manley government's inability to establish "institutional facilities" that would permit democratic participation. The overt assumption here is that power could and should have been decentralized. The implicit assumption is that the central government had the power to formulate social and economic policies according to the needs and demands of the national population, and that some of this power could have been delegated to local governments and to organizations of community participation. However, the experience of the first Manley government shows how little power central governments in dependent countries actually have (see Stephens and Stephens, 1986). Manley himself learned this lesson and returned to power in 1989 with few illusions about the possibility of responding to domestic needs and demands (see Manley, 1992).

The Cuban Revolution represents one of Latin America's most dramatic attempts to achieve national sovereignty vis-a-vis the international capitalist economic structure within which the country developed until 1959. To enhance the power of the state, the Castro government sought to eliminate Western capitalist interference and to control internal political dissent. Developing and consolidating revolutionary state power was seen by the Communist Party of Cuba as necessary for the achievement of social justice in the country.

Cuba succeeded in developing and consolidating the power of the state to formulate and implement public policies that responded to internal needs and demands. However, this power was also ultimately conditioned by international factors. The recomposition of the world political and economic systems over the last five years has left the Cuban regime in a position of extreme vulnerability, and it has dramatically reduced the Cuban state's capacity to respond to internal social and political demands. The Cuban regime is in crisis, not because of domestic pressures, but as the consequence of the transformation of world political and economic structures.

The Nicaraguan Revolution exemplifies another attempt to create state power by developing a sovereign state that functioned independently of the political and economic logic imposed by international forces on the Central American region. In other words, the Nicaraguan Revolution was designed to redistribute state power within society. Participation within the context of the revolution was viewed as an effort to democratize the role and the functions of the state. In this sense, the Nicaraguan Revolution had similar objectives to those of the Cuban Revolution. However, there are important differences between the two cases. The Cuban

Revolution escaped the pressure of the political and economic logic of the capitalist world by obtaining the support of the Soviet Union. Nicaragua, on the other hand, did not have this option. In the final analysis, the revolutionary project backfired when the state's power to manage the economy was severely reduced by the war and the economic embargo imposed by the United States on Nicaragua. The lesson was clear: state power in Nicaragua does not depend on the internal political dynamic of the country or on the correlation of forces within society. In Nicaragua, the power of the state to respond to social and political demands is internationally determined.

The limited scope of political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean revealed by each of the research projects can be seen as an expression of the tensions and contradictions that exist between the international and the domestic dimensions of politics in Latin America and the Caribbean. Participation as an exercise designed to redistribute state power has very marginal effects on the definition of the basic forms of organization of the economic and political life of the countries of the region.

There is no doubt that the intensity of this phenomena differs from country to country according to the capacity of each to balance external and internal pressures. Thus, a country like Brazil, because of its influence on the international economic system and because of the size of its internal market, has better chances of harmonizing and balancing foreign and domestic pressures and building state power, than, for example, the countries of Central America and the Caribbean (see Cardoso, 1991). Despite these differences, the withering away of state power in Latin America and the Caribbean represents an unprecedented challenge to traditional institutions and strategies of participation that assume the existence of state power within the national territories of sovereign states. It also represents a challenge to the way in which the study of politics and participation in developing countries is conducted. Erosion of the state's capacity to respond to pressures and demands emerging from within the national territories of Latin America and the Caribbean is eliminating the *raison d'être* of political participation as it has been traditionally conceived it. To win an election in transnationalized countries like Argentina or Costa Rica is not to win the capacity to govern vis-a-vis society's pressure, but to win the role of intermediary between an increasingly powerful transnational economic and political systems and an active, but increasingly ineffective, process of political participation and competition. The contradictions and tensions of this balancing act have resulted in declining legitimacy of the state and other political institutions in the region as reflected in, and symbolized by, the Fujimori syndrome in Peru or the violence that has shaken Venezuela over the last five years. The withering away of state power, rather than lack of political will or capacity, explains the paralysis that characterizes present governments and their inability to respond to domestic political and social demands.

The consequences of the process of de-institutionalization of Latin American and Caribbean politics can be dramatic. The elimination of the state as the object of political conflict and competition can create conditions for a war of all against all. This is because the withering away of state power does not eliminate the tensions and contradictions that plague Latin American and Caribbean societies. Rather, it eliminates the possibility of using state power as an effective instrument for the promotion of social justice and political freedoms in the region. Without the state as a central point of reference for political participation and competition, the object of political conflict in Latin American and Caribbean societies could be displaced onto civil society. Here, random expressions of violence could replace more traditional forms of political struggle and competition organized through mechanisms of aggregating popular demands -- guerrilla organizations and political parties, for example -- which are oriented toward the capture of state power.

Conclusions

Globalization and the consequent withering away of state power in Latin America and the Caribbean demand fundamental changes in the assumptions that have guided the study of politics and society in the region. The state can no longer be seen as the legal and political container of national power or the political space within which political competition takes place and eventually reaches a balance. Globalization represents the removal of the state's capacity to formulate and implement public policies vis-a-vis domestic pressures and demands. Globalization and the withering away of state power in the region have to be taken into consideration to explore the possibilities and the limitations for national politics, that is, for the control of the life and destinies of national populations.

The study of globalization and the withering away of state power in Latin America and the Caribbean should avoid either voluntaristic or deterministic interpretations of these phenomena. From a voluntaristic perspective, globalization is a process that can be regulated or controlled by the political will of national governments. From this perspective, the political authorities of a national state simply choose to participate or not participate in the process. On the other hand, a deterministic view of globalization and of the withering away of state power, assumes that these processes are the inevitable result of historical forces operating beyond human will. From this perspective, politics is dead and all that countries can do is to resign themselves to the dictates of the international market. These views of the processes of globalization and of the withering away of state power in Latin America and the Caribbean reduce social phenomena to a problem of structural causation or to a problem of human will and political decisions. However, history should be seen

as the "permanent result of a tension between objective possibilities and human choice" (Guerreiro-Ramos, 1970, p. 32). From this perspective,

determinism and freedom are not antipodes. If one excludes from the deterministic approach any place for freedom or for the role of human choices or decisions, one no longer has determinism but fatalism. If one expels from the social process the objective determinants of it, one implies the meaninglessness of society as a whole, i.e., nihilism, and therefore, the impossibility of social science. Determinism is unthinkable without freedom and freedom is unthinkable without objective limitations, i.e., determinism. Determinism or freedom is a false dilemma. In the historical and social process there is always determinism and freedom (Guerreiro-Ramos, 1970, p. 25).

The challenge for social sciences is to assess the framework of limitations and possibilities for national politics as a result of the increasing globalization of the world economy and in view of the withering away of state power in the region. A realistic assessment of this problem requires transcending the voluntaristic view of politics as choice and the deterministic view of globalization as an inevitable process of homogenization of national societies around the world. It involves both the identification and study of existing spaces for political participation and the creation of new forms of political power.

While identification and study of existing spaces for political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean suppose the study of traditional political structures and institutions, the creation of new forms of political power represents a work of theoretical analysis, political knowledge, and imagination. It involves the formation of political processes and structures that can operate within the process of globalization affecting the region. It involves, in other words, a serious assessment not only of the limitations that globalization poses to the capacity of national populations to protect their own interests, but also of the potential opportunities that globalization offers for the defense of the interests of the marginal segments of the international society (see Gill and Law, 1988; McDonald, 1991).

To sum up, the study of political participation and the state in Latin America and the Caribbean must transcend the Eurocentric perspective that has influenced social sciences in the region to account for the different conditions within which the Latin American and Caribbean states operate today. The study of political participation requires building theoretical and institutional bridges between what has been traditionally considered as "national" and "international" politics. In doing this, social sciences must not exclude the possibility that opportunities exist in the process of globalization affecting national societies today. The identification and assessment

of these opportunities should be placed at the top of the research agenda of social sciences in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

Recommendations

Study of political participation and exploration of possibilities for enhancement of people's democratic participation in developing countries are activities that can no longer take nation-states as their sole referents. Today, participation and democracy have to be studied from both national and transnational perspectives. This duality transcends the separation between domestic and international politics portrayed in much of political science literature. Because national and international dimensions of politics in developing countries are intertwined, they can not be studied in isolation from each other.

Moreover, relationships between politics and economics intrinsic to social sciences' interpretation of social phenomena at the level of nation-states, have acquired a new dimension at the international level. The conditioning effects of the international economy on the economic and political organization of developing countries renders the study of politics, as an independent phenomenon, obsolete.

In view of the above, the following recommendation is formulated to facilitate understanding of political participation and democracy in developing countries:

To organize a research project on Participation and Public Policy in Times of Global Interpenetration.

The objectives of the research project/program would be to explore the following issues:

- a) the framework of limitations and possibilities for political participation and democracy in developing countries today both at the national and at the international level.
- b) the possibility of building new mechanisms of participation at the national and local levels. Does globalization and the withering away of state power in developing countries offer possibilities for new and unprecedented forms of political participation at the national and local levels?
- c) the possibility of building new mechanisms for participation at the international level. Does globalization offer opportunities to build new and unprecedented forms of human solidarity across borders? Can the idea of an "international civil society" be made effective? What can we learn from ongoing experiments on

transnational political organizations like the ones being carried out by The Council of Canadians with regard to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)?

These research objectives should be based on the assumption that globalization has radically changed the relationship between economic and political phenomena and between the national and the international dimensions of politics. Furthermore, the project should be guided by a spirit of *docta ignorantia* or "learned ignorance." According to this principle, we know what does not work at the present and hope to find alternative avenues for the future.

Furthermore, this project should involve a cooperative effort by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD). The project should also involve participants from both the developed and the developing countries of the world in a spirit of exploration and concern for the fate of the most disadvantaged sectors of developing societies.

Exploratory activities to assess the feasibility and desirability of a research project on **Participation and Public Policy in Times of Global Interpenetration** might include the following:

- a) The drafting of a discussion document outlining the rationale and objectives of the proposed project.
- b) The circulation of the discussion document among a selected list of specialists within the field of social sciences. These specialists would be invited to respond to the document.
- c) The organization of a "project identification meeting" with the participation of specialists in the field of social sciences for the purpose of outlining the rationale, objectives, and the operational strategy of a research project on **Participation and Public Policy in Times of Global Interpenetration**. This outline would be submitted to the IDRC and the ICHRDD for their joint consideration.

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