Participatory Democracy in Brazil:
Foundations, Developments, and Limits

by

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I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

A lack of historical perspective sustained the widespread view that participatory initiatives in Brazil represented a marked rupture from traditional forms of political engagement to radically new democratic practices. This view overlooks both incremental steps towards broader political participation taking place throughout the 20th century and setbacks restricting participation in the 1980s. This dissertation offers a historical account of the emergence of participatory democracy in Brazil that challenges this dominant view and calls attention to the importance of structural factors and national-level political-institutional contexts. Three case studies of municipal administrations in the late-1970s and early-1980s shine light on the impact of structural factors in the emergence, design, and outcome of participatory initiatives, and the contrast of these precursory experiences with the internationally known 1990s participatory models shows how participatory ideals and practices responded to the changing institutional context of the 1980s. This dissertation puts forward three central arguments. First, research should not treat citizen participation as a normative imperative but instead examine how it emerges through social and political struggles fueled by structural inequalities. Second, it is unfounded to assume that citizen participation will lead to profound transformations of national-level institutions, but it is equally erroneous to suppose that citizen participation is always intended to strengthen representative institutions; the long-term impact of direct citizen participation is an empirical rather than analytical or normative question. Third, a key challenge of participatory democracy today is to free itself from the inflated expectations imposed on it by its own enthusiastic supporters.

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Also at the University of Waterloo, Eric Helleiner has been for many years a mentor and a model. By example, he has taught me that academic research is not a zero-sum game, and that we are all eternal students, who have much to learn from and teach to each other. Andrew

To my siblings,

Kika, Ana, and Beto,

with love and appreciation.

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List of Abbreviations

ANC – National Constituent Assembly (Assembléia Nacional Constituinte)

ARENA – National Renewal Alliance Party (Alliança Nacional Renovadora)

CEB – ecclesial base community (*comunidade eclesiais de base*)

CEBRAP – Brazilian Centre of Analysis and Planning (Centro Brasileiro de Análise e

Planejamento)

CELAM – Latin American Episcopal Council (Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano)

CDP – popular democratic committee (*comitê democrático popular*)

CLT – Consolidate Labor Laws (Consolidação das Leis do Trabalho)

CNBB – National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil)

IEPES – Institute for Political, Economic and Social Studies (Instituto de Estudos Políticos,

Econômicos e Sociais)

IDS – Institute for Development Studies

ISI – Import Substitution Industrialization

MDB – Brazilian Democratic Movement (Movimento Democrático Brasileiro)

MST – Landless Workers' Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhores Sem Terra)

PB – participatory budgeting (*orçamento participativo*)

PCB – Brazilian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Brasileiro)

PCdoB – Communist Party of Brazil (Partido Comunista do Brazil)

PDS – Social Democratic Party (Partido Social Democrata)

PMDB – Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro)

PRC – Santa Catarina Republican Party (Partido Republicano Catarinenese)

PRO – Revolutionary Labor Party (Partido Revolucionário Operário)

PRP – Popular Representation Party (Partido de Representação Popular)

PSDB – Brazilian Social Democratic Party (Partido da Social Democracia Brasiliera)

PSP – Progressive Social Party (Partido Social Progressista)

PT – Workers' Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores)

PTB – Brazilian Labor Party (Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro)

SAB – societies of the friends of the neighborhood (*sociedades de amigos do bairro*)

UDN – National Democratic Union (União Democrática Nacional)

Introduction

Democracy in Brazil has always been a lamentable misunderstanding. A rural and semi-feudal aristocracy imported it, and tried to accommodate it, as much as they could, to their rights and privileges.

Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, 1936

The expansion of participation in Brazil has become a benchmark for participatory policies in the rest of Latin America, as well as in Europe, and parts of Southeast Asia.

Leonardo Avritzer, 2009

This dissertation examines how the façade democratic system described by Buarque de Holanda developed into the benchmark for participatory policies presented by Avritzer. Throughout most of the twentieth century democracy in Brazil seemed in fact a "lamentable misunderstanding." Between 1891 and 1930, the representative system consisted of two parties concerned with the interests of the agriculture-exporting sector and the distribution of the spoils of government. Suffrage was limited to affluent literate males, and fraudulent electoral practices made voting essentially redundant; in this period, voter turnout in presidential elections varied between 1.4 and 5.7 percent of the total population (Fausto, 1999, p. 159). The coup' d'état known as the 1930 Revolution brought liberal reforms that among other things considerably extended the suffrage. However, the leader of the revolution became a popular autocrat and stayed in power for 15 years. The 1945-1964 period witnessed the emergence of a political system that more closely resembled a democracy. This "democratic experiment" ended with a military coup that delayed the establishment of democracy at the federal level for another 21 years. In the 1980s, the re-democratization process was sluggish and largely controlled by the military.

The country's political trajectory resembles that of other Latin American countries whose current democratic systems were established after the mid-1970s in what became known as the Third Wave of Democratization (Huntington, 1991). What makes the Brazilian case particularly interesting is the emergence of various local-level participatory initiatives concomitantly with the establishing of representative democracy. In addition to access to long-denied political rights, such as the right to freely elect presidents, citizens were also allowed to participate in decision-making processes in municipal governments and specialized government agencies, either directly or through informally chosen community representatives. In the late-1990s, Brazil became "a benchmark for participatory policies," and as of 2010 one of its participatory models had been replicated in 53 countries around the world (Sintomer, Herzberg, Allegretti, & Röcke, 2010, p. 76)

A vast literature has examined participatory initiatives in Brazil. This literature is marked by a predominant focus on local-level processes and agency factors such as political motivation and civil society mobilization. While this focus has been useful in understanding the functioning of participatory initiatives in Brazil, it is overly narrow for a research agenda that now seeks to examine the replicability of Brazilian models in other parts of the world. Most importantly, scant attention has been paid to how structural conditions spur or inhibit participatory innovation, and to the influence of national-level political-institutional contexts on local-level initiatives. This dissertation argues that structural and broader institutional analyses are crucial in understanding the foundations, developments, and limits of participatory democracy in Brazil. To support this argument, this dissertation offers a historical account of participatory democracy in Brazil that challenges the dominant narrative of the phenomenon and calls attention to the importance of economic factors and national institutions and processes. Three case studies of participatory

municipal administrations in the late-1970s and early-1980s shine light on the impact of structural factors in the emergence, design, and outcome of local-level participatory democracy, and the contrast of these precursory experiences with the 1990s' models illustrates how participatory ideals and practices responded to the changing institutional context of the 1980s.

Nowadays, the city of Porto Alegre is the first to come to mind whenever the subject of participatory democracy is discussed. In the early-1990s this city created the world's best-known model of local-level citizen participation, participatory budgeting, which is often inaccurately introduced as the first such initiative in the country. However, the cities of Lages, Boa Esperança, and Diadema experimented with direct citizen participation a decade earlier. Although evidence shows that these initiatives were widely known at the time, they are only briefly mentioned in the current literature, often as footnotes. The reasons for neglecting these precursory cases seems obvious: they happened in a markedly different political context, and the country has numerous current and exciting programs that one can study without spending countless days in dusty archives. Nevertheless, in the words of a widely read scholar in the field, one of the goals of the current research agenda is to examine whether "the successful experiences in Brazilian cities [can] be reproduced in places where the conditions may be very different" (Avritzer, 2009, p.3). One way of doing this is to study the functioning of Brazilian models in other parts of the world; there are increasingly more studies doing exactly this. This dissertation focuses on the precursory initiatives of 1970s Brazil. My gloomy days in archives were offset by fascinating interviews with retired city officials who dared to implement participatory democracy under an authoritarian regime.

The chosen approach yielded three noteworthy contributions to the literature. The first concerns the unearthing of experiences neglected in the current literature whose main focus is

post-1988 cases. In a country where despotism has been more common than democracy, these experiences ought to be documented, and celebrated. The second contribution regards the study of the role of structural conditions and processes. The three cases studies occurred in a time and in places where the effects of the country's dramatic structural changes of the second half of the 20th century were strongly felt. In the 1970s, Lages was a rural regional center, partially and slowly industrializing, and divided between its agriculture vocation and elites, and its new industrial impetus; Boa Esperança was comprised mainly of small farmers threatened by the encroachment of large cattle and eucalyptus farms, a considerable portion of whom chose to sell out and migrate to booming urban centers; Diadema was one of the booming urban centers that attracted people from places like Boa Esperança, but could not offer jobs, infrastructure, and social services for all of them. In all three cases, citizen participation in government was seen as the solution to the problems at hand. The political dynamic behind promoting participation, the design of the initiatives, and the outcome of these experiences varied from case to case. These variations were directly related with the structural conditions found in each city.

The third way in which this dissertation contributes to the literature is by proposing an alternative interpretation of the emergence of participatory democracy in Brazil that highlights the influence of the national-level political-institutional context. The widespread account of this process presents the late-1980s as the period in which political processes coalesced and created favorable conditions for radical innovations with participatory democracy, which blossomed in the 1990s. This view overlooks not only the aforementioned precursory initiatives but also a number of less successful experiments in the mid-to-late 1980s. The historical interpretation offered here shows that in the 1970s direct citizen participation was thought of and practiced as an alternative to all previous forms of political inclusion, including the representative system.

This was the ideal that fuelled the experiments in the three case studies, which in many ways were more radical than the internationally known models of the 1990s. In the 1980s, however, the representative system was re-established and the country entered a hitherto unseen period of open access to political and social participation. Direct citizen participation became one of the ways in which individuals could advance their views and defend their interests. Political actors who had advocated the participatory ideal of the 1970s had to learn how to integrate it into the new political-institutional context that among other things included free party competition. Participatory ideals and practices became tempered as they adapted to this new context. This interpretation challenges the dominant view of the phenomenon, wherein the early-1990s were the heydays of participatory democracy, and supports current research that examines the interconnectedness of representation and direct participation.

The approach advanced in this dissertation is inspired by Victor Nunes Leal's seminal work, *Coronelismo: The Municipality and Representative Government in Brazil* (1949/2009). The local-level despots of Brazilian hinterlands are known as *coronéis* and the political system based on their power is referred to as *coronelismo*.[1] In his study of the subject, Leal argued that

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[1] The term *coronel* (pl. *coronéis*) is explained in Leal (1949/2009), "For nearly a century [starting in 1831], a body of the National Guard existed in each of our municipalities. The rank of colonel was generally accorded to the political boss of the community…It was usually the wealthiest landowners or the richest members of the commercial and industrial community, who exercised, in each municipality, the high command of the National Guard, and at the same time the patriarchal – all but dictatorial – political control invested in them by the provincial government. This state of affairs existed under the Republic as well as under the monarchy…But the system was so engrained in the mentality of the rural population that even today the style of the coronel is still accorded to those who hold in their hands the political staff of office, or the leaders of the parties which have the greatest influence in the community, that is to say the despots of village conventicles" (p. xvi).

coronelismo was not a widespread local phenomenon but a national political system based on compromises between *coronéis* and state and federal representatives, which resulted from the diminishing economic power but persistent political influence of the country's landed oligarchy. In other words, local-level despotism relied on the national-level political-institutional context and certain structural conditions. If one agrees with Leal's interpretation, the logical step is to try to understand the emergence of local-level participatory democracy as a change in those same conditions. This dissertation argues that countrywide processes impelled local-level participatory innovation. Notwithstanding the agency of political innovators and civil society groups and the particularities of local contexts, the emergence of participatory democracy was a nationwide phenomenon and cannot be adequately understood without taking into account national-level processes and institutions and the structural changes the country underwent since the 1930s.

In this dissertation, the term *representative system* refers to the set of institutions that allow cities, states, and the country to be governed by legislative representatives and executive leaders chosen through elections. The scope of suffrage, the integrity of elections, the autonomy of legislative members, and the commitment of executive leaders with citizens' rights vary from case to case and change over time. The evolution of the Brazilian representative system is the topic of chapter one. In turn, the term *participatory democracy* refers to initiatives that permit citizens to participate in public decision-making directly or through informally chosen delegates. The scope of participation, the weight of citizens' input in government actions, and the institutional or informal character of participatory initiatives greatly vary. The main models of participatory democracy in Brazil are discussed in the next section of this introduction, and the case studies present less-known examples. Throughout this dissertation participatory democracy is at times called direct citizen participation; though most initiatives require citizens to choose

community delegates, this is still a useful distinction with the representative system, where officials are most often professional politicians chosen through formal voting.

Some scholars have defined democracy as a well-functioning representative system with broad suffrage and the guarantee of basic civic rights (Bobbio, 1987; Huntington, 1991), whereas others have argued that participatory democracy must be an integral aspect of true democracies (Macpherson, 1977; Pateman, 1970). The next section reviews normative debates about the role of citizen participation, and the next chapter outlines a conceptual framework that helps us to distinguish between different types of representative systems. At this point it suffices to point out that this dissertation adopts neither the minimalist definition of democracy nor the normative stance for participatory democracy. A democracy comprises a number of social, political, and economic features; a legitimate representative system is an indispensable aspect of democracy, and direct citizen participation may contribute in various ways to the strengthening of democracy. Other notably important features of a democracy include a dependable judicial system, political control over military forces, and government agencies that treat all citizens equally. This dissertation touches on a number of trends that impelled the overall advance of Brazilian democracy, but its focus is the evolution of participatory democracy, which, as it argues, is directly related to the evolution of the representative system. Other aspects of democracy are discussed only in so far as they are directly related with these two processes.

The rest of this introduction is organized as follows. The next section presents a literature review of participatory democracy in Brazil, which is divided in three subsections: Participatory Budgeting, Health Councils, and Normative Debates. This review offers a more detailed analysis of both the empirical phenomenon and the literature only briefly mentioned thus far. The following section discusses in more depth how the present study seeks to challenge and

contribute to this literature; it includes a section describing the content and purpose of the next chapters. The last section outlines the research work conducted for this project and discusses the methodological approach guiding this dissertation.

Participatory Democracy in Brazil

Since the 1980s, Brazil has witnessed a wave of participatory initiatives in public administration, including participatory budgeting, policy councils, water basin management councils, and ad-hoc programs such as committees for the management of drought-relief aid. The best-known model is the participatory budgeting (PB) created in the city of Porto Alegre in the early 1990s. This participatory mechanism allows citizens to decide how to spend the portion of the municipal budget allocated to new investments. According to a recent estimate, local governments in 53 countries have implemented variations of the PB, including Canada, England, and the United States (Sintomer et al., 2010, p. 76). Policy councils are bodies responsible for overseeing the management of public services, and are usually comprised of representatives of three parties: interested civil society groups, service providers, and the state. The constitution endorses the creation of policy councils in various areas of public services, but health councils are by far the most numerous in the country because federal fund transfers are conditioned on them. Ninety-eight percent of the country's 5,560 cities had health councils in 2001 (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2003, p. 59). Water basin management councils are more recent, less numerous, and less studied (Abers & Keck, 2009; Lemos & Oliveira, 2005). Studies of ad-hoc initiatives have also generated valuable theoretical knowledge (Tendler, 1997).

The first two subsections present reviews of the literatures on PB and on health councils, which have evolved separately and offer distinct theoretical insights. The PB literature initially focused on the ideal case of Porto Alegre and only more recently began to pay attention to less

successful stories, whereas studies of health councils have long been wary of the shortcomings of participatory mechanisms. Studies of PB have been published in various languages and authored by Brazilian and non-Brazilian scholars alike; health councils have gained less international attention. Theoretically, whereas the PB literature focuses on civil society-state relations and civil society mobilization, research on health councils has examined the question of the representativeness of civil society organizations, and more recently scholars began to discuss the relationship between representation and participation.

Two distinguishable normative approaches spur research on direct citizen participation. On the one hand, direct participation is the subject of interest of those who assume it to have an emancipatory and transformative potential; in this view, participation is an instrument to make society more just. On the other hand, citizen participation is advocated by those who expect it to make governments and economic development policies more legitimate and more efficient. To avoid loaded terms, these approaches are here referred to as the emancipatory and conventional views, respectively. They are the topic of the third subsection.

Participatory Budgeting

A review of the PB literature must inevitably begin with a summary of the history and functioning of the Porto Alegre initiative. Although not the first such initiative in the country, as it is often inaccurately presented, the Porto Alegre PB is without a doubt the most successful case. The widely disseminated account of the Porto Alegre PB goes as follows. The Workers' Party (PT) emerged in the 1980s as the first mass party in the country, bringing together the progressive forces of the late 1970s, namely, the new unionism movement, Marxist groups, and the grassroots arm of the Catholic Church. The 1988 Constitution decentralized power and increased the fiscal autonomy of municipal governments. In the same year, the PT won

municipal elections in two state capitals, São Paulo and Porto Alegre. In both cities, the fast urbanization process of the previous decades had led to the disordered growth of low-income neighborhoods without basic infrastructure and services. In Porto Alegre, a city with a history of vigorous neighborhood activism, social movements had been pressing for participation in public administration. The PT administration responded to this demand and together with an umbrella neighborhood association launched a participatory budgeting process.

The PB is based on a *representative pyramid structure:* local-level groups (street, quarter, or neighborhood) meet year round and participate in annual ward assemblies where they vote on four priority investment areas, out of sixteen options,[2] and choose two delegates to serve as ward councilors at the municipal level. A thematic structure functions in a similar way except that citizens gather around six broad themes instead of geographical areas.[3] The Participatory Budgeting Council is the highest level forum; it is comprised of two councilors from each ward and thematic forum, a representative of an umbrella neighborhood association, a representative from the public workers' union, and two representatives from the government's executive office who participate in the deliberations but do not have voting power. The Council's main function is to transform local demands into an investment plan that adheres to the technical criteria

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[2] Basic sanitation, housing policies, street paving, education, social assistance, health, accessibility and urban mobility, youth, transport, leisure areas, sport and leisure, public illumination, economic development, tourism, culture, and environment sanitation (Orçamento Participativo, 2008, p. 19).

[3] Transport; culture; economic development and tourism; education, sports, and leisure; city organization, urban and environment development; and health and social assistance (Orçamento Participativo, 2008, pp. 27-29).

negotiated with the various city departments.[4] The Council also monitors the implementation of the budget and reviews the program's rules (Orçamento Participativo, 2008).

Arguments in favor of PB fall in one of the following three categories. First, PB is a tool to "democratize democracy" (Fedozzi, 1999; Nylen, 2003; Santos & Avritzer, 2002). In this view, the PB helps to break with traditional undemocratic forms of political mediation and serves as a remedy for political apathy. A second perspective highlights the citizenship learning that takes places in PB processes. Abers (2000) has argued that the Porto Alegre PB contributed to the development of "enlarged thinking – a sense of common interests and a respect for others' voice" (p.180). In a similar argument, Baiocchi (2005) used the term "emerging public spheres" that he defined as "open-ended debate about issues of collective concern and community solving" (p.95). The third set of arguments focus on PB's ability to distribute public expediture more justly (Fedozzi, 2007; Marquetti, 2008; World Bank, 2008).

The widely recognized limitations of PB include its inability to mobilize the poorest segments of society and the small percentage of the budget controlled by these initiatives. In Porto Alegre, the average income of the PB participants at the ward level is below the city's average, but above that of the city's poorest; participants at the Council level have higher income and education than ward-level participatnts (Fedozzi, 2007). In the PB model, only a relatively small portion of the budget designated for new investments is open for discussion. In Porto Alegre, between 2000 and 2008 this percentage ranged from 5.2 to 8.8 percent of the total

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[4] In the first five years of OP technical discussions were absent; the population demanded whatever they deemed necessary. The result was upset engineers, unfinished projects, and wasted resources. In 1995 the administration began to ask city agencies to discuss with councillors the technical limitations of public works (Abers, 2000, p. 8).

municipal budget (CIDADE, 2008).[5] The amount varies from city to city. In 2001-2002, Porto

Alegre's investment spending per capita was US$29, while in small and wealthy Ipatinga it was

US$58, and in wealthy but indebted Belo Horizonte it was US$14 (Wampler, 2007, pp.

109,150,219). A more disconcerting limitation of the Porto Alegre PB regards the emergence of

a group of activists who managed to gain control of the process. The first comprehensive study

of the initiative called attention to the fact that a group of overzealous participants felt

responsible for directing the development of the PB, which became known as the "pioneer

syndrome" (Fedozzi, 1999). A later study mentioned "specialist militants" and the corruption of

the democratic ideal that first inspired the initiative (Beras, 2008). More recently, a close

observer and enthusiastic proponent of the initiative admitted that "little by little, the '*cacique*'

(boss/gatekeeper) culture of the presidents of neighborhood associations, which was supposed to

have been buried, returned" (Baierle, 2010, p. 57). As of time of writing, observers have begun

to question whether the Porto Alegre PB will last much longer (Langelier, 2011).

The international fame of the Porto Alegre PB began in 1996, when it was recognized as

a *best practice* in urban management at the United Nations Human Settlement Conference in

Istanbul. Thereafter the model spread rapidly. In 2004 there were 170 PB initiatives in Brazil

(Avritzer, 2009, p. 85); by 2006, 1,200 out of 16,000 Latin American municipalities had tried

some form of PB (Cabannes, 2006, p. 128); by 2008, close to 100 European local governments

had implemented similar programs (Sintomer, Herzberg, & Röcke, 2008, p. 164). In Canada, a

borough of Montreal, the Toronto Community Housing Corporation, and the city of Guelph have

experimented with the model (Pinnington, Lerner, & Schugurensky, 2009). In the United States,

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[5] In total figures, Wampler (2007, p. 106) estimated that in Porto Alegre between 1996 and 2003 close to

US$ 400 million were channeled through participatory budgeting.

a ward of Chicago has had a PB since 2010 (Lerner, 2011), and New York had the first round of PB in four of its 22 wards in 2012 (Sangha, 2012). As of the time of writing there is a growing interest in PB in North America fueled by the not-for-profit organization The Participatory Budgeting Project, whose exclusive mission is to promote PB in the United States and Canada.

This widely spread participatory model attracted much scholarly attention. Nylen (2011) has identified two generations of studies of PB. The first generation (from 1990s to mid-2000s) focused on successful cases in Brazil, mainly Porto Alegre, and found that "PB tends to uphold the Participatory Promise that participatory innovations and reforms can be efficacious" (p.481). The second generation of studies has a broader empirical focus that includes less successful cases of PB in Brazil as well as other countries. Whereas the first generation relied heavily on single case studies, recent works use comparative methods to examine the variables that contribute to the emergence and success of participatory initiatives. This generation tends to focus on "grey cases" that can help to "shift the focus on institutional innovation from poster-child examples to those cases that might appear less appealing, where the conditions for success are less evident, and the outcome of the innovations are less immediately clear" (Peruzzotti & Selee, 2011, p. 7). The literature now includes numerous studies of "grey cases" (Bispo Júnior & Sampaio, 2008; Cornwall, Romano, & Shankland, 2008; Mesquita, 2007; Pereira, 2007; Sell & Wöhlke, 2007); as a consequence, it is now more wary of the challenges and limitations of PB. "Most agree, for example, that PB and other participatory innovations are not instances of participatory, direct, radical, or delegative democracy, but constitute instead 'a new layer of representation'" (Nylen, 2011, p.482).

Second generation studies have also acknowledged that, "we continue to lack a coherent theoretical explanation to account for where and when…participatory experiences are likely to

be successful" (Wampler, 2008, p. 64). With this in mind, three recently proposed theoretical frameworks examine the necessary conditions for successful participatory institutions. The three frameworks examine essentially the same three variables: (1) the governing party's commitment to popular participation; (2) civil society's strength and ability to effectively participate; and (3) the institutional design of participatory channels. There are, however, noteworthy differences in the definitions of these variables.

The first variable may be referred to as *political will*, if the intention is to emphasize the ideological commitment of the governing party; according to the scholar who uses this concept, political will to include civil society organizations in municipal government is found above all in PT administrations (Avritzer, 2009). Alternatively, the concept *mayoral support* calls attention to a mayor's rational calculation of incentives for delegating authority to civil society; the decision to invite the population to participate in the budget processes is a mayor's prerogative, and he or she will carefully consider whether doing so will improve his political position (Wampler, 2007). The concept *government commitment* brings both ideological and strategic aspects into account as it focuses on the importance of the participatory initiative vis-à-vis other government priorities. The scholars who employ this concept pointed out that commitment may vary within the same administration; for example, initial ideological support may be undermined by the need to forge political alliances during a mayor's tenure (Borba & Lüchmann, 2007).

These different ways of conceptualizing the government's role in participatory initiatives capture the strength of political support for participation, but do not offer insight into the political dynamics behind supporting or opposing popular participation. In these frameworks, the political scenario is divided between those who for varied reasons support participation, and those who do not. Participatory initiatives are more likely to be successful if the former are in power. A

number of questions are left unanswered. Who are the political groups supporting participation? Do they represent a specific social group in the city? Given the city's balance of power, what is the likelihood of these groups being elected? What are the strategies used by the groups opposing participation? Are these strategies embedded in the political culture of the city? If so, what are the incentives for the targeted population to choose participation over traditional and more familiar forms of political engagement?

The last question brings us to the second variable: civil society strength. The framework put forward by Avritzer focuses on the density of the *associative network* demanding access to public goods. Density is measured in quantitative terms: the larger the number of civil society groups advocating for access to public goods the better the chances of participatory initiatives. In Wampler's framework the density of civil society is a relevant but secondary factor; the focus is on the "ability of [civil society organizations] to simultaneously engage in cooperative and contentious politics" (p.88). The success of a participatory mechanism depends on civil society groups' ability to take advantage of the opportunity to participate in government without losing their capacity to confront politicians when needed. Borba and Lüchmann's framework focuses on *local associative traditions*, which considers the density of civil society as well as the dominant types of organization in the city. In this case, it matters not only how many organizations are found in a city, but also the ways in which they are used to interacting with the government; for example, civil society groups with a tradition of direct confrontation with the state may hesitate to participate in institutional channels opened by the government.

In examining the role of civil society in participatory initiatives, analyses that take into account local associative traditions are more likely to yield insight into the social and political factors favoring or inhibiting participatory democracy. A study of participatory democracy in

Montevideo, Uruguay, has shown that local associative traditions help to explain differences in outcomes even within the same city (Canel, 2011). It is possible, however, to take this concept a step further. What are the structural conditions in which local associative cultures are grounded? Are these structural conditions changing in ways that facilitate or inhibit social and political organization aimed at local-level participation? Should structural conditions be taken into account when designing participatory institutions?

In all three frameworks, analyses of institutional designs (the third variable) are limited by the exclusive empirical focus on the post-1988 Brazilian context. Avrtizer's framework examines PB and health councils, and city master plans, which allow citizens to approve or reject cities' mid-term development plans. The other two frameworks are based on studies of PB. In the three cases, emphasis is on how much decision-making power is transferred to civil society, and whether this power comes at the cost of civil society's autonomy. Some attention is also paid to whether initiatives include mechanisms that favor the participation of disadvantaged groups.

This third variable is useful in categorizing and assessing the myriad of participatory initiatives implemented in Brazil in the last decades. It is particularly helpful in distinguishing between initiatives that aim to include civil society and those used as a progressive façade to otherwise conservative governments. However, this variable is less pertinent for broader analysis of participatory democracy. As this dissertation shows, the political institutional context that led to the creation of the specific mechanisms taken into account in these frameworks was the result of idiosyncratic processes in Brazil, which are unlikely to be reproduced elsewhere. Scholars should not overlook the specificity of this context and assume that similar conditions can be found elsewhere. Instead, it is necessary to ask what can be learned from the particular way in which mechanisms for direct citizen participation became an integral part of the political system.

The section The Present Study discusses in more detail how the approach put forward in this dissertation can help to answer the questions raised in this section.

Health Councils

Citizen councils are a common practice and their formats vary greatly. In Brazil, councils began to emerge at the end of the military regime (late 1970s); some of these were completely autonomous from formal political institutions, whereas others were created by politicians trying to democratize public administration. The precursory councils are discussed in the case studies and in chapter six. The literature discussed here is based on policy councils implemented in the 1990s. The 1988 Constitution sanctioned the creation of policy councils at the federal, state, and municipal levels in various areas of public services. At the municipal level, the main areas of public councils are health, education, social assistance, and children services. In 1996, legislation made federal fund transfers to states and municipal governments conditioned on the existence of policy councils. Since then the number of councils has grown rapidly, especially in the health sector where transfers are most significant (Gohn, 2001).

One of the criticisms of councils is that they lack well-defined institutional formats and mayors have too much influence over their functioning. Therefore, it is difficult to describe the specific functioning of these participatory spaces. In the institutional framework set by the constitution policy councils are directly attached to the executive arm of governments and are comprised of representatives of the state, civil society, and service providers; 50 percent of council seats are reserved for civil society and the other 50 percent are equally divided between state and service providers. Councils are meant to be an opportunity for state representatives to inform the population about their policies and receive input from civil society organizations and service providers. Council members should inspect the use of public funds and deliberate about

the management of public services. In areas with well-organized and active civil societies, councils at least in part serve these purposes. However, empirical evidence suggests that most councils are mere consultative bodies where members express their opinions without any commitment on the part of state representatives to follow through on any of it. In the worst cases, council members are chosen by mayors and instructed not to raise questions; their role is simply to guarantee the transfer of federal funds (Gohn 2001; Coelho, 2004; Coelho & Veríssimo, 2004).

The literature on health councils is the most extensive in this field, and has long been wary of the limitations of participatory mechanisms. In the late 1980s, Cohn (1987; see also 1992) used studies of health councils to challenge the assumption that decentralization alone would spur participation and lead to the strengthening of citizenship. Throughout the 1990s, numerous studies of health councils and other policy councils were published, mostly empirical works that depicted mixed results of successes and failures.[6] By the early-2000s, few theoretical advances had been made. Since then a prolific collaboration between researchers at the Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning (Centro Brasileiro de Análises e Planejamento, CEBRAP) and their counterparts at the British Institute for Development Studies (IDS) has helped to advance knowledge in this field.

In the early 2000s, Coelho (2004) pointed out that "the literature has attributed the success or failure of participatory mechanisms either to the degree of civil society involvement or to the level of commitment to such mechanisms on the part of the political authorities" (p.33). She argued these to be necessary but not sufficient conditions for effective policy councils, and posited that more attention needed to be paid to institutional factors. The rules used for selecting

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[6] Numerous studies can be found in the following academic journals: *Cadernos Cedec*, *Boletim Participação e Saúde*, *Saúde e Sociedade*, *Sáude em Debate*, and *São Paulo em Perspectiva*.

representatives of civil society organizations were not clearly stated in the design of councils, and neither were decision-making procedures. In São Paulo, for example, the selection of civil society representatives for health councils varied from district to district; public officials in some districts were committed to trying to include historically marginalized groups, whereas in others they simply contacted the most active groups (Coelho & Veríssimo, 2004). In recent years the literature has paid more attention to institutional design, and studies began to enquire about the representativeness of civil society delegates.

Analyses of the representativeness and adeptness of civil society representatives have been put forward by CEBRAP and IDS researchers. A provocative IDS paper argued that the assumption that individual citizens have ready access to channels of participation was largely unfounded; instead, participation is better understood as "a contingent outcome, produced as collective actors…negotiate relations in a pre-existing institutional terrain that constrains and facilitates particular types of action" (Acharya, Lavalle, & Houtzager, 2004, p. 41). This new approach, which the authors called the "polity perspective," focuses on trying to understand how institutional contexts encourage or hinder the participation of certain civil society groups.

In 2005, the same authors pushed the argument further by suggesting that the assumption that civil society organizations autonomous from political parties and state agencies better served the interests of the groups they represent was misplaced. Research in São Paulo showed the opposite: civil organizations with close ties to political and state actors (especially the PT) had better information about participatory processes and more ability to influence outcomes, and as a result were also more motivated to partake in such initiatives. Most of these organizations did not have a formal membership, which made their relationship with purported beneficiaries unclear,

raising concerns about the legitimacy of representation in policy councils (Lavalle, Acharya, &

Houtzager, 2005).

The authors then delved further into the question of the democratic legitimacy of civil

society organizations. "Organized civil society is laying claim to political representation in

contemporary democracies, destabilizing long-standing ideas about democratic legitimacy"

(Houtzager & Lavalle, 2010, p. 1). In a survey of 229 civil associations in São Paulo, Houtzager

and Lavalle found that organizations do not have formal mechanisms for their constituencies to

openly demonstrate their approval for the organizations' work. What exists therefore is an

assumed representation (*representação presumtiva*) from the part of the civil associations.

Leaders of associations offered six fairly well defined and consistent justifications for their

representative status, and only one of these relied on election by the membership. The most

common justification is the "mediation argument" that is based on the idea that state institutions

are inaccessible to certain sectors of the population, and organizations access these institutions in

the name of excluded groups. The claim of legitimacy is not grounded on the relations between

the organizations and its membership, but on the latter's access to the state. The standing

question is whether this is an emerging form of legitimate representation or simply a distortion of

the traditional forms of representation found in political parties and unions (Houtzager & Lavalle,

2010).

Echoing arguments made by CEBRAP and IDS scholars, Dagnino and Tatagiba (2010)

raised interesting questions about developments within "participatory democratic movements,"

which are marked by an anti-state attitude characteristic of a political context that has already

passed (i.e., the re-democratization period). Most of these movements are now involved with

government agencies or political parties; in this new configuration, a movement's relationship

with formal political actors becomes, at times, more important than its connection to the groups it defends. There is a trade-off between political efficacy and autonomy. However, autonomy is not simply the absence of contact with state agents, but the ability to negotiate with the state while maintaining a "critical distance." Dagnino and Tatagiba question the usefulness of the concept of autonomy and cooptation: "are these concepts still useful in trying to understand the nature and meaning of new interaction between state and civil society?" (p.17). The authors note that in the Brazilian case this relationship is even more complicated in PT administrations because of the proximity of social movements and political leaders, and the former's willingness to sacrifice short-term goals in order to preserve the image of the party. In some cases, social movements may even incorporate the electoral logic of political parties. Thus, the authors argue, the important questions are how movements negotiate their relationship with parties and state agencies, and whether they manage to preserve their core democratic values despite the strategies adopted to reach the desired material goals.

In 2011, the Brazilian journal *Lua Nova* organized a special issued on the relationship between participation and representation, titled *Após Participation* (After Participation). The volume largely follows the argumentative line of CEBRAP and IDS researchers. In an insightful conceptual piece, Lüchmann (2011) called the new layer of representation discussed by Lavalle and colleagues *representação conselhista* (council representation). She argued that this form of political engagement is part of the repertoire of actions of civic associations, and is combined, sometimes in a tense manner, with other political strategies. According to Lüchmann, there are two analytical gains in thinking of these practices as forms of political representation. First, it allows us to examine whether these alternative channels of representation are used to advance demands and interests that have been barred from the electoral representation process, in which

case they would be contributing to the betterment of the democratic system; or if these channels are used by already represented groups, in which case we would be witnessing a case of overrepresentation. Second, treating these forms of civic participation as political representation permits us to explore how they contribute to the strengthening of the representative system. Once different kinds of representation are recognized, it is then possible to discuss what is expected of representatives, what associations are qualified to play these representative roles, and what accountability would entail in different contexts. In other words, bringing forms of participation previously seen as direct democracy to the realm of representative politics opens up a myriad of new ways of conceptualizing and empirically examining the relationship between citizens, intermediary organizations, and state agencies.

The variables used in explaining successes and failures of health councils are the same as the ones used in PB frameworks discussed in the previous section: political commitment, civil society strength, and institutional design. Researchers in the field recognize that these variables are insufficient to explain variation in the outcome of health councils, and current research seeks to better understand the broader institutional context of participatory initiatives. However, a weakness of this literature is that much of the empirical work supporting the theoretical postulates discussed above was conducted in the post-1988 Brazilian context, more specifically, in the city of São Paulo, which is a specific context even within Brazil, i.e., the largest and most industrial city of the country. The arguments for the usefulness of structural and historical institutional analyses postulated in the previous section also hold here. As discussed in detail in the Present Study section, a comprehensive historical analysis of the emergence and evolution of participatory democracy in Brazil can shed a new light on some of the question raised by the works discussed in this section.

Normative Debates

Thus far this chapter has mostly focused on research on the challenges of implementation and effective institutionalization of participatory mechanisms. There has also been a normative debate about the purpose of participation. As noted in the introduction, civil society participation has become part of distinct political projects. Since the late-1970s, participation was part of the discourse of broad Latin American social movements' demand for re-democratization. In the 1990s, international development agencies, especially the World Bank, turned to participation as a way to legitimatize and increase the efficacy of economic policies that had become unpopular in the 1980s. As a result, civil society participation became espoused by groups with very distinct political projects, which drew on different theoretical traditions (Dagnino, 2007; Howell & Pearce, 2001). This section of the chapter presents a review of this normative debate that illustrates that neither view considers the possibility that direct citizen participation may have a distinct role in different stages of the democratization process of a country. As this dissertation shows, in Brazil participatory ideals and practices evolved over time, which makes it difficult to support any rigid view of the essential value or adequate form of participation.

On one side of the debate, scholars focus on the emancipatory potential of citizen participation, which is assumed to be able to fundamentally transform state-society relations. In the 2000s, volumes organized by Dagnino and colleagues were the main proponents of this view in Latin America (Dagnino, 2002; Dagnino, Olvera, & Panfichi, 2006b; Dagnino & Tatagiba, 2007). Santos (2002) edited the widely read compilation *Democratizar a Democracia* (To Democratize Democracy)*,* which brought together case studies from different parts of the developing world, and presented participatory democracy as an alternative to "(un)representative democracy." In North America, volumes organized by Roussopoulos and Benello (2003) and Fung and Wright (2003) offered case studies and critical analyses that furthered this perspective.

On the other side of the debate, international development agencies embraced what is often referred to as the neo-Tocquevillean perspective, but will here be called the conventional view. In the 1990s, Putman (1993, 1995) revived the term social capital, which soon became "the missing link" of development theory (Fine, 1999). In response to empirical evidence supporting the claim of market imperfections, some economists recognized that social capital was an essential aspect of the functioning of markets, and that "low stocks" of it helped to explain the inability of markets to spur development. In the 1990s, the World Bank also adopted a "good governance" language that allowed it to become involved in political aspects previously avoided by the Bank. In the Bank's new emphasis on government efficiency and accountability, civil society plays a double role of helping to control government excesses and taking on some responsibilities previously ascribed to states (Leftwich, 1993).

As of 2012, the waning of the neoliberal project weakened this normative debate, but the literature still offers two distinct views of the purpose of participation. In the emancipatory side, Pearce's (2010) most recent edited volume brought together studies that continue to plead for the transformative potential of citizen participation. In the introductory chapter, Pearce distinguished between "participatory governance" and "participatory democracy." The former "encourages the formation of a category of 'participant citizen.' However, rather than autonomous and self-driven, it is made subject to a new neoliberal governance regime" (p.14-15). Pearce argues that participatory governance only decentralizes to local communities activities that were previously a state responsibility, while decision-making power is recentralized. Participatory democracy, on the other hand, "is based on principles of popular sovereignty and direct involvement of all citizens, including and especially the poorest, in decision making" (p.15). The case studies

examine Latin American and British communities neglected by or unsatisfied with the first model who are now pursuing emancipation through meaningful participation.

In works published in recent years, Dagnino continues to warn readers about what she sees as muffled forms of citizen participation. "Under neo-liberalism, participation is defined instrumentally, in relation to the needs derived from the 'structural adjustment' of the economy and the transfer of the state's social responsibilities to civil society and the private sector" (Dagnino, 2010, p. 33). Regarding the Brazilian case, the author is skeptical of the reforms advanced in the Cardoso administration (1995-2001). "The reform of the state that was implemented in Brazil in 1998 under the influence of Minister Bresser Pereira (who introduced the principles of the 'New Public Management') is very clear in relation to the different roles of the 'strategic nucleus of the State' and of social organizations. The former retains a clear monopoly over decision-making" (Dagnino, 2010, p. 33). Thus, in line with Pearce, Dagnino continues to hold that there are more and less democratic types of participation.

In the conventional side of normative debates there have been economic studies further supporting the instrumental usefulness of participation and some developments towards analyses that integrate direct citizen participation and the representative system. In 2007, the World Bank published an edited volume titled *Participatory Budgeting* (Shah, 2007) with cases studies from various parts of the developing world, which consists of a valuable empirical contribution to a literature with a disproportionate focus on Brazil. The introduction makes clear the perspective from which these cases are examined.

> Done right, [participatory budgeting] has the potential to make governments more
> responsive to citizens' needs and preferences and more accountable to them for
> performance in resource allocation and service delivery. (p.1)

The term "empowerment" is used in parts of the volume, but without any conceptual clarification of the term's meaning.

In 2008, the Bank published the most comprehensive quantitative analysis to date of the Brazilian PB.[7] The study concluded that, "participatory budgeting as a mechanism for improving pro-poor capital investments has contributed to ameliorating the living conditions of the poor in the municipalities where it has been adopted" (World Bank, 2008, p. 91).The impact on income and poverty was found only in cities where the PB was in place for at least ten years, but "it is worth noting that this poverty impact occurred despite a reduction in GDP per capita in these municipalities, suggesting that [PB] can contribute to a redistributive impact in the long run" (p.15). This study is widely cited in the literature, including by those whose normative views differ from that of the Bank.

A stream within the conventional view has focused attention on how participation can improve the quality of democracies in Latin America. A *quality democracy* has been defined as "one that provides its citizens a high degree of freedom, political equality, and popular control over public policies and policy makers through the legitimate and lawful functioning of stable institutions" (Diamond & Morlino, 2005, p. xi). In the framework put forward by Diamond and Morlino, democracies vary in quality on eight dimensions, one of which is participation.[8] In the this dimension, quality is high when citizens participate in the political process not only through

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[7] This study compared 48 cities with participatory budgets with a control group of cities without the program. Researchers managed to isolate the impact of PT administrations, which are known for having progressive pro-poor policies and are the most likely to implement PB. The percentage of votes for the PT was included as a permanent control variable, which helped to isolate long-run political processes from the impact of the PB.

[8] The remaining are the rule of law, competition, vertical and horizontal accountability, respect for civil and political freedoms, and the progressive implementation of political equality.

voting, but also by joining political parties and civil society organizations, partaking in the discussion of public-policy issues, communicating with and demanding accountability from elected representatives, monitoring the conduct of public office-holders, and engaging in public issues at the local community level.

As a research agenda, the democratic quality approach emphasizes the workings of the institutions and mechanisms of representative democracy. A recent World Bank volume brings together various contributions from this perspective. In his chapter, Peruzzotti (2011) uses the term "social accountability" to refer to mechanisms that support democracy by "adding new voices and concerns to the political sphere" (p.55) either through pressure exerted by social movements or the more institutionalized participation in the channels such as policy councils and participatory budgeting. (p.55). According to Peruzzotti, the most significant aspect of the new wave of democratization in Latin America is the shift from authoritarian and populist political cultures that bestows a "blank check" to executive leaders to a "healthy concerns for the workings of horizontal mechanisms of 'institutionalized distrust'''(p.57).

The book *Participatory Innovation and Representative Democracy in Latin America* (Peruzzotti & Selee, 2009) also presents various studies from this perspective. "The basic assumption of this volume is that any politics of the institutional betterment of representative democracy must address the question of how to productively combine participation and representation" (p.3). In the chapter on Brazil, Melo (2011) calls attention to overlooked shortcomings of the PB model and argues that the exaggerated focus on channels of direct participation have played down the transformative potential of formal institutions such as the Court of Account (Tribunal de Contas, TC). The PB model allows the mayor to bypass the legislative chamber, and in some cases it is implemented exactly with this objective. As a

consequence, the mayor increases his authority vis-à-vis the chambers, and weakens the relationship between councilors and citizens. In contrast, "TCs are constitutionally defined as ancillary bodies of the legislative branch, with the purpose of examining the accounts of the three branches of government" (p.32). Melo argues that more attention should be paid to channels of vertical and horizontal accountability that regulate the use of public funds, as opposed to direct channels of participation that may weaken institutional arrangements.

The historical approach to the study of participatory democracy in Brazil advanced in this dissertation challenges adamant stances about the real purpose or proper format of participation. The ideals and practices of citizen participation in Brazil changed in responses to both structural and broader institutional transformations. On the one hand, the emancipatory view overlooks the limits that broader political-institutional contexts impose on local-level participatory initiatives. The notion that the latter will eventually reform the former is often an unfounded assumption and this dissertation shows that the opposite is more likely. On the other hand, the conventional view is too quick to interpret citizen participation as an integral part of representative democracy, not considering that it might be against or antagonistic to it.

This dissertation argues for a simple but important distinction: direct citizen participation is influenced by national-level political-institutional contexts, but its purpose is not always to contribute to the functioning of the representative system. The purpose of citizen participation is an empirical question that requires taking into account the overall political-institutional context and the other alternatives that citizens have to express their preferences and satisfy their needs. Direct citizen participation is not always a goal in itself nor it is always intended to support the representative system.

The Present Study

This final section discusses how the present study contributes to the literature on PB, policy councils, and participatory democracy more broadly. As noted in the first section, this dissertation has two distinct but interrelated objectives. The first is to argue for the usefulness of structural analysis in studies of local-level participatory initiatives. It is here argued that a better understanding of the emergence and functioning of these initiatives requires a deeper analysis of the political forces promoting and opposing citizen participation, and the conditions spurring and inhibiting civil society mobilization. The second objective is to propose an alternative interpretation of the emergence of participatory democracy in Brazil, which besides challenging the widespread conventional narrative on historical grounds, supports the argument that it is necessary to take into account the national-level political-institutional context when examining local-level participatory practices. Having reviewed the literature on the subject, it is now possible to discuss how the argument and interpretation here advanced, challenge, contrast with, and contribute to other works.

The three theoretical frameworks discussed in the PB section of this chapter present an invaluable advance in the literature (Borba and Lüchmann, 2007; Wampler, 2007; Avritzer, 2009); they summarized in analytically useful ways a vast amount of empirical knowledge, and helped to move the PB literature from a predominantly empirical stage to a more theoretical research agenda. Notwithstanding these advances, if the objective of this agenda is to examine whether "the successful experiences in Brazilian cities [can] be reproduced in places where the conditions may be very different" (Avritzer, 2009, p.3), theorizing cannot be limited to contexts where the enabling conditions are present in different degrees. Researchers must take a step further and examine how these conditions emerge and what explains their strength or weakness.

In other words, studies must take into account the structural conditions that spur or hinder civil society organization and influence political groups' attitude towards direct citizen participation.

In the case studies examined in this dissertation, political groups that came into power in the examined period had a strong commitment to citizen participation, which helps to explain why participatory initiatives were implemented. However, there were notable variations in these cases. In Lages, the break with the coronéis' power was only temporary as traditional elites were strong and well connected with higher levels of government, and in 1982 managed to elect a mayor to dismantle the participatory structure. In Diadema, the traditional political network was weaker and the working class larger, and the PT was able to elect successive mayors that continued participatory programs. Boa Esperança is an intermediary example: the city did not have a political group that opposed citizen participation, but personal political rivalries precluded the continuation of programs that became associated with a specific politician. There was neither fierce opposition nor continuation and participatory programs were rekindled every time this particular politician was elected. It is insufficient to posit that the coming to power of a political party committed with direct citizen participation increases the probability of successful participatory initiatives. It necessary to also examine what is the likeliness of this particular group to win an election and remain in power, and what are the main challenges it will confront. As discussed in the next chapter, structuralist analyses of democratization offer useful concepts that can help us to examine the formation of alliances in favor or against the expansion of participation in the local-level governments.

Likewise, in order to understand participatory initiatives it is important to pay attention not only to the density of civil society and local associative traditions, but also to take into account the main factors inhibiting and spurring civil society mobilization. The case studies

illustrate how structural conditions can have a different impact on mobilization for participatory democracy. In Lages, the only partial industrialization freed menial workers from the overt control of patrons, but workers continued to live in isolated rural areas and preserved the deference to landlords. The population of Diadema was constituted largely of migrants free from patron-client ties, and as an industrial town, a large portion of its inhabitants supported the PT. However, the city's distance from roads and railways made it a latecomer in the industrialization process and significantly poorer than its neighboring towns, a factor that fueled a more radical political discourse among civil society groups, which at times clashed with the vision of more moderate PT politicians. Civil society mobilization in Boa Esperança was largely influenced by two external factors: changes in the leadership of the Catholic Church, and the ups and downs of coffee prices. It is here argued that it is not possible to fully understand the challenges facing participatory innovation without taking into account these structural conditions.

Finally, it is necessary to analyze more closely the formation of the post-1988 Brazilian political-institutional context and try to draw useful lessons for those interested in implementing participatory programs in places "where conditions may be very different." The present study proposes an alternative interpretation of the emergence of participatory democracy in Brazil that places more emphasis than other accounts on how the national-level political-institutional context influenced participatory ideals and practices. The predominant narrative describes the 1970s as the period that witnessed the birth of social movements demanding more political participation and better public services. The 1988 Constitution is presented as having embodied the radical democratic ideals of the time and made local-level participatory democracy possible through various articles that endorse it. Great emphasis is placed on the role of the PT as the main champion of popular participation in public administration. Empirically, the focus is on

participatory models created in the early-1990s, and initiatives taking place thereafter. In this interpretation, the glory days of participatory initiatives were the 1990s.

This account is generally correct, but a careful historical analysis uncovers significant nuances of both historical and theoretical value. The 1970s witnessed the emergence of active social movements, participatory ideals, and concrete experiences with local-level participatory democracy. The participatory ideals of this time were influenced by the political-institutional context and by interpretations of the country's history of political exclusion. As a consequence, the type of participation advocated in the 1970s was in some ways rather radical. Though participatory movements mainly focused on concrete social and economic issues and did not advocate the use of violence, they were radical in that they rejected all previous forms of political participation, including the representative system and political parties. When ideals were put into practice in municipal governments of the late-1970s and early-to-mid-1980s, the aim was to create fundamentally different forms of state-civil society relations. The participatory administrations of the time tried to do away with political mediation and replace representative institutions for varied forms of community self-government. Remarkably, these early initiatives espoused the emancipatory view of participatory democracy more fully than the widely studied 1990s initiatives, which by then had incorporated direct citizen participation into the logic of party politics. Whereas the literature has portrayed the 1980s as the period in which progressive forces coalesced to give shape to the radical participatory initiatives of the 1990s, this dissertation contends that this was the time in which participatory ideals and practices became more moderate in response to the new political-institutional context.

This alternative interpretation amends some widely spread historical inaccuracies. For example, as discussed in chapter six, defiant proposals for direct participation were rejected by

the Constituent Assembly, and only the more moderate demands were included in the final text. It also recovers the history of these forgotten precursory initiatives; information about Lages and Boa Esperança is not found in the English literature, and studies written in Portuguese are hard to find even in Brazil. Diadema received slightly more attention since it was the first PT municipal administration (Simões, 1992; Keck, 1992), but it has been obscured by the Porto Alegre case. The PT also governed two state capitals in the 1980s, where attempts to implement participatory initiatives failed; these experiences, also discussed in chapter six, are largely omitted in the literature.

The interpretation proposed here also has theoretical implications. The argument that participatory ideals and practices changed in response to transformations in the broader political-institutional context opens the possibility for a different interpretation of the relationship between direct citizen participation and representation: the role of direct citizen participation is contingent on other channels for political participation. In the Brazilian case, citizen participation was practically non-existent until the 1930s, when dramatic structural changes weakened political elites and allowed for the emergence of new social groups demanding participation. In 1964, the channels that been opened for these groups were closed by the military, and direct participation was advocated and served as a proxy and not a complement for representation. In this period, participation was intended to bypass and not improve representative institutions. In the 1980s, the political system was reformed and citizens and social groups found new ways to have their interests and needs represented. In this context, direct participation was an additional democratic mechanism that works to improve other democratic institutions.

The literature on health councils has focused on the puzzle of whether participation in councils is direct citizen participation or a new form of representation. My new interpretation

supports the advances made by the above-cited scholars by showing that participatory democracy in Brazil has not always been a principled alternative, but also a political strategy that emerged in a specific political-institutional context wherein representative and other forms of political participation were not available. Once this context changed, and other political channels were open, direct participation lost much of its normative appeal, and became one of many political strategies that could be combined with other forms of political engagement, as Lüchmann (2011) has also suggested. Nonetheless, the 1970s' normative ideals have endured in the Brazilian political imaginary and to this date make it difficult for scholars and activists to acknowledge that direct citizen participation is not always the most appropriate alternative, and that certain forms of representation may in some cases be a more feasible option. A historical understanding of the evolution of participation in Brazil may help those committed to citizen participation to cast off certain long-standing tenets without needing to embrace the dispassionate conventional view.

This dissertation is organized as follows. The remainder of this introduction outlines the research work conducted for this dissertation and discusses the methodological approach guiding this project. Chapter one outlines the conceptual framework used to interpret developments in the national-level political-institutional context, and then uses the presented concepts to describe the evolution of the country's representative system from 1889 to 1985. In the terms of the adopted framework, this chapter describes the first steps of the transition from a limited to an open access order, which is argued to be a necessary condition for the emergence of participatory processes. Chapter two discusses the participatory discourses of the 1970s, which were intrinsically related with the processes and institutions examined in chapter one. A close analysis of these discourses

helps us to understand how direct citizen participation was conceptualized and put into practice in the 1970s and early-1980.

Chapters three to five present case studies of participatory municipal administrations in the late-1970s and early-1980s: Lages, in the state of Santa Catarina, from 1978 to 1982; Boa Esperança, in the state of Espírito Santo, from 1978 to 1982; and Diadema, in the state of São Paulo, from 1982 to 1988. The objective of these chapters is fourfold. 1) To demonstrate that in all three cases the inception of participatory processes followed changes in structural conditions that undermined local political elites. 2) To show that the formats of participatory initiatives were directly related to local economic contexts. 3) To offer a contrast with participatory practices that emerged in the early-1990s, which corroborates the argument about the influence of national-level processes and institutions. 4) To document valuable experiences with local-level participatory democracy that have received little attention in the literature but that can be useful examples of how to promote participation in contexts different from post-1988 Brazil.

Chapter six shows how the participatory discourses and practices examined in chapters two to six changed in the course of the 1980s. In this period, an increasing emphasis began to be given to political mediation through political parties, and direct participation went from being hostile to party politics to become part of the program of a political party. Noteworthy, the 1988 National Constituent Assembly rejected proposed amendments attempting to institutionalize participatory mechanisms akin to the ones implemented in the late-1970s. The national political-institutional context that emerged at the end of the decade restrained the discourse and practices of participatory democracy, making them more compatible with the representative system. The final chapter discusses how the history of participatory democracy in Brazil, as interpreted in this dissertation, corroborates the proposed theoretical arguments.

Research and Method

The present study is, in essence, a comparative historical analysis. "While not unified by one theory or one method, all work in this tradition does share a concern with causal analysis, an emphasis on processes over time, and the use of systematic and contextualized comparison" (Mahoney & Rueschemeyer, 2003, p. 10). The next chapters present a comparison of three local-level democratization processes culminating in participatory experiences, which were shaped by the same national level developments, including structural changes that were part of the same industrialization and urbanization processes, but that affected the three cases differently.

One challenge in using this method is to uphold the commitment to causal analysis without imposing restrictions that impede the study of processes that change over time. Hall (2007) has discussed the two extreme approaches to causal analysis. On the one hand, cultural study shines light on the richness of local realities and the intricacies of discourse, but "lacks the tools for systematic investigation of social problems and a taste for fashioning practical solutions to them." (p.139). On the other hand, the radical materialism of some economic methods has infiltrated other social sciences, replacing inductive thinking fuelled by history and political imagination with deductive modeling with questionable generalizing power. While not adopting interpretative or postmodern approaches, this dissertation is not bound by rules designed for research that attempts to replicate the experimental method. Instead, this study adopts a Weberian notion of *adequate causation*.

Weber (1949) argued that "an *exhaustive* causal investigation of any concrete phenomena in its full reality is not only practically impossible – it is simply nonsense. We select only those causes to which are to be imputed in the individual case, the 'essential' feature of an event" (p.78). Ringer (1997) posited, "what we want to know about a historical outcome in retrospect is

what 'causes' can be identified as having 'favored' it to a more or less significant degree." (p.69).

In this perspective, a cause is "a factor that, in conjunction with other background conditions, is comparatively likely and thus 'adequate' to bring about the outcome, rather than other possible alternatives" (p.4). The objective is not to find an abstract law that leads from A to B, but to impute how factors came together to lead to B, and not to C (Weber, 1949).

The present study does not try to stipulate a single causal relationship between a specific variable and the emergence of participatory administrations. Instead, the aim is to show variables that have *favored* to a more or less significant degree the emergence of these initiatives. It was possible for similar initiatives to appear in contexts with comparable but not identical conditions, as they in fact did.[9] This does not invalidate the fact that this study examines the essential features of these administrations and offers an *adequate causal* explanation for their emergence. It does, however, beg the question of why these three cases and not others.

The three case studies were chosen so as to allow a comparison of initiatives motivated by distinct participatory discourses. The selection criterion was to choose the most developed

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[9] The archives of the Instituto Brasileiro de Administração Municipal (Arquivo IBAM) contain short descriptions of participatory initiatives between 1978 and 1985 in the following cities: Americana (São Paulo), Caeté (Minas Gerais), Camaçari (Bahia), Colinas (Maranhão), Matão (São Paulo), Nilópolis (Rio de Janeiro), Santa Cruz do Capibaribe (Pernambuco), Toledo (Paraná), and Vila Velha (Espírito Santo). In the same archives references to various small participatory programs are also found. The archives of the newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* contain references to experiences in Pindamonhangaba (São Paulo) and Feira de Santana (Bahia) in the late 1970s ("Governo com as bases em Feira de Santana," 1976; "Pindamonhangaba," 1976). A smaller newspaper has published an article about a participatory budgeting in São José dos Campos (São Paulo) between 1978 and 1980 (Costa, 2001). Public officials in Porto Alegre often refer to Pelotas (Rio Grande do Sul) as the first experience; see (Gugliano, Loeck, Orsato, & Pereira, 2008). Relatively better known cases in the second half of the 1980s include São Paulo (Couto, 1995), Fortaleza (Pinto, 1992), Recife (Soares & Lostao, 1992), and Salvador (Fernandes, 2004).

precursory participatory municipal administration motivated by each of the three discourses examined in chapter two. It is difficult to unequivocally assert that the three examined cases were the most developed in the country, but archival research and consultations with experienced scholars in the field granted the author a high level of confidence on the choices made. The exception is the city of Piracicaba, in the state of São Paulo, where a variety of participatory initiatives were also created in the late-1970s.[10] The reason for not including Piracicaba in this study was that in many ways it resembled the case of Lages, and including both cities risked making the text repetitive. Preference was given to Lages in order to expand the geographical scope of the study, given that Diadema is also in São Paulo. These experiences took place in distinct socio-economic contexts, which allowed for a comparison of the impact of the structural changes the country underwent.

It is possible to interpret the case selection approached used here as "selecting on the dependent variable," i.e., intentionally choosing the most successful initiatives. This is only partially true because the main objective of this study is not to evaluate the success of these initiatives, but to describe how participation was understood and implemented, and therefore it would make no sense to examine initiatives that did not leave the ground. Furthermore, although scholars that favor large-N studies frown upon studies that select on the dependent variable, proponents of qualitative research have convincingly argued for the usefulness of this method. Small N qualitative research that selects on the dependent variable is more likely to generate

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[10] See DelPicchia (1982) for a journalist's book on Piracicaba's experience, and Hernmann Neto (1984) for a testimony of the mayor responsible for the initiative. The cities of Vilha Velha and Toledo also seem to have reached high levels of organization, including the creation of city councils and incipient forms of participatory budgeting.

novel interpretations of historical processes, which is precisely the objective of this research (George & Bennett, 2005).

Despite changing methodological trends, comparative historical analysis has long had a secure, even if at times marginal space within the social sciences (Mahoney & Rueschemeyer, 2003). In recent decades, this approach fueled a productive research agenda in democratization studies (Mahoney, 2003), of which the framework proposed by Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens (1992) and the comprehensive analysis of Collier and Collier (1991), both used in this study, are only a couple of examples. The literature on participatory democracy has not, however, taken advantage of this method. The reasons for this seem to be the widespread assumption that participatory programs in Brazil started only in the 1990s. This method seems the most fit for the present dissertation, which examines historical processes in an attempt to narrow the existing gap between studies of local-level participatory initiatives and broader analyses of democratization.

The empirical material for this dissertation was collected during a one-year field research period in Brazil, when the author was a visiting researcher at the University of São Paulo's Nucleus of Research in Public Policy (Núcleo de Pesquisas em Políticas Públicas). Research included interviews with government officials responsible for the participatory administrations examined in chapters four to six. Two weeks were spent in the state of Santa Catarina, where interviews were conducted with six former officials of the city of Lages. Unpublished dissertations on the experience were found in universities in the state. Two weeks were spent in the state of Espírito Santo, where two-thirds of the team formerly in charge of the city of Boa Esperança and the former Bishop of the local diocese were interviewed. The existence of secondary literature and archival material about the participatory experience in the city of Diadema made interviews less necessary. Day-trips to the city were spent mostly in the archive

of the Centro de Memória de Diadema; only the former mayor was interviewed. Moreover, numerous days were spent in the Centro de Documentação Vergueiro, an independent, activist-run archive in the city of São Paulo. Valuable documents were found in the archives of the Instituto Brasileiro de Administração Municipal, in Rio de Janeiro. The discussion about the National Constituent Assembly is based on an analysis of official proceedings available on the website of the Brazilian Senate. Finally, useful 1970s' and 1980s' publications of limited circulation were found in the libraries Florestan Fernandes, at the University of São Paulo, and John P. Robarts, at the University of Toronto.

Chapter 1: The Brazilian (Un)Representative System

The participatory ideals fuelling the first participatory administrations in Brazil emerged in the

1970s in response to the façade representative system of the military regime and previous forms

of political exclusion. In this period, direct citizen participation was conceptualized and put into

practice as an alternative to representative institutions. This approach changed over the course of

the 1980s as representative institutions were reformed and direct citizen participation began to be

seen as complementary to representation, and even became part of the program of a political

party. This chapter focuses on the evolution of the Brazilian representative system; it describes

how landed oligarchies controlled the political system from the instauration of the republic in

1889 to the end of the 1920s, and then examines the slow and uneven process of political

incorporation that started with the 1930 Revolution and was halted by the 1964 coup d'état. The

partial and controlled character of democratization in this period is fundamental for

understanding the participatory movements that emerged in the 1970s, which are the focus of the

next chapter. Before delving into an historical overview of Brazilian democracy, it is necessary

to discuss the concepts here used to analyze the different types of democratic systems. The first

section of this chapter presents a conceptual framework, and the second section applies it to the

Brazilian case.

The Conceptual Framework

The focus of the present study is citizen participation and how it evolved through time in

response to changes in the country's political system and structural conditions. Consequently, the

conceptual framework used in this dissertation combines concepts from historical institutionalist

and structuralist analyses of democratization. These concepts will help to categorize the different

periods and main actors in the development of the Brazilian democratic system. This admittedly simplified categorization will allow for an examination of how citizen participation was thought of and practiced in distinct periods and contexts.

In focusing on citizen participation, this dissertation knowingly overlooks other important factors that contribute to the development of a vigorous and well-functioning democracy. Other aspects of democracy are discussed throughout the dissertation only when and for as long as they help to understand the evolution of participation. This is a limitation of this dissertation, but one common in studies of multifaceted phenomena that choose to sacrifice breadth for depth. Direct citizen participation is not assumed to be more important than other aspects of democracy; it is simply a significant and interesting aspect, and as such worth closely examining.

In *Violence and Social Orders* (2009), North, Wallis, and Weingast propose an analytical framework to explain how societies controlled by small and powerful elites become open to the economic and political participation of all citizens. The authors call these two types of societies *limited access order* and *open access order*. In the former, elites control valuable resources and profitable activities, and are capable of preventing non-elite members to access them. The means for limiting access to lucrative activities are the overt use of violence and the safeguarding of the privilege of forming social organizations. Only elites are able to form social organizations, which further strengthens them vis-à-vis other individuals; these organizations facilitate collaboration and avoid violent struggle within the dominant elite coalition. From time to time internal or even outside contenders may successfully challenge elite arrangements, which causes temporary turmoil without altering the fundamental features of this social order. In other words, elite members move up and down elite hierarchies, and new members may even replace old members, but at the end a powerful elite continues to dominate the rest of society.

In limited access orders, patronage is the main type of relationship between elite members (patrons) and non-elite members (clients).

> The patrons' privileged position within the dominant coalition enables them to protect their clients from injuries caused by clients or other patrons (whether that protection is legal or physical) and their ability to distribute rewards and levy punishments among their clients (p.36).

Limited access societies are comprised of several patron-client networks; the larger the network and the larger amount of resources it controls, the higher the position of its head in the dominant elite coalition. The heads of the more powerful patron-client networks constitute the organization that governs the society; if this organization is not the state per se, it has much influence over it. In this type of society, the majority of individuals participate in political life only through subservient relations with patrons, who participate in intra-elite arrangements.

In turn, "an open access order exists only if a large number of individuals have the right to form organizations that can engage in a wide variety of economic, political and social activities" (p. 23). Formal and impartial institutions regulate peaceful competition for resources and political control. "The ability of political actors to use organized military or police power to coerce individuals is constrained by the ability of economic and other actors to compete for political control" (p.22). Whereas in a limited access order the dominant coalition includes the heads of the military forces, in an open access order the state controls the coercive apparatus, and social and economic groups are able to compete for control of the state. Moreover, constitutional arrangements deter groups in control of the state from using violence in unlawful ways.

In an open access order, state institutions treat citizens impersonally, and extend to them access to the law and to at least basic levels of infrastructure, education, and social insurance. In

this type of order, a market economy makes entry in the economic realm open to any citizen with the necessary resources and skills. The political system has political parties that represent diverse interests and ideologies, and there is no restriction on the formation of civil society organizations. Whereas in limited access orders individuals' wellbeing depends on relationships with patrons, in open access orders citizens have various alternatives for pursuing their needs and interests.

Whereas North et al.'s framework provides useful empirical categories that capture the economic, social, and political aspects of exclusion and participation, its casual explanation of the transition from limited to open access orders neglects crucial aspects of democratization. In this approach, transition is the result of the establishment of rules and institutions that facilitate non-violent interpersonal exchanges; at first, formal arrangements include only elite members, but are then gradually extended to all citizens. According to North et al., this process is controlled by the elites themselves who come to see as in their interest to have intra-elite relations arbitrated by formal institutions, and then slowly allow these institutions to include other groups. The authors pointed out that in England and France incorporation stemmed from the frustration of certain elites with their inability to form the corporations needed for economic undertakings, which was until then a privilege reserved to the more traditional elites. They also noted that this tension was the result of changes in the economic organization of these countries. However, this institutionalist framework does not include the economic processes fuelling intra-elite conflict as a condition of the transition to an open access order. Likewise, it minimizes the influence of social and political pressures from below, emphasizing instead the calculations of elite members. Material processes spurring intra-class conflicts and empowering subordinate groups are crucial in the transitions examined in this study, and examining them requires drawing on another theoretical tradition.

Structuralist analyses of democratization processes provide useful concepts to examine the transition from a limited toward a more open access order in Brazil. In their famous study, Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens (1992) argue that, "capitalist development affects the chances of democracy primarily because it transforms the class structure and changes the balance of power between classes" (p.47). According to these authors, the proponents of democracy are most likely to be the marginalized social classes that can most benefit from political opening; they are called the *subordinate classes*, and include the urban working class, small farmers, and agriculture labors. The fiercest opponent of democracy has historically been the large land-owning class. Rueschemeyer et al. argue that "capitalist development enlarges the urban working class at the expense of agricultural labors and small farmers; it thus shifts the members of the subordinate classes from an environment extremely unfavorable for collective action to one much more favorable" (p.58). In other words, capitalist development frees a large portion of the subordinate classes from the direct control of the opponents of democracy.

Moreover, Rueschemeyer et al. posit that the role of the bourgeoisie, i.e., owners of capital other than large landowners, in democratization processes varied according to the context. In some cases, the bourgeoisie joined or rallied the subordinate classes against the large land-owning class, in other cases it made alliances with landlords and the military in order to secure its material advantages. In South America, the latter has been the most common. Capitalist development in this continent gave origin to two types of political parties. In *clientelist parties*, middle-class groups forged broad alliances, including with traditional elites, and promoted limited political inclusion. In *mass radical parties*, middle-class groups joined the subordinate classes and pushed for full democratization. Radical parties were only successful where the urban working class was strong; otherwise elites were capable of reversing democratic advances.

Also discussing the Latin American context, Mandel (1973) explained that the piecemeal economic growth in the 1930-1960 period led to a permanent political crisis and the emergence of a *new oligarchy*. The working classes in these countries were smaller and more heterogeneous than in Western European countries, which made their organization more difficult and a bottom-up revolution unlikely. Instead, these countries witnessed the gradual crumbling of landed classes and the concomitant strengthening of the industrial class. The new oligarchy was formed mainly of industrialists, and backed populist governments who presented industrial development as an interclass nationalist project. Oxhorn (2011) pointed out that "populism was the hallmark of controlled inclusion" in a number of Latin American countries (p.44). Populist leaders rose to power by mobilizing the popular masses, but they "sought concessions from upper classes rather than their overthrow" (p.44). These concessions included the limited incorporation of selected segments of the lower classes, usually the urban middle class.

Structuralist analyses offer richer accounts of democratic transitions than North et al.'s analytical framework. The limitation of Rueschemeyer et al.'s approach from the point of view of the present analysis is the fact that it treats economic, social, and political processes separately. The focus is on how economic changes and ensuing social groups increase or not the chances of the establishment of a *real democracy*, which is defined as a stable representative system with universal suffrage and strong and autonomous legislative institutions. Although the authors discuss cases that fall in between real democracies and authoritarian regimes, the focus in on processes leading to transitions to *real democracy*, with less attention paid to what is referred to as *restricted democracies*. Democratization in Latin America is then presented as a series of advances and regressions between authoritarian and more or less democratic regimes. What this approach only briefly acknowledges and does not properly integrate into its overall arguments is

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that the gradual opening of spaces for participation in economic and social realms is an integral aspect of a democratization process more broadly defined, independent of its role in the transition to a representative system with universal suffrage.

Whereas the empirical categories of North et al.'s institutionalist framework encompass the various facets of exclusion, its focus on elite calculation leads to a neglect of the social and political struggles fuelled by structural changes. Rueschemeyer et al.'s structuralist analysis pays close attention to the formation of social groups and political alliances in the process of capitalist development, but its conceptualization of democracy as essentially a political system delegates a secondary and instrumental role to participation in economic and social spheres. For the purpose of the present study, which is to examine how citizen participation developed and responded to changes in institutional and structural contexts, insights from both frameworks can be fruitfully combined. The concepts of limited and open access orders help us to distinguish between two type of societies: one where participation is limited to personal interactions between powerful patrons and subservient clients, and one where participation takes diverse forms. In the transition period new social groups, political strategies, and forms of participation emerge. Politicians who try to rally the old and new subaltern groups through broad rhetorical appeals to their needs and fears are referred to as *populist leaders*. Political parties that extend patron-client networks so as to include new social groups in a more negotiated and less imposing manner become *clientelist parties*. Finally, progressive elite members and non-elite members may try to mobilize subaltern groups in order to push for full democratization in what is referred to as *radical mass parties*. The next section presents the development trend of Brazil at the national level, while the case studies show how the type of political incorporation and extent of citizen participation in transition periods varied depending on local power balances rooted on structural conditions.

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The First Republic: A Limited Access Order

In the colonial period (1500-1823), Brazil was divided in captaincies, which were vast portions of land the Portuguese crown trusted to noblemen and military officials deemed to have the necessary means to secure and exploit it. Captaincy Generals had absolute administrative and military authority over their domains, and responded only to the Governor General, who was the representative of the crown in the colony. Captaincies were hereditary for most of the colonial period. During the Empire period (1823-1889) a representative system was put in place, with a relatively broad suffrage for the time, but the Emperor (the son of the King of Portugal) had the prerogative to dismiss legislatures at his discretion. The focus of this section is the period from 1889 to 1930, known as the First Republic, wherein the logic of a limited access order permeated and corrupted the representative system, leading Buarque de Holanda (1936/2002) to call democracy in Brazil a "lamentable misunderstanding."

In the 1880s, the city of Rio de Janeiro was the capital of Brazil; Minas Gerais was the most populated and politically important province; the province of São Paulo was a burgeoning coffee-based economy; the province of Rio Grande do Sul was a military force; and the province of Pernambuco was a regional leader in the Northeast (see Figure 2, p. 285). Republicanism started with a manifesto signed in 1870 by Rio de Janeiro professionals who advocated for progressive social reforms, the end of slavery, and a peaceful transition to a new political system. Republican parties in São Paulo and Minas Gerais defended the movement in the political sphere, but the actual overthrow of the Empire was carried out by militaries from Rio Grande do Sul and Rio de Janeiro (Fausto, 1999).

The new republican governing elite was divided between those espousing a liberal state with great provincial autonomy, and those defending the need for a strong central power capable

of imposing order and promoting progress. The former group prevailed. The 1891 Constitution transformed Brazil into a federative republic, and provinces, now called states, were granted fiscal autonomy and the right to organize their own military forces. Citizens directly elected the president. The legislative power was constituted by a lower house, the Chamber of Deputies, and an upper house, the Senate; in the former, seats were distributed according to demographic representation, whereas in the latter every state had an equal number of seats. Financial requirements for voter registration were removed and any Brazilian citizen over 21 years of age who was not a beggar or a military man could vote as long as he was literate. The fact that women could not vote was felt to be so obvious that it did not even deserve mention in the legislation. According to 1872 statistics, 99.9 percent of slaves and 80 percent of the free population were illiterate (Fausto, 1999, p. 142). Votes were not secret. In the almost forty years of the First Republic, voter turnout in presidential elections varied from 1.4 to 5.7 percent of the total population (Fausto, 1999, p. 159).

Low political participation in this period was not only the result of restricting legislation but also the outcome of a political-institutional arrangement that made votes irrelevant. The new constitution was followed by political instability. Disagreement between republicans and intrastate disputes evolved into national-level clashes, an attempted coup, the forced resignation of a president, federal intervention in states, and an armed revolt staged by federalists in Rio Grande do Sul. Debts inherited from the previous period, high military expenditure, and low coffee prices strained the country's finances, making the political scenario unstable. Campos Sales, a Paulista[11] elected president in 1898, devised a shrewd political arrangement known as "governors' policy" that balanced state autonomy and central authority. The Chamber of Deputies was responsible for verifying the legitimacy of legislative elections through its

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[11] Paulista: of, from, or pertaining to the state of São Paulo.

Commission for Verification of Power. The Chamber's rules determined that its eldest member served as chair of the Commission and chose four deputies to work with him. President Sales introduced a small but substantial change: the president of the chamber became the head of the Commission, as long as he was re-elected for a new mandate. In other words, the chair was a member of the legislative majority with vested interests in maintaining the political status quo (Silveira, 1978).

To understand the significance of this change it is necessary to briefly review the electoral process at this time. Municipal bodies were responsible for counting votes under their jurisprudence and issuing "diplomas" for the winning candidates. It was a remarkably corrupted electoral system. Numerous studies describe how securing votes was not as crucial as securing the diploma; a candidate could win the election but lose the vote count (Graham, 1990; Kinzo, 1980; Leal, 1949/2009). This literature is full of quotations that depict the unabashed attitude of those involved in politics at the time. For example, a respected republican politician purportedly told a younger and disliked member of his party that he would not have his diploma recognized for three reasons, "the third is that you have not been elected" (Leal, 1949/2009, p. 124). A myriad of terms exist to describe corrupted practices; one of the best known is a "stroke-of-a-pen election," which refers to an election in which the person responsible for vote counting bluntly falsified the proceedings.

State governors and local *coronéis* together secured election results. The former needed the coercive power that only the latter could exert, whereas *coronéis* needed financial support from governors. Intra-elite conflict existed and contesting political groups managed to issue legitimate or fake diplomas that allowed their party members to claim a seat in the legislative chambers. The change put forward by President Sales guaranteed state governors that opposition

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politicians would be "beheaded" once they arrived in the capital, i.e., the Commission would not recognize their diplomas; only governor-supported candidates were accepted. The governor, assisted by *coronéis*, elected the legislative deputies he wished, in return, governors instructed deputies to support the president. According to a politician and intellectual of the time, "soon elections became a mere formality. Everyone became convinced that in order to be elected for deputy, senator, or even president, it was not necessary to receive a single vote" (Assis Brasil as quoted in Kinzo, 1980, p. 179). In this political system it was senseless to be an opposition party. Intra-elite disputes took place within the party for the nominations. Once nominations had been decided, the rest was a formality. Elections results frequently show candidates with 100 percent of the cast votes, which explains why in the three states examined in the chapters below, only one elite party existed for most of the First Republic.

Two additional characteristics of the First Republic are worth mentioning. Municipal autonomy was a contentious issue among republicans. Whereas federalists thought municipal matters were under the jurisprudence of states, those espousing a stronger central government advocated for national legislation on the matter. The former view trumped the latter. As regards mayoral elections, for example, a few states decided the governor had the authority to nominate all mayors, others allowed municipal elections in all but important cities and the capital, and still others held elections in all cities. Financial autonomy was rarely granted to municipalities as the governor's ability to approve expenditures at his discretion was the key to guaranteeing the support of *coronéis* (Leal, 1949/2009). As the case studies show, as recently as the early-1980s governors used this prerogative to boycott participatory administrations of opposition parties.

This period is often referred to as the Coffee with Milk Republic in allusion to the main agriculture products of the two elites at the top of the patron-client network that governed the

country during the First Republic, São Paulo and Minas Gerais. At the time of 1891 Constitution, Minas Gerais was the most populated province and was therefore guaranteed the largest number of legislative seats. The state's political elite focused on access to the spoils of government and infrastructure projects that benefited cattle, coffee, and milk producers. São Paulo came in second in number of seats, but was first in economic power. The elite of this state promoted the rhetoric that coffee interests were national interests given the commodity's weight in the country's finances. During most of the First Republic the elites of Minas Gerais and São Paulo had a political alliance that included alternating members of their respective elites in the presidential office (Fausto, 1999).

From Vargas to Goulart: Towards an Open Access Order

In 1928, Paulista President Washington Luis was supposed to accept the nomination of a Minas Gerais candidate, but he refused to do so and selected another Paulista. Minas Gerais and Rio Grande do Sul formed the Liberal Alliance (Aliança Liberal) and launched the candidacy of a politician from Rio Grande do Sul, Getúlio Vargas. The Alliance also included political groups excluded from the dominant elite coalition of their respective states. The President's nominee won the elections, but the Alliance organized a military insurrection that succeeded in removing the Paulista from power. This insurrection became known as the 1930 Revolution, though there were only few and isolated cases of armed struggle.

The Liberal Alliance was a coalition of five groups with distinct reasons for opposing the ruling class of the First Republic. The first was a group of young military *tenentes* (lieutenants) who had launched several short-lived revolts in the 1920s. The poorly defined goal of this group was to regenerate and modernize the nation; with a nationalist discourse and an authoritarian attitude, *tenentes* respected competent technocrats more than elected officials. The second group

was comprised of liberal constitutionalist political parties supported by the emerging urban middle classes, to whom free elections and civic liberties were imperative. The Revolution also found support among the high-ranking military personnel disgruntled with the First Republic's handling of the armed forces. The fourth group was coffee growers displeased by President Luis' unwillingness to sustain monetary policies favoring their exports. Finally, politicians and local bosses excluded from the dominant party welcomed a crisis that could alter the political status quo (Skidmore, 1967). In the first years of government, "Vargas's Machiavellian political style encouraged each of these groups to press their claims" (Skidmore, 1967, p. 14). Demands were attended to in an ad hoc fashion and always with the goal of strengthening the leader's position.

A new constitution was promulgated in 1934, the same year Vargas was indirectly elected president for a four-year mandate. Two new political parties with concrete ideological programs emerged: on the left, a moderate arm of the illegal Brazilian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Brasileiro, PCB) gained the support of discontented middle class groups and some militant labor unions; on the right, a Fascist party advocated for an authoritarian path to development. Vargas pitched these parties against each other and used a failed rebellion of the PCB to enhance his powers. In 1937, liberal constitutionalists and *tenentes* launched candidates for the upcoming presidential election with good chances in the dispute the government of the country. Vargas, however, engineered a coup d'état that further postponed democratic elections. The New State (Estado Novo, 1937-1945) "represented a hiatus in the development of party politics organized on class or ideological lines – a form of politics which itself had only begun to take form in Brazil in the early 1930s. Every significant political group had been outmaneuvered and suppressed" (Skidmore, 1967, pp. 32-33).

Although Vargas silenced ideological and class movements, modernization, a central objective of the revolution, was not abandoned. Coffee remained an important export item and as such was protected by numerous state policies, but it ceased to be the main focus of the Brazilian economy (Silva, 1999). In the Vargas era, industrialization became a state project carried out by a newly created technocratic bureaucracy. Attempts to professionalize the public service started in the 1920s, but gained momentum with the creation of numerous sectorial ministries after the Revolution, and the formation of the Administrative Department of Public Service (Departamento Administrativo do Serviço Público, DASP) after the 1937 coup. "The creation of DASP within the framework of the Estado Novo occurred at a moment when Brazilian authoritarianism returned with force, this time to implement a modernizing revolution in the country, to industrialize it, and to place value on technical competence" (Bresser-Pereira, 2009, p. 151). The DASP created a number of regulatory bodies that became responsible for the state enterprises that served as the pillars of Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) programs.

Brazil adopted the entire ISI package, namely, the nationalization of primary industries; heavy investment in infrastructure; the creation of state-owned intermediary industries, notably the National Steel Company (CNS, in 1941) and a national oil company (Petrobras, in 1953); import schemas blocking the entry of finished products and facilitating the import of capital goods; undervaluation of the currency; the creation of a development bank (BNDES in 1952); and intensive support to select industrial sectors, e.g., automobiles. In the 1930s, 12,232 industrial establishments were created, almost three times as many as in the previous decade; in the second half of the decade industrial output grew 43 percent (Bresser-Pereira, 1984, pp. 19, 20).

Industrialization was accompanied by partial and controlled extension of political and social rights. The 1932 electoral code extended suffrage to women, instituted the secret vote, lowered the voting age from 21 to 18, and created a judicial body to supervise elections. The new code only took effect after the end of the dictatorial period; illiterate citizens, 51 percent of the population in 1950, were still denied the right to vote; the electoral judicial body was flawed and until 1950 contained mechanisms that allowed for corruption in the registration of voters; and electoral laws alone did not alter power relations in rural areas (Kinzo, 1980, p. 64). Notwithstanding these limitations, these were significant steps towards the enfranchisement of the popular masses.

The Vargas government also pushed social and labor legislation. Created after the 1930 Revolution, the Ministry of Labor enacted many laws regarding working conditions and social welfare that culminated in the 1943 Consolidated Labor Laws (Consolidação das Leis do Trabalho, CLT), a decree that governed labor relations. Legislation applied only to urban sectors, and rural workers were overtly neglected. At the same time, the government kept a strong grip on organized labor. The Brazil of Vargas has been characterized as "the most full-blown system of corporatism in Latin America" (Collier & Collier, 1991, p. 186). From 1930 to 1935, the government repressed and demobilized incipient labor movements, often accusing them of representing a communist threat. The government imposed a rigid framework on the functioning of labor unions: only one union was allowed per jurisdiction, all workers were obligated to pay a syndical tax that was channeled to the unions through the state, and the state monitored union activity and intervened whenever deemed necessary. Unions were not meant to represent class interests. Instead, they "were conceived primarily as social service organizations that would distribute benefits to workers and generally contribute to a collaborative social order" (Collier &

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Collier, 1991, p. 187). Union leaders were subordinated to the Ministry of Labor and typically

acted in the interest of the government in order to secure the personal benefits associated with

their position (Collier & Collier, 1991).

Vargas' corporatist state represented a transition from a patrimonial to a state-organized

bureaucratic form of political engagement, which has been interpreted both as an advance and a

lasting hindrance in the development of autonomous forms of political participation. According

to O'Donnell (1973), Vargas' manipulation of the working class thwarted the emergence of more

spontaneous forms of workers' organizations, "but it also had the effect of giving urban workers

an organizational basis that, with all its weakness considered, was incomparably stronger than

anything they had before… even in this subordinate position, the urban popular sector was given

its first chances to have some effective weight in national politics" (p.59). Schmitter (1971)

advanced the thesis that the controlled incorporation of workers gained roots and outlived the

Vargas era; the right to strike, he author noted, was not granted until 1966, and only with

considerable restrictions. As later chapters show, the urban working class became one the best-

organized social groups in the country and played a prominent role in the advance of local-level

participatory democracy. Nevertheless, the persistence of the corporatist system is corroborated

by the fact that co-opted labor leaders, known as *pelegos*, were one of the main targets of groups

promoting participatory democracy.

Towards the end of the dictatorial regime, between 1943 and 1945, Vargas coordinated

the creation of two political parties, the Social Democratic Party (Partido Social Democrata,

PDS), which represented traditional rural elites, and the Brazilian Labor Party (Partido

Trabalhista Brasileiro, PTB), which organized urban workers in state-controlled unions. Vargas

also reinvented himself as "the father of the poor," and welfare benefits were associated with the

leader's benevolent protector image. The support of these two distinct social groups and the skillful use of populist rhetoric allowed a pro-Vargas coalition to dominate national politics for the following 15 years, while increasingly more autonomous unions, social movements, and ideology-based parties formed at the local level.

In 1945, political parties faced a larger than ever and fast-changing electorate. Almost six million citizens voted in the 1945 presidential election; five years later, the electorate had grown to 7.9 million, or 42.5 percent of the adult population, and almost 12 million Brazilians voted in 1960 (Kinzo, 1980, p. 65; Skidmore, 1967, p. 192). This electorate was also increasingly more urban: the percentage of the total population living in urban areas increased from 31 percent in 1940 to 45 percent in 1960 (Thery, 2009, pp. 8-9). This urbanization process was geographically uneven, with southeast capitals receiving migrants from the northeast as people were "attracted by the prospects of employment on coffee plantations or in the factories of São Paulo or seduced by the mirage of the 'big city'" (Thery, 2009, p. 10). In 1960, 57 percent of the southeastern population was already urban. Urbanization and continuing industrialization brought changes to the structure of occupations. More than 5.6 million jobs were created in the 1950s; 36 percent of these were in the primary sector, and the remaining were in manufacturing, commerce, public administration, and services (Faria, 1989, p. 151). The question, then, is how this large number of new voters was included in political life.

A pro-Vargas coalition formed by the PSD and the PTB was politically successful at the national level, and managed to isolate liberal constitutionalists together in a party called the National Democratic Union (União Democrática Nacional, UDN). The PSD candidate elected in 1945 had Vargas' support. Vargas returned to power in 1951, but then committed suicide in

1954.[12] Juscelino Kubitschek, the last president of the period to finish a mandate (1956-1961), was also elected by the PSD-PTB coalition. The decaying agrarian sector and the growing unemployed urban masses made the need to industrialize a national priority. Industrial elites were not strong enough to head the process, traditional rural elites were still capable of stalling development, and urban labor unions were already a significant political force. Vargas and Kubitschek led a "developmentalist alliance" that brought these groups together. Peasants and rural workers were deliberately excluded – the price paid for the support of rural elites. The unionization of agriculture workers was not legally endorsed until the early 1960s, and the literacy requirement for voter registration excluded a disproportionately large portion of rural dwellers. Urban labor movements outside the official corporatist channels were fiercely repressed, and the agro-export sector was also largely excluded (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979).

The absence of a dominant elite coalition and the only incipiently organized popular sectors was a fertile ground for populism. In this context, populism refers to a phenomenon in which a charismatic politician presents himself as the representative of voiceless social groups. Although from another social class, this political leader mingles in a fraternal, often paternal manner with the lower classes, which are regarded as a homogenous group usually referred to as "the people," "the community," or simply "the poor." In the absence of a dominant political elite, a populist leader claiming to represent "the people" and to be above class interests portrays himself as an arbitrator committed to the country's general welfare. Notwithstanding variances in

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[12] His suicide is a convoluted episode in Brazilian history. Power struggles and intrigue led a faction of the military to demand that he renounce the presidency; instead of fighting or stepping down, the now old and fatigued Vargas opted to defy his opponents with his suicide. Once again, he was successful: the UDN became weaker and its main leader was forced to flee the country. See D'Araujo (1999) and Skidmore (1967).

style and local contexts, this was the general strategy used by Vargas, Kubitschek, and other populist politicians of the period (Weffort, 1980).

In the Brazilian literature, populism is often described as the urban, less patrimonial version of *coronelismo*. Populist leaders targeted the urban mass of factory workers and underemployed citizens living in peripheral neighborhoods. Some authors suggested that rural migrants with a subservient political culture become easy targets of populist politicians. This simplistic interpretation is obvious in Carvalho's (2001) analysis of the period:

> [Vargas'] emphasis on social rights found fertile grounds on the population's political culture, especially the poor population of the urban centers. The latter grew rapidly due to migration from rural areas and from northeastern to southern cities (p.26).

Weffort (1980, p.55) also considered the transition from rural areas to urban centers an essential first step in the "dissolution of traditional patterns of submission." However, Weffort argued the adherence to populism was more than simply a political culture factor: new urban groups experienced a significant material ascension that was not accompanied by social and political inclusion. Populist politicians offered this emerging class an opportunity to enter the political realm and further advance, in a reformist rather than radical manner, their acquired benefits. According to Weffort, a social class with explicit demands was behind the populist phenomenon.

As with corporatism, scholars consider populism a partial and incomplete rupture from the previous patron-client political system. Bresser-Pereira (1984) put it succinctly: "at least now it is necessary to try to convince the electorate" (p.79). Carvalho (2001) admitted that this period witnessed advances in citizenship rights, but argued that this submissive incorporation of the masses had the negative effect of generating a passive citizenship. Weffort (1980) thought that populism opened a channel for the political participation of a new economic class that would

eventually impose a serious challenge on the political system: "to make economic development compatible with democratic development" (p.164). When consolidated democracies succumb to the inflammatory rhetoric of politicians disposed to exploit times of crisis, populism is rightly regarded as a digression. In the case of Brazil, in this period, populism helped to move the country toward an open access order for it included new sectors of the population into the political life of the country, even if at times in a deceitful manner.

The renovating role of populism is particularly visible in lower-level politics. At the national level, populism was the tactic of the pro-Vargas coalition and represented a continuation of the previous period. In subnational disputes, populism was often the strategy of politicians not included in the dominant elite coalition. Aside from the two aforementioned presidents, Jânio Quadros was the most successful populist politician of the period. A school teacher from a modest family, Quadros became the mayor of São Paulo in 1953 with 70 percent of cast votes, the governor of the state only two years later, and the president of the country in 1960. Quadros repeatedly refused to join the main parties and promoted an image of an outsider committed to moralizing politics.[13] Quadros' main opponent was Adhemar de Barros, another populist politician from São Paulo and head of a small personalistic party (Weffort, 1980). Diadema, located in the outskirts of São Paulo, was clearly dominated by this style of politics, which became the main target of participatory discourse in the area. Rural regions were also touched by this phenomenon. In Espírito Santo, the first governor (1955-1960) from outside the political elites was Francisco Lacerda de Aguiar, a populist leader known as Chiquinho (an affectionate nickname). In 1972, populist Juarez Furtado became the first mayor of Lages to win an election

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[13] Quadros was the UDN candidate in the 1960 presidential election, but he stressed that his nomination did not entail a commitment to the party. Therefore, his election is hardly described as a UDN victory.

without being directly nominated by the powerful Ramos family. In these cases, populist politicians represent an only partial but marked break with patrimonial politics.

The inflamed discourses of populist leaders were accompanied by agreements and compromises that guaranteed electoral victories. At the national level, the PSD-PTB coalition secured the support of the key players. At the local level, politicians had to build clientelist networks. Clientelism can be defined as a scenario "where the game of politics is centered around individual politician's distribution of patronage and 'favors'…and candidates' promises of such, in exchange for political/financial support and votes" (Nylen, 2003, p. 15). Canvassers, pejoratively known as *cabos eleitorais*, served as intermediaries between the dwellers of a particular neighborhood and populist politicians; they diligently campaigned for a candidate in return for priority treatment by the elected administration. Clientelist networks were organized around *sub-diretórios* (party neighborhood chapters), as Furtado did in Lages, or in neighborhood associations, as the societies of the friends of the neighborhood (*sociedades de amigos do bairro*, SABs) common in São Paulo and Diadema.

It is correct to affirm that clientelist practices inhibited broad and autonomous popular political engagement since only appointed subdirectory leaders could negotiate "favors" (Moisés, 1978). Yet again, taking into account the status of Brazilian democracy in this period, clientelism may be seen as a positive step in terms of political inclusion. Andrade (1996b) has argued that in the more traditional patron-client relations, the level of dependence and devotion of a client was much higher than in clientelism based on party machines: "If, on the one hand, [the new clientelism] bonds (through political favors) many community leaders to the government's party, making them dependent on the political party machine, on the other hand, it makes the support of

these leaders contingent." Paraphrasing Bresser-Pereira, at least now it is necessary to negotiate with community leaders.

At last, it is necessary to note that autonomous social movements and ideology-based political parties significantly increased in this period. After the end of the Estado Novo, unions launched an unprecedented series of illegal strikes and gained important concessions from the PSD-PTB administration. In the following decade, gradual steps towards autonomy included the creation of confederations that in the 1960s demanded profound structural reforms (Collier & Collier, 1991). Authentic union leaders began to emerge and replace co-opted *pelegos* (Bresser-Pereira, 1984). Peasants and rural workers organized and started to press for land distribution and political inclusion, and the Peasant Leagues (Ligas Camponesas) became a considerable disturbance to northwestern political elites (Morais, 2002). As discussed in more detail in the next chapter, the Catholic Church under the influence of the Conciliar Vatican II began to support numerous grassroots movements (Krischke, 2010). Research also showed that at least some SABs were independent organizations and played an important role in the movement for the municipal autonomy of the peripheral districts of São Paulo (Moisés, 1978).

Moreover, smaller parties with more clearly defined constituencies began gaining space in federal and state legislative chambers. The PCB had significant positive results in the two years following the end of the Estado Novo, but was made illegal in 1947. The number of seats held by small parties in the Chamber of Deputies tripled between 1945 and 1962, from 5.6 to 16.2 percent. The growth of small parties forced the more traditional coalitions to seek a closer relationship with the electorate, leading to ruptures within these groups (Souza, 1976). Souza (1976) has argued that the fragmentation of the political party system did not cause the 1964 breakdown, a common thesis at the time. On the contrary, the emergence of new political parties

signaled the renewal of the Brazilian representative system and the inclusion of new social groups.

The 1964 coup d'état is generally associated with the breakdown of the PSD-PTB coalition, and more broadly with the radicalization of politics. In 1961, the eccentric Jânio Quadros renounced the presidency six months after being inaugurated. He claimed to face a political deadlock and his renouncing was probably a bluff aimed at gaining extraordinary executive powers. Congress, however, accepted his request. The vice-president, at the time elected separately, was the leader of an ever-more-radical PTB, and was visiting communist China when Quadros stepped down. In the following three years, Cold War dynamics fuelled political polarization in Brazil. The successful 1959 Cuban revolution inspired leftists across Latin America, including groups inside and closely associated with the president's PTB. In the perspective of conservative forces, the communist threat was stronger than ever and needed to be neutralized. When the president finally took the side of the leftist groups and began to endorse structural reforms, the military stepped in. A large portion of the urban middle class welcomed the coup.

The Military Regime: Stalling Democratization

The direct presidential election of 1960 was not repeated until 1989. Gubernatorial elections took place in 1965; defeated in five states, including the capital district, the military abolished the multiparty system and established a façade two-party system. Direct legislative elections were maintained at the federal, state, and municipal levels. Legislative chambers indirectly elected presidents and governors. Mayors were the only executive post with direct elections, except for state capitals and cities with hydro and mineral resources. The National Renewal Alliance Party (Aliança Nacional Renovadora, ARENA) was the majority party for the

entire period, and its task was to sanction and legitimize decisions of the military junta running

the country. The Brazilian Democratic Movement (Movimento Democrático Brasileiro, MDB)

was the controlled legal opposition. The rules of the game altered whenever electoral support for

the MDB increased: legislative chambers were closed, elections postponed, the number of

senators altered, and deputies lost their political rights. Between 1964 and 1965 alone, 513

senators and state and municipal deputies had their mandates revoked (Carvalho, 2001, p. 164).

Labor unions and other social organizations were either dismantled or repressed, and "in

a very short period, virtually all the radical and militant union leadership was replaced by passive

pro-government appointees" (Mericle, 1977, p. 309). According to one estimate, there were 536

state interventions in unions between 1964 and 1970 (Carvalho, 2001, p. 164). Interventions

were selective and random, instituting generalized fear and self-censorship. The corporatist

mechanisms created in the 1930s were used to control union activities and co-opt the leadership.

Moreover, laws passed in the beginning of the regime decreased job security and made almost all

types of strike illegal. During two illegal strikes in 1968, the regime made patently clear its

willingness to violently suppress protest (Mericle, 1977). The National Students Union (União

Nacional dos Estudantes) and the leftist think tank Higher Institute of Brazilian Studies (Instituto

Superior de Estudos Brasileiros) were raided and shut down by the military. The leaders of the

Peasant Leagues were arrested and the movement subdued (Page, 2002).

In 1968, in response to mounting opposition, the military passed a decree known as the

AI-5, which temporarily closed the national legislative chambers, abolished habeas corpus, and

instituted the death penalty by shooting squad. The AI-5 marked the raise of the hard-liners, a

faction of military who contrary to its moderate counterpart did not see the role of the military as

that of a provisional government managing a short-lived crisis; instead, hard-liners believed a

military government to be the only alternative to develop Brazil and subdue the communist threat. As totalitarian regimes usually do, the Brazilian military portrayed itself as the guardian of the national interest, and as a result, those who challenged the regime were regarded as national enemies. In the following years the persecution, torture, and killing of opponents of the regime became an institutionalized practice.

The military regime also closely controlled the economy. In the 1960s, Brazil began to face some of the shortcomings of the ISI policies that affected most Latin American countries, namely, regional concentration of industry, the industrial sector's inability to absorb the rapidly growing urban population, and growing income inequality (Baer, 1972). Income inequality was the consequence of the creation of proportionally few, relatively high-skills jobs in one region, but was also related to the way the government financed industrialization. Beginning in the mid-1950s, industrialization was increasingly funded through inflation generated by the government's printing of money. In this case, inflation was a way of taxing wage workers and small farmers because their real income decreased disproportionally more than that of the business class who passed increases in the prices of inputs on to consumers (Singer, 1976). Rising prices were made easier by the oligopolistic character of ISI markets, while wage increases were difficult to achieve in the context of outlawed strikes. Real minimum wages dropped 38 percent between 1958 and 1966 (Bresser-Pereira, 1984, p. 96).

In the first years of the military regime, an orthodox economic team adopted policies aimed at ending inflation, and its policies included forced wage decreases, increases in the mandatory contribution to the state's pension plan, price freezes, and increased tariffs on public services (Baer, 1977). In the late 1960s, however, inflation was controlled, and savings from the forced pension plan and international loans allowed the government to fuel another economic

expansion. Numerous incentives also attracted foreign companies to install factories in the country. The 1968-1974 period became known as the years of the "economic miracle" where industrial growth averaged 12.2 percent per year (Baer, 1977, p. 11). In 1974, growth began to slow. The government borrowed heavily abroad and allowed inflation to rise in an unsuccessful attempt to avoid a recession. In 1980, international banks refused to roll over the country's debt and a set of contractionary fiscal policies were implemented (Bresser-Pereira, 1984). Two defaults on international debt, high levels of inflation, and economic stagnation marked the 1980s.

From an economic perspective, this period witnessed significant advances in the overall process of the nation's industrialization. Nevertheless, for the purpose of the present study it is important to note that only a small middle and upper class benefited from these advances at the time. Capital-intensive domestic industries and foreign companies employed and supplied a small portion of the population. Wage earners, small farmers, and in some cases small business owners had to finance the industrial expansion that benefited them disproportionally less than the wealthier segments of Brazilian society. The percentage of the national income in the hands of the poorest 50 percent dropped from 17.4 in 1960 to 12.6 in 1980, whereas the percentage in the hands of the richest 10 percent rose from 39.6 percent to 50.9 percent. In the same period, the share of the poorest 20 percent decreased from 3.9 percent to 2.8 percent (Bresser-Pereira, 1984, p. 184). The repressive character of the regime made it difficult for the poor segments of society to try to influence or resist this economic development approach that ignored their needs.

Conclusion

As the case studies illustrate in detail, the Vargas Era was not a definite blow to the traditional elites of the country. Vargas's power rested on agreements with local elites across the

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country. However, industrialization and urbanization were accelerated in this period and spurred the emergence of new social groups not subjected to patron-client networks. In a first moment, new social groups were incorporated into the political life of the country through the controlling hands of the corporatist state. The state institutions created in the Vargas years were not meant to facilitate the interaction of competing social groups as much as to control them, but at least rules began to become codified as rights and extended to groups other than the elites. Urban groups were incorporated first. The rural population continued under the authority of local elites, who remained politically significant though no longer able to restrain access to economic and political activities.

In the 1950s, emerging social groups began to demand autonomy from the state and form social organizations detached from the government bureaucracy. This decade also witnessed the rise of populist politicians who used their personal appeal to the masses to compensate for their lack of support from established patron-client networks. As the case studies show, some traditional elite parties were forced to reach out for the emerging classes; this was done through the creation of clientelist parties which exchanged political support for favors in a less hierarchal manner than in patron-client relationships.

Overall, this period was marked by the partial and controlled inclusion of new popular sectors. In its essence, the corporatist state, populist politicians, and clientelist parties were new channels for the participation of previously excluded and new social groups who were now in a position to demand political inclusion. Albeit far from normative ideals of democracy, these were noteworthy democratic advances. Counterfactually, it is possible to imagine a scenario where representative political parties, independent unions, autonomous social movements, and combative neighborhood associations would slowly gain strength and form a democratic society.

However, in a time of tremendous social inequalities and extreme political polarization, some of the new social groups pressured for major structural reforms. When the state signaled it was willing to push these reforms, traditional elites and the emerging middle-class benefiting from recent economic development called on the coercive apparatus to protect their interests.

The military regime closed the political system and pushed economic programs that largely disregarded the living conditions of the poor majority. This was an immense setback in the slow and uneven process towards an open access order that started with the 1930 Revolution. The party system became a façade, new social movements and organizations were dismantled, and unions were brought back under the control of the state. In was in this context of a partially open social order with closed political institutional channels that participatory movements strived. As the next chapter shows, participatory movements in 1970s condemned patronage, corporatism, populism, and clientelism; these movements carried a deep-rooted mistrust of the formal political institutions that had been permeated and corrupted by these practices, including political parties. Direct citizen involvement in political processes was considered the only truly democratic option. Citizen participation became exalted as an end in of itself.

Chapter 2: Participatory Movements under Authoritarian Government

The authoritarian period (1964-1985) witnessed the emergence of participatory movements that began to form in the mid-to-late 1960s, gained force in the mid-1970s, and spurred various types of participatory initiatives in the late-1970s and early-1980s. These movements were not only a reaction against the military regime, but above all efforts to fundamentally reform institutions that had previously barred the meaningful participation of ordinary members. The core demand of these movements was not the reestablishment of a legitimate representative system, but the construction of truly democratic institutions, which in their conceptualizations required the direct participation of ordinary citizens. The educational material these movements produced show that they rejected all forms of partial and controlled incorporation: patronage, corporatism, populism, and clientelism were bundled together as undemocratic and unjust practices, and direct citizen participation was presented as the alternative. As the political opening began in the late-1970s, these movements coalesced into a broad participatory movement that supported numerous social and political organizations, campaigns, and protests. Participatory municipal administrations were only one of the various manifestations of this movement. The objective of this chapter is not to reduce the struggles of the period to direct participation in municipal government; rather, the goal is to situate the precursory participatory municipal governments in their political context.

This chapter examines the most influential participatory movements of the period. The first section discusses what is here referred to as Disenchanted Marxism. While Marxist groups were not always proponents of citizen participation, it is important to examine the character of Marxism in the period and the influence it had over other social movements. The second section examines the *autênticos* (authentics) of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB), a group within the legal opposition party who tried to organize a true political resistant to the military

regime; *autênticos* maintained that MDB mayors had to govern with the direct participation of community organizations. The third section turns attention to the ecclesial base communities (CEBs), the grassroots arm of the Catholic Church. Members of these groups were strongly encouraged to be actively involved in the political life of their communities. The fourth section focus on the new unionism, a labor movement that refused to accept the limits on union activities imposed by the corporatist framework established in the 1940s. This movement became the backbone of the Workers' Party, an internally democratic party committed with promoting citizen participation.

Each section begins with a brief review of the sphere of action of these movements, and then describes their genesis, main tenets, and key proponents. For analytical purposes it is useful to treat each movement separately. The conclusion of the chapter considers how the movements overlapped. Chapter four examines the *autênticos* administration of the city of Lages. Chapter five describes how the mayor of Boa Esperança relied on CEBs' organizational structure and leaders to create a participatory administration. Chapter six analyses the experience of Diadema, a PT participatory administration headed by new unionism members and Marxists groups.

Disenchanted Marxists

In the twentieth century the Latin American left was comprised of groups with varied interpretations of Marxist theories inspired by socialist experiments in the Soviet Union, El Salvador, China, and Cuba. If the character of the revolution was a contested topic among these groups, the final goal was clear: the construction of a socialist state (Löwy, 1999). In the 1970s, however, Marxist groups in Brazil were fragmented and lacked a project capable of galvanizing the support of popular classes. Moreover, most of these groups had embraced democratization and the mobilization of civil society as meaningful struggles, which represented a break with

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doctrines that neglected or even disdained democratic goals. In this context, Marxists either assisted participatory movements or were unable to substantially oppose them. In one of the cases examined in this study, Diadema, Marxists groups played an ambivalent role of supporting participation while trying to limit it to certain sectors of society. It is, therefore, worth briefly reviewing how Brazilian Marxists became fragmented and democratic.

The history of Marxism in Brazil can be divided into four periods. The 1917 October Revolution and the Leninist Communist International impelled the creation of the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB) in 1922. In the early-1930s, the PCB joined forces with Carlos Prestes' *tenentistas*. In 1935 this alliance executed an unsuccessful armed strike against the Vargas government. This failed operation marked the end on this first, revolutionary period of Brazilian Marxist (Löwy, 1999).

In the mid-1930s, the PCB adopted the Stalinist doctrine promoted by the Communist International. According to this view, the region was semi-colonial and, as such, its first step towards socialism was the struggle against feudalism and American imperialism. In this national-democratic strategy, the expansion of capitalism and the strengthening of a national bourgeoisie must precede a socialist revolution. Thus, in this period the PCB supported democracy. Garcia, however, noted that in this phase the PCB "thinks of democracy fundamentally as a means;" according to him, the adjective "bourgeois" disfigured the concept and prevented substantial reflections on it (Garcia, 1996, p. 121). Moreover, this doctrine led the PCB to seek an alliance with the corporatist apparatus that defended the interests of the business class, even if that meant a loss for the workers in the short-term. As shown below, this position set the PCB against movements that promoted workers' participation in the organizational structure of unions.

In the third period, the 1959 Cuban Revolution and the writings of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara inspired a new wave of revolutionary movements throughout Latin America. In 1967, the *Latin American Organization for Solidarity put forward clear directives:* "the revolutionary armed struggles constitute the fundamental line of revolution for Latin America" (Solidariedad, 1967, p. 313). In Brazil, armed opposition to the regime peaked between 1969 and 1974, the first years of the AI-5, the period that government repression was most strongly felt. The absence of other forms of political participation drove some activists previously involved in unions, Church youth groups, student and other social movements to join guerrilla organizations (Alves, 2005).

The PCB leadership rejected the Castroist current, leading some of its members to leave the party and form new organizations (Löwy, 1999). In 1962, the Maoist faction of the PCB founded the Communist Party of Brazil (Partido Comunista do Brazil*, PCdoB), which in the early 1970s backed one of the few rural guerrillas in the country (Araguaia). The army annihilated insurgents. One of the survivor rebels, José Genoíno, became the president of PT in 2002, but was forced to renounce the position due to allegations that he was involved in a corruption scheme involving the Brazilian president's chief of staff office, of which he was found guilty of in a 2012 federal court ruling. Other PCB dissidents formed the National Liberation Alliance (Aliança Libertadora Nacional) and the October Eighth Revolutionary Movement (Movimento Revolutionário Oito de Outubro). The former counted on the support of workers associated with the PCB, and the latter was an offshoot of student movements (Garcia, 1996). Another noteworthy organization is the Palmares Revolutionary Armed Vanguard (Vanguarda Armada Revolucionária Palmares), which brought together smaller groups that include people such as legendary army captain Carlos Lamarca, killed in action (1971); Carlos

Minc, later active member of the PT and of the Green Party, and Minister of Environment (2008-2010); and the current president of Brazil, Dilma Rouseff (2011 –).

Overall Brazilian guerrillas were highly unsuccessful in their disorganized actions against the large oppressive apparatus of the military regime (Garcia, 1996). Alves (2005) explained this was in part due to the adoption of focalism as the main fighting strategy. Focalism was used in the 1959 Cuban Revolution and relied on the idea that the uncoordinated actions of autonomous guerilla cells eventually lead to a nationwide insurrection. Cuba is much smaller than Brazil. In a country of continental proportions, isolated guerilla attacks did not mount to anything other than more repression. The fiasco of the armed struggle spurred the Left's search for a new paradigm (Burgos, 2002).

The fourth period of Brazilian Marxism was incited by a number of theoretical and political developments that led to the construction of a political project that valued democracy and popular participation. A body of work later grouped under the label "dependency theory" argued that the underdevelopment of Latin American was the consequence of the region's position at the periphery of the international capitalist system. Latin American development was conditioned on the functioning of a capitalist system wherein the majority of the surplus was sent back to the core of the system, the Northern-developed countries, and only a small portion remained in the periphery, the Southern-underdeveloped countries. These analyses challenged the Stalinist national-democratic route to socialism.[14] A portion of this group of theorists supported the second wave of revolutionary movements described above (Löwy, 1999).

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[14] For an example of this argument, see Cardoso, F. H. (1972). Dependent Capitalist Development in Latin America. *New Left Review* I/74 (Jul-Aug). Cardoso was later president of Brazil from 1995 to 2002.

Concomitantly, a new alternative emerged as a new Marxist doctrine spread throughout the continent. In orthodox Marxist thought, civil society belongs to the greedy economic sphere, an interpretation grounded in a materialistic reading of Hegel's examination of the concept. Antonio Gramsci offered an alternative conceptualization of civil society that allowed Marxists to come to terms with the idea of civil society (Cohen & Arato, 1992). In his *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci argued that a dominant group must exert control of both political and civil society in order to become a hegemonic force. The political society is the sphere of legal and overt control, while civil society is the arena of cultural dominance where subaltern classes "spontaneously" give consent to the hegemonic group. Civil society is also the arena where a counter-hegemonic bloc is able to challenge the established order (Hoare & Nowell-Smith, 1971, p. 263).

According to Burgos (2002), Gramsci began to play a major role in Latin American academia at the end of the 1960s. During this period, many countries in the continent were under rightist authoritarian regimes and a number of intellectuals were writing from underground or from exile. The left had failed to seize control of the state using tactics learned from Lenin and the Cuban Revolution; the need to deliberate on new ways of constructing a socialist society and the desire to respond to oppressive regimes required bridging the gap between theoretical analysis and political actions. At the same time, democracy had become the demand around which resistance was organized and therefore new strategies had to endorse democracy in order to gain popular support. Gramsci allowed Latin scholars to put forward the idea that revolution is not a single explosive act but a process in which political democracy is a necessary terrain where revolutionary forces gain strength.

According to Sader (1988), in the 1970s Marxist groups were fragmented, without a clear doctrine, and more receptive to democratic ideals. Marxists participated in various social

movements without heading any of them. The influence of Marxism was felt in religious groups, unions, and parties, but never very markedly. In terms of practical political activities within the limits of the regime, Marxists became particularly involved in popular education projects and adult literacy campaigns inspired by Paulo Freire's methods. Sader explained that Marxists tended to deliberatively overlook the humanism and Christian values intrinsic to Freire's method and focus instead on the more instrumental aspects of "consciousness raising" (*concientização*). The weak links between these activities and Gramsci's postulates was the closest Marxists had come in terms of revolutionary work.

This disenchanted Marxism played an indirect role in the participatory movements discussed below. Insights from historical materialism fuelled theological debates within the arm of the Catholic Church responsible for spurring community mobilization. It is possible to find moderate Marxist and socialist groups within the MDB, especially in youth groups. The new union movement had an uneasy relationship with the PCB, but was more open to support from other Marxist groups. By the end of the decade, Marxists of various shades converged into the PT. However, at its foundation, the party clearly stated that it did not embrace specific Marxist doctrines. Marxist groups became simply factions within the party; the more authoritarian of these groups led the party only for a short period in the 1980s. Members of the new unionism movement were more influential within the party. In some cases, the doctrine of Marxist groups clashed with the more participatory ideals that sprouted in the 1970s. Diadema was one these cases.

MDB Autênticos

In 1965, the military regime closed the existing political parties and imposed a two party system. Supporters of the regime joined the National Renewal Alliance (ARENA), whereas those

who opposed the military formed the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB). The objective of the reform was to guarantee a legislative majority for the regime while upholding a façade of democratic legitimacy (Melhem, 1998). A progressive faction within the MDB did not accept this expendable role, and decided to use congressional privileges to denounce the regime. In the 1970s, this faction advocated for participatory channels for popular participation in MDB municipal governments. This section examines this militant arm of the legal opposition party, the political practices it rejected, and the type of municipal government it endorsed.

As an umbrella opposition party, the MDB included a wide range of political views, from conservatives who did not join the ARENA because of personal grievances to former members of the PCB. There was, however, a known divide between a majority of moderate, experienced politicians, and a minority of more radical, mainly young and inexperienced party members. The former group was in control of the party; the two party presidents and three head secretaries in the authoritarian period were moderate members previously active in the Social Democratic Party (PSD) of Vargas and Kubitschek (Motta, 2007). The latter group was one of the leading proponents of participatory democracy in Brazil; its composition and name changed with each legislative election. The 1967 cohort was called *imaturos* (immatures); the 1971 group was known as *autênticos* (authentics); the defying deputies elected in 1974 were referred to as the *neo-autênticos*; and in 1979 the more progressive faction of the MDB was called *tendência popular* (popular tendency) (Kinzo, 1988). Today the group is generally remembered simply as MBD *autênticos*.

In the years following the coup, *imaturos* openly attacked the military in congressional speeches, attempted to create a commission for popular mobilization, and participated in various campaigns and protests against the government. The group was mainly comprised of young

deputies without previous political experience other than in student movements and in political journalism. According to Marcio Moreira Alves (1973), a journalist and well-known *immaturo*,

> A handful of congressmen, elected by the large cities where elections were free of the voting-booth control enforced in the interior, had decided to test the limit of the constitutional guarantees the military had left standing as a token to international – and especially American – liberal opinion. We fired off denunciations, launched congressional investigations, and covered with our immunity all sorts of protest movements, mostly student demonstrations and workers strikes. Our connections with leftist movements were varied, but we shared a common hate for the regime and the justifying role it had assigned us. (p.14)

The continuing defiance of this group irritated the military, which in 1968 requested congress to revoke the mandates of Moreira Alves and another vocal member of the group. In an unexpected reaction against the regime, two-thirds of congress voted against Moreira Alves's impeachment; a political crisis ensued and ended with the enactment of the infamous AI-5. Moreira Alves felt forced to leave the country, and numerous deputies had their mandates revoked (Motta, 2007). Upon his return, 19 years later, he wrote a book about the participatory administration of the city of Lages. The book went through nine printings. He also wrote news pieces on the topic and participated in public debates on participatory democracy (Alves, 1980a, 1980b, 1983).

The confrontational spirit of the *imaturos* was renewed by MDB deputies elected in 1971 – the *autênticos*. After a poor performance in the 1970's election, wherein null votes summed to more than MDB votes, the party decided to move away from its overly moderate position. In 1971, the MDB appointed Pedroso Horta as the party leader in congress; a deputy with a more aggressive stance, Horta supported the combative deputies who now constituted 25 percent of the

party, some 40 deputies (Kinzo, 1988). It is difficult to ascribe the group a homogenous ideology. According to Motta (2007),

> many of the *autênticos* did not have previous political experience; they were mainly
>
> professionals disgruntled with the authoritarian regime who were offered the chance to
>
> run for Congress in a period where it was difficult to find more experienced candidates.
>
> (p.290)

Kinzo (1988) argued that the most marked characteristics of the group were its members' young age, lack of experience in the pre-1964 political scenario, and courage to confront the military regime.

In spite of lacking a cohesive ideological framework, *autênticos* grew as a distinct force within the MDB throughout the 1970s. The group's most renowned action was an attempt to boycott the staged presidential elections of 1973. Initially a widely-supported plan within the party, the plot was later abandoned by moderate leaders; on the election, 23 *autêntico* deputies absented from voting and issued a statement calling for real democracy. Other attempts to gain space within the party hierarchy were equally unsuccessful. Efforts were not in vain, however. The daring attitude of *autênticos* helped the party to regain the respect of the electorate, and the MDB began to be seen as a real opposition party. Sensing the moment, the party leadership decided to devote more efforts to the 1974 legislative elections, which included drafting a campaign manual that included proposals for socio-economic issues and advocating for more political participation. The elaboration of the proposal counted on the help of researchers associated with the Brazilian Centre of Analysis and Planning (CEBRAP), a research center that brought together intellectuals forcedly retired from universities. Results were positive: the party

won 16 out of the 22 senate seats in dispute and increased its representation in the federal chamber from 87 to 160 seats (Kinzo, 1988).

The group of *autênticos* was reinforced with some 30 deputies elected with the support of trade unions and student movements; the fresh impetus of these *neo-autênticos* at times clashed with the by now more restrained deputies elected in 1971. The 1974 election also brought to the MDB a group of hardheaded deputies. Pejoratively called "pragmatics" and *adesistas* (those who adhere to), these politicians were concerned with winning elections and defending the economic interests of their constituency; the struggle for democracy did not concern them as much. In the following years, there were numerous quarrels between *autênticos*, moderates, pragmatics, and *adesistas* deputies (Kinzo, 1988). Most interestingly for the purpose of the present analysis, these groups espoused different views of municipal politics.

During the military regime, mayoral elections were the only direct executive elections, with the exception of state capitals and cities with hydro and mineral resources where governors appointed mayors. In the mid-to-late 1970s, the MDB began to focus on municipal elections in hopes that victories in this sphere would strengthen the party and spur the democratization process. According to MDB President Ulysses Guimarães, these were the only elections with "representative authenticity" and offered a chance to reform the political system "from the bottom up" ("MDB quer reforma através do município," 1974). This broad vision presented by Guimarães comprised distinct views on the role of municipal politics. Pragmatics focused on the creation of a strong party that could gain space in legislative chambers and compete for executive posts in the event of democratization, *autênticos* were concerned with reforming the political system and including popular sectors.

The *pragmatics* created efficient "electoral machines" in the states of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. In the former, Orestes Quércia, the ambitious mayor of the city of Campinas (1969-1973) organized an encompassing web of more than 200 municipal party chapters.

> Quércia took advantage of local dissensions within the ARENA, thus managing to attract dissident elements from this party in order to create the MDB in town. Thus, most of these local branches merely reflected local disputes and had little to do with opposition attitudes towards national politics (Kinzo, 1988, p. 34).

His administration focused on modernization and economic development ("A Tese de Campinas no Congresso de Itanhaem," 1973). On the three-year anniversary of his administration, a half-page advertisement in an important newspaper celebrated the accomplishments of "Quércia's Planned Administration,"

> We managed to bring together all of the city's problems into one City Master Plan. The precise fulfillment of all planned tasks led to numerous grandiose public works, which solves today's problems and leaves the city ready for the year 2000. ("Campinas Cidade Planejada para o ano 2000," 1972)

Visible infrastructure projects were the most marked characteristic of Quércia's governments. The shrewd politician became senator in 1974 and state governor in 1987; in the latter post he became known for building highways.

In 1974, the MDB also elected 20 federal deputies supported by Rio de Janeiro Governor Chagas Freitas (Kinzo, 1988). Freitas was an established conservative politician who supported the military coup but joined the MDB when he realized his state's ARENA was controlled by one of his rivals. Freitas led a large clientelist network entrenched in the state bureaucracy; in Rio de Janeiro, *chagismo* (derived from Chagas) became a synonymous for clientelism. Freitas

used his network to gain the MDB majority in the state assembly, and became the only MDB indirectly elected governor of the time. This position allowed him "to consolidate an 'electoral-party machine' that largely depended on access to the state public administration as well as a receptive dialogue with the military" (Melhem, 1998, p. 95). Freitas was later replaced by other traditional politicians from the MDB moderate caucus (Melhem, 1998).

In contrast with these pragmatic and clientelist strategies, *autênticos* advocated a participatory approach to municipal government. Though present in various states, *autênticos* of Rio Grande do Sul and Pernambuco were particularly recognized for their activism (Melhem, 1998). The weakening of the party in the early 1970s was marked by national seminars organized in the capitals of these states, Porto Alegre and Recife. Final reports of these seminars included daring statements against the regime; the "Letter of Recife" even called for a new constituent assembly – an intrepid act frowned upon by the party's leadership ("MDB quer assembléia constituinte," 1971). The party's first think tank was founded in Porto Alegre in 1973. The Institute for Political, Economic and Social Studies (Instituto de Estudos Políticos, Econômicos e Sociais, IEPES) organized seminars and debates with students, intellectuals and party members, and published a series of documents and studies.

In 1976, the IEPES published a 61-page booklet titled Political Formation Course for Mayors and Municipal Representatives. The second chapter, authored by Senator André Franco Montoro, discussed the theoretical foundations of participatory democracy, drawing on political theory, theological scripture, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Participatory democracy was defined as a "model of democratic organization funded not only in popular 'representation' but also in organized and active 'participation' of social groups in matters of their interest" (Instituto de Estudos Políticos, 1976, p. 18). Montoro argued that instruments of

participatory democracy could be created at the local level, in the work sphere, in the educational system, in the structure of political parties, and in professional and consumer co-ops. The chapter elaborated on each of these points. Regarding the local level, the role of neighborhood associations was described as,

> 1. representative organizations of each community; more specifically,
>
> 2. organizations that demand collective services and benefits;
>
> 3. organizations that execute, coordinate or inspect these services;
>
> 4. organizations that promote the study of local problems and foment a communitarian and collective consciousness; and as a consequence,
>
> 5. organizations that integrate the population into the development process.
>
> (pp. 23-24)

Montoro concluded calling paternalist "all assistance plans carried out without the cooperation of their beneficiaries" (p.28).

In 1976, the MDB prepared two booklets containing the party's electoral strategies and political program for municipal government. The original idea was to have only one booklet, but the moderate leadership edited out the sections on direct popular participation included by *neo-autênticos,* who in response wrote and distributed a second booklet (Braga, 1976). The booklet approved by the party leadership, issued in São Paulo, only made one mention of participation. Quoting principles approved in a national convention in that same year, the document discussed the "right to participation."

> It is not sufficient to recognize community members' right to receive social benefits. In order to recognize an individual's personal dignity, it is necessary to recognize and ensure his right to actively participate in the solution of problems that affect him.

Therefore, the substitution of 'paternalism' by 'participation' is an imperative of modern

social policy. (Movimento Democrático Brasileiro, 1976a, p. 1)

Although unambiguously supportive of popular participation, this document was reticent on the

subject in comparison to the second pamphlet.

The party directory of Pernambuco published the second pamphlet titled "A Municipal

Government of the Opposition," which was conceived as an "instrument for the construction of a

popular municipal administration" (Movimento Democrático Brasileiro, 1976b, p. 1). After a

long list of criticisms of the regime, the document set three goals for a government of opposition:

to defend the cause of municipalities vis-à-vis state and national governments; to establish an

efficient administrative structure; and "to strengthen the various forms of popular participation in

[municipal] administration" (p.15). In discussing these goals in detail, the authors argued public

spending should focus on attending to the basic needs of the population in deprived

neighborhoods and rural areas, and not "in façade sumptuous public works and road projects"

(p.18). Moreover, the document raised the question,

What must be done in order to have the population begin to decide about the social

priorities to be taken into account in municipal budgets and programs, the utilization of

urban areas, [and the management of] transport, housing, and health? (p.21)

The proposed answer was,

It is necessary that all democrats and everyone who wishes to participate in the struggle

for a DEMOCRACY WITH POPULAR PARTICIPATION help to strengthen base

community organizations, such as party neighborhood chapters, neighborhood

associations, football clubs, samba clubs, religious associations, urban and rural unions,

etc. (p.23, emphasis in the original).

The next section of the document added,

> An administration fundamentally oriented towards [underprivileged] neighborhoods and
>
> rural areas…must mobilize its population for the most varied forms of participation.
>
> These forms of participation may vary from the organization of meetings, debates, and
>
> conferences about the city's problems to the direct involvement in the most varied tasks
>
> of municipal agencies. (pp.24-25)

The document emphasized the importance of the party city and neighborhood chapters. Contrary

to clientelist approaches, in this view local chapters were not meant to serve as the main

intermediaries between citizens and the government.

> The population must learn how to use community organizations to pressure local and
>
> municipal administrations to carry out public works that satisfy their necessities. The
>
> main functions of city and neighborhood chapters must be to stimulate and promote this
>
> type of participation. (p.24)

Thus, in the view of *autênticos*, a municipal government of the opposition had to create channels

for participation and help communities to organize in order to take advantage of them.

The MDB also depended on *autêntico* militants in the state of São Paulo, especially in the

capital. In this state, intellectuals associated with the CEBRAP collaborated with the MDB and

regularly contributed to the political magazines *Opinião* and *Movimento* (Kinzo, 1988). In the

months preceding the 1976 municipal elections, these magazines published numerous articles

advocating for local-level participatory democracy and showing support for the combative arm

of the MDB. In July and August, *Opinião* published pieces by intellectuals Braz José de Araujo

and José Álvaro Moisés; whereas the first drew on political science classics in order to argue for

the importance of local level democracy, the latter reviewed some episodes of Brazilian political

history warning against the risk of elites using old political practices to co-op emerging social moments into clientelist networks (Araujo, 1976; Moisés, 1976).

In September, *Opinião* published a large article on the "MDB and the Local Question." The piece presented a summary of debates and works produced by the IEPES. The first part reproduced sections of the training course booklet discussed above. The second part discussed two models for organizing participation in municipal governments that fundamentally altered the structure of representative institutions. In the first model, city councilors would be replaced by ward delegates: each neighborhood would have a directory, whose leaders would form a political council, which would decide on the agenda the ward delegate had to defend at the city hall. Thus, instead of a mandate to represent a constituency, delegates, as the term implies, would defend a pre-determined agenda. The second proposal regarded the creation of Municipal Councils that would count on the participation of mayors and their secretariats, city councilors, representative of the city staff, and the leaders of the main community associations. The proposal acknowledged that councils would have a *de jure* consultative role, but suggested that MDB mayors should make them *de facto* decision-making bodies. In this proposal, community leaders were granted a role equivalent to that of elected officials, visibly disempowering the latter. It was recognized that these were hard goals to achieve: against them "stand not only the country's current institutional framework, but also decades of conventional political tradition." The piece ends with a call for those on the side of democracy to start participatory initiatives ("O MDB e a Questão Local," 1976).

In an editorial piece ten days before the election, *Opinião* discussed the history of municipal governments from the colonial period to the present day, and concluded that the satisfaction of the aspirations of the popular classes depended "much more on the opening of

channels of participation in decision making processes at the local municipal level, as well as the central government, than any possible alteration in formal institutional models" ("O município da oligarquia a nosso dias," 1976). The issue printed three days before the election brought three pages of denunciations of the way ARENA and MDB moderates conducted campaigns. The MDB leadership was accused of "reproducing the tradition of *politicagem* [politicking] that characterized [the country's] institutional life before 1964, with all its authoritarian and paternalist components" ("MDB Projeto e Campanha," 1976).

The magazine *Movimento* also spurred debate about local-level participatory democracy. In June and September of 1976, the magazine published summaries of IEPES texts discussing the Municipal Council proposal described above ("MDB. O que fazer nas prefeituras?," 1976; "O MDB e as Prefeituras," 1976). Another article in the same month endorsed the candidacy of an *autêntico* who promised to allow communities to decide the priority of public works in their neighborhoods ("Em defesa dos interesses populares," 1976). Yet another piece described the MDB administration in the city of Americana, which had already created 40 community committees. According to the mayor of the city, "We get together with [these committees] and try to hear their suggestions. 'What do you want first? Water, sewage, playground, or football field?' They answer, and then we decide what do to" ("O Poder do MDB," 1976).

On Election Day, the cover of *Movimento* read, "After Elections. The MDB Strategy: Participation in the Municipalities." The central article discussed the fact that from 1822 to 1930 municipal autonomy was coupled with the political power of landed oligarchies in the detriment of the popular classes. The Vargas government centralized power at the federal level and soon after the country witnessed the emergence of a movement for municipal autonomy. This movement, according to the article, was different in that it did not represent the interests of the

oligarchies but the interest of the emerging popular sector. The military regime centralized power even further and almost completely eliminated municipal autonomy. The piece concluded that MDB mayors should come together to demand democratization and municipal autonomy while starting to open channels for popular participation in their own cities ("A participação popular e a autonomia dos municípios," 1976).

In the weeks following the municipal election, MDB politicians promised to follow through with the participatory project. The elected mayor of Feira de Santana, Bahia, relied on the campaigning efforts of 155 neighborhood committees organized by *autêntico* militants; he now promised that these committees would decide the city's spending priorities ("Governo com as bases em Feira de Santana," 1976). The 24-year-old Geraldo Alckmin, elected mayor of Pindamonhangaba, São Paulo, planned to govern the city in collaboration with varied types of civil associations "in order to take advantage of the benefits of what is called participatory democracy." According to the young mayor, a Municipal Council was still a far-fetched dream, but there were small steps that could be taken in that direction ("Pindamonhangaba," 1976). In the city of Piracicaba, São Paulo, Herrmann Netto described his election as "a popular victory, not a populist one - a victory of the working-class neighborhoods" ("76 votos dão vitória ao MDB em Piracicaba," 1976). He became responsible for one of the most known participatory administrations of the MDB, which included attempts to create a Municipal Council (DelPicchia, 1982). Chapter three examines the model *autêntico* municipal administration: the city of Lages.

Ecclesial Base Communities

The ecclesial base communities (CEBs) organized by the Catholic Church under the influence of the Second Vatican Council and Liberation Theology played a crucial role in the emergence of participatory democracy in Brazil. CEBs encouraged citizens to participate in local

politics and helped to delegitimize patron-client relations, clientelist networks, and populist politicians. CEBs also created community organizational structures that facilitated political mobilization. This section starts with a brief review of the Catholic Church's "preferential option for the poor," a topic already extensively explored in the literature, then discusses the format of CEBs and the magnitude of the phenomenon in Brazil. Next, attention is paid to the type of political participation encouraged in these communities; this is done through an analysis of inter-clergy correspondence and pedagogical material used by CEBs.

For most of its history, the Catholic Church in Brazil sided with political elites, although never exerting over them as much influence as it did in other Latin American countries. From 1920 to 1950, the Brazilian Church followed the neo-Christendom doctrine that focused on the dissemination of Catholic values in the social sphere of degraded modern societies. In this period, the Church organized numerous movements tasked with promoting Catholic values and thwarting the spread of communist ideals. The main objective was to regain political influence by expanding its role in social institutions. The Church supported Vargas' dictatorial corporatist approach, and in return received important concessions in the media and education fields. By the early 1950s, Vargas' power was fading away, communism remained a threat, urbanization was diffusing secular values, and Protestantism and Spiritism were on the rise (Mainwaring, 1986).

In 1958, the Vatican under the leadership of Pope John XIII initiated institutional changes that offered the Brazilian Church an alternative. In 1962, the Second Vatican Council established a new doctrine that,

> emphasized the Church's social mission, affirmed the importance of the laity in the
> Church, encouraged greater co-responsibility within the church, developed the notion of
> the Church as the people of God, called for ecumenical dialogue, changed the liturgy to

make it more accessible, and introduced a host of other changes. (Mainwaring, 1986, p.

43)

One of the fundamental changes brought by the Second Vatican was the encouragement of more interactions between the clergy and the people, replacing what were typically rigid hierarchical relationships, especially in Latin America (Mainwaring, 1986).

As reviewed in chapter two, in the 1950s, Brazil witnessed the emergence of new social groups and increasing demands for political inclusion. The Brazilian Catholic Church was part of this process. Krischke (2010) explained that in this period the Church became fairly autonomous from the state and civil society, and its political actions can neither be seen as the immediate expression of class interests nor as the unrelenting steps of an isolated institution. Instead, the Church was embedded in a political dialectal process, where it generated and propagated ideas that influenced the polity, but also absorbed and reacted to external ideological currents. The National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil, CNBB), created in 1952, became the steering body of the Brazilian Church and served as an umbrella for a variety of Catholic groups and movements.[15]

In the early 1960s, with the radical polarization of politics, groups within the CNBB and Catholic movements took different sides. In 1964, conservative bishops supported the military coup, some members of youth groups joined Marxist guerrillas, and the majority of bishops and Catholic groups chose a position in between these two extremes (Krischke, 2010). The military regime subdued the more politicized Catholic movements and in the years following the coup conservative bishops led the CNBB. In 1968, Latin American bishops met at the Episcopal Conference of Medellin and committed to putting into practice the mandates of the Second

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[15] For analyses of the different movements in this period see Kadt (1970) and Mainwaring (1986).

Vatican Council. Repression escalated in 1969 after the enactment of the AI-5. The Church

finally took an unambiguous stand against the regime and started to denounce human rights

abuses; progressive bishops regained the leadership of the CNBB and began to promote the

formation of CEBs (Sader, 1988).

The CEBs were a pastoral effort to reach, proselytize, and assist the poor. They have been

defined as,

> small, freely-forming associations of ordinary Catholics, who meet on a regular basis to
>
> deepen their knowledge of the Gospel, to reflect on community needs and seek adequate
>
> solution to those needs, to celebrate victories and share defeats together in the Eucharist,
>
> and to spread the Word of God. (Hewitt, 1986, p. 17)

The devotional activities of CEBs included bible study circles and charity work. Gatherings

called *celebrações* (celebrations) were a type of informal mass led by lay leaders and involved

social fraternization. Craft skills workshops and literacy courses were some of the more practical

activities organized by CEBs. Literacy programs used Paulo Freire's method of popular

education, wherein teachers were meant to facilitate the exchange of experience-based

knowledge existent in any group of individuals. Activities guided towards *conscientização*

(consciousness raising), "consist of somewhat more in-depth discussion and debate regarding the

reality of social, economic and political oppression…conducted with direct reference to Scripture

or…to specially prepared pedagogical material" (Hewitt, 1991, p. 43). Finally, CEBs organized

two types of community actions: joint-labor projects called *mutirões*, which involved the

creation of various types of cooperatives and the construction of houses, schools, or parochial

houses; and the coordination of *reivindicacões,* which is the act of collectively demanding a

social service or public work (Hewitt, 1991).

It is important to note that not all CEBs carried out all types of activities, and even when they did, not all members participated in everything. Drawing on empirical work with groups in São Paulo, Hewitt (1991, p. 47) created five ideal-types of CEBs according to their emphasis on devotional and political work; type one is "simple devotional groups," whereas type five is "politically oriented." In a 1984 sample of 22 CEBs, 50 percent had bible study circles, 86 percent organized reflection and discussion groups, and 45 percent carried out community actions (Hewitt, 1991, p. 45). In a sample of 275 members of these 22 CEBs, 18 percent never participated in bible studies, and 49 percent never joined consciousness-raising activities (p.48). Half of Hewitt's sample was located in low-income neighborhoods and the other half was in more affluent middle-class areas. Middle-class CEBs engaged in more charity work than their low-income counterparts. Local *celebrações* were significantly more common in low-income CEBs, probably because they lacked easy access to churches. Low-income CEBs organized more consciousness-raising groups and community actions than middle-class CEBs, but the difference was not statistically significant in 1984. Hewitt repeated the study four years later, and by then community action was more firmly established as typical of low-income CEBs. Although limited to 22 CEBs in one city, this is the most complete study of its kind, and illustrates the diversity of these groups.

The informal character and diversity of these groups make it very difficult to estimate the number of CEBs there were in Brazil in the 1970s. Groups in remote rural areas were unlikely to appear in official reports; and if they did, the question is how to differentiate CEBs and groups of Catholics who gather informally to worship. Moreover, any estimate of CEBs must be multiplied by an estimate of the number of members per CEB in order to arrive at a rough number of how many individuals participated in these groups. In 1974, the Church's statistic center estimated

that there were 40,000 CEBs in Brazil. In 1980, the same center updated the estimate to 80,000

groups (Hewitt 1991, p.17). In 1981, Friar Betto, one of the main promoters of the popular

Church, in a short and widely distributed book on the basics of CEBs, multiplied those figures by

an average of 20 to 30 individuals per group, and suggested that at least two million Brazilians

participated in CEBs (Betto, 1981, p. 17). Thereafter, this estimate appeared in numerous other

publications. A later study indicates that Friar Betto was not completely off the mark. In 1994, a

Datafolha Institute carried a survey on voting behavior according to religious affiliation in which

1.8 percent of the representative sample was categorized as CEB members (Pierucci & Prandy,

1996, p. 216). In the 1991 census, 1.8 percent of the population constituted 2.64 million

inhabitants; in the 1980 census, 1.8 percent of the population represented 2.14 million inhabitants

(Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 1997).

In 1994, research pointed to the existence of approximately 100,000 ecclesiastical

communities; out of which 39 percent can be categorized as what Hewitt called "simple

devotional groups" without any participation in social or political movements, whereas 42

percent participated in movements and struggles for improved living conditions (Valle & Pitta,

1994, pp. 59-60). The authors warned against dividing ecclesiastical communities between

political and devotional groups. The study found that the frequency of masses was positively

correlated with the organization of community actions, which suggested that the divide was

between active and inactive communities. This study also pointed that two thirds of CEBs were

in rural areas, 17 percent in urban peripheries, and only 12 percent in cities (p. 49). The

prevalence of CEBs in rural areas was common wisdom, showed in early studies (Demo &

Calsing, 1977, p. 20), but challenged by Hewitt (1991). The time gap between late-1970s and

mid-1990s figures makes the analysis imprecise, but these comparisons still provide some

supporting evidence. Recent studies considered the early 1980s the peak of CEBs (Burdick, 2004; Lesbaupin, 1997; Levy, 2000); in this case, 1990s statistics are likely to be an underestimation of the phenomenon in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Notwithstanding the impossibility of arriving at a precise number of CEB members, the significant magnitude of the phenomenon is undeniable. For comparative purposes, 3,104 civic associations were created in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in the 1970s, a large increase from the previous decade (Santos, 1994), and yet only a fraction of the estimated number of CEBs in the country in that period. The famous Porto Alegre participatory budgeting engaged approximately 1.3 percent of the city's urban population in its peak year, which helps to gauge the magnitude of the 1.8 percent figure (Fedozzi, 2007, p. 23). In sum, the CEBs constituted a civil society organizational structure hitherto unseen in the country.

It is relevant to note the specific form of political participation advocated at CEBs. In the 1970s and 1980s, participation was discussed at three levels within the Church. At a conceptual level, participation was an integral part of a body of literature known as Liberation Theology. With more practical purposes in mind, bishops and clergymen discussed how to support political participation in their dioceses and parishes. At the local level, CEB leaders educated community members about the importance of being politically active. Although debates at these three levels were largely concomitant and often intertwined, they were only loosely connected. Liberation theologians argue that CEBs epitomized the type of Church they espoused, and CEBs leaders often incorporated notions from Liberation theologians in their teachings, but not every CEB leader was an adept of Liberation Theology and not every Liberation theologian was directly involved with CEBs. Likewise, not all CNBB bishops who welcomed the directives of the Second Vatican Council directly engaged with Liberation Theology. The Brazilian Catholic

Church is this period is best described as a permissive institutional context that allowed for innovative thinking and practices that developed side-by-side in a mutually reinforcing manner. The next paragraphs discuss the three levels of debate about participation.

Following the Second Vatican Council and the Episcopal Conference of Medellin, a group of Latin American theologians began to write texts articulating a new vision for the Catholic Church. At the core of this new vision was the idea that the poor were being exploited by an unjust economic and political system, and that it was the role of the Church to support their liberation from oppressive structures. This literature became known as Liberation Theology. Some of its main exponents included Peruvian Gustavo Gutierrez and Brazilian Leonardo Boff. The idea that an unjust political economic system barred poor people from improving their lives, and that collective action was the necessary response, brought these theorists close to Marxism. Nevertheless, Liberation theologians most often avoided using the concept of class and preferred a less provocative term, "the poor." Moreover, though theologians acknowledged that at times the Church had served the status quo, they refuse to see it as the "opium of the masses," and insisted instead on the liberating role it could play (Camurça, 2007).

Liberation theologians were very prolific in the 1970s and 1980s. In Brazil, the religious press Editora Vozes was the publisher of most of their books, and the journals *Tempo e Presença* and *Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira* the main specialized journals. Articles, books, and conference proceedings usually had as their central theme the discussion of the objectives and characteristics of the new church, referred to as the "church of the people" or the "grassroots church." CEBs were the most concrete realization of this vision; they represented a break with old hierarchical relations and the typical neglect of social injustices. CEBs symbolized the

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Church going to the poor, to serve them. Therefore, Liberation theologians writings about the CEBs were the exposition of a project, a vision for a new church.

In a 1980 conference on base communities, Boff made a presentation later published as the "Theological Characteristics of a Grassroots Church." The following passages illustrate how in his view of the struggle for a more just society began with the construction of a new church.

The great virtues of the Catholic saint are obedience, ecclesiastical submissiveness, humility, and total reference to the church…The prophets and reformers, the people who criticize the existing power relations in the church and call for mobilization, are subjected to all sorts of symbolic violence…there is a contradiction between an unsymmetrically structured ecclesiastical religious sphere on the one hand and the figure and message of Christ and the apostles on the other. (Boff, 1980, pp. 131-132)

The religious interest of the grassroots level is to make its own quest for liberation self-legitimizing. It seeks to delegitimize and denaturalize the domination under which it is suffering. The ecclesiastical sphere can offer this legitimation…it may do so because it understands the righteousness of their struggle, or because it sees their struggle to be in conformity with the ideas and ideals of the gospel message. (p.133)

These grassroots communities signify a break with the old monopoly of social and religious power, and the inauguration of a new social and religious process involving the restructuring of the church and society. (p.134)

Boff and other Liberation theologians saw the process of liberation within the Church and in society as intrinsically related and mutually reinforcing, and CEBs as the main driver of this process.

More practical debates about the organization and promotion of CEBs are found in documents circulated among bishops and clergymen. The 28 documents found in the archival research for this study offer valuable insights into the goals and concerns at this level of the Church structure. The oldest of these papers is the outcome declaration of a 1969 conference on the organization of CEBs. The six-page document offered detailed explanation of how CEBs are the continuation of the church and a form of renovating it, followed by specific instructions of how to create a CEB, and what types of activities to organize. At the end of the document, there was an example of a community structure: "12 families form a base community, 20 CEBs form a Community Center, and 15 Community Centers form a Communitarian Center" (Seminário Central do Ipiranga, 1969, April 30, p. 5). This conference was likely one of the first efforts to begin to actively promote CEBs.

Some of these documents were written as chronicles of regional clusters of the CNBB to their brothers elsewhere, usually signed by a bishop or archbishop. They offered descriptions of efforts to organize CEBs, which usually began with approaching the most active members of the parish and encouraging them to become *animadores* (community organizers). According to these accounts, communities started as bible study groups and only some evolved into active CEBs. The "poor" of each letter varied according to the socio-economic characteristics of the region. A letter from the state of Goiás talked about a CEB of rural workers (Bispos do Centro Oeste, 1973, May 06), a bishop visiting the state of Acre reported on the local Church's incipient political work with indigenous groups (Christo, 1977, July), and a document issued in the state capital of Santa Catarina talked about rural exodus and growing shantytowns (CNBB Regional Sul 4, 1981).

The final reports of meetings of the permanent council of the CNBB in 1981 and 1982 demonstrate the Church's concern with promoting political participation without becoming involved in party politics or reducing CEBs to social movements. This was a dominant debate during the democratization period. The 1981 letter explained,

Although the Church is not involved in party politics, it has the political task of showing the important values of organization within a society, calling attention to the future of millions of Brazilians that depend on political organization, and stimulating all Catholics to struggle for a democratic and just society. (CNBB, 1981, p. 2)

A definition of democracy is offered later in the document,

True democracy is a process that improves the living conditions of the people and allows their *full participation in public decision-making.* (p.3, emphasis added).

The 1982 document focused on the relationship between CEBs and social movements,

Many members and leaders of [social] movements are part of CEBs and were [politically] awakened by them. On the other hand, previous circumstances led many well-meant people without faith to join the CEBs because, as they belonged to the Church, they constituted the only space where social activism was tolerated. (CNBB, 1982, p. 29)

The document argued that CEBs must focus on their broad objective of supporting various types of social and political organization.

Theological arguments and intra-clergy discussions were adapted to accessible booklets and pamphlets used by lay leaders in CEB meetings. Research for this dissertation included the collection and analysis of 136 of these booklets, from 18 states, and 58 cities, printed between 1973 and 1993. Eleven do not have information about location; two thirds were issued before 1984; and 23 do not have the year of publication. Few were professionally printed; most are

photocopies of handmade and handwritten originals. Three features confirm that these booklets were used as education material: the use of simple language and illustrations (some are in the format of comic strips); the first pages bring instructions of "how to use this booklet in your community"; and the last pages present "questions to debate with your group." The most common themes are political participation, equality (bosses versus workers, men versus women, clergy versus followers), the history of political exclusion in Brazil, the difference between principled politics and politicking, the importance of the vote and reasons for not selling it, and the history of particular communities (in the form of chronicles).

In 1977, the Diocese of São Mateus, Espírito Santo, published as a booklet a popular version of the outcome document of a CNBB Conference in that same year, titled "Christian Demands of a Political Order." The first pages remind the reader that Jesus was a humble servant of the people. It then goes on to discuss the role of the state, the notion of common good, and the role of political participation. The following passage illustrates how religion, politics, and community organization are woven together in these brochures.

> It is important to live in community. An isolated and lonely person is unhappy. The youth always organize strolls, football games, meetings, and dances. In the chapel, Christians come together to pray and worship the Lord. In labor unions, workers unite to struggle for their rights…In chapter six of the Gospel of Saint Mark, which talks about the multiplication of bread, Jesus asks the people to organize in groups. This shows how important it is for the people and for every person to organize. If workers form a large union, they will have more strength to demand their rights. A Gospel group that reflects and debates is more likely to solve community problems…when people partake in these

groups, they are in a way trying to organize society. This is a form of political action.

(Diocese de São Mateus, 1977, pp. 9-10)

In the same booklet, a chapter is devoted to participation. Government actions that prevented political participation were listed, and the following lessons were drawn:

the government makes us lose the habit, interest, and wish to participate. It makes participation look like it is not important. We end up paying attention only to soap operas, football, and lottery. We discuss only unimportant things. As a result, we don't learn to have an opinion about things. The government decides everything without taking our interests into consideration. And so we cannot contribute to the construction of the common good. We see things that are wrong, but we can't do anything about them. People who remain outside of things, outside of politics, are depoliticized, and alienated. There is a lack of political formation. The Church has the right and the duty to collaborate in the political formation of the people, so that they can truly participate in the construction of a more just and fair nation. (p. 24)

This chapter on participation ends offering two questions for group debate. "How can we have political participation? Why do workers spend their lives constructing buildings but never manage to have a house?" (p.24).

A booklet published in 1981 by the diocese of Juazeiro, Bahia, summarizes the history of political exclusion in the Brazil from colonial times to the date of publication. The First Republic is characterized in the following way,

The people can already vote. But, how? 'Encabrestado' [haltered like an animal]. The participation of the People in politics depends on the CORONÉIS of the interior, who get to choose the candidates in which the People must vote. The People vote in exchange for

favor…The Republic does not care about the interests of small farmers. (Diocese de Juazeiro, 1981, p. 22, emphasis in the original)

Concerning the Vargas Era, the booklet tells that, "the People were cheated on by POPULISMO, which is a government based on beautiful speeches and promises about social reforms that never come about" (p.24). At the end, the booklet reminds readers that politics with "P" is a struggle for the common good and concerns everyone; party politics is simply politics with "p". Elections are a predominant theme in this sample of education material. In 1982, the year of a municipal election, a group in Piracicaba, São Paulo, published five booklets on the topic. The core message was to choose candidates carefully and refrain from exchanging votes for favors or gifts. The fifth issue of the series emphasized that, "elections are neither the beginning nor the end but only a moment in the democratic process. The continuation [of the process] depends on us. If you don't water a little plant, will it grow? The questions offered for debate was, "What are the forms of political participation in your neighborhood, at work, at school, others?" (Equipe Caderno Debate, 1982?)

The theme of different types of politics is also discussed in a 1982 handwriting booklet issued in the state of Mato Grosso, which includes a table distinguishing *política* (politics) and *politicagem* (politicking). The former is defined as, "to work in favor of the community and the search for the good of all," whereas the latter is, "to deceive the people, buy votes, make fake promises, and embezzle public money" (CNBB Regional Extremo Oeste, 1982, p. 5). This volume also describes the "rights and duties of people in a democracy: 1) to elect leaders and representatives, 2) to inspect the activities of elected politics, and 3) to participate in the execution [of public projects]" (p.19). To inspect the activities meant organizing to debate the needs of the community and to then attempt to influence decision-making. To participate in the

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execution involved safeguarding public property and partaking in self-construction projects. The idea that political participation involved engagement in communal projects is often found in this material. For example, a 1981 issue printed in Ji-Paraná, Rondônia, promoted the idea of creating small farmer cooperatives to purchase inputs and food for a better price and sell their produce without intermediaries (Ji-Parané, 1982).

The participatory administration examined in chapter five had as its main goal to create favorable economic conditions for small farmers. In the city of Boa Esperança, Espírito Santo, the organizational structure of CEBs became the structure of the participatory initiative, and lay leaders within these communities became the delegates to the city's community development council. Moreover, most of the city staff heading the project were politically trained at the CEBs. The prominence of CEBs in the region was due to in part to an active young bishop trained under the Second Vatican Council and influenced by Liberation theology.

The New Unionism Movement

The new unionism movement also played a significant role in fostering a participatory ideology in Brazil. This movement started in the early 1970s, in the industrial periphery of São Paulo, with a group of metalworkers who refused to accept the limits imposed on union activities by the corporatist framework established in the 1940s. They demanded a democratic, bottom-up union structure that would allow factory floor workers to participate in negotiations. This vision spread beyond São Paulo and became a current within the national labor movement. In 1983, this movement succeeded in founding a national central labor union with the aspired democratic structure. Moreover, new unionism was one of the foundational blocks of the PT, which became an avid promoter of participatory democracy. This last section briefly examines the history of

Brazilian unionism, and then focuses on the new unionism movement, paying particular attention to the democratic ideals it espoused.

From 1888 to 1930, numerous strikes and a few incipient labor organizations in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo marked the beginning of the Brazilian labor movement. Initially fuelled by anarchist immigrants, the movement was engulfed by the PCB in the 1920s. In 1930, the Liberal Alliance rose to power without the support of communists or labor movements, and therefore felt free to crash strikes and begin an incorporation project aimed at creating "a legalized and institutionalized labor movement that was depoliticized, controlled, and penetrated by the state" (Collier & Collier, 1991, p. 163). In the first years of the Vargas Era, the newly created Ministry of Labor crafted an institutional framework that dismantled politically oriented unions. During his authoritarian period (1937-1945), Vargas erected "the most full-blown system of corporatism in Latin America," wherein economic policies were highly centralized and the labor movement subjected to strict controls (Collier & Collier, 1991, p. 186).

The 1942 labor code known as Consolidated Labor Laws (CLT) created an organizational structure that allowed only one union per sector per geographical area, usually municipalities. All workers paid an obligatory syndical tax. Membership was not mandatory but advantageous since it allowed access to social services. Federations grouped unions of the same sector in a larger geographic area, usually states. A confederation grouped all federations of a sector. There could be no unions outside this structure, no links between unions of different sectors, and no communication between unions in the same sector other than through the institutional hierarchy. Rural workers' unions were proscribed. The Ministry of Labor controlled unions' financial activity through mandatory reports, and had the authority to declare strikes illegal. Moreover, "the state was given the right to 'intervene' in unions, that is, to seize its headquarters, take

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charge of its funds, and install a new leadership" (Collier & Collier, 1991, p. 187). The Ministry also controlled union leadership. At the local level, the Ministry chose the directories responsible for electing union officers. At the federations, each union had one vote, regardless of its size, which made it easier to sideline rebellious movements in larger unions. The same was true for confederations. Finally, union leaders were required to make an "ideological oath" in which they swore not to subscribe to ideologies incompatible with the interests of the nation. The oath served as grounds to removing any objectionable leader (Collier & Collier, 1991).

In the 1945-1964 period, the CLT was not legally abolished but overlooked as populist leaders tried to gain the support of increasingly more autonomous unions. As we saw in chapter one, in this period the PSD and the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB) governed the country. According to Schmitter (1971), in an initial phase, "the permanence of the PTB, with its unofficial hold on the Labor Ministry, as a partner in the ruling coalition, meant a continuation of the past policies of preemptive cooptation and paternalism" (p.130). This relationship changed beginning in 1952, with the Ministry becoming increasingly more responsive to workers' demands. Communist groups played an important role in the strengthening of the labor unions. From 1945 to 1947, the PCB performed well in the legislative elections and gained influence in the labor movement, where it advocated for more union autonomy. Despite the party's moderate rhetoric, its advances became wearisome for the federal government, who banned the party in 1947 (Skidmore, 1967). Illegal and under the influence of an international doctrine that argued that the development of democratic capitalism was a step towards a socialist revolution, the PCB opted for infiltrating formal politics in order to influence the country's development and regain its legality (Garcia, 1986). The PCB gained control over numerous unions and was capable of influencing the vote of workers in favor of allies in legal parties, usually the PTB. Some

criticized the party for validating and profiting from the bureaucratic apparatus controlling unions (Collier & Collier, 1991).

In the mid-1950s, the PCB split over party doctrines and dissident groups focused on a new type of work with the labor movement. "They were particularly concerned with promoting union autonomy from government and the revitalization of grassroots participation within unions" (Collier & Collier, 1991, p. 549). Marxist groups to the left of the PCB also began to promote mass-based unionism. In reaction, a group of right-wing *pelegos* organized an anticommunist union movement. In the early 1960s, the labor movement was divided between the leftists in the PCB and the PTB willing to work within the system, radical reformers, and *pelegos*. Most of the members of the first two groups joined the new national organization called General Workers Command (Comando Geral dos Trabalhadores, CGT), which played a major role in the political radicalization that led to the military coup.

In 1964, the military revived the corporatist union apparatus and repressed leftist leaders. In the first two years of the regime, the Ministry of Labor replaced the heads of 382 unions, 45 federations, and 4 confederations. In the first five years of the regime, 108 union leaders and deputies representing the labor movement had mandates revoked and political rights suspended. A law passed in 1965 mandated that annual wage increases were to be determined by an index published by the Ministry of Labor; this regulation preempted wage disputes, the main task of unions. After two years of intense repression, the regime allowed union activity to resume, but then violently crushed strikes in 1968, which led to years of inactivity in the labor movement (Almeida, 1983).

In 1973, a new labor movement rekindled in São Paulo; at first it was called *authentic unionism*, but later it became known as *new unionism*. From 1940 to 1970, the percentage of

unionized workers increased only from 8 percent to 13 percent; however, in absolute terms, urban unionized workers increased 3.5 times from 1960 to 1978 (Almeida, 1983, pp. 193-194). Whereas in the period of 1930-1960 unions represented mainly workers in state-owned services and primary industries, in the 1970s "heavy industry workers – auto, metal, mechanic, steel, and petrol – were the backbone of the syndical movement" (Almeida, 1983, p. 196). These workers were highly concentrated in the São Paulo industrial belt called the ABCD Region, comprised of the cities of Santo André, São Bernardo do Campo, São Caetano, and Diadema. For example, in 1978 the city of São Paulo had 400 thousand metalworkers, while the small towns of the ABCD Region had 205 thousand metalworkers, of which 80 thousand worked in the three auto factories in São Bernardo, the heart of the new labor movement (Moisés, 1982, p. 15). The ABCD Region workers were highly trained, with an above average educational level, and young; most had not participated in union activity in the pre-1964 period (Moisés, 1982).

Besides these socio-demographic characteristics, the new unionism movement had new aspirations. The specific wage and working condition demands that fuelled the groundbreaking strikes of the late 1970s do not need to be reviewed here.[16] The organizational changes advocated by the new unionism are more relevant for the purpose of the present analysis. According to a scholar with close connections with the movement,

> the question of organization at the factory level is the main focus of labor groups such as the Oposição Sindical, which are primarily interested in strengthening the bases of the labor movement. In order to create an effective process of grass-roots mobilization, the leaders of the Oposição Sindical faction are trying to organize *comissões de fábrica* (factory commissions)…since these commissions are not officially recognized by labor legislation, their leaders must rely on support or tolerance from labor unions and leaders

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[16] See Moisés (1979) for a detailed analysis or Keck (1992, pp. 61-67) for a short summary.

that function within a structure which does little to stimulate those rank-and-file groups.

(Moisés, 1979, p. 59)

It is worth reminding that the CLT authorized only one union per sector per city, and therefore

factory floor organization had never been legally allowed. In this context, the idea presented

below by then president of the metalworkers union of São Bernardo and Diadema was rather

radical. In 1979, when asked about the ideal union organizational structure, Luis Inácio "Lula"

da Silva replied,

> The way I see it is as follows: in a company with, for example, 50 sections, it should have
>
> 50 elected union delegates. This of course would be in a different union structure. This
>
> way you could have a union convention made up entirely of union delegates. Now for me,
>
> the union delegate would only be of value if he is elected. It's not right for me to become
>
> a member of a factory commission just because I want to. I think there must be an
>
> election, and the worker must choose someone based on a particular program. These
>
> delegates could choose the union leadership. They would be the guys who would be in
>
> daily contact with the workers, talking about their problems, and in all their statements
>
> they would be representing the workers of their section. You could have meetings with
>
> the delegates of a particular company to discuss the specific problems of that company,
>
> and once a month we could have a general meeting of the delegates to take a united
>
> position for the metalworkers as a whole. (as quoted in Garcia & Harding, 1979, p. 96)

Lula's view was representative of a faction within the São Bernardo metalworkers union. When

he was elected union president, in 1972, his election slate put forward a nine-point program that

included advocacy for the creation of a bottom-up structure of representation, wherein each set

number of workers would have the right to send a delegate to consultations (Almeida, 1975, pp.

75, fn26). The outcome document of the III Congress of Workers in the Metal, Mechanic, and Electric Industries of São Bernardo and Diadema also identified the creation of a new union organizational structure as one of the main goals of workers' struggle. The existing structure, the document asserted, "was erected more than 40 years ago with the deliberate aim of impeding workers' organization independent of state tutelage" ("Resoluções," 1978, para. 5).

The new unionism of the ABCB Region developed into an organized faction within the national labor movement known as Syndical Opposition (Oposição Sindical), the short form for "workers in opposition to the syndical structure." Members of this faction gathered in state and national congresses and promoted their ideas through numerous pamphlets and bulletins. In 1981, Syndical Opposition printed a booklet describing the experience of three unions that succeeded in organizations factory commissions. The piece described the formation of these commissions, discussed the achieved results and shortcomings, and called on workers to promote the idea. "[Factory] commissions are the seed for a grassroots, independent, and representative unionism," the booklet concluded (Oposição Sindical Metalúrgica, 1981, p. 60). It is noteworthy that these commissions were illegal and employers had the right to dismiss employees involved in these activities.

The confrontational approach of Syndical Opposition clashed with the moderate reforms espoused by a heterogeneous faction of the national labor movement called Syndical Union (União Sindical). This faction included members of the PCB as well as conservative trade unionists. The unifying characteristic of this group was their willingness to work from within the existing institutional structure, where many of them held posts. In 1981, a massive collective of unions around the country culminated in the First National Conference of the Working Class (Conferência Nacional da Classe Trabalhadora), the largest union gathering ever organized in the

country. The conference brought together 5,036 delegates, representing 1,091 unions, from 23 out of 25 states (Central Única dos Trabalhadores, 1984, p. 33). The event was organized in a democratic fashion with regular communication from organizers to individual unions, a set process for choosing delegates in local assemblies, and a clear voting system at the conference. The majority of delegates voted in favor of repeating the event in the following year and establishing a subgroup in charge of planning the central labor organization, which was to be called the Unified Workers' Central (Central Única dos Trabalhadores, CUT). In the following year, however, moderate unionists withdrew from both resolutions, proposing instead smaller gatherings with the representatives of the official confederations and federations, who would draft a proposal for the new organization (Central Única dos Trabalhadores, 1984; Keck, 1984).

Adherents of the new unionism harshly criticized the undemocratic attitude of moderates. A document that represents Syndical Opposition's view described the situation as follows,

> Bloc 1 [moderates] has a project for a CUT established within the current syndical structure, under the control of the confederations and federations. Bloc 2 [syndical opposition] has a project for a CUT grounded on workers base organizations, controlled by base organizations: unions, factory commissions, base delegates, etc. We defend a CUT built on the extensive participation of workers organized in their working places, unions, states, and at national level. (Central Única dos Trabalhadores, 1984, p. 65)

The Syndical Opposition went ahead with the original plan, held the congress and founded CUT.

In 1979, the military abolished the two-party system. The new unionism movement and the CUT became the main pillars of a new workers' party. According to Keck (1992),

> the idea of a workers' party was first launched officially as a resolution of the São Paulo State Metalworkers' Congress in Lins, São Paulo, in January of 1979. The Lins resolution

on party politics called for Brazilian workers to overcome their marginalization by uniting to form an internally democratic party. (p.67)

The PT was founded in 1980, after a herculean effort to satisfy the requirements imposed by the party reform. The 1982 legislative and municipal elections were the party's first test. The outcome was very unfavorable: the PT elected eight federal deputies, ten state deputies, and two mayors (Meneguello, 1989, p. 125). The mayoral victories were in a small town in the northern state of Maranhão and Diadema in the ABCD region. The new mayor of Diadema, Gílson Menezes, was a metalworker and leader of the new unionism movement who had been fired in the late-1970s' strikes. The PT of Diadema was composed of new unionists and Marxists, both supported participation, but in somewhat different ways. The participatory administration of Diadema is the topic of chapter five.

Conclusion

The participatory movements examined in this chapter started with a critique of the lack of representativeness of their institutional contexts and the development of proposals for how to create bottom-up organization structures that would allow the participation of ordinary members. It was also understood that the democratization of their institutions would help to pave the way for the democratization of society. In this process, movements took a clear stand against partial and controlled forms of participation and social relationships marked by hierarchy and authority. MDB *autênticos* advocated for a true opposition party, developed programs to govern cities in a participatory manner, breaking away from the clientelist practices other party factions adopted. The reform of municipal administrations was seen as the first step in the reform of the political party system. Progressive clergy and Liberation theologians argued the Church had to reinvent itself and break with a past of neglect to social injustices. In this view, the CEBs represented "a

new way of being Church," and would contribute to the construction of a more just society. The new unionism movement urged a break with institutional restraints on workers organization, and struggled for a grassroots labor movement based on factory commissions. The call for the democratization of unions evolved into a unified workers' central and a workers' party.

The members of participatory movements often overlapped: factory workers were also the residents of a certain community, which was the constituency of a certain candidate. These movements were mutually reinforcing and often deliberately supported each other. Most notably, the Catholic Church played an important role helping to organize the labor movement. Catholic groups known as *pastorais* worked much like CEBs, but were issue based instead of organized around local communities. The Workers' Pastoral (Pastoral Operária) led discussion groups just like the ones at CEBs; the education material was similar, but more focused on topics pertaining to the reality of factory workers. Furthermore, CEBs in the ABCD region supported strike efforts, e.g., fundraising money and food to help workers who had strike days deducted from their salary. The higher echelons of the church also supported the new unionism. In a telling episode in 1980, the military accused São Paulo Bishop Paulo Evaristo Arns of inciting the strikes of the ABCD region. The government claimed the Church did not support such unlawful demonstrations. Days later the CNBB issued a document endorsing the strikes (Moisés, 1982). In another example, the Bishop of São Bernardo was one of the speakers of the conference that founded the CUT. In his remarks, the Bishop acknowledged that the Church had wronged workers in the past, but stated that it was now on their side (Central Única dos Trabalhadores, 1984).

In an initial phase, the MDB *autênticos* and the intellectuals associated with the group saw the new unionism movements as a fundamental advance towards democratization, while unionized workers found among *autênticos* the best candidates to represent their interests. As

democratization advanced, some MDB members wanted their party to become the voice of social movements, whereas workers started to envision their own party. This break was mirrored in intellectual circles, where new groups began to form according to views on the autonomy of popular movements. The fragmentation of these participatory movements is the topic of chapter six. For the moment, it is important to note that at their inception these movements merged into a loud call for a democracy with active and direct citizen participation.

It is not possible to understand these participatory movements outside the context of the partial and controlled political incorporation of the 1930-1964 period, and the closure of formal channels for political participation following the 1964 coup. The former weakened traditional elites and spurred the organization of new social groups, some of which were granted rights (e.g., urban workers), and others that had to mobilize to fight for rights (e.g., peasants). Moreover, it opened the party system to outside contenders making electoral processes more than simply elite arrangements. These partial and incomplete gains in participation were taken away by the military in 1964. As a pendulum that comes back stronger after being thrown in the opposite direction, the movements that emerged in the 1970s were no longer content with having their interests and needs included in political agenda: they demanded that ordinary citizens have the means to directly participate in decision-making processes.

Visions aside, an authoritarian government headed the country, and there were few spaces where participatory ideals could be put into practice. As Telles (1986) and Sader (1988) pointed out, the neighborhood, the local, was the only political space open for activism during the regime. While these and other authors have researched neighborhood organizations and social movements that emerged in this period, the next chapters focuses on innovations in municipal government and the creation of mechanism for direct citizen participation.

Chapter 3: MDB *Autênticos* in Lages

Socioeconomic Formation

The Portuguese crown's concern with defending the colony from Spanish invasion and the transit of cattle herds were the two main factors spurring the occupation of the southern state of Santa Catarina. The lines dividing Portuguese and Spanish colonies in South America were unclear and provoked disputes that lasted almost four hundred years. In the 18th century, the Portuguese crown tried to address the overpopulation of the islands of Azores and Madeira and the vulnerability of the uninhabited south of Brazil by moving people from the former to the latter. In 1756, the crown sponsored the migration of five thousand Portuguese families from those islands to Santa Catarina (Cunha, 1982, p. 8). Efforts to colonize the region continued in the subsequent century with the settlement of Italians, Germans, Poles, and other Europeans.

The patterns of occupation and the economic activities of each part of the state led to distinct social formations. On the southeastern coast, the first settlers and the Portuguese families from Azores and Madeira engaged predominately in subsistence farming, fishing, and the manufacturing of basic products for internal consumption. The type of soil, the abundance of crustaceans, the isolation from economic centers, and Azoreans' tradition of family farming prevented the development of large-scale agriculture (Lago, 1968). In the northeast, Blumenau and Joinville started to stand out as technologically advanced areas with primary industries (*mate* herb tea, sugar cane liquor, timber, textile, leather) in the second half of the 19th century. Geography favored the early industrialization of these cities, located in a region known as the Itajaí Valley, close to Curitiba and São Paulo, with fluvial routes to the interior and an international port. Moreover, German migrants in this region had experience with industrial activities and founded family industries, the best known being the Hering brothers' textile

factory (Cunha, 1982). In the end of 19th century, the republican movement thrived in this region; Blumenau was the political base of Hercílio Luz, one of the most important politicians of the First Republic (see Figure 3, p.286).

The plateau of Santa Catarina had a distinct formation. The main city of the region, Lages, was founded in 1776 to defend the territory from Spanish invasions and to serve as a provision post along the route connecting the ranches of the south and the Sorocaba (São Paulo) livestock market serving the gold mining region (Peixer, 2002). Cattle dealers and muleteers slowly occupied the settlement attracted by the possibility of owning land in a region with natural grazing fields and unclaimed salvage livestock. According to a respected local historian,

> From its foundation until around 1920…livestock was Lages' exclusive economic pillar. First as a resting stop for cattle dealers; then with the trading of horses, donkeys, and mules; after with the commerce of leather and dried beef; and finally, with the raising of livestock sold to slaughterhouses in Rio Grande do Sul and in the coast of Santa Catarina. (Costa, 1982, p. 1497)

In 1939, the city of Lages was responsible for close to 60 percent of the cattle production in the state (Cunha, 1982, p. 156).

The Lages plateau had the highest concentration of land ownership in the state. In 1817, a public land inventory listed only 56 farmers in an enormous region that today includes Lages and neighboring cities (Costa, 1982, p. 1478). In 1950, 44 percent of the state's farms with between 100 and 1,000 hectares were in Lages, whereas only 8 percent of the farms between 10 and 100 hectares were in the region (Peluso Júnior, 1991). In 1966, after the first wave of urbanization and industrialization, land was still fairly concentrated: holdings with up to 100 hectares occupied 18 percent of the arable land, while holdings with more than 1,000 hectares occupied

30 percent of the land (Costa, 1982, p. 1501). The economic and political elite of *coronéis* that emerged out of this pattern of occupation governed the city until the 1960s. It is possible to link many of the most influential families in the first half of the 20th century to those 56 farms listed in the 1817 inventory.

Peluso Júnior (1949) explored in detail the operation of one of the large cattle farms in the region and described their social organization as comprising three groups. Peons were in charge of the cattle and did not receive a salary for this job, only payments for sporadic services such as the building of a fence or occasional work on the rancher's fields. "The floor of the house in which he lives, the land he works, and the field where he keeps a few cows of his own constitute the landowner's remuneration for his labor" (p.1387). The second group was constituted of tenants settled away from the center of the farm. In this case, the exchange with the rancher was also in kind: a portion of their crops for the use of the land. The third group was the rancher's family. Male children received 50 calves on their 10th birthday; eventually they would build a house within their father's land, as a way to secure the occupation of large estates. The rancher was, above all, "the boss of a social group that in him finds support whenever in need of comfort and protection, which traditionally should be provided by large land owners" (p.1390). The children of the peons often became the peons of the new generation of ranchers. Demographic data and qualitative studies also point out the existence of small contingents of subsistence farms, especially in the less favorable mountainous terrains (Martendal, Calazans, Silva, & Sartori, 1982; Peixer, 2002; Peluso Júnior, 1991).

The subaltern group of peons, tenants, and subsistence farmers formed a social group known as *caboclo*. Literally, the term means a person of mixed white and aboriginal descent. The *caboclo* of the Santa Catarina plateau, however, had a mixed ethnic formation that included

African slaves brought with the first settlers, natives from the Botocutos and Kaigáng nations, and Italian and German migrants from the east of the state. Despite ethnic diversity, throughout two hundred years of living and working in this region, a culture with specific symbols and rituals developed. Unfortunately, the *caboclo* culture was delegated an inferior character in the history of the region. The *caboclo* is rarely present in official local history, and the rare mentions usually associate the group with backwardness (Peixer, 2002). The most complete work on the history of Lages neglects the *caboclo* culture. The chapter on "Cultural Evolution" focuses on classic music groups, jazz bands, orchestras, and choirs. Brief mentions of *caboclo* customs and beliefs are found in the "Folklore" chapter (Costa, 1982, pp. 1596-1622).

The uprising of a movement of *caboclos* led by a messianic leader is one of the best-known events in the history of Santa Catarina. The center of the Contestado War (1912-1916) was Curitibanos, the second largest city in the plateau, which at the time had a larger number of subsistence farmers than Lages. Destitute farmers who believed they were led by a man with mystic powers rose against the political and economic system and demanded a more just life. During the First Republic similar uprisings took place across the country (e.g., the Canudos Rebellion in the state of Bahia), and may be seen as an extreme choice of people trapped in a limited access order and forced to choose between subservience and violence. As in other similar cases, federal troops massacred insurgents. The military campaign was accompanied by propaganda that depicted the movement as a revolt of fanatics, indolent and idle *caboblos* (Munarim, 1990). To this date, people of this origin often reject the denomination *caboclo*, which they see as pejorative, and prefer terms such as "popular groups" or "Brazilians"[17] (Peixer, 2002, citing Geraldo Löcks 1999).

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[17] "Brazilians" is used in juxtaposition to *gringos*, the name given to Italian migrants in the region.

A central preoccupation of the 1970s' participatory administration was to promote the valorization of the *caboclo* culture. As the next section shows, this social class was never part of local or state politics, dominated by local cattle ranchers and industrialists of the Itajaí Valley. The team in charge of the participatory administration tried to bring *caboclos* and their concerns to the fore of the city's social and development agenda. The objective was to improve the living conditions of rural families, allowing them to preserve their life style, avoiding rural exodus. Whereas much of the literature on participatory democracy focuses on initiatives in fast-growing urban centers, the pioneer experience of Lages was devoted to rural *caboclo* citizens.

Limited Access Order: The Plateau and Itajaí Valley Elites

In Santa Catarina, the Proclamation of the Republic (1889) and subsequent conflicts brought to power a reformist elite imbued with the ideology of the revolution and allied with the *coronéis* of the Lages region. The appointed governor of the new regime was Lauro Müller, a military official from the Itajaí Valley. Established politicians from the former conservative and liberal parties swiftly showed their support for the revolution, and many joined the Republican Party. The new governor, however, isolated the old elites, filling legislative and administrative posts with "genuine republicans" who represented the urban, industrialist, and commercial classes (Meirinho, 2009). Dissatisfied, members of the old elites joined the party of disgruntled monarchists and federalists. In 1893, a federalist revolt roared in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul, involving Santa Catarina, whose capital came under the control of federalist forces. In September of 1893, Desterro was declared the provisory capital of a new federal union. In April of 1894, federal forces regained control of the city and launched a gruesome retaliating campaign that included the summary execution of federalist leaders (Meirinho, 2009; Neckel, 2003).

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Hercílio Luz, a republican from Blumenau led the resistance to the federalist occupation and became the new governor in 1895. He was one of the most important political leaders of the time and his followers were known as *hercilistas*. Lauro Müller was the other very influential republican politician, and his comrades were nicknamed *lauristas*. In 1898, the two republicans supported São Paulo's opposition to the candidacy of Campos Salles for the presidency. The lingering federalists campaigned for Salles and gained a considerable number of votes for the future president. As seen in chapter one, Salle's political strategy rested on peaceful alliances with governors, and neither the president nor Hercílio would benefit from clashes. However, Salles had to reward federalists' campaigning efforts. The solution was the creation of a new party in 1902 that brought together *hercilistas*, *lauristas*, and federalists (Cherem, 2001). The Santa Catarina Republican Party (Partido Republicano Catarinense, PRC) became the umbrella party of the dominant elite coalition – the organization that facilitated intra-elite negotiations and helped to avoid violent struggle. At the turn of the 20th century the urban elite was at the top of the elite hierarchy.

In the Region of Lages, the transition to the Republic consolidated the political influence of landed families. The most powerful clan in the city branched off from Laureano José Ramos (1777-1862). In 1868, the Emperor Don Pedro II nominated Vidal Ramos, Laureano's son, lieutenant of the local regiment of the National Guard, in 1894 President Prudent promoted him to the post of *coronel*, and later he became the president of the city's Republican Party. In 1895, Vidal Ramos Junior, Vidal's son, was the only candidate in the first municipal election in Lages. In the 1894 state elections, Hercílio and Lauro appealed to the political support of the Ramos in the Plateau. Vidal Júnior guaranteed the support of Lages and two neighboring cities, and soon after became Lauro's vice governor. Lauro resigned to serve in a ministry in Rio de Janeiro and

Vidal Júnior became governor (1902-1906). He was also governor for the period of 1910-1914, and then became one of the three state senators until 1928. His son, the lawyer Nereu Ramos, made his debut in political life in the state legislature in 1912 (Costa, 1982; Peixer, 2002).

The 1922 presidential elections divided republican parties across the country between those supporting Arthur Bernardes, the incumbent president's candidate, and those backing Nilo Peçanha, the candidate of a dissident group. Senator Vidal Ramos Júnior and his son Nereu headed Peçanha's campaign in the state, aggravating previous disagreements with Hercílio, current governor and as such a supporter of the status quo. Bernardes won and ostracized the dissidents. In 1926, after the death of Hercílio (1924) and Lauro (1926), the Konder brothers of Itajaí rose to the top of the party, galvanizing authentic republicans and further isolating the Ramos. Adolto Konder became governor in that same year. In the last two years of the decade, republicans nationwide were again divided between the incumbent president's candidate, Julio Prestes, and the opposition leader, Getúlio Vargas. The Konders backed Prestes, whereas the Ramos founded Santa Catarina's Liberal Alliance and supported the Vargas candidacy (Lenzi, 1983). With Vargas' ascent to power, the powerful Plateau families moved to the top of the elite hierarchy in the state.

In Lages, Belisário Ramos, Vidal Júnior's brother, ran the city from 1902 to 1922. In these twenty years, his son, Aristiliano Ramos, and son-in-law, Otacílio Costa, served as deputies for prolonged periods. The Costa family was very influential and tied to the Ramos by marriage. In 1923, Otacílio Costa became mayor, now as the leader of an opposition group to his father-in-law. In 1927, Caetano Costa, also from the opposition group, replaced Otacílio Costa. Despite intra-elite disputes, the city continued to be run by a Ramos, a Costa, someone directly appointed

by a Ramos in the state government, or a politician publicly supported by the Ramos family until 1977 (Costa, 1982; Peixer, 2002).

Toward an Open Access Order: The Lumber Shop and *Caboclo*-Workers

In the early 1930s, the brothers Vidal Júnior and Belisário retired and their sons, Nereu and Aristiliano, respectively, became the political leaders of the Ramos clan. In 1935, both cousins wanted the Liberal Alliance's nomination for state governor.[18] The gentlemen's solution for this intra-elite dispute was simple: the party leadership sent a telegram to Vargas asking him to choose one of the two cousins. Thirty-five party leaders signed the message, 33 of whom were official colonels of the National Guard. Vargas picked Nereu and soon after Aristiliano became the candidate of the opposition party. The pre-elections negotiations involved intrigues, threats, and bribes. Nereu won and remained governor until 1945 (Lenzi, 1983).

The discord between Nereu and Aristiliano had an impact on Lages. In 1930, the cousins, leaders of the victorious revolution, appointed Colonel Octávio Silveira Filho for mayor. In the mayoral election of 1935, Aristiliano backed the candidacy of a cousin on his side of the dispute, Henrique Ramos Júnior, while Nereu supported the name of his brother Celso Ramos. Henrique won and headed the city until 1937, when Vargas' coup endowed the governor with new authoritarian powers. Nereu discharged Henrique and appointed his comrade Idalécio Arruda, and later his younger brother, the second Vidal Ramos Júnior (Lenzi, 1977; Peixer, 2002). Subaltern classes remained excluded from these intra-elite disputes.

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[18] Both thought to deserve it for different reasons. In the 1930 military campaign, Aristiliano headed the Lages front that joined the troops from Rio Grande do Sul and together seized the capital. Nereu was the leader of the opposition in late 1920s and together with his father founded the Liberal Alliance.

In 1945, Vargas' authoritarian regime ended and the political elites reorganized. Santa Catarina followed the national trend wherein the "ins" in Vargas' period formed the Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the "outs" grouped in the National Democratic Unions (UDN). Nereu's clan and the Costa family became the leaders of the PSD, whilst Aristiliano's branch and most of the coastal elite enlisted in the UDN. Saulo Ramos, Nereu and Aristiliano's uncle, founded the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB) in the state. Saulo was a doctor trained in Rio de Janeiro, where he entered Vargas' inner circle. He practiced medicine in the state's capital and was popular in low-income areas where he did unpaid work (Peixer, 2002).

Whereas intra-elite disputes between Ramos and a few other influential families continued to mark Lages politics during the Vargas period, the city's socioeconomic context dramatically changed, leading to the emergence of new social and economic groups that would challenge the limited access order controlled by the landed oligarchy. During the First World War, logging became an increasingly significant activity in the state. Initially in the northeast coast, logging moved towards the plateau, partially because of fast deforestation, but also spurred by the construction of new roads. The revenue generated by logging in Santa Catarina increased almost fivefold between 1910 and 1920 (Cunha, 1982, p. 148). In the 1930s, timber became the number one export of the state. The Second World War increased the demand for wood and in 1942 the product represented 38 percent of Santa Catarina's exports (CEAG/SC, 1980, p. 184). By the 1950s, "cattle farming stopped being the [Lages Region] principal activity; the lumber factory, as unit of production, began to compete with the ranch" (CEAG/SC, 1980, p. 187).

The lumber factory was the symbol of the new economy, but the formation of new social groups was a consequence of a number of interrelated structural changes. First, Lages' transport infrastructure improved. Until the 1920s, precarious roads connected the city to the capital and

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other states; livestock was sold alive and herded to slaughterhouses. The "Second Construction Battalion," an army-run construction company that also employed civilians was stationed in Lages between 1934 and 1970. In this period, the battalion built and improved roads connecting the city to the state capital and to the neighboring states. The new roads attracted logging entrepreneurs and contributed to the emerging of the new economic activity. The construction company also brought with it a considerable contingent of workers and wage jobs. According to the General in charge of the Battalion, in 1952 approximately 800 troopers and 1,600 civilians worked in road building and related activities (Lenzi, 1977, pp. 126-127); 2,200 workers in a population estimated at 35,598 people (Peixer, 2002, p. 17).

Writing in 1949, Peluso Júnior noted that improvements in the transport infrastructure were making agriculture more attractive; some peons were becoming tenants hoping that the sale of their produce in newly accessible markets could improve their livelihood. Moreover, the continuous portioning of large farms and the progressive change in the type of land usage was making it increasingly difficult for the descendants of peons to find positions in the same occupation. As a result, Peluso Júnior (1949) noted, the new generation had to look for land elsewhere or engage in different economic activities. The more accessible, economically striving, and only partially occupied plateau also attracted the descendants of the migrants workers settled in the east of the state and in the state of Rio Grande do Sul.

The Second World War and national policies promoting import substitution encouraged the transformation of raw wood into furniture, paper, carton, and wood pulp. In the first decades of the activity, numerous small lumber shops provided raw material for low-technology factories. An observer of the time described production as predatory, very labor intensive, and extremely wasteful (Lago, 1968). In 1962, however, this industry was responsible for 27 percent of the

state's industrial output (Lago, 1968, p. 307), and much of it was concentrated in the region of Lages: 46 percent of the state production in 1959, and 78 percent in 1970 (CEAG/SC, 1980, p. 187). The largest paper factory in the state was located in the district of Otacílio Costa, in Lages. In 1962, this factory alone employed 450 people, had an industrial village with 250 workers' houses, and provided basic social services to the family of employees (Lago, 1968, p. 309).

These structural changes fostered outside migration to the Lages Region and an exodus from rural zones to the urban perimeter of the city. The rural and urban populations dramatically increased between 1940 and 1970. Whereas rural dwellers increased by 51 percent, the urban population increased by tenfold. The percentage of urban inhabitants rose from 31 to 75 percent of the total population, which increased from 27 to 112 thousand inhabitants in the same 30-year period (Peixer, 2002, p. 17). This profound socioeconomic transformation fueled the emergence of new social groups and new types of social relationships,

> the caboclo-peon, from a patrimonial work relationship, starts to experience, in the lumber shop, a binary, vertical, modern, and capitalist type of work relationship…the caboclo-small grower no longer sells the excess of his subsistence production, now he sells labor power for money. (Munarim, 1990, p. 97)

Munarim also captured an aspect of this transformation that helps to understand the format of the participatory initiatives implemented in the late-1970s. According to the author, although freed from patrimonial bonds, the employee of the Lages lumber shop remained a rural person. "He continues to live in rural areas, even if his house is now in a village" (p.98). His religion, cultural practices, eating and dressing customs did not alter. Most importantly, this *caboclo*-worker preserved the subservience to authority typical of patron-client relationships. As viewed below, the participatory administration put great emphasis on activities aimed at increasing the self-

esteem of *caboclo* people; this was seen by the team in charge of the administration, which included Munarim, as an essential step in process of political emancipation of excluded groups.

Mayoral elections resumed in 1951. The outsider elite of logging entrepreneurs grouped in the PTB. The *caboclo*-worker class remained without organic political representation. The traditional and the new elites began to compete for the vote of this class, using old patrimonial tactics as well as new clientelist and populist political strategies. Nereu's clan won the five municipal elections between 1951and 1968. Nevertheless, these electoral victories were more costly than the political arrangements that had crowned Ramos and Costas in the previous decades. The PSD had to form alliances with the PTB and include members of the new elite in its ranks. The party's 1951 candidate was a lawyer born outside the region, and in 1960 the elected mayor was the son of an industrialist (Lenzi, 1977). In rural areas, political allegiance was no longer simply exchanged for patronage. A considerable portion of peons and subsistence farmers were now wageworkers in lumber factories, and relatively independent from patrons. In many cases, PSD candidates had to buy votes and stories are told of farmers that went bankrupt selling cattle and land in order to "invest in votes" (Munarim, 1990, p. 94). Traditional rural families remained a powerful political force, but their ability to deny access to political and economic activities had considerably decreased by the late 1950s.

The industrialization and urbanization processes that altered the socioeconomic formation of Lages and weakened the political power of the Ramos occurred while the most prominent members of the clan enjoyed two decades of uncontested rule in the state government. This paradox begs for clarification. The parsimonious explanation here is that political groups in this period did not have a development agenda. Intra-elite disputes merely decided who shared the spoils of government. In the first three decades of the 20th century, the only policy question

dividing the coastal and the plateau elites regarded taxation: coastal politicians favored taxing property, while the large landowner of Lages pushed for taxation of exports (Neckel, 2003). Development debates are largely absent in the state's political literature for the first half of the century. The focus of this literature is on intra-elite disputes. A review of the economic literature of Santa Catarina points out that the two main interpretations of the state's economic development agree that external forces fueled industrialization between 1930 and 1950 (Michels, 1998).

In the 1950s, as the externally promoted industrialization started to lose momentum, a group of influential developmentalist intellectuals advocated that the state government had to lead the industrialization process and guarantee the economic prosperity of Santa Catarina. Both the coast and the plateau elites embraced this ideology. Irineu Bornhausen, political leader of the Itajaí Valley, launched the first state-sponsored industrialization scheme in the early 1950s, which was continued by Celso Ramos in his 1961-1966 administration. At this point, Vidal Ramos Júnior, the Ramos running Lages, had already sold his cattle and invested in lumber production. The military regime endorsed the state-led industrialization policies of the Santa Catarina elites. Between 1950 and 1980, coastal and plateau politicians took turns in the state government, all promoting industrialization (Michels, 1998). The *caboclo* did not figure in this development plan: culturally subdued, political unorganized, and economically vulnerable, this class was expected to adapt to the new times.

Following the 1964 coup d'état, most UDN politicians nationwide joined the National Renewal Alliance Party (ARENA), but in Lages the regime's party was staffed mainly by former PSD members – demonstrating once again the ability of Nereu's clan to land on the "right side" of the "revolution" (Silva, 1994). A former UDN member and founder of the local MDB chapter

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explained that, "we supported the 1964 revolution thinking we would come to power, but to our surprise the military chose the PSD, so we joined the opposition" (Celson Anderson de Souza, personal communication, December 14, 2010). The Lages MDB also included a large portion of the PTB, the Ramos of Aristiliano's side, and young professionals educated and politicized in state capitals (Andrade, 1996b).

In 1972, MDB's Juarez Furtado defeated the Costa candidate running for ARENA. Born and raised in Lages, his pre-1964 political affiliation was with the PSD. Furtado was educated in Law in Curitiba and worked as a labor lawyer in his hometown, which gained him the support of urban workers. Although running for the MDB, he counted on the public support of members of Nereu's side who were discontented with the ARENA candidate. Tellingly, his role model in the MDB was Quércia, the pragmatic mayor of Campinas who created a wide clientelist network in the state of São Paulo. Furtado's MDB was a clientelist party organized around *sub-diretórios*, i.e., party neighborhood chapters that assiduously campaigned for the party's candidates during election years in return for priority treatment by the elected administration. This political strategy inhibited broad and autonomous popular political engagement since only *sub-diretórios* leaders could negotiate favors. In Quércia's style, the Furtado administration was marked by visible infrastructure projects, including two industrial districts, and a modernizing discourse that appealed to most sectors without challenging the established elites (Peixer, 2002; Silva, 1994).

The Dirceu Carneiro Team: A Radical Mass Party

Dirceu Carneiro, Furtado's vice mayor and secretary of public works, had a more radical ideal of democracy. Carneiro grew up on a farm in the plateau, moved to Lages to complete his secondary schooling, and then left for Porto Alegre to study architecture. The historical perspective presented in the architecture program and his active involvement in the city's

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vigorous organized opposition to the military regime influenced his political formation. In 1971, Carneiro returned to Lages and joined the MDB; soon after, he became the party's general secretary, and then the vice-mayor of the first MDB administration. Furtado envisioned a politico-technical administration, and thought an architect would complement his skills (Silva, 1994). Carneiro attributed his rapid political rise to his ability to communicate with people in the rural areas, where the party was weak (personal communication, December 13, 2010). By 1973, the two had become political opponents. Furtado regretted having the architect as his vice mayor; "it would have been better to have chosen people we knew from the party, from the city" (as quoted in Silva 1994, p.77). Carneiro affirmed that the labor lawyer was conservative and unwilling to break with clientelist practices.

While Furtado focused on urban projects in the central part of town, Carneiro started to mobilize the rural neighborhoods. The landmark of the city's participatory approach was an initiative called Viva Your Neighborhood, launched by Carneiro while Furtado was in Europe (Quinteiro, 1991). On set dates, the Secretariat of Public Works would send a large portion of its equipment and personnel to a specific neighborhood; there, municipal workers and residents would work together on self-construction projects called *mutirão*, which addressed immediate infrastructure and maintenance problems. According to Carneiro, besides being an efficient work strategy, these collective actions "animated the people in the neighborhoods." In 1976, Carneiro was elected mayor with more than twice the number of votes of the ARENA candidate (Costa, 1982, p. 1372).

The "Dirceu Carneiro Team" is the name used to refer to the enthusiastic group of cabinet secretaries, department heads, and community organizers that worked in the 1977-1982 municipal administration of Lages. The Team's main concern and motivation was to promote a

new type of political culture and practice that would undermine the political power of *coronéis* and the party clientelism of Furtado. Carneiro reported there was "an intense preoccupation with doing things differently from the status quo." Although it is not possible to assign the Team a coherent ideology, there are noteworthy political-cultural traits that help to understand its emphasis on popular participation.

Carneiro's years spent at university in Porto Alegre introduced him to political life, and subsequent trips to the city helped to shape his political ideals. Carneiro partook in several meetings organized by MBD's Institute for Political and Social Studies (IEPES). In 1976, Carneiro and some of his secretaries attended a regional meeting for MDB candidates for municipal government. The principles and strategies of the group were listed in a document where popular participation is one of the foundations for municipal government,

> Today, one of the central questions confronting the [MDB] is the *creation and strengthening of mechanisms for effective popular participation in the municipal administrations of the Party*…The municipal technocracy is necessary in the elaboration of budgets, programs and projects, but in an [MDB] administration, it should never be in charge of making any decisions, it should simply provide technical advice …The effective popular participation in the decision making at the municipal level is not only a viable possibility, but indispensable in the formulation of a truly democratic government program. (PMDB, 1981a, pp. 95-96)

According to Andrade (1996a) , "the then candidate Dirceu and his team adopted almost in its totality the guidelines set in this document" (p.80). The text was later used as the grounding paper for the First National Seminar of PMDB Mayors in 1981, and was printed in the *Revista do PMDB*, followed by a description of Carneiro's government, introduced as "an example of the

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creative implementation of PMDB's program" (PMDB, 1981b, p. 103). Carneiro was the model administrator espoused by *autênticos*.

Many in the Team were not closely affiliated with the MDB, and their source of motivation rested elsewhere. "The truth is that there wasn't a unique and complete theoretical project, well-elaborated intellectually, around which [these] intellectuals/militants gathered" (Munarim, 1990, p. 157). Most members belonged to the middle class, were recently graduated from university, originally from the region, inexperienced in Lages politics, but had a history of involvement with student movements in the 1960s (Quinteiro, 1991) or some other form of resistance to the military regime (Silva Neto, 1995). According to two interviewees, the Team's view of the interior of the country was influenced by Leal's famous book on *coronelismo* and municipal administration, widely read by the group. The state governor accused them of being Marxist, which at that time only contributed to their popularity. Although some saw Cuba as an inspiring example, a clear Marxist doctrine was absent (Paulo Tarso, personal communication, December 16, 2011).

 Researchers and interviewees pointed out that the single unifying principle of the Team was a strong belief in the knowledge and political potential of the popular classes. A researcher and former member of the Team described the group as,

> a group of young intellectuals, 'agents of the middle class' who made an 'option' for the popular classes…[they] repudiated the manipulation of people and tried in their day-to-day living and being with people to value them, to help them to turn to themselves, to believe in their strength, in their capacity to interpret and change reality. (Quinteiro, 1991, pp. 136-137)

Another Team member mentioned in his master's dissertation an "almost blind belief in the capacity of the 'oppressed people' to organize themselves and confront the dominant forces" (Munarim, 1990, p. 158).

As seen in chapter two, during the military regime numerous leftist militants became involved in adult literary campaigns inspired in the Paulo Freire's popular education method, which was seen as a tool for "consciousness raising." The term "popular education" and the name "Paulo Freire" are recurrent in oral and written depictions of the participatory administration, but never in a systematic or elaborated way. The ideals of the grassroots arm of the Catholic Church also played a role in motivating the group. The most experienced Team member was known as Professor Manuel. In the early 1960s, Manuel and his wife Sonia were active in the political life of São Paulo, where they participated in a theology seminar guided by the doctrine of Second Vatican Council, and in a movement for public education reform led by Dom Paulo Evaristo Arns (Quinteiro, 1991). In the same decade, they moved to Lages and became teachers. Furtado brought them to the department of education and in the Carneiro years Manuel became the head of the department. The former vice mayor explained that much of what they did in Lages was based on principles Manuel brought with him to Lages (Celso Andrade de Souza, personal communication, December 14, 2010). The former director of the cultural department referred to Manuel as the "guru" of the Team (Valmor Beltrani, personal communication, December 20, 2010). According to a local researcher and lay religious leader, CEBs were not yet organized in the city in this period (Gerlado Löcks, personal communication, December 16, 2010).

Finally, a marked attribute of the Team was its devotion to the work being done. The conviction in new political practices motivated these young public administrators to work long

days. An interviewee reported having undergone a tenfold income decrease in order to join the administration, "and I didn't think twice about it." Carneiro reported having to order his secretaries to go home and rest. Every written description of the experiment transpires a feeling of enthusiasm and anticipation that seems to have been present in most of Dirceu's mandate. The 1979 national electoral reform that allowed for the creation of new political parties also extended the mandate of current mayors from four to six years. The energy of the Team is reported to have declined in these two additional years. Only a couple of members of the Team remained involved in party politics.

The Participatory Administration

Carneiro explained that the first challenge of the participatory administration was to surmount party politics lines that impeded them from reaching communities associated with the PSD. The solution was to pick schools as the central public spaces for organizing community activities. The neutral image of the school and the respected position of teachers allowed for the broad mobilization of the city's population. Whereas Furtado privileged efforts to create party neighborhood chapters, the front line workers of the new administration assisted people in organizing varied kinds of "base organizations" – namely, agriculture centers, parent-teacher associations, mothers' clubs, small business owners' associations, rural youth groups, community gardens, and neighborhood associations. The mayor and his secretaries had an open-door policy to leaders of all representative associations, which constituted a change from the clientelist logic where only community leaders loyal to the party were recognized as legitimate interlocutors. For this reason, party colleagues criticized Carneiro for working with people who had campaigned against them.

The administration's effort to mobilize the population to participate in political life relied heavily on the work of the education and culture departments. The objectives were to promote an education based on people's practical experiences and organize activities that helped to unearth local customs and history. The goal was to extol the hitherto denigrated *caboclo* culture. For example, the Education Department included gardening, construction, and basket weaving in the curriculum of rural primary schools and invited parents to teach some of these classes as a way of calling attention to the knowledge existent within the community. The Culture Department worked with teachers in the preparation of annual plays that presented important chapters in the history of Lages – told from the perspective of subaltern groups. The Department also organized periodic gatherings in rural schools that worked in the recovery of local customs and stories.

The famous Gralha Azul, a marionette theater group, also drew on local cultural themes in their numerous plays. The former director of the Secretariat of Culture explained that this cultural agenda was not inspired by romantic ideas of the past or a nationalist outlook. Instead, the work was based on the conviction that people had the right to express themselves, the right to access culture, and that it was of vital importance to preserve the local cultural heritage. Thus, the secretariat promoted activities that rescued local culture, allowing audiences not used to artistic languages to recognize themselves in the works presented, and even to participate in it. The Gralha Azul sang a song that typified this thought: "You can do tomorrow as we do today" (Valmor Beltrani, personal communication, December 20, 2010).

The knowledge, skills, histories, and stories uncovered by the various cultural and educational programs soon demanded a place to be better showcased. The Mostra do Campos (Field Fairs) were annual events organized in each of the city's seven districts. At these fairs, communities displayed the produce of the year's harvest, animals, machinery, and artwork; all

accompanied by melodies of local musicians, the rhymes of uninhibited poets, and freshly cooked food. The preparation for these events mobilized all the recently created associations, each working in specific tasks, coordinating with the remaining organizations and district organizers, who in turn discussed a multitude of matters with the city's secretaries. The administration supported the event from a distance, allowing organizational structures to form. According to the education secretary who preceded Professor Manuel, within the first three years it was already possible to notice improvements in community groups' organizational skills (Martendal, 1982). A participant researcher concluded that in these fairs, "the *knowledges* (*sic*) of local culture were valued, increasing the desire to learn and share them. Those who participate in this process felt valued in one way or another. As a result, the self-esteem of these historically marginalized and exploited peasants was elevated" (Silveira, 2004, p. 100).

The Team also implemented participatory programs focuses on social and economic problems. Twenty-one agriculture centers were formed and worked as small farmer cooperatives. The primary incentive for forming these groups was the opportunity to use city-owned tractors for a third of the price charged by commercial services. In order to have access to the machines, farmers had to organize themselves to purchase and store diesel, make minor repairs, pay for the cost of tractor drivers, and fairly share the use of the equipment. The goal of this program was to prevent the bankruptcy of small farmers who were unable to access machinery (Alves, 1980b). The centers also housed the rural youth groups and served as central community spaces.

The *mutirão* (self-construction project) was the best-known program of Lages. By the late 1970s, the city had become predominantly urban and squatter homes had mounted everywhere. The federal low-income housing project required applicants to have an income above the average of most squatters. Carneiro's team decided to work with the ineligible families.

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The administration divided a large plot of public land into 960 lots and had social workers select the families most in need. The mayor then passed a law authorizing city personnel to do free demolition and free transport of debris for any construction site, as long as all material was donated to the *mutirão*. The future residents topped the recycled debris with traditional construction methods, e.g., clay roof tiles, and some non-substitutable materials were provided by the city, e.g., doorknobs. Groups of twenty families worked together in the construction of each other's homes. The administration provided technical assistance for the construction of sewage and water pipes, and technical guidance for volunteers. Further, Carneiro demanded that municipal employees contribute one day per year of volunteer work in the *mutirão* (Alves, 1980b).

Finally, it is remarkable to note the precursory participatory budgeting installed in Lages. In the beginning, Carneiro's Team allocated 5 percent of the budget for special projects, and called upon community leaders active in the Viva Your Neighborhood to help decide how best to use these resources. This structure became more complex as the number of base organizations increased. Popular Councils were created to represent neighborhoods' concerns. Councils had, on average, fifteen members from various "work fronts;" for example, associations concerned with health formed the "health work front" and would elect delegates to neighborhood councils. Council representatives were subsequently invited to participate in the preparation of the municipal budget and the elaboration of the city's master plan (Quinteiro, 1991).

The administration distributed pamphlets explaining that, "in Lages, as we draft the city's budget, people in rural and urban areas are organizing and meeting with executive representatives. Together they discuss, vote and make decisions about the use of the public funds." In 1982, the Team wanted to make their innovations official and so began issuing

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decrees known as "popular laws." Law number 550, Section V, created the Cabinet of Planning and Coordination (GAPLAN), responsible for linking together the various departments and projects of the municipal administration. Article 51 describes how the cabinet should operate,

> In the implementation and execution of projects in the sphere of responsibility here outlined, the GAPLAN must submit projects of future works to popular and democratic consultation, specially matters regarding the municipal public budget, urban planning, and legislation of social interest...using for this purpose assemblies of associations and organizations duly constituted by the people. (Alves, 1980b, Annex 1)

The Team's disregard for the municipal legislative chamber is patently clear in this proposal. A "popular and democratic consultation" did not involve elected representatives; instead, the new executive body had to dialogue directly with civil society associations about essentially every matter of municipal public administration.

Actual implementation of the participatory budgeting process seems to have been timid. The close cooperation between administration and popular associations created a largely consensual atmosphere, and community leaders' participation was limited to comments and suggestions on proposals elaborated by the secretariats (Ferreira, 1991). Ultimately, the 1982 electoral defeat prevented continued evolution of the participatory budgeting and the other initiatives here described.

The 1982 Elections: Old and New Politics

The MDB lost the 1982 municipal elections to a PSD candidate well connected with the city's traditional elite. "The new mayor [assumed the position] willing to liquidate the innovative experience implemented in the city" (Ferreira, 1991, p. 29). One of his first moves was to fire the technical staff identified with the previous administration (Andrade, 1996b). The still weak

neighborhood associations slowly crumbled and were replaced by organizations connected with the new mayor's political party. What is more, a similar outcome would have likely resulted had the former Mayor Furtado, the PMBD's candidate, won the election (Silva, 1994).

Several factors contributed to the Team's inability to elect a successor. The "Dirceu Carneiro Team" became a political group isolated from the rest of the party. Ferreira (1991) attributed this disregard for the party as a sign of the group's political naiveté, pointing to its majority of non-politicians convinced of the supremacy of the popular organization. The Team worked predominately with the most needy sectors of society, the population of urban peripheries and especially the *caboclo* population in rural areas. Little attention was paid to organized workers' unions and the middle-class of the city's center. The former kept corporatist ties with the PSD while the latter was generally disgruntled with Carneiro's lack of attention to urban developments (Silva, 1994).

Furtado, then PMDB president, continued to organize the party's base during Carneiro's years. He was helped by municipal representatives who feared that direct citizen participation was going to undermine their role as political brokers. When the party convention arrived in 1982, Furtado was able to maneuver things according to his preferences (Silva, 1994). Carneiro avoided direct confrontation with the party's president because by now he was focused on his nomination for federal deputy, which would be hard for him to obtain if Furtado opposed it or decided to run for the position himself. There is a known rumor about a tacit agreement among the party's leadership: "the city goes back to Furtado in exchange for Carneiro's ascension" (Silva, 1994, p. 129). Franscisco Küster, the former secretary of agriculture, and, for many, the natural candidate of the Team, was hit in the crossfire and forced to the sideline. During the

electoral campaign, Carneiro and Furtado did not publicly support each other's candidacy, and neither aided Küster's bid for the state legislative chamber.

Interviewees reported that tensions within the Team began around 1980 with the arrival of the "ideological tourists." News about this defying democratic experiment spread quickly in 1970s' authoritarian Brazil. Militants and intellectuals from all over the country came to Santa Catarina to see the experiment first hand.[19] After a tour of the projects, visitors would sit with Carneiro and his team for a questions and answers period; questions were often theoretical and enquired about the meaning and long term-goals of the participatory administration. It was in these meetings that the Team learned that their political orientations were dissimilar. Carneiro frequently failed to provide the leftist political-programmatic answers that some of his aides expected, either because of lack of theoretical knowledge or for unwillingness to openly ascribe to a particular ideology; eventually Carneiro stopped attending these meetings. An additional and related point of friction within the Team regarded the possibility of joining the recently created PT. Some in the Team felt that PT's program was in line with what they had been doing, but the discussion became taboo (Quinteiro, 1991). Tensions escalated with Carneiro's inaction regarding the selection of a successor, which led a portion of the team to unsuccessfully try to launch the candidacy of the secretary of urban services.

Meanwhile, the restored PSD organized a concerted effort to crush what the state governor pejoratively called a "little Marxist republic." In the two years preceding the municipal election, the PSD state government first attacked the city by encouraging the dismemberment of the two districts with cellulose factories, considerably reducing the administration's revenue

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[19] This fact was confirmed in interviews with the mayors of Boa Esperança and Diadema; fully aware of the Lages initiative, they reported having thought about sending people to Lages to learn about specific programs.

(Ferreira, 1991). Moreover, the governor financed a parallel administration in the form of a regional superintendence. According to one journalist, 3,000 employees staffed this regional administration, while the city had 1,788 people on its entire payroll (Nelson Zambom as quoted in Quinteiro, 1991, p. 206n30). A good example of the financial might of the state government was in the housing area. In the *mutirão* project, people had to pay for the land and some construction costs in installments that never amounted to more than 10 percent of a family's income. The PSD candidate promised to write off everyone's debt (Andrade, 1996b); in the weeks preceding the election, the state government inaugurated a popular housing complex much larger than the sum of all the houses built by the people in the previous six years (Ferreira, 1991, p. 27).[20] In the end, the PSD candidate won the elections in a close race. Carneiro moved to the country's capital. The Team dispersed.

Conclusion

The socioeconomic formation of Santa Catarina led to the emergence of an economically and politically hegemonic class of cattle farmers in the Plateau of Lages, who shared the control of the state with the industrial elite of the Itajaí Valley. The politically excluded class of Lages was comprised of peons and rural workers whose interests were neglected in state level politics and in the consecutive municipal governments of the Ramos family. Culturally, the identity of the *caboclo* was relegated an inferior status that led many to avoid the categorization. Structural changes in the 1930s-1950s period weakened the dominant elite, fuelled the emergence of new social and economic groups, transformed peons in wage earning *caboclos*, and spurred the fast growth of rural and poor urban neighborhoods.

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[20] State-level financing of networks of traditional politicians as a way to prevent the growth of democratic forces was a widespread practice in the last years of the military regime (Hagopian, 1996, Chapter 5).

In this new socioeconomic context, a populist politician nonmember of the traditional elites managed to become mayor, and headed an administration focused on visible urbanistic projects. Furtado's attempt to build a strong clientelist network was obstructed by his vice mayor and other militants influenced by participatory ideals promoted at the IEPES, the values espoused by the progressive arm of Catholic Church, and notions of popular education. The participatory administration of Lages had an unequivocal objective: to include, strengthen, and benefit subaltern classes hitherto barred from politics. The design of the participatory initiatives followed this rationale. In order to mobilize a society without a previous history of popular mobilization, the Team found it necessary first to promote the value of the *caboclo* culture and boost the self-esteem of this social group. Participatory initiatives focused on culture and education as much as social and economic problems, an approach that is not seen in current participatory administrations.

The Dirceu Carneiro Team had plenty of *political will* but it was a politically weak group trying to galvanize the most disenfranchised class against a still-powerful economic elite. A class alliance with middle-class groups could have increased the odds of participatory innovations, but the obstacle was a populist leader trying to forge a broad coalition among the upper classes. The separation of the two industrial districts was a PSD strategy to spilt *caboclos* and urban workers and avoid an alliance that could have further weakened the traditional elite. The PSD also used the sizable investments of the regional superintendence to persuade citizens of the benefits of supporting the governor's party. Thus, participatory democracy had to compete with other forms of political inclusion, which although less democratic from a normative standpoint, may be more effective in the achievement of material necessities, as the case of popular housing illustrated well. In the end, old tactics prevailed.

Notwithstanding the disappointing electoral result and the later dismantlement of much of the participatory structure, the Dirceu Carneiro Team accomplished the extraordinary deed of initiating participatory democracy in a period of political repression, in a land of *coronéis*. The news of this defiant group of administrators quickly spread across Brazil, a country that had lived almost twenty years under a technocratic military dictatorship. Alves's reports of the city's innovative programs were read throughout the country, inciting interest and admiration. Moraes' (1983) documentary about the Lages initiative circulated the country stimulating debates. Buses full of visitors from all parts of the country came to the city to witness the experiment (Quinteiro, 1991). Paulo Freire himself came to see the practice of popular education. National television news programs highlighted the successes of the southern town. Short articles and studies helped to further disseminate the democratic practices of Lages (Ferreira, 1991; Martendal, 1982; PMDB, 1981b; Silva, 1981). Carneiro and his aides shared their experiences in public events. In 1983, in São Paulo, more than two hundred people watched a panel discussion with Carneiro, Alves, Moraes, two scholars, and the secretary of interior of the state of São Paulo. The last was quoted saying, "the democratic experience of Lages is a model for all of Brazil." The hosting newspaper described the event in a half-page piece in its Sunday issue. The title of the article read, "Lages, a pioneer experience" the subtitle was, "São Paulo plans to implement Santa Catarina's model of 'participatory democracy'" ("Lajes, experiência pioneira,"1983). Although short-lived, the Lages initiative made a valuable contribution to the inception of participatory democracy in Brazil.

Chapter 4: CEBs in Boa Esperança

Socioeconomic Formation

The state of Espírito Santo has always faced insurmountable challenges to economic development. In 1535, the Portuguese settler endowed with this part of the colony was a high-ranked soldier with limited resources, not a wealthy nobleman. The indigenous populations of the region did not easily yield to friendly barter or forced labor. In 1547, three native nations united to destroy the Portuguese settlement; the colonizers had to start over in an easier-to-defend island they named Vitória, the present state capital. In the late 17th century, gold was found in a neighboring region, but the province did not benefit from it. The Portuguese crown considered the inhospitable jungles of Espírito Santo a great natural defense for the gold mines, and in 1704 passed a decree forbidding the opening of routes in the province (Oliveira, 1975). According to one source, 85 percent of the territory of the province was still virgin forest in 1850 (Borgo, Rosa, & Pacheco, 1996, p. 14).

Espírito Santo followed the main economic cycles of the country – *pau-brasil* (lumber), sugar, and coffee – but the aforementioned factors made the province a latecomer. The coffee expansion started in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in the last decades of the 18th century and peaked in the 1860s and 1910s, respectively. In Espírito Santo, production began in the 1820s, and then grew slowly until the 1960s. The lack of transport and commerce infrastructure hindered the expansion of coffee farming. The other key factor was the absence of labor force. In Espírito Santo, the expansion of coffee coincided with the ban on the slave trade (1850) and the abolition of slavery (1888). São Paulo invested heavily on programs to bring migrant workers from Europe but Espírito Santo did not have as much capital (Silva, 1995). In times of high coffee prices the state sponsored immigrants who settled in holdings offered by the government

(25 hectares) or became tenants in large plantations (Dadalto, 2003, pp. 55-57). Saletto (1996) noted that the sharecropping contracts were very attractive due to plantation owners' desperate need for labor, but most settlers worked as tenants only for the necessary number of years to save money to start their own farm. Moreover, government policies made it easy to regulate the tenure of illegally occupied land. Settlers without land titles, known as *posseiros*, could occupy land, start producing, and pay for it years later. In 1888, 62 percent of the land of the state was occupied by *posseiros* (Saletto, 1996, p. 117). In 1920, the average size of landholdings in Espírito Santo (61 hectares) was the second smallest of all states in the country (Saletto, 1996, p. 139). In 1966, 54 percent of arable land was divided in plots of up to 100 hectares (Instituto Brasileiro de Estatística, 1970b, p. 24); the average for the country was 18 percent (Instituto Brasileiro de Estatística 1970, p. 85). This pattern of colonization and land occupation prevented the formation of a politically hegemonic landowning class in Espírito Santo.

Regional economic variations created distinct economic elites and supported specific types of social domination. The south of the state was the agriculture frontier of Rio de Janeiro's coffee growers; in the mid-1800s, large plantations with slave workforces entered the export-oriented economy centered in neighboring states. Harvests were transported to Rio de Janeiro's port and did not generate tax revenues for Espírito do Santo. Southern plantation owners formed an economic elite that remained influential for most of the 20th century, although the end of slavery and the volatility of coffee prices forced some to hire tenants and sell parts of their land (Silva, 1995). The specialized literature refers to the plantation owners of the south as the classic Brazilian *coronéis*.

The Center and North of the state was a distinct socioeconomic region (see Figure 4, p.287). The capital Vitória comprised the government bureaucracy, military corps, liberal

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professionals, and the import-export houses in charge of the coffee trade. The interior of the central region included traditional families with large estates acquired during colonial times and small growers (Silva, 1995). In the North, the coastal city of São Mateus developed independent economic activities: the growing of cassava, in large plantations, the production of cassava flour, in numerous small industries, and the commercialization of the product in the city's port (Nardoto & Lima, 2001). São Mateus was not the basis of a single political class; large landowners tended to support their southern counterparts whereas industrialists were more inclined to back politicians from Vitória.

The Northwest region was colonized only in the 20th century. Government programs to expand the agriculture frontier and logging companies spurred the deforestation of the region, displacing indigenous populations, and making possible the settlement of small growers. Initially, settlers were Italian immigrants and freed slaves (Osório, Bravin, & Santanna, 1999). In the middle of the century, new settlers arrived, mostly the descendants of immigrants established in the center and south of the state and Brazilians from neighboring states (Dadalto, 2003). In 1890, Italians settlers founded a village called Nova Venécia (New Venice) 70 kilometers from São Mateus (Egler, 1962, p. 159). In the same decade an entrepreneur founded an estate called Boa Esperança across the river from Nova Venécia, which later became a town with the same name (Nardoto & Lima, 2001, p. 158). The first mass in Boa Esperança was celebrated in 1940, the village became a district of São Mateus in 1949, and in 1964 the district became an autonomous municipality (Azevedo & Kohlz, n.d.). Small coffee farms were the principal unit of production in the region. Although always present, logging was predatory, in the hands of foreign companies, and did not constitute an organized economy activity until the 1960s (Borgo et al., 1996).

A network of merchants brought the economies of the central and north regions together. The *vendeiro*, owner of the local store called the *venda¸* was the local boss in these regions. He bought the production of small growers and sold them kerosene, salt, wheat, and other things farmers could not produce themselves. Farmers could buy overpriced products on credit, and that required them to sell their next harvest to the *vendeiro* to whom they were indebted. In personal accounts, Italian settlers repeatedly mentioned the fact that *vendeiros* had cargo animals to fetch the coffee harvested (Vilaça & Dadalto, 2003). One can imagine how arduous it was to transport the year's crop without animals or vehicles. The *vendeiro* also played a patrimonial role, offering counseling and aid in time of need, baptizing the children of settlers, and solving local disputes. According to an observer of the time, *vendeiros* often exerted more authority than the priest and disagreements between the two could disrupt peace in the community (Silva, 1995, citing Ernst Wagemann, 1949). According to another early observer,

> Generally, famers in Espírito Santo are desolately dependent on merchants, the zonal political bosses who tie farmers through anticipated credit, making themselves bankers, and subduing entire municipalities - becoming rich while the poor farmer heroically struggles to obtain the indispensable for his maintenance. (Torres Filho, 1913, as quoted in Saletto, 1996, p. 146).

Saletto (1996) classified the vendeiro-settler relationship as a type of "primitive accumulation," wherein capital appropriated workers' surplus without being directly involved in the production process. Silva (1995) and authors drawing on her work (Hees & Franco, 2003; Vasconcellos, 1995) classified the phenomenon as Espírito Santo's distinct type of *coronelismo*.

It is important not to exaggerate the social influence of *vendeiros* by simply equating them with *coronéis*. Small growers owned their land and did not grow only coffee. The climate

and topography of the center and north regions were not propitious for coffee (Bittencourt, 1987a); much of the harvest of the state was sold as low quality grains (Saletto, 1996). However, the virgin soil and the climate were favorable to a number of other crops. In 1920, 78 percent of landholdings grew coffee, 86 percent grew corn, and 77 percent grew beans (Saletto, 1996, pp. 139-140). In 1966, the amount of land used for growing corn, beans, and rice equaled the amount dedicated to coffee (Instituto Brasileiro de Estatística, 1970b, p. 25). Polenta made out of corn was the staple food of Italian immigrants, and rice and beans is the most basic everyday food in Brazil. According to Rocha and Morandi (1991), smallholdings produced most of the food products necessary for their maintenance and adapted their consumption patterns in times of low coffee prices. Moreover, immigrants' accounts indicate that family holdings would often have some livestock and that in some locations it was possible to choose between two or more *vendeiros* (Vilaça & Dadalto, 2003). Since small farmers' livelihood only partially depended on coffee, *vendeiros* could not exert the same control over farmers as *coronéis* had over subdued workers.

Notwithstanding this necessary qualification, the merchant network connecting local *vendeiros* to import-export houses in Vitória sustained the most influential political elite of the state. This was a closed political system not accessible to small farmers. The easy access to land in Espírito Santo was due to the fact that the merchant elite had monopoly over commerce, not production, and was therefore interested in spurring production and consumption (Saletto, 1996). Entry in the economic system was open only at the bottom of the pyramid that sustained the merchant network. This socioeconomic context helped to determine the format and objective of Boa Esperança participatory programs, which were mainly focused on making small farming a lucrative and autonomous economic activity.

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Limit Access Order: The Mercantile and Plantation Elites

Following the Proclamation of the Republic, the elites of Espírito Santo regrouped in two political parties. One of them brought together plantation owners of all three regions of the state, while the other included the mercantile class, the small urban middle-classes, and a large portion of the military and bureaucratic establishment. In spite of the distinct economic and regional base of the two parties, negotiation and accommodation were more common than confrontation. The national republican leadership appointed a plantation politician to the state government. However, disputes within the republican leadership brought to power the party of the mercantile class (Silva, 1995). The leader of the party, Moniz Freire, a journalist from Vitória, governed the state from 1892 to 1896 and from 1900 to 1904. Henrique Coutinho, Freire's vice-governor, led the state from 1904 to 1908. Coutinho had disagreements with his vice-governor and expected successor, Freire's son-in-law, which generated a stalemate within the party. To prevent conflict, the party invited the Bishop of the state to be the party's candidate. Don Fernando declined the offer but appointed his brother Jerônimo Monteiro to the position (Hees & Franco, 2003).

The Monteiros were the most influential family in Espírito Santo in the first half of the 20th century. Francisco de Souza Monteiro, a thriving merchant, bought some land in the south of the state in 1851 and soon after married the daughter of a prosperous tradesman. The dowry was a piece of land and a family of slaves. Francisco, his wife Henriqueta, and their slaves went on to build Monte Líbano, one of the most opulent plantations of Espírito Santo. Francisco became a *coronel* in control of local politics and very influential in the south region; he died at age 48, leaving Henriqueta the control of the family. Of their five children, Jerônimo and Bernardino went to law school in São Paulo and later became involved in politics; Fernando went to seminary and became the state's Bishop (Vasconcellos, 1995).

Support for the candidacy of the son of a southern coronel by the merchant class' party symbolized a truce between the state's political elites. The uncontestable political control of these two elites is illustrated in the 1908 election results: Jerônimo Monteiro received 7,989 votes, whereas the two other candidates together received 23 votes (Hees & Franco, 2003, p. 54). Jerônimo and a leader of the mercantile class founded the Espírito Santo Republican Party (Partido Republicano Espírito Santense), which brought together the two dominant elites into one organization that would facilitate intra-elite negotiation. Jerônimo was governor between 1908 and 1912, managed to elect his successor, became state representative, and later senator. Bernadino Monteiro was elected senator in 1909 and then governor from 1916 to 1920. In 1919, Bernardino wanted to appoint his successor but Jerônimo wanted the position back for himself or for an appointee of his. The brothers' old quarrels developed into conflict, and even shots (without victims). Bernardino won. The clan previously known as *monteiristas* became spit between *bernardistas* and *jeronimistas*. Bernardino was the representative of the mercantile class, while his brother was the preferred Monteiro of plantation owners. In 1924, an agreement between the two brothers led to the election of Florentino Avidos, their brother-in-law (Achiamé, 2010).

In the First Republic, the mercantile class was at the top of the elite hierarchy and had more influence over the state's development agenda. "The basic priority of public funding was infrastructural build-up: the building of roads and bridges to transport the coffee production, investments in urban implements, and the construction of Vitória's port" (Silva, 1995, pp. 107-108). In turn, Jerônimo's government tried to spur industrialization and promote the diversification of crops but results were meager. The state lacked infrastructure, capital, and skilled labor. Jerônimo used revenue from years of high coffee prices to invest in

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industrialization, but efforts were unsustainable in the absence of basic factors of production (Bittencourt, 1987b). The interests of small farmers were not included in either program; due to the exploitative *vendeiro*-small farmer relationship at the local level, increased coffee sales did not directly entail improvement in the conditions of growers. In the 1920s, high coffee revenues helped to improve the infrastructure of the state. Towards the end of the decade, investments were yielding results and Espírito Santo politicians were finally starting to participate in the inner circles of the national coffee elite led by São Paulo farmers (Achiamé, 2010). Once again, Espírito Santo was late. The coffee elite was about to lose political control of the country.

Towards an Open Access Order: Small Farmers Enter the Political Agenda

In 1930, *bernadistas* and *jeronistas* supported the federal government and president's choice for the upcoming election, whereas a minority of politicians excluded from the dominant elite coalition joined Vargas' Liberal Alliance. When it came time to choose a governor, the revolutionary elite could not come to a consensus about a name, mainly because their loyalties rested with distinct economic and regional groups. After standing out in the revolutionary campaign, Captain João Punaro Bley had become the military member of the tripartite provisional government. The Commerce Association of Vitoria saw in Captain Bley a safe choice and suggested his name to President Vargas, who was pleased to appoint one of his military fellows (Achiamé, 2010).

Bley appointed supporters of the Liberal Alliance to municipal governments, in some cases altering the local balance of power, in others simply bolstering already dominant families. Once elections were scheduled for 1934, Bley was in charge of organizing the PSD in the state, and for this, he recurred to old political practices. The uncle of Carlos Monteiro Linderberg, one of Bley's aides, was none other than Jerônimo Monteiro, who authorized his nephew to mobilize

coronéis in the south (Achiamé, 2010). A segment of the mercantile class also joined the PSD

(Silva, 1995). The opposition party gathered the political elites sidelined by the new regime,

which included Jerônimo Filho, Jerônimo' son, and Nelson Monteiro, Bernardino's son. This

opposition group was strong and threatened the incumbent governor's candidacy for the 1934

election. Bley managed to break the opposition coalition by sending a letter to Jerônimo Filho's

mother, explaining that her son was supporting the candidacy of the son of a former political

enemy of her husband. Jerônimo backed down. Bley won the election and stayed in power

throughout most of Vargas' authoritarian period (Achiamé, 2010).

Although politically entangled with local elites, Bley managed to stay the course of the

state's economic development according to Vargas' national strategies. The 1929 international

crisis brutally affected the revenue of the state, which was almost solely reliant on coffee export

taxes. Fiscal adjustment was therefore one of Bley's priorities. He created a state agency to

supervise municipal administrations and investigate cases of mishandling of public resources,

sending auditors to scrutinize the work of mayors around the state. Achiamé (2010) noted that

this direct intervention in municipal affairs constituted a marked change from the First Republic,

where governors simply endorsed the most prominent local groups. Bley also made considerable

investments in health and education: between 1930 and 1933, expenditure in education increased

fourfold (Silva, 1995, p. 120). Moreover, the administration built new roads, reequipped the port,

invested in the manufacturing of sugar, created vocational agriculture school, and support to

cattle farmers in the south of the state. Finally, the governor created a rural credit bank for small

growers with the objective of fomenting cooperative agriculture. According to Silva (1995),

development policies in this period were independent from impositions from the local oligarchy

and in line with national industrializing strategies.

The composition of the major national parties in the 1945-1964 period followed national trends. Towards the end of the authoritarian regime, Vargas replaced Bley with Jones dos Santos Neves, a well-established politician from the São Mateus region who had occupied important positions in government since the revolution. Jones' main task was to reconcile the elites and reorganize the PSD. Bley's assertive policies had made him unfit for the task. Neves was successful: The new PSD founded in 1945 included most of the mercantile and the large landowning elites, both the "ins" and "outs" of the Vargas period. The National Democratic Union grouped intellectuals, liberal professionals, and opponents of politicians included in the PSD. The Brazilian Labor Party (PTB) included leaders of urban sectors sympathetic to Vargas.

The particularities of the state's socio-economic context are found in the characteristics of the minority parties. The Popular Representation Party (Partido de Representação Popular, PRP) was born out of the fascist movement and initially led by Priest Ponciano Stenzel. First, the PRP appealed mostly to German and Italian migrants and their descendants, some of whom had previously supported fascists. The Catholic priest leader helped to boost the influence of the party in Italian towns where the church was strong. The socioeconomic basis of the party was small growers, who for the first time had a political organization to represent their interests. The Progressive Social Party (Partido Social Progressista, PSP), founded by populist politicians of São Paulo, was also an important political group in the period. Leftist groups active in various parts of the country did not find fertile ground in Espírito Santo.

The new social group represented by the PRP and the new political practices of the PSP slowly became part of the state's political context, competing for space with traditional elites and their intra-elite maneuvers. In 1947, two PSD contenders disputed the gubernatorial elections. On the one hand, Carlos Lindenberg represented the traditional agriculture elite of the south of

the state. In the campaign, he felt forced to reach out to small growers. One of his public notes stated that, "small growers should not pay any taxes…all taxes must be paid by the distributing centers" (as quoted in Silva, 1995, p. 235). This pledge drew the support of the PRP. On the other hand, the jurist Attilio Vivacqua represented the progressive forces within the PSD. Vicacqua's image of accomplished intellectual enthralled the emerging urban elites, but in the interior of the state his intricate proposal to reform state institutions did not have the same appeal as the "zero taxes" refrain. Lindenberg received 65 percent of the votes and his coalition gained the two senate posts and half of the seats in the representative chamber. Old and new political groups shared the other half of the representative chamber (Silva, 1991).

The 1950 election reaffirmed the political might of traditional elites and the efficacy of traditional practices. The Lindenberg administration was conservative and largely focused on responding to the agriculture class's demands, and by doing so consolidated the political basis of the PSD. In the process, the PRP had its demands sidelined, which led it to join an unsuccessful anti-PSD coalition for the 1950 election. This time the PSD made an alliance with the PTB and launched a campaign appealing to poor urban workers. The PSD candidate Jones dos Santos Neves became the new governor. Santos Neves followed an autonomous policy agenda informed by nationalist-developmentalist ideals of the time; his authoritarian-technocratic approach was difficult to advance without breaching political pacts.

In 1955, an opposition coalition representing the mercantile class, the PRP of small growers, and the PTB of the urban working class was finally successful in winning a state election. Although a wealthy farmer, the coalition candidate did not have family bonds with conservative groups; instead of being known by a reputable last name, he went by "Chiquinho," an affectionate nickname for Francisco. Chiquinho was a federal representative in Rio de Janeiro

between 1950 and 1955, at the peak of Vargas' populism in the country's capital and Adhemar de Barros' rise in São Paulo (chapter five). He learned the new style of doing politics and successfully conveyed the image of a common man, a farmer, a father figure; his campaign included catchy jingles and for the first time a candidate visited poor areas (Silva, 1995). Whereas Santos Neves focused on industrialization projects, Chiquinho reoriented development policies towards small growers and small agribusinesses.

The opposition coalition that elected Chiquinho became fragmented and unable to forge an alliance for the 1958 elections, which allowed for the return of Carlos Lindenberg as governor. In 1959, political forces representing industrial interests formed the Industrial Federation of Espírito Santo (FINDES), which rapidly gained space within the PSD. The influence of industrialists within the PSD was visible in the selection of the candidate for the 1962 election. While Lindenberg tried an alliance with the PSP, the industrial faction successfully pushed the name of Neves, the developmentalist governor who had previously displeased the traditional land owning class (Silva, 1995).

The 1962 election marked the end of intra-elite politics. On the one hand, there was a PSD internally divided between the traditional elites and the new industrialist groups; their candidate had already governed the state and pushed industrialization. The party stubbornly refused to make coalitions and trusted elite arrangements that had previously won it numerous elections. On the other hand, the various opposition parties representing the mercantile class and recently included political groups backed Chiquinho's candidacy. The alliance heavily invested in populist tactics that had become even more prominent in the 1960 presidential elections. In the end, the coalition alliance won all major posts - governor, vice governor, and the senate seats – and reduced the PSD space in the legislative chamber (Silva, 1995, p. 406). In government,

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Chiquinho turned the state apparatus towards small growers. The Credit and Rural Assistance Association of Espírito Santo replaced the FINDES as the most influential lobby group.

In 1964 the military came to power and within two years Chiquinho was forced to resign. In the next two decades, the federal government and its appointed governors highhandedly sidelined small agriculture from the development agenda. Initiated soon before the 1964 coup, the eradication of coffee farms was a federal response to low prices of the product in international markets. The average price of a coffee sack went from US$16 in 1945 to US$86 in 1954, leading to a 74 percent increase of the number of coffee trees in Espírito Santo between 1940 and 1960 (Rocha & Morandi, 1991, p. 47). Overproduction soon made prices plunge. In 1962, a federal agency started to promote the eradication of low-productivity farms by paying a set price per burnt coffee tree. Espírito Santo was the most affected coffee producing state because of the low productivity of its farms and overall low quality of its coffee. An estimated 54 percent of the state's coffee trees were burned between 1962 and 1966 (Rocha & Morandi, 1991, p. 52).

Whereas in states with market-oriented agriculture the eradication program led to the diversification of production, in Espírito Santo eradication meant a profound change in the economic basis of the state. Seventy percent of the area freed by eradication became grazing fields. In the 1950s, grazing fields occupied 23 percent of the state's rural area; by 1970, the activity was using 55 percent of all available land. As a less labor intensive activity than coffee farming, cattle farming absorbed only 13 percent of the 73,470 workers made unemployed by the eradication program (Rocha & Morandi, 1991, pp. 66, 58). The second economic activity spurred by the eradication program was logging and lumber production. Logging extraction increased almost fivefold between 1954 and 1974; from 1960 to 1975, the area used for forestry increased

from 398 to 142,239 hectares (Rocha & Morandi, 1991, pp. 62, 72). Coffee farms ceased to be the predominant unit of production in Espírito Santo's rural area.

While the eradication program began before 1964, the military regime played an unequivocal role pushing industrialization and disregarding other development agendas. The authoritarian federal government, exclusively dedicated to the modernization of the country's social and economic structure, made industrialization the only development alternative for Espírito Santo. Numerous industrialization schemes and policies were implemented in the late 1960s and early 1970s: The main goal was to promote primary industries that could process local natural resources. Funds for these initiatives came from the state and federal government as well as private investors. The most notable initiatives included infrastructure projects, a development bank, federal tax cuts for new industries, the creation of industrial districts, and a fund to foment port activities and tourism. Large industries with mixed state and private capital also received numerous incentives (Bittencourt, 1987b).[21]

The rapid shift in the economic basis of the state created grave social problems due to the inability of the industrial sector to absorb the newly available workforce and the lack of state capacity to provide the necessary social programs. Like many other state capitals in the country, Vitória received a rural exodus that it could not adequately accommodate. In the interior of the state, "the decline of traditional economic activities caused the stagnation and even the decay of a large number of municipalities" (Bittencourt, 1987b, p. 208). Boa Esperança, in the Northeast Region, was one of these impoverished municipalities. In 1970, Boa Esperança had 11,387 inhabitants in an area of 344 square kilometers (Instituto Brasileiro de Estatística, 1970b, p. 16);

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[21] These included Companhia de Ferro e Aço Vitória, Realcafé Solúvel do Brasil, Indústria de Chocolates Garoto, Fábrica de Cimento Nassau, Usina Paineiras, and Aracruz Celulose (Bittencourt, 1987).

out of the 695 land holdings, 486 had up to 50 hectares and 613 up to 100 hectares (Instituto Brasileiro de Estatística, 1970a, pp. 134-135). Largely dependent on the production of coffee, Boa Esperança was one of the towns bankrupted by the eradication of coffee farms. According to the mayor responsible for the 1970s' participatory administration,

> The municipal economy consisted of 18 thousand cows and the logging of the remaining native timber. Houses lost their commercial value and commerce was reduced to a bar, a basic grocery story, and two little fabric stores.

> On average, ten flatbed trucks with wooden seats (*pau-de-arara*) left the city each month taking families to the states of Paraná, Rondônia, Mato Grosso, Goiás and Pará. Cattle ranchers planned to transform the downtown square in a cattle-loading station.

> In this period, the State Financial Board advised the governor to abolish the municipality and reincorporate it to the city of São Mateus, due to its economic infeasibility. This news spread and all state secretariats had their doors closed to Boa Esperança, making matters worse for everyone.

> Small and middle holdings were disappearing, sold to cattle ranchers for very low prices. In order to facilitate acquisitions, cattle farmers recklessly burnt fields, destroying planted areas, expelling men, and replaced them with cows.

> This was the lamentable situation of [Boa Esperança] when we were elected to care for the town's fate, in the two-year administration of 1971-1972. There was only one way to save [the municipality]: guided by the hands of the Almighty, we began community work. This work was interrupted between 1973 and 1976 because my successor did not share this ideology. In 1977, again in control of the municipality's fate,

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we reactivated community work, and made it official in order to avoid future

interruptions. (Covre, 1980, pp. 1-2)

Local-level participatory programs are commonly associated with burgeoning urban centers, but

the pioneer participatory initiative examined below took place in a decayed rural town.

Mayor Covre and CEB Leaders: A Community Party

Mayor Amaro Covre was the mind behind and the face of Boa Esperança's participatory

administration, but an enthusiastic group of twelve inexperienced public servants was crucial for

the success of the initiative, as Covre himself recognized. The project relied on the staff's ability

to engage existing community leaders. The ecclesial base communities (CEBs) were very strong

in the region of São Mateus and in the rural neighborhoods of Boa Esperança, and the leadership

it formed became Covre's community organizers.

Amaro Covre grew up in a coffee farm in a region south of Boa Esperança. He started

working in the farm at age 8 and later was sent to a Marist school that "formed [his] spirit and

forged [his] character" (Amaro Covre, personal communication, January 21-22, 2011). His father

had fifteen tenants, "all very well taken care of," and was never involved in politics. Three of his

brothers and one of his sisters married the children of tenants – an astounding fact for those

whose view of Latin America's countryside rely on the literary portrayals of Isabel Allende. In

the late 1950s, Covre worked in state storage facilities and was personally responsible for

burning 180 thousand sacks of coffee. This experience had a profound impact on his view of

agriculture and the need to diversify production. In the mid-1960s, Covre helped to found the

MDB of Boa Esperança and partook in political activities organized by the Brazilian Democratic

Center (CEBRADE), an organization blacklisted by the military regime. One day, hours before

leaving for a CEBRADE event in Rio de Janeiro he received a phone call warning that he was

going to be arrested at the airport. He cancelled the trip and later received a call from the governor offering to erase his dissenter background records if he left the MDB and joined the ARENA. Covre replied, "right away, where do I sign?" The "headache" was over. This pragmatic orientation is the most marked characteristic of Mayor Covre: his participatory administration had the concrete goal of making family agriculture economically viable.

Mayor Covre described his staff as a "small and multifaceted team." The vice-mayor, Valdelino Zagotto, deceased by the time of this research, was a lay religious leader. Interviewees described Zagotto as a senior and esteemed citizen who gained an administration of otherwise young fellows the respect of more conventional groups. Zagotto's son Joelson was the mayor's aide. He eventually left the administration to follow his seminary studies in Paraná, but returned every summer to assist the team. The administrative head was Maria Motta whose family was very religiously active; her testimony shed light on the slowly mutating nature of religious groups in the city. Another foot soldier was Teresinha Bergamin, the coordinator of one of the community centers. Teresinha described her work in Boa Esperança as directly linked with her Italian background, the community values in which she was raised, and her involvement in what she called a "very open Catholicism" (personal communication, January 25, 2010). The Social Assistance Department was staffed with two dedicated workers who received visits at home in the late hours and left dinners unfinished to attend requests from the mayor; Dulce Maria da Costa and Lidia Pasti Moreira mentioned working closely with church groups although they were not personally involved with the Catholic Church (personal communications, January 21

and 22, 2011). Miguel Lorenzone, then in charge of public works, recalled that the order of the day was to listen to community leaders' demands (personal communication, January 22, 2010).[22]

Oral depictions portrayed a young, very devoted, and enthusiastic team. None of the interviewees had previous political or public service experience. Joelson participated in the diocese's youth Catholic groups and described this as the political experience that prepared him for the work with Mayor Covre. According to Joelson, "most of the people working with us [in the administration] had this same type of training" (personal communication, January 22, 2011). My assessment is that Joelson's assertion applies to two-thirds of the team. The topic of party politics did not naturally emerge in interviews, and when asked interviewees had difficulty recollecting anything on the matter. The two Zagottos participated in the founding of the PT in the mid-1980s, but eventually left the party, and party politics. Miguel became the owner of a construction material store. After a career as a social worker in São Mateus, Motta considered running for the municipal legislature, but decided to focus on her community work instead (personal communication, January 24, 2011). During our interview, she had to make calls to finish organizing that afternoon's meeting of a church-related community organization. Dulce and Lidia continued to work as social assistants for the municipal governments (personal communication, January 23, 2011). Teresinha moved to Vitória, where she continued to work with education and run volunteer social projects. All interviewees had fond memories of the Amaro Covre years and distaste for party politics.

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[22] The remaining four people directly involved in the administration were not available for interviews. Luiz Cardoso, responsible for the administration's finances; Eroisa da Rocha, in charge of human resources; Laura Alzilia Covre, a religious woman who sporadically helped with community mobilization; and an out-of-town educator known as Rita, who led workshops on family economy, health, and nutrition.

As discussed in chapter two, it is difficult to specify the magnitude of CEBs because of insufficient data and the fact that groups had varying combinations of politically oriented and purely ecumenical activities. Nevertheless, it is possible to affirm with confidence that São Mateus and Boa Esperança had a strong CEBs presence. The most comprehensive quantitative study on the subject found that Espírito Santo had 32 ecclesiastic communities per parish whereas the national average was 16 (Valle & Pitta, 1994, p. 45). A booklet printed in 1979 by the Diocese of São Mateus listed 456 communities in its 13 parishes, 35 on average (p.45). The parish of Pinheiros, which at the time included Boa Esperança, had 38 ecclesiastic communities (Diocese de São Mateus, 1979, p. 3). However, the study by Valle and Pitta (1994) also noted that in the region including the states of Espírito Santo and Minas Gerais, only 41 percent of the ecclesial communities declared having socio-economic activities, and an even lower 38 percent admitted to participation in political organizations (p.56). These averages are lower than most other regions of the country, and there is no data available for specific dioceses.

Nevertheless, the history of the Diocese of São Mateus attests to the outstandingly active and progressive character of the Church in this part of the country in the examined period. In a state that received large contingents of Italian and German migrants, Catholicism endured in spite of an underdeveloped Church infrastructure. Until the 1950s, the state of Espírito Santo was a diocese within the archdiocese of Rio de Janeiro. In 1937, the Bishop of Vitória sent Priest Guilherme Schimitz to the parish of São Mateus. Schimitz reported having found the parish in a terrible condition: an unfinished church inhabited by bats, no parochial home, and insufficient candles for daily masses. He was responsible for the entire São Mateus region, which at the time covered almost a third of the state; horses and canoes were used to reach the villages, where malaria was a constant concern (Nardoto & Lima, 2001).

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In 1954, Italian Comboni missionaries arrived in São Mateus to support the church efforts in the region. In 1958, Vitória became an archdiocese and São Mateus one of its two dioceses. Comboni Priest José Maria Dalvit became São Mateus' first Bishop, loyally assisted by Priest Aldo Gerna. Between 1962 and 1965, the two returned to Italy to participate in the Second Vatican Council, and while there raised funds for their deprived diocese. Upon return, Don José worked to implement the Church's new vision. In the following years, he founded a training center for rural leaders, a seminary for priests and lay leaders, and a typography center, among other things. Don José's most popular maxim was "we have to help the people to help themselves" (Nardoto & Lima, 2001, p. 415). Don José stepped down in 1970 due to ill wealth.

In 1971, Don José's loyal aide was made Bishop of São Mateus. Don Aldo Gerna was an exemplary Liberation Theology leader. A novice in the years of the Second Vatican Council, he rapidly embraced the church's "preferential option for poor." He rose in the Church hierarchy in the late 1960s, became an energetic advocate of social justice, promoted CEBs and unions, and helped to organize the Landless Workers' Movement. In the 1980s, the Vatican scolded Don Aldo for his exaggerated attention to political questions, and displeased *coronéis* sent him two death threats because of his support for landless workers (personal communication, January 24, 2011).

In an interview, Don Aldo noted that when he became bishop the diocese still had very few priests and the work in the communities was just starting. This gave him the chance to start almost from zero. Don Aldo did not face internal resistance since he ordained all the new clergy. He recalled mimeographing CEB booklets one by one and leading "political faith" study groups.

Fundamentally, participation was a requirement; if you participate in your community, you can receive the sacrament, if not, we will see [laugh]… People joked that I asked to see their union cards before giving them the communion.

Don Aldo acknowledged that his forceful emphasis on social and political participation caused the disenchantment of a considerable number of followers who joined evangelical groups. He held Zagotto, the vice mayor of Boa Esperança, in high regard, "a religious leader much more than a politician." Don Aldo valued the work done by Mayor Covre but found it limited to economic objectives, as opposed to the more fundamental reforms Liberal Theology promoted. According to the former Bishop, the Covre administration built on the work done by the Church but did not replace it because the goals of each project were different.

In Boa Esperança, CEBs and the associations involved in the participatory initiative seem to have had a mutually reinforcing relationship. It is often difficult to distinguish them in written and oral descriptions of the experience. The confusion is at least in part due to the fact that Covre's team named neighborhood associations "base communities," without the "ecclesial." The only piece published on Boa Esperança's participatory administration is unclear on this topic. Writing in 1982, sociologist and activist Herbert de Souza states that,

In the last 10 years, some local leadership and the Church developed in this area a process of organization of base communities concerned with studying and solving the local population's problems. In November of 1971, the experience of the base communities gained a legal format, becoming a not-for-profit, non-partisan, non-religious civic association constituted by representatives of social, cultural, and economic organizations and community leaders: The Municipal Development Council of Boa Esperança. (Souza, 1982, p. 104)

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It is not possible to know whether "the experience of base communities" refers to CEBs or the lay base communities that Mayor Covre first tried to organized in 1971. In 1981, a news piece on Boa Esperança's initiative read as follows, "the base communities organized by the church played a fundamental role; in 1971, *they became* civil society organizations constituted by representatives of economic and cultural organizations and community leaders" (Tragtenberg, 1981, Abril 01, emphasis added). These and other similar accounts, but especially Souza's widely read piece, have disseminated the idea that CEBs became the community organization of the participatory initiative.

An unpublished report of Boa Esperança's participatory administration by researchers of the Brazilian Institute of Municipal Administration (Instituto Brasilerio de Administração Municipal, IBAM) offers a contrasting view to Souza's piece. The report explains that "some of the base communities had been previously organized by work conducted by the Church and some local leaders, which made it easier to implement the Mayor's plans"(Lobo, Oliveira, Lopes, Rocha, & Cortez, 1984, p. 113). This attenuated version is more consistent with the testimonies of Don Aldo and the lay leaders in the administration. Maria Motta explained that ecclesial groups had been present for a long time, but slowly became more organized. In the rural parts of town, Catholic families routinely gathered in each other's houses to worship. Whenever a school was built, the same site became the area's center, and communal efforts were made to construct a church. The new church would bring together people from the various ecclesial communities.

Covre's team shrewdly based the five district centers of the participatory initiative in the main schools of the town, taking advantage of this preexisting organizational structure. Joelson Zagotto attested that the design of the participatory structure took into account the existence of already organized communities. In testimony collected by Souza (1982), an interviewee

explained that in his district center five of the eight community leaders were also CEB leaders. Teresinha Bergamin affirmed that CEBs and community leaders "were the same people." She noted that in the rural communities leaders had an encompassing role. Thus, the Boa Esperança participatory administration rested on synergy among a practical minded mayor confident of the potential of community work, a diocese actively promoting political participation, a group of devoted public servants with experience in community organization acquired in Catholic circles, and a preexistent community organizational structure. As the next section shows, these social actors united to resist a national and state development agenda that neglected small growers.

The Participatory Administration

The participatory administration of Boa Esperança had as its main objective the creation of conditions that would allow for the permanence and prosperity of small growers, and in this way deter the rural exodus that threatened to bankrupt the city. Mayor Covre and his team designed a participatory structure based mainly on small growers. Education, health, culture, and agriculture programs branched from this participatory structure. Data suggests that the initiative achieved its main goals, but was only partially successful in promoting a participatory political culture.

The initiative rested on a clear structure. The city had five districts: Sobradinho, KM 20, Santo Antonio, Bela Vista, and Sede; each district had between four and ten base communities, totaling 33 communities. Each district had a Centro de Irradiação (Outreach Center) with an infrastructure that included a sports court, a social hall, a health clinic, a police station, and phone posts. Base communities usually used the local school as their communal space. Dirty roads connected communities to their respective Irradiation Centers, and paved roads connected the latter to the downtown core (Souza, 1982).

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The functioning of the participatory schema was equally clear. Base communities met bi-monthly to discuss local problems and needs. Elected community leaders met bi-monthly in the Irradiation Centers to debate the problems of each community and elaborate a program to attend the district's needs. The Mayor and his team also attended these meetings. According to Covre (1980), "the objective of the Centro de Irradiação [was] to allow the families that constitute it to live in society, with all the necessary assistance, and provide conditions for the permanence of the rural men" (p.8). At the top of the participatory structure was the city's Development Council,

> a not-for-profit civil society organization constituted by [community] leaders, the mayor, the vice-mayor, legislative representatives, priests, pastors, union leaders, representatives of technical and credit agencies, principals of primary and secondary schools, the director of the hospital, the director of the sanitation unit, the police chief, the justice officer, and the public attorney. (Covre, 1980, p. 9)

The Council met twice a month: once with the leaders of the Centro de Irradiação of the urban area and once with the leaders of the four rural districts. The tasks of the Council included,

> To bring together decisions made in the Centros de Irradiação in a single work plan that can attend to everyone at the Municipal level…[and] send this plan to the Mayor and the legislative assembly in order for it to inform the elaboration of the budget and the use of funds from federal programs. (Covre, 1980, p. 10)

Another task of the Council was to engage with state and federal agencies operating in the city to ensure they worked in accordance with priorities determined by local communities.

According to Souza (1982), the Development Council created a new type of state-civil society relation wherein political power rested on the community and political parties were

redundant. As the only published piece on the subject, it is worth quoting Souza's account in length.

The Council is in fact the sovereign assembly of the municipality, to which the mayor, the bureaucracy, and the legislative representatives are subjected. This power relation is exerted directly, every month.

Citizens elect legislative representatives as leaders of the communities to which they belong. They act in the Council as community leaders and in the legislative assembly as elected representatives; however, [in the latter] they *act according to decisions made in the Council.*

The mayor is a member of the Council and in charge of leading the meetings; however, *he submits himself to majority decisions just as all other members…The bureaucracy is submitted to a double control, from the mayor and from the community, in monthly meetings where everyone's tasks is followed up and the veracity of information passed on to the mayor, legislative representatives, and the community is verified.*

Finally, current political parties more or less lose their function. Party divisions are in a way external to the reality of the municipality, and do not correspond to the diversity of interests concretely present in the city…the contradictions existent within the community are not expressed in the form of an officially institutionalized political 'opposition' removed from power; instead [contradictions] are resolved in assemblies that make decisions by simple majority. In Boa Esperança, PSD and MDB representatives are not distinguished by the differences of their respective parties, but in terms of the concrete performance of their duties as community leaders: the communities to which

they belong, not party programs, determine their commitments and duties. (Souza, 1982,

p. 113, emphasis in the original)

Souza was closed involved in the experience and his account is more optimistic than that of the authors of IBAM's unpublished report. Even if perhaps unintentionally confounding facts with visions, it is clear in Souza's description how the participatory administration of Boa Esperança attempted to create a form of direct democracy that disregarded the tenets of a representative system. In the Development Council, elected representatives and the mayor sat side-by-side with the delegates of Irradiation Centers, ignoring the distinction between formal representation and community advocacy.

The activities of the Irradiation Centers and the Development Council were focused on testing new crops and organizing cooperatives to commercialize products and share machinery. In the beginning of his mandate, Mayor Covre forwarded to the legislative chamber a municipal bill defining the use of the city's land according to quotas discussed with growers and cattle farmers. Although unconstitutional, the bill passed and set the following limits for land use: 20 percent for coffee, 32 percent for livestock, 10 percent for cassava, 8 percent for sugarcane, 10 percent for other crops, and 10 percent for preservation and reforestation (Lobo et al., 1984, p. 112). Moreover, four "experimental crops" were introduced in "testing fields" around Irradiation Centers: black pepper, soya, sorghum, and rubber. Towards the end of his mandate, Mayor Covre proposed the creation of a sugarcane biodiesel cooperative factory. Many advocates of family farming saw this project as a move towards monocropping and contrary to everything the administration had previously promoted. Don Aldo was a vocal opponent of the project. The administration thought the activity could be interspersed with other crops, and that the land usage

law would impede monocropping. Private investors established the factory in the mid-1980s, already in a different administration.

The participatory administration also launched numerous other initiatives in other areas of government. Basic infrastructure in rural areas constituted an important element in the plan of avoiding rural exodus. The city opened or paved 320 kilometers of back roads. Electricity was also a main concern. The Development Council decided in favor of requesting those to be benefitted by the new electrical infrastructure to contribute with material or work so that funds transferred by the state government extended the service much further than forecasted. The administration built schools in rural communities and the aforementioned infrastructure of Irradiation Centers (Lobo et al., 1984, p. 115).

Shantytowns had already formed in the urban center by the beginning of the Covre period. The administration tried to address the need for popular housing in the same way as Lages: *mutirão*. The main difference between the two cities was that Amaro Covre was a PSD mayor and received state government funding. Resources were limited, however, and the participation of the population made projects much cheaper. Future residents were involved in every aspect of the project, from choosing suppliers to the actual building of the houses. The city hired the more skilled construction personnel but the community did most of the construction work. In the end, the administration managed to save part of the money channeled by the state government. Mayor Covre then opened a savings account for each family and deposited their respective fraction of the saved funds; with the high interest rates of the period, the money paid for a considerable portion of the state-subsidized loans due within the next years. The idea of unused public funding was so absurd that federal inspectors came from Brasilia to investigate possible corruption schemes (Amaro Covre, personal communication, 20-2 January, 2011).

Education programs also included community participation and took into account the rural vocation of the city. The administration created an agricultural vocational school in the urban center with the ambitious goal of forming one agriculture technician per family. In the Irradiation Centers, 14 youth groups received vocational training and support to organize social activities "by and for" rural teens (Lobo et al., 1984). Funds for this project also came from the state government. Finally, Volkswagen Kombis transported teachers to and from rural schools; this service was costly for the administration, but was a priority because proximity to schools was one of the main pull factors of urban living.

The administration's Kombis also transported doctors and dentists to rural areas as part of an attempt to decentralize healthcare. The health posts of each Irradiation Center had a nurse and a domestic economist whose work focused mainly on preventive health. In some districts, health post staff coordinated community gardens that brought together primary school students, youth, pregnant women, and anyone interested in learning about gardening and nutrition. Food harvested at the gardens went to the schools' kitchens. Towards the end of the administration, a Home Industry Community Cooperative was established. "The idea was to integrate house work with the local economy" (Lobo et al., 1984). Homemade products included soap, cheese, baskets, wine, and candy. The original project included setting up a large distribution network but in the end only one store sold cooperatives' products. Women involved in the project expected to earn a steady income, and the small and sporadic returns from sales de-motivated them.

Every year a large field fair brought together all the Irradiation Centers. The idea was to promote amicable competition among the communities, share experiences with new crops and growing techniques, and offer an opportunity for community building. Music, food, and sports animated the event. Awards were given to the most productive Irradiation Center. Tenants and

wageworkers who acquired land received "model worker" awards and land titles were publicly handed with much ceremony (Covre, 1980).

The participatory administration was successful in its main goal of making small farming a feasible economic activity. Agricultural censuses allow for indicative comparisons between Boa Esperança and its neighboring towns: São Mateus, to which it once belonged; Nova Venécia, the Italian settlement on the southern border; and Pinheiros, the northern neighbor (see Figure 4, p. 287). Table 1 shows that whereas in São Mateus and Pinheiros the percentage of small and median holdings dropped by half from 1970 to 1985, Boa Esperança and Nova Venécia witnessed only a 7 percent percentage decrease. Noteworthy, Boa Esperança showed a reaction between 1975 and 1980, with a 3 percent rise. In the same period, São Mateus and Pinheiros continued on a descent, and Nova Venécia improved by less than 1 percent. In the mid-1980s, Boa Esperança and Nova Venécia still had more than a third of their land occupied by small and median farmers.

Table 1

Percentage of Land Occupied by Plots Between 10 and 100 Hectares

	1970	1975	1980	1985
Boa Esperança	42 percent	34 percent	37 percent	35 percent
São Mateus	41 percent	25 percent	20 percent	18 percent
Pinheiros	34 percent	22 percent	16 percent	17 percent
Nova Venécia	46 percent	38 percent	39 percent	39 percent

Information complied from Agricultural censuses published by Instituto Brasileiro de Estatística (1970a, pp. 134-137; 1979, pp. 162-165; 1983, pp. 184-187; 1985, pp. 218-221).

Table 2 shows that Boa Esperança was more effective than its neighbors in resisting the encroachment of cattle farms. In 1975, agriculture used 30 percent of the land and cattle farming used 69 percent; by 1985, agriculture occupied 56 percent of the land and cattle farming 41

percent. This 44 percent increase in the percentage of land used for agriculture was superior to

that witnessed in São Mateus and Pinheiros, and close to the 46 percent achieved by Nova

Venécia. Remarkably, Boa Esperança was the first of the four cities to turn the game around: in

1980, during the participatory administration, agriculture had already surpassed cattle farming.

Table 2

Percentage of Land Use for Agriculture and for Cattle Farming, 1975-1985

	1975		1980		1985	
	AGRIC.	CATTLE	AGRIC.	CATTLE	AGRIC.	CATTLE
B. Esperança	30	69	47	46	56	41
São Mateus	30	43	22	37	34	27
Pinheiros	11	88	22	66	32	60
N. Venécia	28	69	43	49	56	37

Information complied from Agricultural censuses published by Instituto Brasileiro de Estatística (1979, p. 146; 1983, p. 156; 1985, p. 186)

One widely publicized figure about the success of the Amaro Covre Administration was

that during his tenure Boa Esperança went from last place to the 33rd position in a ranking

comparing the tax revenues of all 55 municipalities of Espírito Santo (Covre, 1980, p. 15; Lobo

et al., 1984, p. 136; Souza, 1982, p. 119).[23] The authors do not provide dates or specific statistics

but probably refer to the 1971-1972 Covre administration because another study shows that in

1974 Boa Esperança made the 36th largest contribution to the state revenue (Garcia, 2002, p. 33).

It is possible to use the data in the latter study to calculate percentage changes in cities'

contributions to the state revenue, and then plot these values against a common start point,

isolating differences in cities sizes. Figure 1 shows the evolution of the four cities in the period

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[23] Souza's (1981, p.119) chapter reports that Boa Esperança went from last to the 23rd place. This may

have been a typing mistake since the other two sources explained that the city moved up 22 positions, reaching the

33th place.

from 1978 to 1982, using 10 as the common start point for 1977. Boa Esperança presented the best performance with an increase of 31 percent in the period. Nova Venécia had an accumulated increase of 7 percent. São Mateus and Pinheiros closed the period with small declines in their contribution to the state revenue.

Figure 1

Evolution of Boa Esperança's Contribution to the State Revenue, 1978-1982
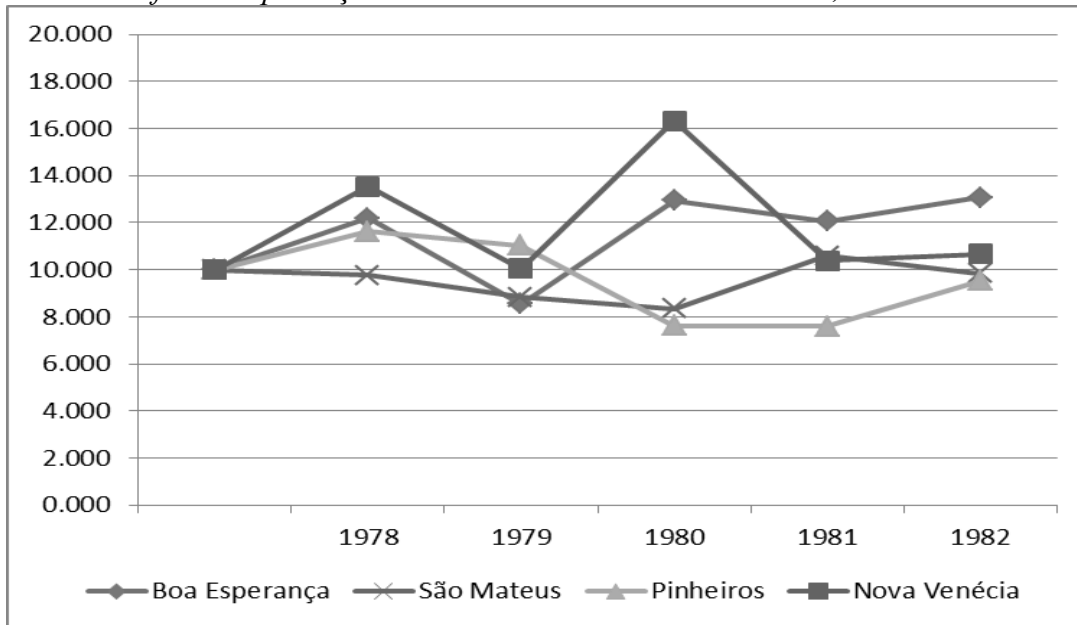
Municipal participation indexes listed in Garcia (2002, p.33), calculations by the author.

Finally, Boa Esperança managed to avoid eucalyptus and pine plantations, the second activity spurred by the coffee eradication program of the 1960s. The 1970 and 1975 censuses do not even mention the city in the tables for this economic activity. Boa Esperança appears in the eucalypts inventory only in 1985, with one planter with between one and two thousand trees. In the same year, Nova Venécia had 321,000 trees, Pinheiros had 464,000, and São Mateus close to 8 million eucalyptuses (Instituto Brasileiro de Estatítica, 1985, p. 343). One interviewee described Boa Esperança as the frontier of numerous eucalyptus plantations surrounding it. In sum, the administration was successful in its main economic objective: preserving small scale farming and stopping the encroachment of cattle and eucalyptus farming.

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Successional Elections, Personal Disputes, and High Coffee Prices

Mayor Covre's team's ability to build a long-lived participatory culture is more difficult to measure and outcomes seem mixed on this front. Mayor Covre was elected for another three mandates between 1982 and 2008. According to Amaro Covre Júnior, the city goes through periods of mobilization and demobilization. In his father's tenures, citizens actively participate because they trust programs will deliver results, but successors come, discontinue programs associated with Mayor Covre's image, and people return to their private lives. Yet according to Júnior, organizations that gain strength during a Covre administration continue some activities through the demobilization period, but weak associations disband (personal communication, January 21, 2010). The motto of Covre's 2001-2008 administration was "Communitarian Administration: The population suggests, the City does. People decide, the City implements" (Prefeitura de Boa Esperança, 2008). However, Mayor Cover acknowledged that participation never reached the same levels as in the 1978-1982 administration.

Other team members argued that the project implemented involved a process of *consciousness raising* that required time and should not have been interrupted. IBAM researchers also noted challenges in the creation of a long-lasting participatory environment; their study pointed out that the participatory infrastructure built by the administration was not sufficient to install active participation. In some communities, organizations took advantage of the new participatory structure but many other programs died once the administration stopped actively promoting participation (Instituto Brasileiro de Administração Municipal, 1984). Thus, a broad participatory culture did not develop in Boa Esperança. Participation remained attached to a particular politician, although not through patrimonial or clientelist bonds but by confidence in his administrative competence. Community work aimed at allowing citizens to keep their land

and preserve their economic activity. It was successful, but participation became largely associated with specific economic goals.

In the 1980s, coffee prices began to rise and once again became an economically viable alternative. Numerous small farmers decided to go back to the practice of producing a single cash crop in addition to subsistence crops. Mayor Covre strongly opposed this choice. He argued that dependence on monocropping led to ups and downs in the revenue of the municipal government and in the income of citizens that is detrimental to the city's economic development. In economic terms, there was no investment in town because in times of fat cows people save money for the next drop in coffee prices. Monocropping, moreover, does not require community organization since it can be easily sold to wholesale buyers, the contemporary equivalent of *vendeiros*.

In 1982, reelection was not permitted and none of Mayor Covre's aides stepped to the plate. The party nominated Etury Barros, who easily won the election with the support of the mayor. This, however, did not guarantee the continuity of Covre's policies. The participatory programs of the late 1970s as well as other initiatives implemented in the later mandates were often interrupted by his successors. In interviews and reports the subject of party politics do not appear as a key factor. Mayor Covre blamed lack of continuity on his successors' envy and desire to efface programs associated with his name. Another possible explanation is that Mayor Covre's forceful character and hands on attitude made him an irreplaceable piece of the participatory initiatives. He had a known contempt for legislative representatives, who accused him of wanting to run the show alone (Lobo et al., 1984). His argument was that he worked for the city, not for any one party.

The IBAM study called attention to the only aspect in which party politics seems to have been crucial: state funding. Written in 1984, the report noted that the funding of some of the participatory programs was drying up. In this period, municipalities were highly dependent on the goodwill of state governments to channel them funding. Covre's friendly relationship with the state government brought a considerable amount of resources to the city. In 1983, Espírito Santo elected a PMDB governor less willing to support PSD activities; funding for the decentralized health post was cut, for example (Lobo et al., 1984). During our interviews, Covre reported that he did not think highly of the 1988 Constitution that decentralized power to the municipal level. Admittedly, his preferred strategy is to meet one-to-one with state officials, pitch an idea, and see how much support he can get. According to the Mayor, this was always done in the name of the city and despite party politics.

Conclusion

The socioeconomic formation of Espírito Santo led to the emergence of two political and economic elites: large plantation owners in the South Region and coffee merchants in the Center and North Regions. At the local level, the merchant network relied on unequal relations between powerful *vendeiros* and small farmers. The latter was not included in the political programs of either political elite until the 1950s. After the Vargas period, a new political party emerged and reached out to small farmers using the populist tactics common of the period. The traditional political elite coalition became fragmented as industrial interests permeated the rankings of the state government. The 1950s' witnessed a battle between traditional politicians uneasily allied with new industrialists and populists rallying small farmers. In 1962, the latter won the state elections and started to guide government policies towards small farmer interests. The military regime sidelined this political project and put industrialists in charge of the state's development.

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The coffee eradication program further worsened the conditions of small farmers in the state. Small rural towns started decaying as land was sold to large cattle and eucalyptus farms and idle workers migrated to other parts of the country.

The participatory administration of Boa Esperança had as its main goal to make small farming an economically viable activity. Mayor Covre took advantage of the organizational structure of CEBs and the experience of lay Catholic leaders to create a participatory structure that allowed for cooperation in the design and execution of government policies. Economic and culture activities were implemented with the goal of mobilizing small farmers to participate in production and sales cooperatives. From a purely economic perspective, the administration was successful. Data shows that the city performed considerably better than its neighbors. Results were less encouraging in terms of promoting a participatory culture. Participation in the city is instrumentally attached with economic results, which are trusted to an individual politician.

This participatory experience cannot be effectively examined without taking into account the local economic context. The format of participatory initiatives was directly related with the history of exclusion of a specific socio-economic class. Producer cooperatives were meant to resist industrialization policies and bypass *vendeiros*, making small farming a viable economic activity. The mayor in charge of the initiative was a practical minded politician exclusively focused on the economic survival of his bankrupting city. The economic structure of the city also helps us to understand the challenges of community organization. Initially, CEBs provided the organization basis for the participatory initiatives, but the impulse of the grassroots arm of the Catholic Church became weaker in the 1980s (chapter six), and what remained were the community organizations created in Covre's first administration. Of an essentially economic nature, these organizations seemed to respond to material incentives more than any democratic

ideal. The competent Mayor Covre and low coffee prices were the main incentives for engaging in participatory initiatives. In the absence of Mayor Covre and his eager team and in times of high coffee prices, the motivation to engage in the direct governing of the city faded.

In spite of its shortcomings, the Boa Esperança participatory administration inspired mayors and activists around the country. Souza's chapter was included in a widely read book organized by José Álvaro Moisés and other scholars actively engaged in the democratization movement. Case studies written by IBAM researchers were discussed in seminars on municipal administration (Instituto Brasileiro de Administração Municipal, 1984; Lobo et al., 1984). Mayor Covre talked about community participation in events planned by the IBAM, in a convention for Espírito Santo mayors, or other forums organized by municipal governments around the country. Boa Esperança also received broad media attention, with newspapers articles covering the successes of the administration and the touring of the mayor. Headlines included "Boa Esperança Method Valid for the State" ("Metodo de Boa Esperança válido para o Estado," 1980, June 19); "The City of Democracy, Boa Esperança proves that power and people can walk side-by-side" (Caponi, 1981, June 27); and "Community Administration Resuscitated Boa Esperança" (Tragtenberg, 1981, Abril 01). The large television network Globo and other smaller channels also dedicated airtime to the initiative. Thirty years later, the name Boa Esperança "rings a bell" in activist and academic circles.

Chapter 5: The PT in Diadema

Socioeconomic Formation

In 1554, Portuguese Jesuits founded the village of São Paulo dos Campos de Piratininga in a plateau 70 kilometers away from the coastline. During the colonial period, the province of São Paulo served as the base for expeditions to the unexplored interior and as a supplier of some subsistence crops for the rest of the colony. The poor quality of the soil was compensated by a privileged geographical location: waterways and favorable topography made all the neighboring regions accessible. The village of São Paulo was on the only feasible route connecting the south and the northeast of the colony. The village also had ready access to the Santos port. The Tietê River supported family agriculture, and later became a valuable source of hydroelectric energy (Prado Júnior, 1975).

Due in part to these geographical conditions, São Paulo developed a commerce-based economy only indirectly involved with the agriculture export sector. In the first three centuries of colonization, the economy of the region was marked by "adventure capitalism."[24] Colonial scouts known as *bandeirantes* headed expeditions to the unexplored interior of the country in search for things that could be traded for luxury goods. Initially, the most profitable activity was the capture of natives sold as slaves to sugar plantations in the northeast. This activity became less lucrative with the introduction of African slaves and the focus became the search for precious metals (Singer, 1968). In the 18th century, the discovery of gold in a northern neighboring area led to the partial depopulation of the village, but also helped to spur trade,

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[24] Defined by Weber (1958/2003, p. 21) as "predominantly of an irrational and speculative character, or directed to acquisition by force, above all, the acquisition of booty, whether directly in war or in the forms of continuous fiscal booty by exploitation of subjects."

especially the commerce of mules and dried beef coming from the South to supply the mining region. In the 19th century, coffee became an increasingly lucrative crop and by 1840 it was the country's chief earner. The north of São Paulo was the first coffee-growing region, but most of this production was sold and taxed in Rio de Janeiro's port. By the 1860s, coffee farms had spread south and westwards and improved transport infrastructure connected them to São Paulo's Santos port. In 1894, Santos surpassed Rio de Janeiro in coffee exports (Singer, 1968).

A marked difference from São Paulo coffee growers and plantations owners elsewhere in the country was the former's direct involvement in the commercialization process. The city of São Paulo was the financial center where foreign and national capital changed hands and where most coffee growers resided. With the abolishment of slavery in 1888, the São Paulo government invested on the sponsoring of European migrant workers: 700,000 immigrants arrived in the state in the 1890s, more than 60 percent of all immigrants arriving in the country in that decade (Love, 1980, p. 10). Although the objective of the migrant program was to supply workers for coffee farms, a significant group preferred to settle in the city and find opportunities in the emerging industries. The government also invested in energy, communication, and transport infrastructure. In the 1910s, the state became the largest industrial center of the country, responsible for 31.5 percent of Brazil's industrial production (Singer, 1968, p. 48).

The southeast periphery of the city of São Paulo is known as the ABCD Region because it comprises the cities of Santo <u>A</u>ndré, São <u>B</u>ernardo, São <u>C</u>aetano, and <u>D</u>iadema (see Figure 5, p.ix). The first settlement in the region was the commune of Santo André da Borda do Campo founded in 1553 by *bandeirante* João Ramalho. São Bernardo and São Caetano were large estates owned and run by the Jesuit congregation of São Bento from the 1630s to the mid-1800s. Both were devoted to subsistence and cattle farming, and the more prosperous São Caetano also

had a brickyard and a pottery factory. These farms were located in the margins of the road connecting São Paulo and the Santos port and largely depended on the commerce generated by it. Monks, slaves, bastard children, natives, and ethnically mixed individuals inhabited these estates. Diadema was a rural neighborhood of São Bernardo (Kenez, 2001).

In the mid-to-late-1800s, the coffee elite of São Paulo attempted to transform the ABCD Region into a green belt that could feed the city. According to Alves (2001), the implicit idea was to create a boundary between the backward countryside and the modernizing city. Two colonial nuclei were created and received European migrant workers sponsored by the state government: São Caetano in 1847 and São Bernardo 1893. The poor quality of the soil, agriculture pests, and the absence of transport infrastructure frustrated the original plans of the coffee elite. Most of the region became a poor enclave based on subsistence farming and logging. The inauguration of the railroad in 1868 meant prosperity for Santo André, where a train station was located, but brought further ruin to areas at the margin of the now abandoned road to Santos (Alves, 2001). The plans for the green belt failed, but the region would later become the industrial belt of São Paulo.

Limited Access Order: The São Paulo Coffee Elite

The Republican Party of São Paulo (Partido Republicano Paulista, PRP) was the umbrella political party for the dominant elite coalition of the First Republic period. The PRP was founded in 1873 with the chief goal of protecting the province's economic interests, which at the time meant the needs of the coffee exporting sector. The majority of PRP members were not steadfast abolitionists, but policies passed between 1884 and 1888 securing the entrance of cheap migrant labor allowed the party to portray itself as a champion of the victorious abolition movement. The abolition of slavery opened the way to the 1889 republican coup that put an end to the Empire

and brought the PRP to power. All eleven state governors of the First Republic were from the

PRP, and all received between 98 percent and 100 percent of cast votes (Love, 1980, p. 143).

The interconnectedness of the agricultural and industrial sectors in São Paulo made elites

more homogenous than in other states. Paulista coffee bosses were entrepreneurs also involved in

commerce, banking, and industry. Coffee revenues fuelled investments in areas that supported

the exporting sector (e.g., railroad companies) and the consumption of people involved in the

coffee economy (e.g., the textile industry). The political ideology in São Paulo was relatively

uniform. Regardless of party affiliation or membership in cliques within parties, the Paulista elite

wanted autonomy from the federal government, a market economy with special treatment for the

coffee sector, the separation of Church and State, and incentives for foreign capital investments.

The Paulista elite might have been imbued with some liberal values and urban attitudes, but the

representative system was based on patron-client networks just as in the rest of the country.

According to Love (1980), the PRP executive committee was constituted of *super

coronéis* responsible for distributing patronage and securing party cohesion.

> Factional divisions within the PRP were offset in great measure by the continuity
>
> provided by the party's executive committee, a body that stood between the governor and
>
> the coronéis. The committee's authority derived from the power of party [bosses] (or
>
> their representatives) who sat on it. Through the [bosses], the committee also represented
>
> various zonal interests, and served the brokerage function of distributing patronage,
>
> including public works. (Love, 1980, p.115)

These *super coronéis* coordinated nominations between the party executive and local *coronéis*

responsible for securing ballot results. Electoral competition was most often successfully avoided.

The PRP had organizational cohesion and discipline, and was clearly something more

than an elaborate network of parentelas and clientelas; yet it had this side to it too, and

party divisions, such as the 1901 and 1924 splits, were heavily influenced by patterns of

family solidarity. (Love, 1980, p.115)

In an incredible empirical effort to catalogue the Paulista elite in the First Republic, Love arrived

at a list of 262 men and one woman who occupied important positions in government. This was a

fairly homogeneous group: no one from the working class; only one landed immigrant and 11

sons of immigrants; 63 percent had a degree from the São Paulo Law School; 67 percent worked

mainly in the capital city but owned farms in various parts of the state; 43 percent had a direct

family relation with at least one other member of the group; and "more than a third of the whole

elite formed a single complex of business and kinship ties" (Love, 1980, p.155). Family bonds

were visible at the top of the political ladder: of the eleven governors in this period, only two did

not have an immediate relative who occupied the same position (Love, 1980).

In the mid-1920s, the cohesiveness of the Paulista elite started to deteriorate as a result of

its diminishing political clout. In 1924, the state created an agency solely concerned with the

coffee sector, the Coffee Institute. Planters welcomed the initiative until they realized the agency

was not in their hands; only two of the five executive positions in the Institute were designated

for planters. Competitions for these positions aggravated intra-elite tensions. Furthermore, low

coffee prices in the early-1920s forced the government to borrow abroad and print money to

guarantee an undervalued currency that could secure coffee sales. In order to address the ensuing

debt and inflation, the government began to impose fiscal austerity measures in the second half

of the decade, which fuelled further discontent with the established political class (Font, 2010).

In 1926, the increasing fragmentation of the Paulista elite led to the breakup of the PRP and the

creation of the Democratic Party (Partido Democrata, PD). The founding members of PD were for the most part middle-class professionals from traditional coffee grower families. The party's liberal-democratic program defended certain institutional reforms such as the establishment of the secret vote, otherwise the party's positions were similar to those of the PRP (Fausto, 1972).

Towards an Open Access Order: Corporatism and Populism

The 1930 Revolution deposed Paulistas from power both at the national and state level. The PD supported the Liberal Alliance and hoped to gain control of the state. The party's ambition was frustrated by the nomination of a *tenentista* governor who defended a centralized political system. The 1930-1945 period was marked by an incessant struggle between Paulista elites and Vargas' government, which included a failed armed revolt in 1932. Although the "communist threat" was the excuse used for the 1937 coup d'état, Vargas' main concern was the political strength of São Paulo. Likewise, Paulista elites' demands for a new constitution and respect for democratic principles was rhetoric aimed at regaining their lost political power (Codato, 2010).

In the early-1930s, the emerging working class of São Paulo benefited from this unstable political scenario. The revolution did not count on active participation from the working class, at the time largely engulfed in the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB) (Collier & Collier, 1991). Nevertheless, organized workers saw in the political crisis an opportunity to press for their demands. In Rio de Janeiro, manifestations were violently repressed. In São Paulo, however, *tenentistas* facing opposition for the state's elite tried to gain the support of the working class. According to Fausto (1972, p. 59), "*tenentistas* tried to channel [political] pressure and organize the [working] class…as a way of establishing a stable social basis" in the state. This *tenentista* attempt included support for a large textile workers strike as a way of attacking a politician from

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the traditional coffee party. Ultimately, coffee elite defeated *tenentistas* and Vargas' corporatist apparatus encapsulated the labor movement.

In the economic sphere, the 1930s was marked by the decline of the coffee sector as the prices of the product never fully recovered from the 1929 international crisis. At the same time, the federal government began to play a direct role in promoting industrialization, which would make São Paulo an even stronger economic force. By the late 1920s, the state offered the best conditions for capital investment: it was located at the center of Brazil's internal market, and coffee exports had paid for the country's most developed infrastructure and sponsored a large contingent of immigrant workers. Moreover, state autonomy in the First Republic allowed the Paulista elite to invest in what by then was the country's most developed industry. Following the logic of capitalist development, São Paulo continued to grow, accumulate, and attract further investment (Singer, 1968).

The National Steel Company created in 1942 spurred the development of various manufacturing sectors, including metal and auto industries. In the early 1950s, the federal government encouraged the production of auto parts for trucks assembled in the country by foreigner firms. President Kubitschek (1955-1961) made the auto industry a core piece of his modernization plan, which also included the construction of a new capital in the inaccessible center of the country, and the construction of new roads connecting major cities to it and to each other. Kubitschek created an agency that lobbied the world's largest auto companies to install manufactures in the country; companies producing outside the country would not have access to the domestic market. This strategy was successful and the auto industry became the symbol of industrialization in Brazil (Singer, 2009).

Most auto companies established themselves in the ABCB region. In the first decades of the 20th century, the downtown core of São Paulo housed commercial and financial enterprises; affluent families lived in the hilly area immediately next to it. Immigrant neighborhoods such as Mooca and Ipiranga housed the first industries. Far from downtown, the ABCD region supplied the city with coal, lumber, bricks, pottery, and furniture; a smaller number of factories produced chemicals, raw steel products, and tires. The closer to the train station the larger the number of industries; Santo André was the most industrial, São Bernardo was in the middle, and Diadema remained rural. In 1925, the road connecting São Paulo to the Santo port that cuts through the ABCD Region was paved. In the industrializing efforts of the 1940s, this road became the main connection route between the capital, the port, and the east of the state, where important factories were located, including the National Steel Company. Besides the favorable location, land in the ABCD Region was more easily available than in the increasingly crowded city of São Paulo (Fonseca, 2001).

Despite short-lived efforts for grassroots mobilization, the mass of workers concentrated in the ABCD Region was incorporated in political life mainly through corporatism and populism. The state corporatist structure has already been described in chapters one and two. However, it is important to note that in São Paulo corporatist and populism were closely connected. According to French (1992), Vargas' 1945 electoral legislation "was systematically designed to enfranchise the working class and favor urban over rural voter registration and electoral participation" (p.113). This legislation maintained the literacy requirement for voting, made voting mandatory, and allowed group registration for employees of public offices and professional organizations. The goal was to undermine the political power of *coronéis* by reducing the weight of the vote of their dependents and subordinates. Nationwide, suffrage increased from 10 percent of the adult

population in 1930 to 33 percent in 1945; in São Paulo, the "country's urban and industrial heart-land," the percentage of voters increased between 400 percent and 500 percent (French, 1992, p. 129).

In the first years of the democratic period there were two competing approaches to the electoral incorporation of urban workers: populism from above by the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB) that controlled the union structure, and grassroots mobilization efforts by the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB), which infiltrated unions. Whereas the former relied on *pelegos* at the top of the union structure, the latter connected with workers increasingly discontented with the controlled union structure and poor living conditions. Vargas had the support of workers, but the PTB lacked local networks. The grassroots approach of the PCB was based on the organization of popular democratic committees (*comitês democráticos populares,* CDPs) in working class neighborhoods; these non-partisan, PCB-led groups focused on the concrete needs of the poor, e.g., garbage collection, and strengthened support for the party in the ABCD Region. The PCB was also closely connected with workers' groups that began to demand union freedom and autonomy. "The PTB's greatest weakness in 1945 was precisely its inability to conceive of politics on such a participatory basis" (French, 1992, p. 142). The PTB slowly lost grounds to the PCB.

In 1947, workers displayed their electoral might. The PCB became the third largest party in the state assembly; the representative of the ABCD, Armando Mazzo, a union leader in Santo André, was the party's most voted candidate, with four times the number of votes of the second most voted candidate, a labor lawyer. Furthermore, the PCB backed the gubernatorial candidacy of Adhemar de Barros, who was running for a small and unknown party. Barros won the election

with twice as many votes in urban as rural areas. The grassroots approach to local level and factory mobilization was showing results (French, 1992).

It did not take long for conservative forces to dismantle this political threat. In May of 1947, the federal electoral court banned the PCB. The next day, the government passed a decree stating that unions had to be kept apart from political parties and social movements. PCB and other militant union leaders were removed from leadership posts. Adhemar de Barros, the PCB-backed governor, accepted the directives of the federal government and helped to demobilize the labor movement and the PCB. In the ABCD Region, PCB members joined a small and unknown legal party in order to run in the municipal elections at the end of the year. In Santo André, union leader and PCB state deputy Armando Mazzo was elected mayor with 33 percent of the voters; communists also elected the largest number of city councilors. Santo André had a union leader mayor, thirteen city councilors representing workers interests, and CDPs organized in nine districts. The prospects for a participatory administration were very concrete, but none of these workers were inaugurated. Conservative parties appealed the Communists' victory, the São Paulo electoral court denied the plea, but the federal court accepted it. The inaugurated mayor was a member of a traditional family in the city. Soon after, PCB state deputies also had their mandates revoked. In the following two years, the international scenario of growing polarization served as an excuse to dismantle Communist organizations and repress labor activists. In 1948, Santo André's elected but not inaugurated mayor was jailed for 90 days.

The coalescence of neighborhood committees, union activists, and a grassroots political party in power would not be repeated for another forty years. Populist leaders dominated the remaining of the 1945-1964 period in São Paulo. On the one side, there was Adhemar de Barros, "a charismatic, paternalistic leader with a mass lower-class following or clientele, bound together

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by 'the personalistic, particularistic ties' between the powerful leader and his 'dependent followers'" (French, 1988, p. 3). Adhemar was governor from 1954 to 1967, mayor of São Paulo from 1961 to 1963, and again governor from 1963 to 1966. To achieve these electoral successes, "Adhemar could and did ally himself with just about every group at least twice" (French, 1988, p. 2). On the other side, Jânio Quadros offered voters a different populist option. The eccentric schoolteacher presented himself as an outsider to the dirty realm of party politics, which he promised to clean up. His moralist rhetoric was particularly alluring to the state's growing middle class, but his personal style and campaign themes also attracted the popular classes. In the democratic period, Jânio was city councilor of São Paulo, state deputy, mayor, and governor. In 1961, he became president, but resigned in the same year. Populists Adhemar and Jânio were the two most influential politicians in the state and local politics in the ABCD Region was divided between *ademaristas* and *janistas* (Skidmore, 1967).

In the 1950s, the process of seceding from São Bernardo marked politics in Diadema. In this period, municipalities had little financial autonomy; budgets largely depended on mayors' contact inside the state government and were usually spent at the urban core where influential families lived. Districts removed from the core were neglected and many tried to secede. Municipalities resisted separations because they entailed a decrease in tax revenue. São André and São Bernardo used to be one municipality with the city center at the latter. The train station brought prosperity to Santo André, and it became the city center in 1938. São Bernardo did not want to be simply a disregarded district, and managed to gain autonomy in 1945. The Anchieta highway made São Bernardo once again the economic center of the region: Ford, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen, and Scania established plants in São Bernardo between 1956 and 1962, leading to a population boom. Land by the highway was expensive and workers lived mostly in the interior of

the city, in places like the neglected rural district of Diadema, which soon started to demand autonomy (Simões, 1992). In some cases, the movement for political emancipation was a demand from organized citizens; in other instances it was the political move of a local boss (Moisés, 1978).[25] Diadema was the latter case.

The political boss of Diadema was Evandro Esquível, a real estate agent, accountant, and teacher. His trades conferred on him the key features of a local boss: connections in the state capital and the ability to extend favors to local residents. He was known as "Professor Esquível," a title with a paternalist appeal.[26] Elected city councilor of São Bernardo in 1947, he managed to build a school and a small church in Diadema, feats that boosted his popularity. Esquivel submitted the first plea for the political emancipation of Diadema in 1953, but it was not even put to a vote. At the time the mayor of São Bernardo was Tereza Delta, a politician who "represents the epitome of many established ideas about populism" (French, 1992, p.207). She emerged as a political leader in the city in the early 1940s and was rapidly brought into the clientelist network of Governor Barros. As a mayor closely connected with the governor, Delta was capable of outright ignoring Diadema's plea. Five years later a state deputy persuaded Esquivel to pass to the side of by-now Governor Jânio in exchange for backing for the secession. The deal worked. Diadema was emancipated in 1958 (Simões, 1992).

Municipal governments for the following two decades was dominated by *janista* Esquível and Lauro Michels, a real estate agent and cattle farmer, locally influential, and well connected with the *ademarista* network in São Bernardo and São Paulo. Since reelection was not allowed,

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[25] As seen in the case of Lages, the separation of the certain districts could also be a political maneuver by the state government to weaken an opposition municipal government.

[26] In Portuguese, *professor* is the only word for professor and teacher.

the two took turns in power: Esquível from 1960 to 1962; Michels from 1964 to 1968; Esquível again from 1969 to 1972; legally barred from running in 1972, Michel successfully endorsed Ricardo Putz, the mayor from 1973 to 1976; and Michels came back from 1977 to 1982. Elections in this period were a contest between local *janista* and *ademarista* political networks, which were led by middle class politicians disconnected from the reality of factory workers. Clientelist networks facilitated the exchange of favors among voters, political intermediaries, politicians, and officials in the state government. Ideological commitments were absent and whether a politician joined the MDB or the ARENA was largely accidental (Draghichevich, 2001; Simões, 1992).

Diadema drastically changed in the decades that Esquível and Michels ran the city. The population increased almost 19-fold, from 12,287 inhabitants in 1960 to 228,663 in 1980 (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 1960, p. 82; 1982, p. 110). In the same period, Santo André's population's doubled, São Bernardo's increased fivefold, and São Caetano's grew 40 percent (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 1960, p. 82; 1982, p. 116). Whereas at the time of political emancipation Diadema had a seventieth of São Bernardo's inhabitants, in 1980 it had slightly more than half of the population of its neighboring town. Migrants came mainly from the interior of the state and from the drought-affected Northeast of the country (Fonseca, 2001). Population growth was not accompanied by economic development and investment in social services. As a late industrializer in comparison to its neighbors, the city did not attract as many major companies; for example, instead of large plants of multinational auto companies the city had small-to-medium auto part factories. Poor infrastructure made the city less appealing to the well-paid workers of the major companies in the region, and even those working in the few larger companies of Diadema often lived elsewhere. Diadema became a

dormitory town for factory workers with average to low earnings, and the home of small to medium industries that did not bring as much in tax revenues.

Municipal administrations tried to revert this scenario by investing available resources on infrastructure at the urban downtown core. The argument was that new industries would bring economic development. According to this view, public works in rural areas with fast growing shantytowns was a shortsighted idea. Esquível's and Michels' properties and networks in the downtown area certainty made it easier for them to support this view. The city slowly succeeded in attracting industries that established themselves in the downtown area and in major transport routes, but this did not bring significant improvements to neighborhoods entirely constituted of shantytowns. Shantytowns only became a concern when they occupied land that could be used more profitably; in these cases the policy was to relocate poor residents to more distant areas. The exception seems to have been the Putz administration, where some modest but concrete efforts were made to ameliorate the conditions of certain poor areas (Draghichevich, 2001; Simões, 1992).

In the early 1980s, Diadema was known as the "poor cousin" of the ABCD Region. At this time, in the four cities of the region, between 52 percent and 57 percent of the adult population was economically active; of these, between 51 percent and 56 percent were employed in industrial activities (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 1983b, pp. 227, 230, 234, 237). In terms of educational level, 3 percent of Diadema's total population had finished secondary education, and 6 percent had an elementary school degree (eight years), whereas in the other three cities these figures varied between 8.5 and 12 percent and 11 and 13 percent, respectively (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 1982, pp. 621,624). As Table 3 shows, 60 percent of Diadema households had an income between 1 and 5 times the amount set

as the legal minimum monthly salary for a full-time worker; in the other cities only between 33

and 40 percent of families were in this income bracket. Whereas in the other three cities between

52 and 56 percent of families earned between 5 and 10 times the minimum monthly wage, only

34 percent of Diadema households had this income. Considerably fewer Diadema households

were in the "10 to 20" and "more than 20" minimum wages categories. In terms of social

indicators, in 1981 the infant mortality rate per thousand live births in Diadema was 87.9,

whereas the average of the other cities was 42.3 (Simões, 1992, p. 68). As seen below, this socio-

economic inequality among ABCD cities fueled tensions between the different factions of the PT.

Table 3

Percentage of Households According to the Number of Minimum Monthly Salaries

	Up to 1	1 to 2	2 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 20	>20
Santo André	2.8	7	32.6	33.6	17.2	5.4
São Bernardo	2.5	7.7	30.5	30	20.6	7.4
São Caetano	2.1	5.7	27.2	33.5	22.4	7.8
Diadema	2.7	13.1	46.7	27.4	7.1	1.1

Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (1983a, pp. 82-83, 88-89). In all four cases, the categories "no income" and "no response" add to approximately 1.5 percent.

The PT in Diadema: New Unionists and Marxists

In the 1982 mayoral election, union leader Gilson Menezes defeated Michels' vice mayor,

former Mayor Putz, and a candidate associated with Professor Esquível. The eleven-year-old

Gilson Menezes moved to São Paulo from the interior of Bahia in 1959. In his youth, Gilson

worked in small factories, then worked for Mercedes-Benz, and in 1973 was hired as a toolmaker

in the Scania plant in São Bernardo. His union activity started with recruiting members, giving

legal aid to youth interns, and serving in the factory's accident prevention commission. In 1977,

the metalworkers union organized a protest to contest the rate used to adjust salaries. Gilson's

mobilization job at Scania impressed the union's president, Lula, who invited the toolmaker to

join his slate for that year's election. In May of 1978, Gilson became part of the 24-member board of directors leading the Metal, Mechanic, and Electric Workers Union of São Bernardo and Diadema – the heart and mind of the new unionism movement. In the same month, he led a large strike at Scania, the first of a series that marked the late-1970s (Batista, 2004).

Gilson participated in the foundation of the PT and was in charge of organizing the party in Diadema. He had never participated in party politics, although as a union leader he supported the candidacy of MDB *autênticos*. Gilson became the president of the Diadema PT and was unanimously chosen as the party's candidate for the 1982 municipal elections. He used the word *mutirão* to describe his electoral campaign. He and his colleagues trained volunteer leaders who organized groups that went canvassing door to door (Batista, 2004). One of these volunteers said they worked like Jehovah's Witnesses, "but instead of Jesus Christ, we handed out a PT star and a program we made" (Justino, 1997, November 11). At the core of the political program was the proposal to create popular councils that would break away from the city's traditional politics. The campaign was aided by an electoral regulation that forced voters to choose governors and mayors from the same party; the PT candidate for the state was Lula, the esteemed union leader of the region.[27] Gilson won by a small voting margin and the PT elected six out of seventeen city councilors (Meneguello, 1989; Simões, 1992).

In 1982, the PT did not have a defined, much less tested idea of how to govern a city. Cesar (2002) examined the varied and evolving meanings of key terms in the party's political

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[27] This was yet another of the regime's gimmicks to try to control the democratization process. The rationale behind this regulation was grounded on the logic of the "governor's politics"(chapter one): in rural areas where municipal elections were controlled by *coronéis*, votes for mayors picked by local elites would boost the gubernatorial candidates closest to the regime, who would help the military to control the democratization process at the federal level. In some cases, as in Diadema, the regulation backfired on the military.

program, such as workers, democracy, and socialism. In what concerns local-level participation, the two first documents of the party presented statements that did not make clear the relationship between society's base organizations and the party's nuclei. Both were exalted as vitally important, but the role of each was not defined. The Letter of Principles (Carta de Princípios) issued in 1979 stated that,

> As a political organization aiming at increasing the degree of mobilization, organization, and consciousness of the masses, and seeking to strengthen the political and ideological independence of the popular sectors, especially workers, the PT will promote a broad debate about its theses and proposals, which should include: the leadership of popular sectors, even if not members of the party, [and] all militants, bringing to the interior of the party debates propositions from any organized sector in the society considered relevant based on the objectives of the PT. The PT declares itself committed to and engaged in the task of introducing popular interests in the political scenario…With this aim, the Workers' Party plans to implement its militants' nuclei in all work places, unions, neighborhoods, municipalities, and regions. (Partido dos Trabalhadores, 1979)

This document was written by a small group of union leaders associated with Marxist groups, who were accused by others involved in the process of creating the party of trying to play a vanguard role (Keck, 1992). The Manifesto published on the occasion of the official creation of the party was equally ambivalent.

> The PT does not want to be active only during elections, but also, and mainly in the day to day of all workers, only in this way will it be possible to build a new type of democracy rooted on society's base organizations and on majority decisions. This is why we want a broad party open to all, committed to the workers' cause and [the party's]

program. As a consequence, we want to build a democratic internal structure based on

collective decisions and program directives decided at the base. (Partido dos

Trabalhadores, 1980)

These documents did not explain whether a PT administration should give priority to proposals

put forward by the organized base of the party, the nuclei, or to demands coming from organized

groups allied with but not inside of the party. Another document issued in 1982, the Electoral

Letter (Carta Eleitoral) discussed in more detail the relationship between elected officials and the

party's *diretórios* (city chapters); in short, the mandate was of the party, not of elected

individuals who must always subject projects to the approval of the *diretórios*. The document

was mute on the question of the relationship with other organized groups in society.[28] Members

of the Diadema PT issued and signed a local version of the document, wherein the subordination

of elected officials to the *diretório* was reinstated (Simões, 1992).

The PT team elected in Diadema was in some ways similar to the Dirceu Carneiro Team

and Mayor Covre's staff.

A group of young leaders (the elected mayor and councilors all had less than 35 years of

age), skilled and semi-skilled factory workers, with primary or secondary education

levels, zero legislative experience, who until then had played a subordinate or not very

expressive role in local politics. (Simões, 1992, p. 90)

In spite of these similarities, the team had distinct ideological backgrounds and different visions

of how the party should govern. Studies of the formation of the PT identified workers associated

with the new unionism movement as the most numerous and influential group within the party;

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[28] Document reprinted in Gadotti, M., & Pereira, O. (1989). *Pra que PT? Origem, projeto e consolidação do Partido dos Trabalhadores*. São Paulo: Cortez Editora, pp. 231-239.

intellectuals, professionals, MDB politicians, CEB members, and Marxist groups were important but less prominent actors in the process (Cesar, 2002; Keck, 1992; Meneguello, 1989). The PT in Diadema was more equally divided between new unionists and Marxists.

The Participatory Administration

During the electoral campaign, differences within the party were shrouded by Gilson's ambiguous speeches. After the election they became irreconcilable. Marxists expected the local *diretório* to be in charge of appointing the *heads of departments*. Gilson refused to renounce his prerogatives on the matter, a fight ensued, and the mayor had his way. A few months later, the Marxist faction won the *diretório* elections and gained control of the Diadema PT. From then on there were practically two PTs. On one side were Gilson and eight heads of departments chosen by him, including his chief of staff, Juracy Magalhães, a former co-worker, and also member of the board of directors of the Metalworkers Union in the 1978-1982 term. Another two members of the same board of directors were now the first secretary of the PT and the president of the São Paulo *diretório*, which facilitated the relationship between Gilson and the party leadership outside Diadema. Three heads of departments were from São Paulo. On the other side were the leadership of the *diretório*, the heads of two departments, and four of the six PT city councilors who now joined the opposition in denouncing and attacking the mayor. The vice mayor, a Catholic lawyer esteemed for defending shantytown dwellers, and the two remaining councilors remained neutral, picking sides each battle (Keck, 1984; Simões, 1992).

The numerous quarrels that marked the entire administration sprang mainly from four related disagreements. First, Marxists accused Gilson of exerting too much direct authority and succumbing to the bureaucracy instead of following the party's directives; they claimed that solving problems in an ad-hoc fashion without consultation was a clientelist practice. Gilson

responded that militants were unaware of the concrete challenges involved in running a city. Gilson adopted a realistic approach of trying to learn how the administration worked before implementing changes (Pinto, 1985). Second, Marxists criticized the administration for being populist, i.e., trying to please everyone, and not defending workers' interests. Gilson replied to this recurring criticizing by stating, "I am not the mayor of the PT, I'm the mayor of Diadema," to which one of the PT opposition councilors replied, "Gilson was elected by the majority, but he was elected by the PT…The working class voted for a class based political program, and Gilson must commit himself to this" (Simões, 1992, p. 121). Third, the PT opposition resented Gilson from bringing administrators and staff from outside of Diadema. This decision intensified local bitterness towards the "intellectuals of São Paulo" and "bourgeois workers of São Bernardo" (Keck, 1992). This disgruntlement was grounded on the idea that São Bernardo workers, like Gilson and his colleagues, were well paid and their priorities differed from that of the poor workers of Diadema. Finally, the two groups disagreed on the format of popular councils. In Gilson's words, "people told me they had to be PT councils, but I said they would be popular councils" (personal communication, March 17, 2011). Marxists wanted councils working within the party structure and limited to "politically qualified" members. Gilson's team supported the idea of neighborhood community councils open to all residents. Gilson pushed his model, but his own party heavily undermined his efforts.

In the weeks following the 1982 election, Gilson made numerous public announcements about the creation of popular councils in Diadema ("Em Diadema, conselhos populares," 1982; "Gilson já começa a delinear seu trabalho," 1982). However, if being at the epicenter of the new unionism movement guaranteed a political leadership committed to participatory democracy, it did not mean that the neighborhoods were organized and ready to participate. In fact, there was

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little popular organization in Diadema. Most of the neighborhoods did not have any organized group. Some areas had the more traditional Society of Friends of the Neighborhood (SABs), which were usually part of the clientelist network of a politician. The city's shantytowns had some incipient community organization resultant from the spread of a Santo André movement for the defense of shantytown dwellers. This movement was supported by CEBs, which were better organized in Santo André than in any other ABCD city. According to the testimony of a militant and a local historian, CEBs formed some of the most active citizens in Diadema, but they were relatively few and did not form a community organizational structure like they did in Santo André (Valdo Ruviado, personal communication, May 10, 2011). Therefore, the Menezes administration also faced the challenge of having to mobilize the population to take advantage of the participatory channels being created.

The first popular council was created in the neighborhood of Eldorado by the initiative of some of its residents, but this was an exception. This region had a history of popular organization due to its location next to a water reservoir that had recently become an area of environmental preservation. The first meeting was held days after Gilson's inauguration and gathered 250 residents ("Conselho vai fiscalizar o novo prefeito," 1983). The Planning Department received representatives of the Eldorado Popular Council every Monday to discuss the area's challenges. Nevertheless, the Council failed to become an established participatory channel because of divergent interests within the area: shantytown dwellers did not want to be removed; low income families wanted rights to the land they had settled without papers; middle class families wanted the environmental preservation of the land and the consequent valorization of their properties, which required removing shacks and illegal occupations. Each group saw the other as a problem. Once the administration became divided, these groups picked allies within the PT. Ultimately,

militants associated with the *diretório* came to dominate the Eldorado Council. As a result, the mayor came to see it as a "nest of the opposition" and systematically disregarded their demands, which led to the demobilization of the Council (Pinto, 1985; Simões, 1992).

The second attempt to create popular councils was the Internal Urbanization Commissions (Commissões Internas de Urbanização, CIUs) of shantytowns. The Planning Department was headed and staffed by technical personal from the São Paulo PT who advocated for "pedagogic participation"; these *técnicos de fora* (outsider technicians) believed that the process of learning to organize and deliberate was as important as the solving of the problems at hand. The Department created the Program for the Urbanization of Shantytowns (Programa de Urbanização de Favelas, PUF). CIU members were responsible for organizing their neighborhoods and discussing their priorities; a PUF *técnico* helped them to draft a diagram of how shacks could be reallocated in order to allow for the construction of infrastructure, e.g., light posts, asphalted streets, sewage pipes. The diagram had to be approved by both residents and the directorship of the PUF. Once that was done, residents were in charge of demolishing and rebuilding shacks according to the diagram, then the city came in and built the agreed upon infrastructure. CIUs also sent representatives to the Municipal Commission of Shantytown Dwellers (Comissão Municipal de Favelados, CMF), which met regularly with the Planning Department to discuss broader urbanization issues (Santos, 2009; Simões, 1992).

The head of the Planning Department, Amir Khair, was politically savvy and managed to keep his department largely isolated from PT internal conflicts.[29] Nevertheless, the department's emphasis on "pedagogic participation" eventually clashed with the mayor's priorities. The CMF became a much-disputed political space since on the Commission's agenda was nothing less than

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[29] His was close with Gilson, but his secretary was the president of the *diretório*.

land tenure matters, which in Brazil is a thorny legal issue.[30] In an initial moment, militants with

CEB experience dominated the space in a slightly forceful fashion, but after some time other

members began to challenge their authority and managed to gain voice. Landowners associated

to SABs asked their respective city councilors to intervene in their favor. As a consequence

shantytown dwellers had to come together in the CMF to oppose the influence of SABs. In sum,

this was a very politicized and time-consuming process.

The *técnicos de fora* regarded clashes between popular groups as democracy in the

making, and even celebrated the existence of struggle for the leadership of the CMF. In their

view, this was proof that groups were learning to organize and participate. Mayor Gilson,

however, had opposition from all sides and few results to show as the end of his second year in

office approached. A 1984 survey showed that a small fraction of the population participated in

any of the initiatives and the majority demanded more actions from the government (Santos,

2009). The mayor was further haunted by the fact that Diadema as the first PT administration

was responsible for proving to the public that the PT could govern. Pressured to show some

results, Gilson unilaterally decided to move the PUF to a department that he believed would be

more expedient. Debates and fights ensued, but the mayor pushed the change through. Amir

Khair quit the administration. The PUF continued to involve the participation of shantytown

residents but in a much less politicized, consultative manner (Draghichevich, 2001; Santos, 2009;

Simões, 1992). This conflict between the ideal of participation and efficient administration

"would plague all future PT administrations as well" (Keck, 1992, p. 210).

The Gilson Menezes administration launched a participatory budgeting process in 1984

that discussed the expenditures for the third year of the PT mandate. The plan was to implement

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[30] See Holston, 2008 (Chapter 4).

the process in the first year, but internal disputes made Gilson wait. The initiative was called Popular Council (Conselho Popular), probably because Gilson had promised councils during the campaign and felt pressure to deliver them, but their sole purpose was to discuss the budget. The structure of the process was similar to the participatory budgeting established in Porto Alegre in 1989. In the first half of the month, meetings were held in various districts of the city (11 in 1984, and 17 from then on). In these meetings, city staff explained the budgetary process and residents elected delegates to the Council, four per district in 1984, five in 1985, and 10 in 1986. In the first year there was a great emphasis on explaining to the population that only a small portion of the total budget could be used for new investments (10 percent in 1985). Delegates met at the Council and discussed the priorities for the available funds. The city's technical personnel helped citizens to draft an investment plan, which was then subjected to approval of the city council (as required per law). Delegates were encouraged to inspect the execution of the investment plan ("População discute o orçamento de Diadema," 1984; Prefeitura do Município de Diadema, 1984, 1985, 1986a, 1987a).

Given the low organizational level of the city and the delicate political scenario, the Popular Council developed slowly and did not achieve the aspired levels of participation. According to Simões (1992), in the first year the process was closely controlled by the overzealous chief of staff who made sure that the Council was not hijacked by the *diretório*; few people attended the local meetings, and many were frustrated for being unable to get immediate solutions to their problems. In the following years participation increased and local gatherings came to be called Neighborhood Popular Councils (Conselhos Populares de Bairros). Simões argued that the mayor and his immediate staff most often managed to approve a previously prepared budget. According to Gilson, they only made suggestions that were frequently refuted

(personal communication, March 17, 2010). An activist from the Canhema neighborhood confirmed Gilson's statement. She described an intensive back and forth between discussions at local council and debates at what she called the Budget Council. The militant reported a strong CEBs presence in her area and admitted that they always succeeded in getting their demands at the Council; it is likely that this was one of the few well-organized communities (Gimenez, 1997, July 01). Notwithstanding differing views, as the only scholarly account of the process, it is worth reviewing Simões' overall assessment.

> We can say that in practice the Neighborhood Popular Councils of the Gilson Menezes administration show a conception of 'popular participation' largely as a consulting and information sharing mechanism aimed at preventing protests and galvanizing a base of massive support for the municipal government. It is worth noting, however, that these initiatives were the solution mayor Gilson Menezes found to deal with conflicts generated by 'participation', minimizing its explosive character and this way preserving the participatory ideal as the diacritic mark of his administration. (p.173)

This incompatible dynamic of political conflicts generated by participation and the participatory ideal are found not only in Diadema. As the next chapter will explore, other PT administrations faced the same problem. The 1980s were marked by attempts to accommodate the participatory ideal to the new political and institutional context of an open representative system with a multitude of conflicting ideologies and interests.

Aside from these three initiatives involving popular councils, the Diadema government spurred participation in other spheres of government. The head of the Health Department, Zé Augusto, brought to the city the decentralized, preventive, and participatory approach to public health that he had helped to implement in the east side of São Paulo. The emphasis of this

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approach was on educating citizens about health and public policies so that they could actively participate in the health of their communities (Prefeitura do Município de Diadema, 1987b). Zé Augusto, however, sided with Gilson and his department was permeated by the party's internal disputes. Augusto was also unwilling to compromise efficiency for "pedagogic participation" and at times bypassed community councils in order to improve the city's calamitous health care system (Keck, 1992). In the long run, public health in Diadema dramatically improved and became recognized as a successful case (Bisilliat, 2004, pp. 45-58).

Finally, another noteworthy accomplishment of the Gilson administration involved public transportation. One of the most fruitful fights of the PT government was against the company in charge of municipal buses. The company was notorious for the poor quality of its service, e.g., reducing the number of circulating buses at its discretion and regardless of demand. In 1983, the company planned to raise bus fares, which would have had an enormous impact on the family budget of low-income workers. Municipal technical staff with the help of volunteers of the Users' Commission (Comissão de Usuários) conducted a survey of the number of passengers the company carried and showed that there was no basis for the increase. Fares remained the same. Additionally, the city implemented free fares for unemployed, seniors, and retired citizens; something new at the time but that would later be partially incorporated in the 1988 Constitution. Fights with the bus company continued due to the poor quality of service. In 1986, the city bought the company. The Users' Commission became part of the management of the now state-owned bus company (Batista, 2004; Prefeitura do Município de Diadema, 1986b). As seen in the next chapter, there were attempts to include users' commissions in the 1988 Constitution, but the proposed amendment was rejected by majority vote.

The 1988 Election: New and Old Politics

In 1985, the election of a pro-Gilson *diretório* leadership and the dismissal of the divisive chief of staff eased political tensions. Intrigues resumed when debates started about the selection of a successor for the 1988 elections. Gilson was elected with 31.2 percent of the cast votes in 1982 (Meneguello, 1989, p. 140), and by 1988 a poll showed that 55 percent of the population approved this administration and would reelect him if possible, but reelection was not allowed. (Simões, 1992, p. 131). Zé Augusto, head of the Health Department, after years of fighting the Marxists came to an agreement with them: he would be the party's candidate and Marxists could choose a vice mayor. Gilson did not have a say on this deal and his suggested successor did not stand a chance in the nomination process. Fights and accusations ensued. The national leadership tried to mediate a compromise but did not directly intervene, probably because they saw the deal as an end to internal disputes. The mayor and his chosen successor quit the PT and launched the latter's candidacy through another party (Batista, 2004).

Zé Augusto won the 1988 municipal election with a narrow 32.5 percent of the votes (Bisilliat, 2004, p. 32). In the electoral campaign, Augusto promised to allow popular councils to directly elect department's heads. Once elected, he backed down on his promise and after much debate allowed the *diretório* to choose two heads of department. His vice mayor, part of the staff, and party militants became opposition. Augusto kept some participatory initiatives but stopped the participatory budging process. The PT once again won the 1992 municipal election. This time the candidate, José de Fillipi, had the support of the incumbent mayor, but the victory was still narrow with only 30.5 percent of the votes (Bisilliat, 2004, p. 32). Filippi rekindled the participatory budgeting, which by now was gaining fame because of the Porto Alegre initiative. The PT lost the 1996 election to Gilson, now a candidate of the Brazilian Socialist Party (Partido

Socialista Brasileiro, PSB). When interviewed for this study in 2011, Gilson was the vice mayor

of a PT-PSB administration elected for the 2008-2012. As of the time of writing, the PT-PSB

dual is running for re-election, which is now permitted. Diadema still has a low profile

participatory budgeting process and occasional participatory initiatives.

The internal struggles of the PT gained more attention than Gilson's attempt to create one

of the first participatory administrations in Brazil. "Unlike the MDB administrations that had

experience with new forms of popular participation in city government in Lages, Santa Catarina,

and Piracicaba, São Paulo, the PT in Diadema did not enjoy a sympathetic national press" (Keck,

1992, p. 199). A study of printed press coverage of Gilson's government showed that emphasis

was put on party disputes and the allegedly inefficiency of the administration. The newspaper

Jornal da Tarde was so disingenuous as to print pictures of historically poor neighborhoods and

accuse Gilson of abandoning the city (Alves, 2007). The present study, however, showed that the

first participatory administration of Diadema had failures and partial successes similar to the

better-known experiences of Lages and Boa Esperança, and a precursory PB much like the

famous Porto Alegre model. Contrary to Lages, where traditional elites regained power and

dismantled participatory programs, and Boa Esperança, where participatory channels are

dependent on a single politician, in Diadema the PT and Gilson's PSB made participation an

integral part of the city politics. However, direct participation gained a more moderate character

that made it more adaptable to the party politics context.

Conclusion

The socioeconomic formation of São Paulo was marked by the expansion of coffee farms

and the emergence of a relatively homogeneous dominant elite coalition. During the First

Republic, this coalition succeeded in making the state of São Paulo defend the interest of coffee

growers to the detriment of other economic groups and social classes. In this period, the ABCD Region was a rural and underdeveloped periphery of this economic center. The 1930 Revolution weakened the political but not the economic power of the Paulista elite. São Paulo offered the most favorable conditions for industrial investment and grew fast as a consequence of federal policies fomenting encompassing industrialization. The ABCD Region was transformed in the 1940-1960 period with the establishment of numerous industries, especially auto factories, the symbol of the Brazilian modernization project. In this period of fast population growth, two forms of political patronage coexisted in the region. Inside the factories, a strict corporatist structure allowed little autonomy in political organization. Within the region, two populist networks competed for the votes of the new urban popular groups. In Diadema, two populist politicians competed for the municipal government, though in practice, their emphasis on the infrastructure development of the downtown core was the same.

The ABCD Region was the heart of the new unionism movement that reacted against the corporatist structure, and later evolved into the PT. Gilson Menezes won the municipal election of Diadema and tried to put into practice the participatory ideal of the party. However, the party had two distinct participatory ideals, one that privileged the participation of party members, and one that tried to reach the entire population. The conflicts that ensued between these two groups made participatory initiatives difficult to implement, and pressures for administrative efficiency created additional tension among the various government departments. The PT administration in Diadema was markedly different from the other two case studies in that there was a clear conflict between party goals and the participatory ideal. The most promising participatory initiative of Diadema, the urbanization of shantytowns, was put aside not only because of internal conflicts, but also due to pressures for administrative efficiency directly related with electoral goals.

The history of civil society in this case offers an interesting paradox. The participatory ideals that fuelled this administration came mainly from a civil society movement, but a type of movement (unions) that did not build the organizational structure necessary for municipal-level initiatives. Though at the geographic heart of the unionism movement, the few organized groups in Diadema seem to have been spurred above all by CEBs. Contrary to Boa Esperança where the economic activity of the city and the format of participatory initiatives coincided, in Diadema union leaders and militant health practitioners tried to organize shantytowns. As an urban center, Diadema was more heterogeneous than Lages and Boa Esperança, and it was difficult to have a participatory administration solely focused on the needs of a single excluded socio-economic group. Trying to have multiple socio-groups directly participate in governments would also prove difficult. As the next chapter shows, it would be necessary to adapt the radical approach to citizen participation to a pluralistic method that allowed for the participation of various social groups. Diadema illustrates the clash between a participatory ideal that emerged in a time when representative institutions could, and many argued should, be ignored and the more moderate ideal that became predominant in the 1990s.

Chapter 6: Participatory Democracy and the Representative System

The Brazil of the 1980s is most commonly remembered as a "lost decade" marked by economic stagflation and a sluggish democratization process controlled from above. Those certainly were distinguishing aspects of the decade. The decade witnessed numerous failed attempts to end high inflation that mostly only worsened economic stagnation. In 1983 and 1984, hundreds of thousands of citizens participated in protests demanding a direct presidential election. Congress denied the popular appeal and instead indirectly elected a military-approved civilian candidate who passed away before his inauguration, leaving the presidency to his conservative vice-president – a rather anticlimactic end to 20 years of authoritarian government.

That said, the 1980s were also a fascinating time of social and political experimentation wherein social movements that had organized under the authoritarian regime could finally gain the streets. Countless political parties, social movements, unions, and civil society organizations were created in this period; some of these were ephemeral, but others such as the Workers' Party (PT) and the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) remained key political actors to this date. By the end of the decade, the establishment of a multiparty representative democratic system based on a constitution that endorsed citizen participation in public administration and promised universal social service provision had significantly changed the political-institutional context. It is possible to characterize this period as the beginning of an open access order hitherto unseen in the country, despite the limitations discussed below. This chapter shows how the participatory ideals and practices examined in the previous chapters were adapted to this new context.

Whereas regained civil liberties allowed for political participation, the fragmentation of groups that were no longer bound together by a common enemy presented new challenges to political organization. According to Hochstetler (2000), the democratization process changed the

"master frame" under which social movements operated from an opposition to the military regime to a struggle for citizenship rights. The author challenged the once widespread idea that the 1970s' social movements had demobilized following the political opening of the country and novel movements had emerged in the 1990s. Hochstetler found a marked continuity in the practices and strategies adopted by movements in these two periods, which led her to argue that social movements had adapted to the new domestic and international political contexts: what the country witnessed in the 1990s was a new cycle of mobilization. In a similar line of argument, Doimo (1995) stated that activists had to "temper a sort of Christian romanticism driven by a consensual-solidaristic logic, start to make use of rational calculation, and [face] social plurality in its fullness" (p.213). According to this author, social movements' confrontational approach to interactions with the state morphed into an intricate set of strategies; the "struggle against the state" gave away to "society's participation in decision-making," and there was an increasing emphasis on "active-propositive" instead of antagonistic engagement with governments.

A review of the challenges faced by environmentalists and women's movements can illustrate these arguments and help to situate the present analysis. Environmentalists "had to decide on the form that their participation in the democratization process would take, as they moved from protest to active political engagement" (Hochstetler & Keck, 2007, p. 87). In the mid-1980s, environmentalists had to decide whether and how to participate in the National Constituent Assembly (ANC) which, contrary to their preference, was a partisan process. At the same time, environmentalists had to choose between backing the newly created Green Party and supporting a "green list" of candidates of various parties. Later in the decade and into the 1990s, these predominantly grassroots groups had to decide whether to professionalize; the relatively few that chose to do so had to decide whether to accept state and corporate funding or rely solely

on donations from the membership. Environmentalists also had to decide whether and how to bring poverty and environment concerns together. Most groups ended up adopting a social environmentalist approach, at least partially in response to the need to join broader political coalitions; neutrality and isolation seemed impracticable in a period of heightened politicization (Hochstetler & Keck, 2007).

Women's movements also underwent marked changes in the 1980s. Alvarez (1990) explained that in the 1960s and 1970s, the striving developmental state did not see the need to promote family planning; the idea was that Brazil was going to grow in every way. The 1970s' women's movements had clear anti-state attitudes and were very wary of state sponsored family planning programs due to the neo-Malthusian approach dominant at the time, i.e., less births equaled less state spending on the poor. Movements focused mostly on access to day care and other urban services. At the beginning of the 1980s, the International Monetary Funding (IMF) imposed family planning as one of the conditions for rescuing the country from its debt crisis. Family planning became part of the state's agenda both at the federal and state levels, and although motivated by a type of neo-Malthusian rationale, government programs adopted the women-centered discourse of feminists. Incapable of opposing their own discourse, some women's groups decided to engage with the state in order to ensure that programs would not become coercive population controls. Women activists closely associated with programmatic Left groups continued to refuse to collaborate with government agencies.

The decade also witnessed the escalation of tensions between middle class and popular women's groups who disagreed on the relevance of class dynamics and material demands, with the former arguing that the latter placed exaggerated emphasis on these issues. By the end of the decade, women's movements had dispersed into a myriad of fronts; some became active within

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political parties, whereas others took feminism into less directly political spheres of life such as arts, media, and education. The fact that government and political parties in Brazil were (and continue to be) male domains made the question of whether and how to participate in formal politics even more knotty for women's movements. In agreement with Hochstetler (2000) and Doimo (1995), Alvarez concluded that "dispersion rather than disappearance would be a more accurate way to describe the state of the [women's] movement in the late 1980s" (Alvarez, 1990a, p. 228).

These changes in forms of political organization and participation typified the beginning of an open access order hitherto unseen in Brazil. Elites controlled access to social, political, and economic participation from colonial times to the beginning of the twentieth century. Beginning in the 1930s, institutional reforms and industrialization programs spurred the emergence of new political actors, whose partial and controlled inclusion occurred in the 1945-1964 period. During the rule of the military regime, citizens had the choice to participate in the controlled legislature, to join the armed struggle, to enroll in state controlled unions, and to partake in movements that tried to address local issues. The latter was done by either demanding action from the state in a confrontational manner or by winning municipal elections and implementing forms of direct democracy. In the 1980s, Brazilian citizens finally had "the right to form organizations that can engage in a wide variety of economic, political and social activities" (North, Wallis, & Weingast, 2009, p. 23). As Doimo (1995) noticed, the term "popular movement," widely used in the 1970s to refer basically to any and all citizen groups became increasingly associated with one category of organization within the broader "organized civil society" (p.223). There were now numerous ways to participate in political life, and participation itself was no longer the goal as much as the means to achieve other ends.

Nevertheless, the advent of an open access order also imposed limits on the political movements of the 1970s. In what concerns participatory democracy, it became difficult to reconcile tensions between broad and direct citizen engagement in municipal government, the logic of the political party system, and the demands of a pluralist society. These tensions, present in Diadema, and to a lesser extent in Lages, escalated in the 1980s as political actors committed to the participatory ideal of the 1970s adapted to the new political-institutional context. By the end of the decade, participatory democracy began to be thought and practiced as a space within the representative system, and no longer as an alternative to it. It is in this context that the PB model and the public policy councils became the main instruments of participatory democracy in Brazil.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section describes how the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (PMDB, former MDB) sidelined its most progressive members, who eventually formed a social democratic party that was programmatically committed to participatory democracy but did not actively promote it. The second section discusses the refraining of the Catholic Church from direct political involvement. Whereas progressive clergy and lay leaders continued to support civil society groups, the strong institutional backing the Church provided to social movements in the 1970s as well as its emphasis on ecclesial base communities (CEBs) significantly decreased. The third section focuses on the PT. The successes and failures of Diadema and other participatory experiments in the 1980s fuelled internal debates about how to include participation in the party's administrations. The final section shows that while the 1988 Constitution contains progressive legal devices that encourage participation, numerous proposals of more radical forms of participation were rejected in the drafting of the

document. Overall, the changes described in this chapter contributed to making the participatory

ideals and practices of the 1970s more compatible with the representative system.

The Pragmatic PMDB

In 1979, the military government passed an electoral reform that ended the two-party

system imposed in 1965. The regime's "primary intention was to split the opposition Brazilian

Democratic Movement (MDB) into several weaker parties through ruptures on the right and left

wings…and to create a basically centrist party culture to promote evolutionary change" (Selcher,

1986, p. 55). The tactic worked. The progressive leftist forces split among the PMDB, the PT,

and other smaller leftist parties. Whereas Francisco Weffort and José Alvaro Moisés helped to

found the PT, Fernando Henrique ran for senate for the PMDB, and Jarbas Vasconcellos, the

author of the more radical 1976 mayors' manual, ran for mayor of Recife for a small leftist

party.[31] The liberal conservative arm of the PMDB joined the centrist Popular Party (Partido

Popular, PP). This party was mainly constituted of representatives of business and finance

sectors, and for that reason it was jestingly said that PP stood for *partido dos patrões* (bosses'

party) (Benevides, 1986).

Most of ARENA's members joined the Social Democratic Party (PDS); following some

desertions to the PP and the entry of some former MDB deputies, the party managed to keep a

majority in the legislative chambers. The party reform included a number of gimmicks, often

referred to as "electoral engineering," which helped the military to control the transition and

avoid dangerous shifts (Fleischer, 1986). In the 1982 municipal, gubernatorial, and legislative

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[31] A group of intellectuals tried to create a Socialist Party that would bring together MDB *autênticos*, leftist

thinkers, and the new unionism movement, but the project did not flourish, largely because the latter preferred to

have its own, independent, Workers' Party (Christiano, 2003).

elections, with 41.5 percent of the total vote, the PSD managed to gain control of two-thirds of

the cities in the country, 12 of 22 state governments, almost two-thirds of senate seats, and 49

percent of seats in the Chamber of Deputies (Selcher, 1986, p. 61). In 1985, a faction of the PDS

broke off and formed the Party of the Liberal Front (Partido da Frente Liberal, PFL), another

centrist party; following this split the PMDB became the majority party (Fleischer, 1986).

In the context of a competitive party system, the PMDB steadily moved to the center of

the political spectrum, forging alliances with the PP and the PFL, and increasingly isolating

leftist forces within the party. In 1982, the party declared its commitment to supporting and

representing community organizations and social movements without trying to control them

(PMDB, 1982, p. 8). In fact, the PMDB became almost solely focused on electoral disputes to

the point that it asserted that the only "useful" opposition vote was for its candidates; voting for

small opposition parties was wasting opposition votes because the defeat of the PMDB could

bring the "death of democracy." This fundamentally undemocratic and arrogant attitude

reminded observers of the time of the "enlightened elitism" that had supported the 1964 coup

(Benevides, 1986).

At lower levels of government there was some continuity with the participatory practices

previously espoused by the *autênticos*. One of the best known of these was the Popular Councils

created in André Franco Montoro's mandate as governor of São Paulo. Montoro was the author

of the chapter on participatory democracy in the MDB's manual for mayor published in 1976

(chapter two). One of the most experienced of the combative MDB deputies, his pre-1964

affiliation was with the small Christian Democratic Party (Partido Democrata Cristão, PDC).

Throughout the dictatorship, Montoro was a serene but defiant voice within the party, and was

supported by a substantial portion of paulista voters. He was elected state senator in 1970 and 1978, and became governor in the first direct gubernatorial elections in 1982 (Kinzo, 1988).

In 1979, the appointed PSD mayor of São Paulo, Reynaldo de Barros (the nephew of the populist leader Adhemar de Barros) passed a decree creating popular councils in the city. In the following year, eleven councils with representatives of civil society groups discussed the city's budget. According to Gohn (2001), councils functioned mostly as a space for citizens to make demands that were compiled by public officials and later ignored. In 1984, Mario Covas, Montoro's appointed mayor, created popular councils under the umbrella of the Secretariat of Family and Social Welfare (Secretaria da Familia e do Bem-Estar Social, FABES), which were organize by sector of government, e.g. housing and adult education. According to the Secretariat, councils were meant to "guarantee the real and effective presence of the city's social forces in the process of planning, evaluation, control and reorientation of the FABES' operation" (as quoted in Gohn, 2001, p.73). These councils embodied the idea of citizen participation as part of the policy-making process, and not as any form of direct citizen rule.

The PMDB popular councils were criticized by the militant left who saw the initiative as an attempt to co-opt social movements. For example, Sílvio Caccia Bava, an intellectual and PT militant, argued these councils tried to control participation.

> It is very important for [Montoro] to impose on the population and social movements forms of participation that avoid initiatives coming from workers that put the government against the wall. To institutionalize popular participation means to control and channel [citizens'] demands and manifestations of popular protest to a space created from above... This is so important for the Montoro government that he even created a State Secretariat to take care of the popular participation question. (Bava, 1983, pp. 89-90)

Bava contrasted this format of citizen participation with the type of popular council advocated by the PT, which was autonomous from both the government and political parties. Bava offered as examples the truly spontaneous, bottom-up popular councils of Osasco, Campinas, and the health councils of São Paulo. The role of the party, in his view, was simply to support these initiatives.

The PT later learned that working with popular councils was more complicated than the party's intellectuals imagined in the early 1980s (more on this point below). Most important at this point is to call attention to the growing complexity of debates about participation. The PMDB's councils and the PT opposition to them raised important questions about how to include popular participation in government and for what purpose. The clear-cut 1970s' state-society dichotomy started to give away to a more complex institutional scenario, which involved political parties and distinct ideas about participation.

At the national level, the progressive faction of the PMDB became increasingly dismayed with the centrist approach of the leadership and urged party members to revive the ideals of the 1970s. In the mid-1980s, politicians in this group formed a faction called the Progressive United Movement (Movimento de Unidade Progressista, MUP). In preparation for the ANC, the MUP issued a document advocating for bolder reforms that the party leadership did not seem willing to defend. In his speech at the conference where this document was drafted, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, then party leader at the Senate, insisted that the Assembly was a crucial opportunity to regain the population's trust in the PMDB as a party that could promote change. Covas, now state senator, argued that if the Assembly pitched workers against capital, the party's obligation was to defend the former. The PMDB performance in the ANC was frustrating for this group (more below), and led to the split that created the Party of Brazilian Social Democracy (Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira, PSDB). At the moment of the creation of the PSDB, the

national leader of the PMDB was the centrist and compromising Ulysses Guimarães, whereas the most populous state of the country, São Paulo, was in the hands of Orestes Quércia and his extended clientelist network (Christiano, 2003). The PSDB was the last refuge for *autênticos* like Montoro, Cardoso, and Covas who had opted for staying in the PMDB instead of joining newer and more progressive parties like the PT.

In the PSDB founding statement, "modern democracy" was qualified as "participatory and pluralist." In the same document, the party committed itself to struggle for,

> the decentralization of political power, the respect for the autonomy of civil society organizations, and the expansion of information, discussion, and consultation channels in decision-making of public interest…conditions for the increasing adoption of new forms of direct exercise of citizenship, which enhance and validate the classic mechanisms of representative democracy.(Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira, 1992, p. 11)

In this view, the purpose of direct citizen participation was clearly to improve the quality of the representative system, which by now was valued and worth defending.

The city of Campinas, one of the PSDB's showcase municipal administrations, was run in the late-1980s and early-1990s by one of the party's founders, José Roberto Magalhães Teixeira. This mayor created a decentralized public service infrastructure that increased the efficiency of public service delivery. Teixeira also created the program Renda Minima (Minimum Income), a conditional transfer program that assisted families living in poverty as long as they kept their children in school (Figueiredo & Lamounier, 1996). This program was a precursor of today's internationally known Bolsa Família. Notwithstanding progressive programs such as these, as with the aforementioned commitment with direct citizen participation, the party did not promote participatory democracy as actively as the 1970's *autênticos* or the PT.

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In 1994, Fernando Henrique became the first PSDB president. His administration created an agency within the executive branch called Solidary Community (Comunidade Solidária, CS), which was headed by anthropologist and first lady Ruth Correa Cardoso. The main objective of the CS was to help to strengthen civil society organizations, to promote state-civil society partnerships, and to facilitate government consultation with key civil society actors. The CS succeeded in engaging important civil society actors, but received harsh criticisms (Friedman & Hochstetler, 2002). Critical scholars saw the CS as part of a political project that displaces the meaning of participation and civil society from the radical participatory project of the 1980s to a neoliberal agenda that tries to offload state responsibilities and transform civil society groups in mere service providers (Dagnino, Olvera, & Panfichi, 2006a). By the mid-1990s, the two distinct normative approaches to citizen participation reviewed in the introductory chapter were already well established, and the PSDB, originally the party of *autênticos*, adopted an approach more in line with what has here been called the conventional view.

This section examined the evolution of one of the forces behind the participatory ideology and experiences of the late-1970s. The *autênticos* who stayed in the PMDB were responsible for some of the first participatory policy councils in the country, which at the time were criticized as being an attempt to co-opt social movements. Eventually, the progressive members of the party found it impossible to remain in a centrist party solely focused on electoral results and allied with some of the most conservative groups in Brazil. The PSDB presented an option between the then-radical approach to participation espoused by the PT and the increasing conservatism of the PMDB. The party was not a champion of local-level participatory initiatives, as was the PT, and later participatory innovations at the federal level have also been criticized. Nevertheless, PSDB deputies played a key role in the ANC; as seen below, their moderate

proposals made more headway than amendments pitched on a radical tone. For the purposes of

the present chapter, the key is to note the emergence of a more complex political-institutional

context and new ideas and forms of organizing participation.

The Withdrawal of the Church

In 1996, during a trip to Guatemala, Pope John Paul II declared that liberation theology

had crumbled following the fall of socialism, and no longer represented a problem ("Papa diz

que teologia da libertação caducou," 1996). The internal conservative reaction to the Church's

"preferential option for the poor" began in the 1970s, and became dominant in the course of the

1980s when the papacy persecuted militant Latin American clergy. By the early 1990s, the

institutional focus of the Brazilian Catholic Church had moved away from support for grassroots

movements and back to more traditional moral concerns. Politically active CEBs showed signs

of demobilization. Nonetheless, a portion of those who had been politicized under the auspices of

Liberation Theology and trained in the CEBs went on to participate in a multiplicity of civic and

political organizations. The 1980s' conservative retraction of the Catholic Church has been

widely discussed in the specialized literature and will be only briefly reviewed in the first part of

this section. The legacy of the grassroots period has received less attention. The second part of

this section draws on work on the latter to argue that the participatory ideal the Church promoted

in the 1970s spread broadly throughout Brazilian society and helped to build a more democratic

society, although the cohesive structure and discourse that initially supported it were no longer

present.

As examined in chapter two, the progressive arm of the Catholic Church gained

dominance at the end of the 1960s and became a firm opposition to the military regime in the

early1970s. In this period, the Church denounced cases of torture, advocated for the respect of

human rights, and promoted the growth of CEBs. The Church was also involved in the struggle

of various segments of society through its pastoral commissions; for example, in 1975 the Land

Pastoral Commission (Comissão Pastoral da Terra) was created to assist rural workers and

peasants. It was also in the early1970s that conservative forces started to unite against what was

seen as a disruption of the Church's mission. In 1968, the Medellin Conference of the Latin

American Episcopal Council (Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano, CELAM) marked the raise of

the progressive clergy in the region. However, CELAM members elected a conservative bishop

to head the organization and tried to reverse the progressive trend. Alfonso López Trujillo began

by hassling progressive bishops in the region and then formed the Euro-Latin Alliance with the

conservative arm of the West German Church, which aimed to push the Catholics back into their

traditional roles. Although some advocates of the "Church of the Poor" chose to present the 1979

CELAM Conference in Puebla as an advancement of their cause, Trujillo succeeded in

controlling the meeting's agenda. The conference ended in a stalemate in part due to the vocal

opposition of progressive Brazilian bishops (Della Cava, 1986).

Conservative bishops maintained that exponents of Liberation Theology reduced faith to

politics and by doing so threatened the integrity and unity of the Catholic Church. They criticized

the latter's emphasis on socioeconomic issues and held that spirituality, not social justice, was

the main focus of the Church. Conservative bishops also disagreed with the "preferential option

for the poor," which, according to them, isolated the other segments of society. Liberation

theologians' use of Marxist concepts and proximity with Marxist movements greatly distressed

conservative and even moderate bishops. Moreover, the conservative current advocated for a

more hierarchical Church; in its view, Christ had endowed the pope and the Church with the

authority to lead his followers. Finally, although not opposed to the CEBs, conservative bishops

saw their main role to be ecumenical, not social or political (Mainwaring, 1986).

In Brazil, the leader of the conservative movement was Rio de Janeiro Archbishop Don

Eugênio Sales. His views epitomize what would become the dominant approach of the Church in

Brazil. In 1983, Don Sales stated that,

> A new period for the Brazilian Church is beginning. The Church had a very active role in
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> the period when Brazil was becoming a closed society. It was the 'voice of those who had
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> no voice.' Today, the parliament, press, and parties are functioning fully. They should
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> speak, and the Church should take care of its own affairs. (as quoted in Mainwaring, 1986,
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> p. 240)

Concerning the role of the CEBs, the Rio de Janeiro Archbishop declared that, "the CEBs are

[part of the] Church and therefore are born from Christ; their mission is not determined by the

people" (as quoted in Mainwaring, 1986, p.251). This vision faced strong opposition within

Brazil where adepts of Liberation Theology were numerous and influential. Ultimately, Rome

sided with the conservative faction and used its prerogative to appoint bishops and rearrange

dioceses to make its vision prevail.

In the early 1980s, recently elected Pope John Paul II began a systematic persecution of

militant clergy committed to Liberation Theology. The most common reprimands included the

relocation of militant priests to conservative dioceses; the division of dioceses headed by militant

bishops, which was intended to decrease their zone of influence; calls for consultations in Rome,

where clergymen were schooled by the Pope in person; and temporary suspensions of clergy

from activities such as offering the Eucharist, teaching, and writing (Burdick, 2004). In Brazil,

the most visible scapegoats were Leonardo Boff, Clovodis Boff, and Dom Pedro Casaldáliga; all

three had their writing, teaching, preaching, and travelling privileges suspended for periods at a time between 1985 and 1989 (Hewitt, 1991). Leonardo Boff, the most actively persecuted, renounced the Church in 1992. The outspoken Archbishop of São Paulo, Don Paulo Arns, was punished with the arbitrary division of his archdiocese into five dioceses in 1989.

As pointed out in chapter two, the magnitude of the phenomenon of the CEBs has been difficult to measure. The few reliable statistical studies available were done in the 1980s, which makes it impossible to evaluate whether there was a significant nationwide decline of the number of CEBs in this period. Nevertheless, there is a consensus in the literature about the weakening of CEB's activism. Hewitt's (1991) longitudinal studies of the Archdiocese of São Paulo showed a 14 percent increase in the number of official CEBs between 1983 and 1988, which roughly corresponded to the population growth in the area. The author noted that the new political freedoms and the deteriorating economic scenario would have led one to expect a higher increase. Most importantly, his qualitative analysis showed a decrease in political activity in the most militant CEBs (Type VI); the average membership in these groups went from 36 to 23 members between 1983 and 1988. Overall, there was an increasing focus on devotional activities and less attention paid to discussion groups (*consientização*) and collective actions (*reinvidicações*).

One explanation for this shift towards devotional activities is the fact that after 1985 conservative bishops encouraged priests to centralize power and control the activities of their parishes. As a result,

> More time is spent on religious training of laity and political and social education has
> been dropped off the agenda. This has meant the clear separation of politics and religion
> in communities, with a return to a more spiritual and charitable content with regard to
> CEB activities. (Levy, 2000, p. 172)

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Another factor contributing to this dwindling process was the lack of leadership. Following the reestablishment of political parties, there was an intense debate about the role of the Church in the upcoming elections. In 1981, the Church determined that CEBs could encourage participation in electoral processes without supporting any specific party. Partisan involvement was strongly discouraged (Della Cava, 1986). Ultimately, a number of CEB leaders opted for working for the PT; as the party began to win elections, job opportunities opened in government, and migration towards the party grew. Moreover, some of the older lay leaders seemed disillusioned by the conservative turn of the Church and were unwilling to continue to fight with the institution (Levy, 2000). According to Burdick (2004), "by the start of the 1990s, laypeople still committed to an explicitly liberationist agenda found they had few ecclesiastical resources left to conduct political struggle" (p.7).

The Church's withdrawal of institutional support for political involvement did not impede progressive clergy and activists trained at CEBs to support the democratization process of the country. The Bishop of São Mateus, Dom Aldo Gerna, was not removed from his position, but was disciplined by Rome. In spite of Rome's demand that he tune down his political activism, and two death threats from large landowners, Dom Aldo actively supported the MST (personal communication, January 23, 2011). Since its inception, the MST has received unremitting assistance from the Land Pastoral; the genesis and history of the two organizations are intrinsically related (Fernandes, 2000). In this sense, it is important to mention that although the heads of the large archdioceses in the South and Southeast Regions played crucial roles in influencing the Church's progressive political stance in the 1970s, clergymen in rural areas of the country have been extremely active in the defense of their marginalized parishes. Although São Paulo's Dom Paulo Arns was the most visible opponent to the military government, the first bold

actions against the repressive regime took place in the North, Northeast, and Center Region, where overt violence against poor segments of the society was more common (Della Cava, 1986; Krischke, 1979).

Writing in 1986, Mainwaring noted that democratization was not having an even effect across Brazil, and that in rural areas where "forms of domination continued to be unsophisticated and repressive," the Church continued to play an active political role (Mainwaring, 1986, p. 241). In the Amazon region, for example, the Church leadership helped the rubber tappers movement, whose leader Chico Mendes was assassinated in 1988. Marina Silva of the Green Party, the third place contender in the 2010 presidential elections, was from this region, and was trained in the CEBs before joining social movements and later becoming a politician (Hochstetler & Keck, 2007). The brutal assassination of activist nun Dorothy Stang in 2005 in the interior of the Northern state of Para verifies the continuing validity of Mainwaring's observation.

The Brazilian black movement received strong support from the Catholic Church's Black Pastoral created in the early 1980s, but it is interesting to note that the former inspired the latter. During its progressive period, the Church attracted an unusual number of seminarians from lower social classes; in Brazil, this meant that many of them were non-white. The growth of the black movement in the late1970s and the creation of the United Negro Movement (Movimento Negro Unificado, MNU) called the attention of non-white seminarians trained under the doctrine of Liberation Theology to racial divides within the Church structure. Previously self-identified simply as being from lower social classes, non-white seminarians and priests start to organize meetings and to attend MNU events, and eventually adopted the title "black pastoral agents." They interpreted the struggle against racial inequality as integral to Liberation Theology's vision and the Church's preferential option for the poor (Burdick, 2004).

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In the 1980s, the Black Pastoral focused on popular education aimed at disseminating Afro-Brazilian history. In a first moment efforts were only partially successful and educational campaigns did not attract as many people as black pastoral agents hoped. Later in the decade, the Vatican adopted an "enculturation approach" that aimed at making Catholicism more attuned with local cultures, and in that way secure the Church's international congregation. Many among the progressive clergy found this to be a diversion from structural socio-economic issues, but black pastoral agents adopted the approach in order to make their movement more interesting and less strictly educational. In the 1990s, the Black Pastoral turned attention to helping black and brown students in public secondary schools to prepare for university entrance exams where their higher-income white counterparts from private schools tend to perform significantly better. Finally, a continuing theme in the work of the Black Pastoral has been the promotion of black self-identity. The argument here is that the widespread idea that the Brazilian people was formed through miscegenation plays down the African element, and that Afro-Brazilians should instead feel comfortable to "assume their negritude" (Burdick, 2004). Although it is difficult to draw direct causal links, the work of black pastoral agents seems inexorably related with the recent advances Brazilian society has made on this front.[32]

The relationship between women's movements and the progressive Church has been more convoluted. On the one hand, Liberation theologians gave more emphasis to women than other doctrines, and CEBs helped women to organize and become politically active citizens. Leonardo Boff, for example, recognized that "the Church is basically a church of males, a church

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[32] The 2010 census showed for the first time in the country's history that back and mixed citizens constitute more than half of population (50.74 percent). According to statistical analysis, the large growth observed in these two categories in comparison to the 2000 census is mathematically unsound. The only explanation is that in the recent survey more people chose to self-identify as mixed or black than had been the case in 2000 (Caniello, 2011).

of whites, and a church of celibates;" his writings tried to call attention to the unsung women in the Bible (Boff & Tamez, 1987, pp. 99-100). Studies have documented the crucial role CEBs and progressive priests had in supporting the political mobilization of women; the Church's "mothers' clubs," for example, served as launching pads for numerous social movements in the early 1980s (Alvarez, 1990b; Burdick, 2004), including the movement against high living costs (Sader, 1988).

On the other hand, the progressive arm of the Church was unwilling to target the family as the key sphere of oppression of women. Alvarez (1990b) has criticized Liberation theologians and clergymen for being unable to support women's struggles beyond traditional gender roles; in her view, the Church helped to make women politically active citizens, but has failed to politicize women's issues. Burdick (2004) prefers to emphasize that the progressive Church empowered women who then began to make demands and organize around themes that were beyond the clergy's control. Overall, the relationship with women's movement typifies the Church's general attitude after 1985: liberation theologians disseminated a progressive but at times evasive discourse. CEBs and pastoral agents supported small communities and specific disfranchised groups, but the Church as a whole refused to take a stand on the most contentious social issues and denied affiliation with any political organization or combative social movement.

To conclude, the conservative turn of the Church's leadership and its withdrawal of direct support to politically active CEBs does not mean that it did not play an important role in the re-democratization of the country. As showed above, progressive clergy continued to support and advocate for social movements and disfranchised citizens, and CEB members shored up groups and organizations that carried on the participatory ideal of the 1970s. Moreover, the community network created in the previous decade was instrumental in the ANC and the creation of the PT, both examined later in this chapter. Nevertheless, the focus on direct citizen participation visibly

gave away to support for varied forms of expression and organization. In a political-institutional context that more closely resembled an open access order, progressive elements of the Catholic Church could directly and indirectly participate in social and political life in a variety of forms.

PT's Participatory Administrations

The PT brought together a number of progressive forces, including CEB members, leftist intellectuals, Marxists, autonomous professionals, and, the most prominent group, workers from the new unionism movement (Keck, 1992; Meneguello, 1989). As viewed in chapter five, from its inception the PT was devoted to making popular participation a pivotal aspect of the party's political program, but there was a less clear idea about the format participation would take. The absence of consensus on participation was in part due to the internal heterogeneity of the party. The orthodox Marxist factions of the party envisioned an eventual socialist revolution, and participation was seen as an instrumental part of this project. The more democratic factions were concerned with broadening the PT's constituency and making it a competitive political party; in this view participation should include all citizens and not be limited to those committed to the party's socialist program. In Diadema, the first PT administration, these two views collided and led to an administrative stalemate.

Throughout the 1980s the party continued to experiment with participatory democracy. In the process, a pragmatic view of participatory programs emerged and became widely accepted within the party. The first part of this section reviews party documents that illustrate the consolidation of the more democratic and less sectarian vision for the party at the national level. The second part discusses challenges the party faced in trying to implement participatory initiatives in Vitória, São Paulo, Porto Alegre and some smaller cities; it presents both accounts of these administrations and the analysis of influential party intellectuals directly involved in

these first experiments, which helped to shape the party's thinking about the format of popular participation in PT administrations.

The Consolidation of a Democratic Party

In the 1980s, two dominant *tendencias* (factions) argued over the PT's political program. On the one hand, a democratic faction saw the party as a mass party and held democracy over socialism. On the other hand, a more statist faction hung on Leninist ideals, envisioned the PT as a proletarian party, and placed less emphasis on democracy. A general trend marked the party's discourse: the democratic faction was paramount from foundation to the mid-1980s; in 1986, the country's economic and political crisis, allegedly a revolutionary opportunity, backed the rise of the statist faction; the loss of the 1989 presidential elections, the crumbling of socialist role models, and a new analysis of capitalism brought the democratic faction back to the forefront in the early 1990s (Cesar, 2002). The consolidation of the more democratic vision was a necessary condition for the party's support for participatory democracy.

In its founding manifesto of 1980, the PT defined itself as a workers' party that aspires "to be the true political expression of all who are exploited by the capitalist system;" therefore, "an ample party open to all committed to the workers' cause and to the party's programs" (Partido dos Trabalhadores, 1998, p. 66). The first party program issued in June of 1981 stated that, "the rights of all workers are neglected, from peasants to doctors, from industrial workers to engineers to teachers…from menial workers to experts, artists, journalists, tradesmen, rural and urban autonomous workers" (p.71). The document Points for the Elaboration of the PT's Program noted that "it should be clear an *interest identity* (and not simply an 'alliance') between urban and rural workers" (as quoted in César, 2002, p.248). This statement marks a significant

break with orthodox Marxist doctrines that either disregard peasants or instrumentally conceive alliances with rural sectors (César, 2002).

More orthodox statements are found in official documents when the statist faction led the party from the mid- to the late-1980s. The final report of the 1987 annual meeting stated that, "the industrial work force is the most important and concentrated [popular] sector and the one capable of leading the revolutionary process. Poor peasants and urban wageworkers are the main allies of the proletariat;" semi-proletariat and marginalized groups should be attracted to help the outburst of the revolutionary process, and progressive and democratic intellectuals and small shop owners are segments that can be attracted to the revolutionary bloc (Partido dos Trabalhadores, 1998, p. 325). The document elaborated extensively on the struggle for socialism and made references to the Russian Revolution, Mao's China, and the Sandinista uprising in Nicaragua. It was the first time that the PT officially presented itself as a socialist party (César, 2002).

In 1991 the party held its first national congress, and by then the orthodox Marxist tone was no longer central. The final report started with the following statement,

> The Workers' Party wishes to share the revision of its historical project with workers and all democratic and socialist forces, [a project] which is the fruit of 11 years of struggle for democracy and social equality. We consider our natural interlocutors all those who hope for the end of misery and the elimination of Brazil's brutal injustices. (Partido dos Trabalhadores, 1998, p. 481)

The same document criticized the Brazilian Left for,

> Having an egocentric training wherein the Capital [versus] Work question has always been considered the explanatory base for all the contradictions found in society; this has

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prevented [the Left] from understanding that this contradiction is fundamental, but it does not take into account all forms of oppression that the general working population is subjected to. (p. 523)

Other examples of oppression included racism, police violence, and sterilization of women. Finally, commenting on the crumbling of *real socialism*, the document stated that,

For decades *real socialist* regimes deprived entire populations from political participation and democracy. For this reason, the PT welcomes the transformations taking place in these countries; they represent the rebirth of the labor movement, of civil society, and of cultural debates. (Partido dos Trabalhadores, 1998, p. 492)

The document elaborates extensively on the shortcomings of the regimes of the Eastern bloc, focusing especially on their undemocratic character. However, the document cautions that such criticisms should not serve as justification for compliance with the status quo. In a section titled Neither Real Socialism Nor Social Democracy, the document posited that, "For the PT, socialism is synonymous with the radicalization of democracy" (p.499), which included the "socialization of the means of governing" and initiatives that allow the population to "appropriate functions that today are reserved to state and institutional spheres" (p.500).

It is safe to argue that had the statist faction gained control over the party, commitment to popular participation would have lessened or participatory initiatives would have been restricted to the party membership, as a faction of the Diadema PT fancied. In fact, Avritzer's (2009) has contended that PB is more common in cities where democratic factions within the PT are more prominent than orthodox segments. The triumph of the democratic faction enabled the party's unremitting support for participatory democracy in the 1990s.

PT's Participatory Administrations in the 1980s

Brazil had three municipal elections in the 1980s. The 1982 election followed the rules of the regime and did not include state capitals and cities with hydro and mineral resource. Diadema was the only city the PT governed for the entire 1982-1988 mandate. In 1985, state capitals and resource-rich cities elected mayors for a three-year interim mandate. The PT elected the mayor of Fortaleza, the capital of the northeast state of Ceará.[33] In 1988, a nationwide municipal election put all mayoral seats in the country up for dispute for four-year mandates. The PT elected 31 mayors (Keck, 1992, p. 157); of these, 12 left or were expelled from the party before the end of the mandate due to disagreements similar to those examined in the case of Diadema (Abers, 1996). The errors and successes of this period strongly influenced the party's approach to participatory democracy in the following decade (Baiocchi, 2003; Bittar, 1992; Nylen, 2003).

In 1985, Maria Luíza Fontenele became the first Brazilian women and PT politician to be elected mayor of a state capital. Active in the progressive arm of the MDB, she remained in the PMDB for a few years and then joined the PT, but her foremost political commitment was with the orthodox Laborer Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionário Operário, PRO), which at the time functioned as a faction within the PT. In the election campaign Fontenele reached out to the poor segments of society, but was elected largely by the votes of the middle class discontented with the country's economic recession. Once elected, she neglected middle class interests and focused on the poorest sectors of the city. However, the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B)

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[33] A leftist coalition led by the small Socialist Party succeeded in electing Jarbas Vansconcellos mayor of Recife, the capital of the state of Pernambuco, where a participatory experience took place in the 1986-1988 mandate. Similarly to other experiences in the period, this administration had various shortcomings and some successes; the succeeding mayor dismantled participatory programs. See Soares, J.A. & Soler, S. (1992). *Poder local e participação popular* (Rio de Janeiro: Rio Fundo Editora).

was well organized among these sectors and opposed the PT. Fontenele then gave preferential treatment to groups not associated with the PC do B, which fuelled discord among social movements. The administration also faced the opposition of conservative parties who held a majority in the municipal legislative assembly, where the PT did not have a single seat. Finally, the state of Ceará was in the hands of *coronéis*, and at this time state governments were still able to financially boycott opposition municipal governments, as in the case of Lages. Lack of resources greatly limited Fontenele's administration (Pinto, 1992).

The creation of Popular Councils was a core electoral promise, but Fontenele admitted that,

> During the campaign we announced as a commitment that the PT was going to govern the city with Popular Councils. But the idea of Popular Council was not clear in our heads, or was in diverse forms. Once we started to discuss the topic, there were at least five different visions of it. (as quoted in Pinto, 1992, p. 9)

Public policy councils from previous administrations were maintained and new ones were created, but all had a timid role in the administration. The Popular Council announced in the campaign was never formed.

Similarly to Diadema, the Fortaleza administration was marked by internal conflict. The PRO saw municipal government as a tool in the revolutionary process, while the moderate sector of the PT was more concerned with administrative efficiency. In 1987, the PRO managed to isolate the moderate sector and govern alone, but moderates managed to choose the successor candidate, which led Fontenele to leave the PT. In the end, both the PT's and Fontenele's candidates lost the 1988 election. Although the PT made modest but significant advances in

social areas (Pinto, 1992), the PT's first state capital government became known for its administrative incompetence (Bergamaschi, 1988).

In 1985, São Paulo elected the veteran populist leader Jânio Quadros as mayor, showing that populism survived the authoritarian period and participatory movements. In 1988, *paulistas* elected Luiza Erundina, a social worker connected with social movements, and associated with one of the more orthodox factions of the PT. The party leadership did not back her nomination; the city was of important political strategic value and Plínio de Arruda Sampaio seemed a more sensible option. In the 2010 presidential election Sampaio was the extreme-left candidate with a discourse that many found anachronistic. In 1988, Sampaio was a moderate PT politician, a competent lawyer active in the Constituent Assembly, with a strong relation with the Catholic Church and international experience with the United Nations. The party leadership thought that Sampaio could gain middle class votes and forge an alliance with the leftist arm of the PMDB, which at this time was splitting to form the PSDB (Couto, 1995).

In a public debate in May of 1988 the two pre-candidates discussed the topic of popular councils. The newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* summarized the discussion as follows,

> Erundina affirmed that a PT government in the city of São Paulo cannot simply represent the modernization of the 'bourgeois state.' Thus, she understands that popular councils should help to spur the construction of socialism, without limiting themselves to current rules. Plínio thinks that councils should have a consultative character, and that the type of council proposed by Erundina is only justified in a 'phase of popular insurrection.' He then criticized [Erundina's] 'pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric.' ("Petistas divergem sobre 'Conselhos Populares'," 1988)

The party membership chose Erundina, and she was elected mayor by a five percent margin over the second contender. She did not have the support of the party's leadership or moderate factions during the campaign, and therefore was free to select her cabinet secretaries. Erundina reached out for independent party militants and a group constituted mainly of autonomous professionals, and put together a team that included educator Paulo Freire, jurist Dalmo Dallari, philosopher Marilena Chaui, and economist Paul Singer (Couto, 1995).

Erundina's intellectual dream team faced challenges similar to other PT governments. A debate over the public bus fare illustrates well the tensions within the administration. Mayor Quadros was known for allowing bus companies hired by the city to impose high fares. During the campaign Erundina promised to make public transport affordable; it is needless to explain that bus fares have a considerable impact on the income of poor families. In the months preceding the election, Quadros stopped raising the fare in order to regain some popularity. By the beginning of Erundina's mandate the fare had been significantly depreciated by the country's high inflation rate, and the federal government was about to impose a monetary plan that would forbid price increases for a determined period. The finance staff found it necessary to raise the fare, for which it faced voracious reactions from the political staff and party members who had support Erundina's candidacy. The problem was common to other PT municipalities in the state and a meeting with mayors and the national leadership was called. The near-unanimity of mayors defended that the increase was crucial, but Lula and other national leaders insisted that it was not a good political strategy. In the end bus fares were raised (Singer, 1996).

This administrative pragmatism was found in other PT administrations. In the tiny Ronda Alta, Rio Grande do Sul, PT Mayor Saul Barbosa (1989-1992) could openly declare that, "we realized that the city hall is like a company, so we have to be good business people in here"

(Ferreira & Ricci, 1992, p. 23). São Paulo was not Ronda Alta. PT militants and social movements who had supported Erundina were extremely frustrated with what they referred to as *administrativismo* – a pejorative term that implies exclusive focus on technical matters and lack of political vision – and at times criticized the PT as harshly as they criticized Quadros (Singer, 1996). The national leadership resented Erundina's team's unwillingness to try to show results right away and instead choosing to spend the first year putting things in order; 1989 was Lula's presidential campaign and the party had hoped to gain more political capital from a São Paulo government (Couto, 1995).

Concerning the popular councils, São Paulo went further than Fortaleza and organized assemblies in various districts of the city with the purpose of discussing the municipal budgeting. These public hearings were much more in line with Sampaio's notion of consultation than with any sort of revolutionary project. Paul Singer, the finance secretary and party intellectual, later admitted that, "I went to as many assemblies as I could and felt frustrated with the discrepancy between our conception of what participation should be and the reality of it" (Singer, 1996, p.121). He explained that the team expected people to discuss how to improve the city as a whole, but citizens, especially in poor neighborhoods, were solely concerned with immediate material demands. Erundina would repeatedly plead people to "transcend the local and sectorial" and focus instead on broad goals. In 1990, she evaluated these assemblies as "still precarious" and affirmed that it was not the government's responsibility to organize popular councils (Freire & Azevedo, 1990, p. 15). Singer admitted that in the end participation was mostly indirect, through the secretariats' staffs that were closely connected with varied segments of civil society, with some predominance of unionized workers; he wrote, "it couldn't be any other way, it is in fact impossible to negotiate the allocation of resources of a large budget in assemblies with hundreds

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of people" (Singer, 1996, p.121). Some militants referred to this type of indirect participation as left-wing clientelism (Kowarick & Singer, 1993).

According to Lúcio Kowarick and André Singer (1993), scholars at the time associated with the PT, the Erundina government realized that the social movements with which it had direct links represented a small portion of the population. Movements' delegates represented diverse social groups, some much larger than others, and when given the chance to participate they most often defended the private interests of their groups. This realization led Erundina's team to shift the aim of the administration from "putting the government in the hands of the people," as asserted during the campaign, to "governing the city for all," the maxim that guided the government. While the former was based on notions of direct democracy, the latter relied on the active participation of officials in "negotiation councils" that brought together key shareholders to discuss solutions to specific problems. These scholars noted that, "the popular participation exalted in direct democracy processes stopped being the organizing principle of the city's administration" (p.205). By 1990, Erundina was focusing more attention on public policy councils, which she argued would spur a *consientização* process that could lead to the emergence of genuine, bottom-up popular councils (Freire & Azevedo, 1990). As seen in the introduction, policy councils are to this date an important aspect of Brazil's participatory democracy, but they did not lead to popular councils.

Abers (1996) compared attempts to create participatory budgeting in six other PT municipal administrations in the 1989-1992 period, namely, Santos, Santo André, Piracicaba, Ipatinga, João Monlevarde, and Porto Alegre. The main challenges these governments faced were the fact that budgetary decision-making required technical knowledge that ordinary citizens did not have, and the need to balance citizens' focus on their immediate surroundings with

administrators' concern with the city as a whole. Moreover, PT members expected social movements to jump at the opportunity to participate, whereas in many cases citizens were willing to participate only when material benefits were visible. The first rounds of participation usually mounted to an endless number of demands that could not be paid for with cities' limited budget; failure to respond to demands meant that governments lost grassroots support, and that the mobilization of citizens for the next round of participation was even more difficult. "According to numerous informants, the administrations' attempts to incorporate popular movements into the formulation of the city budget largely failed in the first years" (p.43).

Cities addressed these challenges differently. Santos desisted from creating large-scale participatory budgets and replaced them with small consultative councils on specific issue areas, e.g., councils to monitor health posts. Ipatinga and Piracicaba opted for using individual surveys to gather information about citizens' concerns and demands. In Santo André and Porto Alegre citizens were asked to negotiate a list of investment priorities; governments promised to implement only the top priorities. These two cities also focused more than the others on educating citizens about public finances. In Porto Alegre, the two-level participatory pyramid (see Introduction) made it possible for participants at the district level to have simply a general understanding of budgetary processes, whereas their representatives at the municipal level became knowledgeable about city finances.

Santo André and Porto Alegre addressed the dilemma of local demands versus general city planning in different ways. Santo André allocated only a portion of the budget available to new investments to the participatory process and government officials decided on the utilization of the rest; it also required community-level councils to put forward one proposal for a city-level project (Abers, 1996). In 1990, Santo André Mayor Celso Daniel, a university professor who

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participated in the founding of the PT, wrote an article for one of the party's magazines discussing the character of "popular democratic administrations." Daniel distinguished between two existing approaches for the inclusion of popular participation in municipal administrations. "In the first, the government relinquishes a parcel of its political power with the objective of co-governing with the community; in the second, the government transfers all of its power to the community, establishing a type of community of self-government in the municipality" (Daniel, 1990, p. 12). He supported the second approach arguing that a government is elected based on a political project and a series of public commitments. A party committed to popular participation should transfer a portion of its power to the community, fulfilling its commitment, but retain the rest of the authority in other to play the governing role for which it was elected. According to Daniel, completely renouncing the authority to govern is only justifiable if the party's sole political commitment was community self-government, which was not the case of the PT.

Porto Alegre allowed citizens to decide how to use the entire investment budget. The city's intensive education efforts were an attempt to increase citizens' awareness of broader issues. City officials also devised an equation wherein the population density and the level of infrastructure of each district where taken into account in determining the amount of resources they received; whereas citizens decided the priority investment areas, how much each district received depended on this technical criteria. The need to make participation work for everyone was clearly a concern of the administration. In 1988, the Porto Alegre Mayor Olivio Dutra, at the time in the capacity of the party's national president, commented on the case of Diadema Fortaleza.

The PT needs to learn that when taking on government in a capitalist society it is not possible to govern only for itself without taking into account society as a whole…the

party urgently needs to extract lessons from the Diadema episode. ("PT tenta convencer

prefeito de Diadema a ficar no partido," 1988)

Dutra publicly asked Menezes to stay in the party. He considered Fortaleza a very different case

because Fontenele was never concerned with the PT.

The second PT administration added six thematic forums to the Porto Alegre PB, which

functioned similarly to the district councils but were organized around broad policy themes such

as culture and transport (Abers, 1996, 2000). In my fieldwork of 2008, it was possible to notice

that topics debated in thematic forums were indeed broader and regarded, for example, support

for the city's gay rights movement and the rationale defining investments in the public transport

system. The actual demands, however, remained geographically determined; some interviewees

called thematic forums "back doors," i.e., a second option for demands that were not approved in

the district councils. The city has organized annual congresses to discuss city planning, but the

participants of these events tend not to overlap with the participatory budgeting; congresses are

held in universities and attract wealthier, more educated, and more influential sectors of society.

Ultimately, Porto Alegre succeeded in creating a practical and lasting model, that is still in place

as of 2012, and that has inspired similar initiatives around the world. The absence of

irreconcilable divides within the city's PT, officials' commitment to participatory democracy,

and the ingenuity of those designing the program, coupled with the city's associative tradition,

which is widely-acknowledged to be stronger than in most parts of the country, set this case apart

for the other cases.

Despite its merits, the PB is remarkably less ambitious than the 1970s' experiences and

PT attempts to include popular participation in the 1980s. Although the PB has an immense

potential in terms of educating citizens about public administration, it is ultimately a mechanism

that allows people to make specific demands for how to spend a small portion of the budget. This is the type of participation that Erundina and her comrades had previously opposed as too limited. The PB is more comparable to Montoro's initiatives, allegedly meant to co-opt social movements, than the popular councils promised by PT candidates in the 1980s. As seen in this section, what made this moderate model of citizen participation become PT's main participatory initiative was not lack of political commitment: PT mayor and officials went long lengths and even risked their careers trying to promote citizen participation. However, in the political-institutional context of the time, it was no longer practical to advance more radical forms of citizen participation. PB was a feasible compromise. As Nylen (2003) put it, "while fundamentally reformist in nature, the [PB] could easily fit into the Left's traditional discourse of radical, even revolutionary, change" (p.50). The radical rhetoric surrounding the PB and the actual reformist character of the initiative gained it the support of political actors as distinct as India's Communist Party and the World Bank.

It is nevertheless important to understand the PT's adaption of the radical participatory ideal as more than simply a realistic turn akin to what MDB's pragmatics did in the late-1970s. In this sense, the significance of the PT's commitment to democracy and willingness to engage diverse sectors of society cannot be understated. Latin American history has various examples of leftist parties that mobilized the masses around ultimately undemocratic political projects. As seen in chapter one, the Brazilian Communist Party of the 1950s was more concerned with the revolution than with the emancipation of social groups or the strengthening of democracy. A faction of the Diadema PT found it more important to secure the party's control over the city's administration than to promote the political inclusion of marginalized social sectors. In Lages, the Dirceu Carneiro Team was indifferent to party politics and unconcerned with the creation of

a long-lasting organization capable of advancing the participatory ideals it actively promoted. In

Boa Esperança, after the departure of religious lay leaders, popular participation became a one-

man endeavor and as such was unsustainable. Thus, the processes described in this section regard

not only the PT's challenges in adapting to electoral competition and administrative demands,

but more broadly the party's efforts to create a well-organized mass party committed to the

participation of popular masses, a long-lasting political organization able to defend diverse

marginalized groups while also strengthening the country's democratic institutions. It was the

first party of this kind in the history of the country. Thus, if the PB model was less ambitious

than the popular councils advocated in the early-1980s, it was also more feasible and sustainable,

as proven by more than 20 years of the Porto Alegre PB and the adoption of the model in various

parts of the world.

The Temperate Citizen Constitution

The 1988 Constitution has an ambiguous legacy. On the one hand, it grants fiscal and

political autonomy to municipal governments, includes numerous devices endorsing citizen

participation in public administration, and is often referred to as the Citizen Constitution in

allusion to the active civil society participation in its drafting. Nearly every study of PB mentions

at least in brief the constitution as one of the factors favoring participatory democracy in Brazil.

On the other hand, during the National Constituent Assembly (ANC) the aforementioned centrist

alliance of self-serving politicians became dominant in the legislative chambers. The *centrão*

(broad center) succeeded in controlling the ANC and stalling progressive legislation in matters

such as land reform. Although it counted on the input of civil society organizations, in most issue

areas the final text expressed the interests and compromises of the pragmatic arm of the PMDB,

which at this time forced the last *autênticos* out of the party.

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The participation of civil society organizations in the Constituent Assembly and the formation of the *centrão* have already been documented (Michiles et al., 1989; Souza, 1997; Spitzcovsky & Tura, 1993). The purpose of this section is to examine the lesser-known proposals for the creation of channels of direct citizen participation intended to bypass the representative system. Consistent with the other processes analyzed in this chapter, these challenging proposals were supplanted by more moderate solutions compatible with the new political-institutional context. As the next pages show, the predominant view in the ANC was that participation should enhance and not replace representation. The first part of this section describes the participation of civil society in the drafting of the constitution. Aside from being an interesting process, the participation of civil society groups is significant because they were the proponents of most of the amendments for participatory devices, which are examined in the second part of the section.

Participating for the Right to Participate

Following the defeat of the campaign for direct presidential elections, civil society groups, progressive clergy, and militant intellectuals began to mobilize to influence the drafting of the new constitution. Two umbrella organizations were created in the first months of 1985: the National Movement for the Constituent (Movimento Nacional pela Constituinte), in Rio de Janeiro, and the Assembly Pro Popular Participation in the Constituent (Plenário Pró-Participação Popular na Constituinte), in São Paulo. Numerous similar organizations were then formed across the country with the same purpose of influencing the drafting of the country's *magna carta*. In June of 1985, President José Sarney (the indirectly elected vice-president) sent to congress a bill proposing the creation of a constituent assembly. A multi-party committee was created to discuss and further develop the bill and submit it for voting. The president's bill suggested an assembly formed with regular deputies taking place concomitantly and within the

same structure of other legislative processes. Civil society organizations lobbied and protested to have an assembly separated from the current institutional apparatus, with representatives elected solely for this purpose; they feared that a constitution written under the auspices of institutions still largely controlled by conservative forces would not echo Brazilians' democratic aspirations. In December congress approved a proposal akin to what the president had suggested (Michiles et al., 1989).

The legislative elections scheduled for 1986 were going to elect the deputies from whom the members of the ANC were to be drawn. Citizen groups concerned with the constituent process tried to make the election about the constitution. They queried parties and candidates about their platforms for the constituent process and launched a number of education campaigns that attempted to teach the population about the importance of the constitution and the special weight of the upcoming legislative election. Despite these efforts, electoral results were not very positive. According to two estimates of the ideological make up of the Assembly,[34] 9 percent of deputies were leftists, 23 percent were center-left, and the rest was center, center-right, or right (Rodrigues, 1987, p. 98).

While civil society organizations and militants lost these two important battles, in the process they forged an extensive nationwide network of pro-popular participation that would prove effective in the next phases of the process. A central actor in this network was the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB), which still had many progressive elements despite the undergoing internal struggles discussed above. In 1986, the CNBB reignited the idea that had first inspired some of the groups of this network but which had been put aside during previous

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[34] The Departamento de Pesquisa da Folha de São Paulo and scholar David Fleischer separately reached the exact same estimates.

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campaigns: popular participation in the Constituent Assembly. Organizations throughout the country focused their efforts on drafting, promoting, and lobbying for a mechanism that would permit citizens to submit proposed legislation to the Constituent. They succeeded in collecting the signatures of 14 senators and 76 federal deputies, and scheduling a hearing at the commission in charge of determining the procedures of the ANC. Following their official proposal, three members of the commission volunteered to give the popular request an official format: the PMDB's Mavio Covas (Montoro's former appointed mayor of São Paulo, then senator, later founder of the PSDB and governor of the state of São Paulo), the PT's Plínio Arruda de Sampaio, and deputy Brandão Monteiro of the Democratic Labor Party. The chair of the commission was Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The project passed. Citizen amendment proposals required the signature of 30 thousand eligible voters and the sponsorship of three civil society organizations that were responsible for the authenticity of signatures. Proposals that followed these criteria were to be treated as equal to those put forward by legislative representatives (Michiles et al., 1989).

Citizen Amendment Proposals

A total of 122 citizen amendment proposals sponsored by 288 civil society organizations collected more than 12 million signatures; 86 of these met the procedural requirements and were presented to the ANC (Michiles et al., 1989, p.106-107). Three proposed amendments explicitly focused on citizen participation in government: amendment 021 was sponsored by organizations in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo and gathered 367,047 signatures; amendment 022 was drafted by organizations in Rio Grande do Sul and collected 31,219 signatures; amendment 056 was put forward by organizations in Minas Gerais and had the support of 35,000 voters. Whereas most of the citizen proposals were sponsored by organizations directly associated with the subject matter

of amendments (e.g., the public education amendment was sponsored by teachers and students associations), umbrella civil society organizations drafted these three proposals, and numerous different organizations participated in the campaigns for the collection of signatures. Catholic groups were active in all three campaigns. It is noteworthy that the Diocese of São Mateus managed to have close to 20 percent of the citizens in towns under its jurisdiction sign amendment 021, which was the highest inhabitants-signatures ratio for this proposal. Signatures for amendment 021were collected in all but two states of the country, and although drafted in the southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul, 30 percent of signatures for amendment 022 were gathered in the northeast state of Bahia (Michiles et al., 1989). The impressive number of signatures supporting these three amendments, the fact that sponsors and signatories were spread through a large portion of the country, and the diverse character of organizations supporting these campaigns corroborate the argument that participatory democracy was a widespread aspiration in 1980s Brazil.

Notably, none of these proposals concerned direct participation in public administration, nor did they employ the defying tone found in participatory experiences of the late-1970s. The three proposed amendments regarded the creation of mechanisms allowing citizens to propose legislative bills, and the procedure through which elected officials and civil society groups could call referendums. Similarly to the project that allowed citizen participation in the ANC, these proposals specified the procedure for submitting popular proposals for the consideration of legislators. The public presentations of these amendments at the ANC exemplify their moderate tone (Assembéia Nacional Constituinte, 1988, hereafter ANC). Jurist Dalmo Dallari, the exponent of amendment 021, emphasized the compatibility of mechanisms for direct participation and the representative system.

It is in no way possible to say that popular initiatives or the referendum diminish the

Parliament. On the contrary, the Parliament preserves in full its power to decide and will

have the last word concerning norms proposed and incorporated in the Constitution or in

the legislative system of the Brazilian judiciary order. (ANC, 1988, 9A, p.429)

The exponent of amendment 022 was José Paulo Bisol, a PMDB senator who in the 1970s

actively participated in Porto Alegre's Institute for Political, Economic and Social Studies

(IEPES). Although Bisol's speech had a more provocative tone than Dallari's, his defense of the

importance of popular participation was grounded on notions of government transparency and

accountability, for which he drew on liberal theorist Norberto Bobbio. José Gomes Pimenta, a

construction worker and political militant, presented amendment 053; his statement ended with

the following clarification,

The purpose of our demand for popular initiative [in legislative matters] is to strengthen

Brazilian institutions, to help the National Congress as well as state-level legislative

bodies to regain their prerogatives. In participating, the people do not want to interfere in

greater matters that concern legislators…We do not want to undertake political leadership,

we want to contribute with our work, intelligence, and organization to the strengthening

of democratic institutions. (ANC, 1988, 9A, p.431)

Thus, the three citizen-proposed amendments for increased popular participation in government

advocated for mechanisms that improved the functioning of legislative institutions, and not any

sort of self-governing mechanism as the ones tried in the late-1970s. These proposals were

included in the final text, which allows for referendums but restricts the right to request one to

elected legislators, and permits citizens to propose legislation following a procedure similar to the one used in the ANC.[35]

Citizen-proposed amendments on healthcare (ns. 118 and 71) and urban reform (n. 65) also called for increased citizen participation in the planning and execution of public policies as a way of improving government transparency and the quality of services. Citizen participation was one element of long lists of demands for public sector reforms and was not treated as a separate issue. In the case of the healthcare sector, participation was included in the draft of the constitution before the presentation of citizen amendments. Civil society groups lobbied members of the ANC's sub-commission in charge of discussing the healthcare system to push for their demands. The center-left MDB deputies in charge of the commission agreed to include most of these demands in their final reports. The redactor of the two first drafts of the Constitution did not edit out the section on citizen participation on the healthcare system, and the systematization commission (more below) did not raise issues with it (Michiles et al., 1989; ANC, 1988).

As reviewed in the introduction, policy councils became the most widely implemented participatory mechanism in the country. However, it is important to note that the format of the approved policy councils is akin to Montoro's purportedly clientelist councils and the informal consultation Erundina's staff had with social movements with which it had links, i.e., tripartite councils with representatives of the state, civil society, and public workers, whose mission is to discuss policy and priorities for the sector. These councils are not designed to transfer decision-

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[35]An exemplary use of the latter was the Lei da Ficha Limpa (Clean Record Law). According to Law n.135/2010, public officials who had their mandates revoked due to corruption charges, or who resigned a position in order to avoid the revocation of their mandate are not eligible to compete in elections at any level for eight years. The bill was put forward by civil society organizations after the collection of the due amount of citizen signatures.

making power to citizens, but instead to include the concern of interested groups in the policy-making process. One of the hurdles of the literature on participatory councils is the assumption that they are meant to mobilize broad participation. In fact, policy councils were created after there was a general disillusionment with the popular councils that failed in Diadema, Fortaleza, São Paulo and other smaller cities. As the next section shows, proposals for large-scale popular councils with authority over public administration were rejected at the ANC.

The Last Round of Votes

Whereas most of the constitution was decided through deliberations, bargains, and the controversial summarizing of commission secretaries, the last contentious points were decided through voting. The Systematization Commission voted on 535 proposals of revisions to the second draft of the constitution. The majority of these proposals regarded alterations on existing articles, adding new paragraphs, excluding certain sections, or changing the wording. In most cases exponents avidly defended the importance of the proposed change; in fewer instances proposals were presented as mere improvements in the consistency and readability of the text. Likewise, deputies who intervened against a proposal either openly refuted the content of the change or argued it was incompatible with the remaining of the text. Out of 535 proposals, 18 referred exclusively to citizen participation in local government, legislative bodies, unions, and universities.[36] Six were accepted and 12 were rejected by majority vote. The accepted changes were noticeably more moderate and vague than the rejected ones (ANC, 1988).

The Systematization Commission unanimously accepted PT Deputy José Genoíno's proposal to insert the sentence "mechanisms of direct popular participation" in the opening

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[36] There were also proposals with numerous items that included citizen participation as one of them, but these will not be considered here because it is not possible to determine why they were accepted or rejected.

paragraph of the constitution, which defined the country's political system (vote n.7). However, a subsequent proposal suggested the rewording of this paragraph (vote n.14), altering the text to its final form: "all power belongs to the people, who exerts it through its representatives or directly, in the cases prescribed in the Constitution" (ANC, 1988, 9B, p.75). While Genoíno's exposition exalted the intrinsic value of popular participation and mentioned the possibility of creating a mixed type of democracy wherein representation would be complemented by various forms of direct participation, the proponent of the latter modification noted that "direct" referred to citizens' right to propose legislation and demand referendums, hence the explicatory clause "in the cases described in this Constitution" (ANC, 1988, 9B, p.81). Although notable that people's direct exercise of power is mentioned in the first paragraph of constitution, it is important to note that it does not refer to direct citizen participation in public administration, as is usually assumed when the 1988 Constitution is exalted as an enabling condition of the PB.

Deputy Nelton Friedrich (PMDB/PSDB) suggested the inclusion of two sentences in an existing article on political organization that would have unambiguously asserted the country's commitment with participation democracy (vote n.28). "The State will stimulate popular participation in all levels of public administration," and in all services offered by the state or by state-commissioned agencies, "there should mandatorily be a commission comprised of representatives of the state or commissioned agency, of its workers, and of its clients," which will inspect the agency's work and participate in planning (ANC, 1988, 9B, p.142). Deputy Gerson Perez (PDS) accused the exponent and deputies who intervened in favor of the proposal of pushing for a socialist, interventionist state. Ninety-two of the 93 members of the systematization commission were present, of these, 32 voted in favor and 60 against the proposal. All deputies of the left-lining parities such as the PT and PCB voted in favor of the proposal. The

traditional conservative PDS and the center alliance PL rejected it. The PMDB vote was split in half. This was only two days after 89 deputies had accepted Genoíno's broad statement about participatory democracy.

The moderate tone also prevailed in votes regarding workers participation in labor unions and associations. Deputy Lula da Silva (PT) presented a proposal that extended to floor workers the right to organize representative labor commissions, which was reserved only to labor union (vote n. 154). This proposal was grounded on the experience of the floor commission that had marked the new unionism movement (chapter two). A deputy intervened against the proposal and insinuated that Lula was trying to incite a revolution. Thirty-one deputies voted in favor of the proposal, many of the same that supported Friedrich's, and 42 voted against it. In the following day, a proposal for the creation of tripartite commissions (state, workers, employers) to oversee social assistance organizations was also rejected (vote n.155). Deputy Nelson Carneiro (PMDB) suggested a revision that secured workers' and employers' participation in public and welfare institutions overseeing matters of their interest. Carneiro emphasized in his defense that the proposal did not call for equal participation for workers or employers or any type of co-management arrangement. The proposal passed almost unanimously; only three of the most active leftist deputies voted against it.

Two proposals of popular councils akin to the ones tried in PT administrations earlier in the decade were rejected, while a more modest bid of involving civil society organizations in municipal planning passed. Deputy Vivaldo Barbosa (PSB) proposed the insertion of the following paragraph (vote n.248),

> Municipalities will be divided in Districts and District Community Councils will be
> established. Councils will be comprised of non-paid citizens elected in the districts

through facultative vote and will exercise the role determined by law. (ANC, 1988, 9B, p.774)

The exponent emphasized the need to foster people's self-government, especially in isolated areas removed from city cores. He was vague about councils' relationship with representative institutions: the former was not supposed to replace the latter, unless the latter was absent. Four deputies intervened against the proposal, an unusually high number of interventions. The first argued that controlling the form of civil society organization meant returning to the corporatism of the Vargas Era. The second found grammatical inconsistencies in the text. The third, Deputy Gastone Righi (PTB) argued that citizen participation takes place through elected officials and not through "informal representatives of informal community organizations" (ANC, 1988, 9B, p.773). Righi also added, "accepting this proposal implies negating all the system here sustained of political representation through elections," and then ironically suggested they might as well close all representative institutions. The fourth opponent was Deputy Bernardo Cabral, the redactor of the Constitution, who posited,

> *How is it possible to think about a participatory democracy that does not clash with representative democracy*? It is obvious that in this conflict of competences we will witness the demoralization and weakening of the representative system, and that is not a small thing. (ANC, 1988, 9B, p.774, emphasis added)

Cabral then urged the exponent to withdraw the proposal, which Barbosa did not do. There were 21 votes in favor, 64 against, and one abstention.

The second popular council proposal was defended on the following day (vote n. 250). It was authored by the PT's Sister Passoni and presented by Plínio de Arruda Sampaio (who in the mayoral campaign of São Paulo admitted to being skeptical of councils). Sampaio posited that in

modern cities citizens are too far removed from decision-making and in order to follow and participate in them, "the classic mechanisms of representative democracy are not sufficient…it is necessary to create intermediary bodies closer to the people that will allow for participatory activities that do not challenge the competence of elected representatives" (p.785). Sampaio tried to emphasize that councils would have a complementary role to representative institutions. Deputy Gerson Perez did not repeat the attacks on the previous proposals but simply jestingly reminded deputies that a similar proposal had already been rejected. The result was 26 votes in favor, 60 against, and one abstention.

Finally, a proposal authored by Deputy Octávio Elísio (PMDB/PSDB) suggested a small but meaningful change in the Organic Municipal Law, the article allowing municipalities to draft their own local statutes within the limitations imposed by the national and state constitutions. Elísio proposed that the list of conditions for the drafting of organic laws included the sentence, "the participation of community organizations in municipal planning" (vote n. 244). The proposal initially circulated to deputies was more ambitious, it read, "the institutionalization of mechanisms that secure the participation of community organizations in municipal planning and decision-making," but it was changed at the last minute (p. 758). The exponent's taming down of the proposal is likely to have helped its close win: 48 votes in favor, 41 against, 1 abstention. The swing voters were center-left PMDB politicians; for example, João Hermann Netto (former mayor of Piraricaba) and Artur da Távola (one of the founders of the PSDB) voted against the two popular councils proposals but supported Elísio's amendment. The final text, altered by the redactors, was still slightly more moderate; it substituted the word *participation* for *cooperation*, and "community organizations" for "representative associations." Thus, Organic Laws were to include "the cooperation of representative associations in municipal planning."

Though markedly less ambitious than other proposals, Elísio's amendment has sufficed to secure the constitutionality of participatory mechanisms such as the PB. The 1988 Constitution has helped to make Brazilian participatory initiatives possible by including articles that in some cases vaguely endorse citizen direct participation in public administration and in others demand the creation of tripartite commissions. It is not incorrect to present this constitution as an enabler of participatory democracy in Brazil, as studies of PB and health councils do. It is, however, inaccurate to suggest that the articles endorsing participation are the untainted manifestation of the participatory ideals of movements that emerged in the late-1970s. As this section has shown, a more precise interpretation is that the constitution embodied an attenuated version of the 1970s' participatory ideals, and molded them to fit in the political-institutional context of the country, which had at its core the emerging representative system.

Conclusion

This chapter presented four concomitant processes that together indicate a marked trend in the 1980s that has not been adequately examined in the literature on participatory democracy in Brazil: the tempering of radical participatory ideals and practices. The dominant interpretation of the emergence of participatory democracy in Brazil describes the late-1980s as the period in which progressive forces coalesced to create defiant initiatives that would profoundly challenge the patterns of civil society and state interaction. The story presented here tells otherwise.

In the 1980s, MDB *autênticos* became isolated in a party willing to make alliances with the most reactionary political groups of the country, and eventually founded a social democratic party that notwithstanding its commitment with social justice did not make citizen participation one of its priorities. The PT persistently tried to create channels for direct citizen participation in municipal administration. The party paid a high price for this, including the Fortaleza fiasco and

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the convoluted administrations of Diadema and São Paulo. Some PT mayors learned from these earlier experiences and from their own failures and opted for giving less attention to participation and focus instead on administrative efficiency, as in the case of Santos. In Santo André and Porto Alegre the PT tried to find a balance between idealistic attempts to include citizens in all aspects of public administration and the neglect of the party's commitment to popular participation. The ingenious solution was the PB, a mechanism that allows for broad citizen participation on a specific part of government, and helps to address the basic needs of marginalized sectors without antagonizing middle and upper class groups.

The decade also witnessed the conservative turn of the Catholic Church and the drafting of a new Constitution. As reviewed in chapter two, the Catholic Church under the influence of the Conciliar Vatican II and Liberation Theology was one of the forces fuelling the participatory ideals and practices of the 1970s. In the 1980s this Church slowly abandoned its focus on social justice and political participation. Progressive clergy and activists trained in CEBs actively participated in the democratization of the country by supporting and partaking in varied social movements, civil society groups, and political parties. The specific focus on direct political participation, however, was put aside.

The 1988 Constitution epitomized the trend towards more temperate participatory ideals and practices. Whereas members of the ANC were willing to sanction vague clauses endorsing citizen participation, amendments that in any way defied the representative system were outright rejected, even by center-left MDB deputies. The mention of direct participation in the preamble of the constitution and the paragraph that encourages municipal governments' *collaboration* with *representative associations*, both widely cited in the literature, were moderate versions of bolder commitments to participatory democracy. Proposals to create popular councils with authority to

challenge elected officials were rejected. The 1988 Constitution allows citizens to participate in government as long as their participation does not obstruct the functioning of representative institutions.

The interpretation of the emergence of participatory democracy in Brazil presented in this chapter challenges the widespread assumption that participatory mechanisms implemented in the 1990s were meant to radically transform political institutions. This was true for the initiatives of the late-1970s and early-1980s, which took place in a distinct political-institutional context, and PT administrations of the mid-to-late 1980s, which failed to live up to their promises of broad citizen participation. In addition to rectifying some historical inaccuracies, this new interpretation allows us to rethink the ways in which participatory initiatives are studied and assessed. The next chapter discusses how the findings of this and the previous chapters help to shine a new light on the literature reviewed in the introduction of this dissertation.

Chapter 7: The Foundations, Developments, and Limits of Participatory Democracy

In the spring of 2012, Pateman published the article "Participatory Democracy Revisited," in which the theorist used the Porto Alegre PB as the yardstick of truly participatory innovation. "Most of the examples being called participatory budgeting fit very easily within authority structures, and citizens are not participating, as a matter of right, in decisions about their city's or town's regular budget. Most of the innovations fall far short of participatory democracy" (p. 14). This dissertation tackled three widespread ideas about participatory democracy further advanced in Pateman's recent article. The first concerns the premise that citizen participation is founded on inherited rights. This is an ideal worth defending but an unfounded assumption: research should not assume the right to participate but examine how it emerges. The second idea concerns the impact of local-level participation on the overall development of a country's political system. Scholars in the emancipatory camp have argued that participatory initiatives had the potential to transform the representative system, wherein the Brazilian case the contrary has been the case. The third point is intertwined with the second and relates to the expectations imposed on local-level citizen participation. Scholars and activists have set unrealistic goals for participatory initiatives, and by doing so may have contributed to its "failure." This final chapter discusses how this dissertation sheds a new light on these common ideas about participatory democracy by connecting the findings of the previous chapters with the literature reviewed in the introduction.

Foundations

One may argue that citizens everywhere should have the right to directly participate in public decision-making. Support for this stance can be found in varied scholarly traditions, from the philosophical foundations of human rights to econometric studies on government efficiency.

The fact, however, is that in numerous societies individuals do not have this right, or formally have it but are unable to exert it, which sums to not having it. In Brazil, citizens have this right and in a large portion of cases are *de facto* able to exercise it.

Scholars and activists devoted to the subject have documented successful experiences of direct citizen participation in Brazil, and by doing so helped to promote the emancipatory ideal. The literature advanced and more attention began to be paid to the challenges of implementing participatory initiatives, and to the necessary conditions of successful experiences. In the PB and health council literatures, theoretical works examined the interplay between civil society strength, political willingness, and institutional design. These works offered a better understanding of the kind of political contexts in which participatory democracy is more likely to strive, but they were largely mute on the processes hindering or spurring the advent of such favorable conditions. The literature tends to assume that citizens have the right to participate, and focus on whether mayors are committed to facilitate this participation, and how ready civil society is to take advantage of it. This assumption is reasonable in studies of participatory initiatives in the post-1988 Brazilian context, where citizens have the right to participate in public decision-making and elected public officials choose to facilitate, ignore, or thwart these processes. This is not the case everywhere and, in fact, was not the case in Brazil until relatively recently.

What we witnessed in the literature reviewed in the introductory chapter is a fusion of the normative stance that citizens should have the right to participate and an empirically grounded assumption that they do in the post-1988 Brazilian context. Although a prominent scholar in the this literature posited that one the main current goals of theorizing is to examine whether "the successful experiences in Brazilian cities [can] be reproduced in places where the conditions may be very different" (Avritzer, 2009, p.3), research has focused on the functioning of participatory

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initiatives, and scant attention has been paid to the processes that led to the political context in which citizens' right and ability to participate can be assumed. Enthusiasts of the Porto Alegre PB, for example, were quick to state that the initiative meant a dramatic rupture with old and undemocratic forms of political engagement, and 20 years later were disappointed that "little by little, the '*cacique*' (boss/gatekeeper) culture of the presidents of neighborhood associations, which was supposed to have been buried, returned" (Baierle, 2010, p. 57). The problem here is assuming that democratic participation is a right, and choosing it over other forms of political engagement is a matter of choice, of political culture. Analyses grounded on these assumptions end up just pointing out democratic and clientelist actors, praising the former for the successes of participatory initiatives, and blaming the latter for their shortcomings. This dissertation put aside normative and empirical assumptions and asked how Brazilian citizens conquered a seat in local-level public decision-making forums.

The experience of Lages was a characteristic case of class struggle. Industrialization policies pushed forward beginning in 1930 profoundly altered the socio-economic landscape of the city and weakened the dominant class's ability to control access to economic and political participation. Two new political groups entered the dispute for the control of the city. The first was a populist leader who tried to build a broad class alliance based on the exchange of favors through a clientelist network. The second was a more radical group that tried to rally hitherto excluded subaltern classes against the dominant elite coalition that had governed the city for almost a century. Participatory democracy was the political project of the latter group, and its prospect was directly related to the group's ability to gain and retain control of the city's government.

As chapter three showed, middle-class sectors were pleased with Furtado's investments in the urban core, and *coronéis* had the support of the state government, which provided material benefits for the poor segments of the population that were beyond the might of Dirceu's team. In 1982, traditional politicians regained control of the city. The team in charge of the participatory administration was not an integral part of any local social group, and soon disbanded. A study of social movements in the city and my interview with a local community leader suggest that there were only timid developments in political organization in the city in the 1980s and 1990s (Silva, 2009; Gerlado Löcks, personal communication, December 16, 2010), and overall the traditional political and economic elite effectively removed participatory democracy from Lages political agenda.

It is also impossible to fully comprehend the participatory experience of Boa Esperança without taking into account the city's structural conditions. The initiative was a clear reaction to decades of neglect of the needs of small farmers. The target of the participatory administration was not a specific political group but state and federal policies favoring industrialization and large-scale agriculture. The participatory administration brought small farmers together to make small farming a viable economic alternative, independent from *vendeiros*, less vulnerable to coffee prices, and capable of resisting the encroachment of cattle and eucalyptus farms. The economic results of the initiative were very palpable, but as a consequence, mobilization and demobilization cycles are directly related to material expectations. The efficient and resourceful Mayor Covre makes participation more likely, but high coffee prices make small farmers more autonomous and cooperation less necessary. Once fuelled by communitarian values promoted by the progressive arm of the Catholic Church, participation has become strictly associated with administrative efficiency and coffee prices.

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The Diadema experience was rooted in a political movement led by members of a social group specific to the city's socio-economic context. The ABCD Region was a byproduct of the industrialization policies implemented beginning in 1930. In 1947, the city of Santo André had a favorable political conjuncture for the advancement of participatory reforms: an elected mayor from the Brazilian Communist Party committed to citizen participation, and had the support of a network of popular democratic committees. At this moment in the history of the region, however, traditional political groups were still powerful and managed to avoid inaugurating the defying mayor, and later put him in jail. In the 1970s, the region became the heart and mind of the new unionism movement that emerged against the state's corporatist apparatus. A key demand of the movement was a union structure that allowed the organization and participation of workers at the factory-floor level. In the early-1980s, this movement coalesced with other progressive groups and formed a political party committed to citizen participation, which succeeded in winning the municipal elections of Diadema in 1982, by a very narrow margin.

Although residents of the region largely supported the PT, not all residents were directly involved with the new union unionism since the partial industrialization and fast urbanization of Brazil was incapable of adequately accommodating rural exodus. In the ABCD this was true especially for Diadema, the poorest city of the region. The Menezes administration had to deal not only with the lack of organizational structure of poor, recently settled inhabitants, but also with a group of PT Marxists that found his approach to city government overly moderate and typical of the well paid bourgeois workers of São Bernardo. PT administrations in Diadema have been convoluted and marked by internal struggles. Nevertheless, the party has succeeded in imposing itself and securing consecutive elections in this overcrowded industrial town. The

weight and scope of participatory initiatives have varied, but it has remained on the city's political agenda since 1982.

The theoretical frameworks proposed by Wampler (2007), Borba and Lüchmann (2007), and Avritzer (2009) can help us to understand variations in the participatory administrations in Diadema. The levels of political commitment and civil society engagement, and the institutional designs of initiatives varied in the last 30 years, and it is possible to use the concepts and insights of these frameworks to evaluate what has been the most effective combination of factors. These frameworks have less explanatory power when it comes to understanding why the famous Lages experiment has been so effectively dismantled, or why citizen participation in Boa Esperança follows erratic cycles of mobilization and demobilization. Mayor Covre's *political will* or *mayoral support* is a key aspect of the story in the small Espírito Santo town, but so are coffee prices and the bids of cattle and eucalyptus farmers. Likewise, the low density of *associative networks* in Lages can help to understand the discontinuation of participation; however, a weak civil society is not a natural phenomenon, but the result of the lobbying of a strong landed elite that among other things has been able to plot the separation of the district with the higher number of industrial workers.

The argument here is not that structural conditions and processes are the most important aspect in understanding participatory democracy. Nevertheless, as the literature review presented in the introduction demonstrated, this aspect of the phenomenon has been largely overlooked. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, normative postulates and the literature's empirical focus on the post-1988 context are parts of the explanation for this neglect. As a consequence, the right to participation is treated as a normative imperative and not as the outcome of social and political struggles fuelled by economic inequalities. The type of analysis offered in the case studies

augments the explanatory power of the frameworks discussed above by enhancing our understandings of the structural conditions supporting and inhibiting political and civil groups promoting participatory reforms.

The choice of opening, or closing, channels for direct citizen participation in government is ultimately a political one, especially in areas where segments of the population are continually excluded from political life and these channels have the potential to amend historical inequalities. Political decisions of this significance do not take place merely at an ideological level. Rather, they are most often grounded on and about material conditions. Thus, to fully comprehend the dynamics behind the successes and failures of participatory innovation, it is necessary to treat the actors involved in these initiatives as more than simply civil society associations and political parties, which the literature has tended to do. It is necessary to treat them as socio-economic groups with specific interests, needs, and resources, and examine their ability to forge alliances capable of surmounting resistance to the political project of increasing citizen participation.

Developments

Democratization processes leading to the emergence of participatory democracy require separate attention from studies of national-level regime change. Whereas scholars have tended to examine one or the other, this dissertation analyzed the two processes concomitantly, showing how they were at once autonomous and interconnected. A key argument put forward here is that it is not possible to understand the emergence and characteristics of participatory democracy in Brazil without taking into account the broader political-institutional context. At the same time, this dissertation showed that processes leading to local-level citizen participation had a trajectory of their own.

The liberal representative system of the First Republic meant little to local-level politics, which continued to be tightly controlled by *coronéis*. The impact of the 1930 Revolution varied from region to region. In Santa Catarina the Vargas government helped to further empower the Ramos Family. In Espírito Santo, the *tenentista* governor made investments in education and family agriculture that took into account small farms, but these policies were interrupted by the re-establishment of elections and the government's need to forge alliances with *vendeiros* and *coronéis*. The Revolution managed to break the hegemony of the Paulista elite, but this did not have much impact on the rural peripheries of the state's capital.

In the 1945-1964 period, the representative system allowed for the partial and controlled inclusion of new social and economic groups. This was an interesting moment in which national-level process and attempts to broaden and deepen citizen participation were mutually reinforcing. The populist practices of the time and the selective inclusion of some groups to the detriment of others may not be fully commendable from a normative democratic standpoint, but these were laudable steps towards the consolidation of an open access order wherein access to economic, social, and political participation would no longer be controlled by a small elite.

The 1964-1985 period witnessed a paradoxical phenomenon: the emergence and growth of participatory movements under an authoritarian government. Too often these movements have been described simple as a reaction to the regime. As showed in chapter two, they were much more than that. The Catholic Church's reform was essentially an internal institutional process with a dialectical relationship with the social and political changes taking place in the country. The new unionism movement was the outcome of a long-initiated reaction against the corporatist apparatus assembled during Vargas' regime, and the industrial growth of the 1960s and 1970s was the most important fact in its strengthening. MDB *autênticos* were a direct reaction against

the façade representative system of the time; however, as the analysis of the group's discourse and educational material showed, it was also opposed to the political practices that had become dominant in the previous democratic period, especially populism and clientelism.

Irrespective of the genesis of these movements, the fact is that they gained force in a time where the political system offered very few options for citizen participation. This context helped to confer them a certain radical tone: they were not simply pro participation but also against all forms of partial, controlled, or negotiated political inclusion, which in their conceptualizations included the representative system. The participatory initiatives inspired in these movements had a marked disdain for party politics and representative institutions more generally; their goal was to implement forms of direct democracy and self-government that profoundly transform state-civil society relations. As examined in detail in chapter six, in the 1980s these ideals had to be adapted to the context of an open access order, which included a legitimate representative system and the recognition of a diversity of needs, goals, and strategies within what was no longer referred to as popular movements, but instead was called civil society.

This method of studying local-level participatory initiatives as separate but linked with national-level institutions and processes is fairly different from the predominant approaches in the literature. Starting with the famous works by Pateman (1970) and Macpherson (1977), a stream of this literature has contended that citizens' direct participation in local-level decision-making processes will have a tangible impact in democratic system as a whole. The hope has been that citizen participation would be able to radically transform representative institutions and make them more truly democratic (Santos & Avritzer, 2002). In this view, the change would be from the bottom-up. There has also been a stream of the literature here called the conventional view that argues that citizen participation is an integral part of a democratic system and that it

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has the potential to further strengthen representative and other institutions that constitute the apparatus of liberal democracies.

The historical account provided in this dissertation does not support either of these views. Local-level participatory initiatives have existed in Brazil for almost four decades and there are no signs that they have radically transformed the representative system. On the contrary, chapter six has showed that the former adapted to the latter in the 1980s. The present account has also found that citizen participation has not always been meant to support representative institutions; at times it was purposefully designed to defy these institutions. The straightforward and yet provocative lesson that can be drawn from this historical study is that the role of direct citizen participation in public decision-making is an empirical rather than analytical or normative question; it may or may not promote profound changes in a society, and it may or may not strengthen representative institutions. Channels for direct citizen participation may strengthen, weaken, bypass, or serve as a proxy for representative institutions. The actual impact of these channels must be considered on a case-by-case that takes into account the character of national-level institutions, which vary greatly from country to country. In Brazil, hesitation in accepting this obvious postulate seems to be at least in part related to the fact the participatory ideals of the 1970s continue to permeate academic and activist circles. Lüchmann's (2011) recent article is a great advance in this front. She proposed that mechanisms for direct citizen participation should be treated as additional representative spaces; starting from that premise, researchers should examine what they in fact do, how they challenge, complement, or reinforce existing political institutional and processes.

At last, the most compelling argument against a rigid stance on the role of direct citizen participation is the fact that political actors themselves change their views on it. As chapters two

and six demonstrated, the view of the role of direct participation and the importance attributed to it changed from the early-1970s to the late-1980s. The most common explanation in this case is that political actors were co-opted by the state or took a realist turn to competitive party politics. As this dissertation showed for the case of participatory movements, and other scholars argued for other types of movements (Alvares, 1990a; Doimo, 1995; Levy, 2000; Hochstetler, 2000; Hochstetler & Keck, 2007), the story is both more complicated and more interesting: political actors altered their strategies and reviewed their objectives. The ideals and practices of direct citizen participation changed in order to adapt to the new political-institutional context. If the social phenomenon at hand is not static, our categories for understating it cannot be either.

Limits

The previous sections pointed out some challenges and limits of participatory democracy related to structural conditions and political contexts. A less tangible but equally substantial limit of participatory democracy concerns the expectations imposed on it. Scholars and activists in the emancipatory camp have envisioned and promoted prospects for direct citizen participation that it is unlikely to be able fulfill; what is probably to ensue is disappointment, of the kind that is already visible among observers of the Porto Alegre PB. In turn, the conventional view presumes so little of participatory democracy that it hardly makes it an interesting subject of study. Is there a normative standpoint from which to support participatory democracy without inflated hopes or disenchanting pragmatism?

Properly addressing this question requires abundant debate and careful reflection, and a junior scholar should not be so foolish as to try to offer a definite answer. Nevertheless, the work done for this dissertation allows me to suggest that in order for this debate to take place those in the emancipatory camp need to relinquish their elevated conviction on specific participatory

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models, and advocates of the conventional view ought to acknowledge the fact that the so-called consolidated or old democracies do not offer inspiring examples of vibrant, just or credible political systems. We should not impose on participatory democracy the overwhelming task of reinventing the widely adopted liberal representative model, nor should we accept the latter as the ultimate political alternative.

There have been advances in the direction. Nylen's (2003) study of PBs begins with a discussion of democratic deficits in Brazil and the United States, and examines how increased citizen participation may buttress the sort of civic involvement on which democratic system are supposedly built on. There is a nuanced distinction in Nylen's work vis-à-vis similar studies: he focuses on how participatory initiatives may permit the representative democratic model to live up to its unfilled promises, not on how these initiatives may fuel profound reforms towards some vague notion of true democracy, nor on how participation oils the existing apparatus. A recent article by Dagnino and Tatagiba (2011) also offers an interesting step in this direction. The well-known proponents of the emancipatory view acknowledged that the autonomy versus co-optation dichotomy is no longer as useful as it was in the 1980s, when an anti-state attitude was a marked characteristic of "democratic participatory movements." This seemingly simple postulate is very significant for it breaks with the still widely held supposition that negotiations between civil society groups and governments always involve a co-opted community leader and a clientelist politician. It may or may not be case, and that too should be an empirical question.

A line of research that is moving in this direction is that carried out by Lavalle, Acharya, Houtzager, and Lüchmann. While skeptical of the emancipatory potential of citizen participation, and attentive to the negative effects it may have on the representative system, these scholars are judiciously holding off a final verdict on the role of participatory mechanisms. In this stream of

theorizing, participatory mechanisms bring forward new ways of conceptualizing and practicing representation that fuel revisions of conventional ideas of legitimate representative institutions. In this view, direct participation will not replace or radically transform representation, but may alter some of its fundamentals in ways that we cannot immediately foresee.

Another way to carve an in-between normative stance from which to support attempts to increase citizen involvement in public decision-making is to focus more on outcomes and less on procedures of participation. Outcomes here would be measured in terms of the inclusion of neglected or outright excluded social groups. Instead of fixating on whether participation follows the rules of ideals of truly democratic engagement, we should also pay attention to whether channels of participation allow for the concerns, needs, and interests of social groups hitherto denied access to political negotiation to make their way into governments' agenda. In this view, the clientelist *sub-diretórios* of 1960s Lages were a democratic advance at the time, and so was the populism of Espírito Santo's Chiquinho that for the first time brought small farmers into the political agenda. As seems to be true in both of these cases, these partial advances could have been taken further by involving citizens more openly and directly in public decision-making, but the latter procedure had to compete with other strategies and opportunities citizens had to access desired benefits.

Those of us interested in promoting more democratic and just societies should pay less attention to the assumed roles of direct participation, and to whether initiatives fit our ideals of democratic engagement, and examine how different channels of political participation increase, or not, excluded socio-economic groups access to decision-making processes they consider important to the improvement of their social economic and cultural conditions. Deciding how to use the portion of the municipal budget allocated to investments may not always be the priority

of these groups. As the case studies showed, there are various ways in which marginalized or

excluded groups can improve their ability to have a voice regarding decisions that affect their

lives. Our role as observers is not to praise the PB councilor who demands a daycare in a budget

assembly and to condemn the community leader who exchanges political support to a candidate

for a closed sewage system. This type of principled judgment is not the task of social scientists.

A more fecund approach is to examine the history of the groups represented by these community

leaders and compare their accesses to political decision-making processes and the ensuing

benefits with that of other groups in that society. Ultimately, the standard to assess how

participatory a society is should not be how many citizens participate in a specific manner, but in

how many different ways varied socio-economic groups can choose to participate in decision-

making processes they judge relevant.

Leftist thinking went through a sweeping change in the last three decades. Sophisticated

structuralist analyses almost exclusively focused on how to improve the material well being of

the poor majority, often willing to sacrifice civil liberties and democracy, gave away to studies

that overlook structural conditions, only indirectly consider the material struggles of the poor,

and vigorously advocate for certain democratic ideals. The only thing in common between the

two approaches is the lack of clarity on the actual functioning of the envisioned institutions.

Paulo Freire and Albert Camus, two of the greatest thinkers of the twentieth century, warned us

against the danger and ineptness of subjectively constructed political projects. This dissertation

began to draft an alternative approach that carefully examines structural conditions, and supports

citizen participation that helps excluded groups to overcome historical inequalities, whichever

form that participation may take. Whether and how participation will transform the broader

political-institutional context is an empirical matter that should be carefully observed. However, institutional reform ought not be the a priori purpose of participation, the well being of citizens is.

It is unusual for an analysis of participatory democracy in Brazil to end with a discussion of the limits of citizen participation. This study has emphasized the shortcomings of the Brazilian experience more than most studies on the subject. In part this was due to a conscious focus: other studies, including my previous work, have already discussed the positive aspects of these models. The wary tone of this dissertation is also related with it being a historical study, and as such less inclined to enthusiastic appreciations of only seemingly novel initiatives. However, it is vital to note that criticisms have been directed at interpretations of participatory democracy more than on its functioning or outcomes. Ultimately, my view is that today the greatest limit to participatory democracy is the inflated expectation that has been imposed on it, which has been sustained by a lack of historical perspective. Participatory democracy is likely to fail when assessed against the high hopes of scholars in the emancipatory camp, and to try to lower these expectations is a way of preserving it. To evaluate participatory democracy for what it is, and not for what we wished it were, is to give it a second chance to enchant us.

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Appendix: Maps

Figure 2. Map of Brazilian States

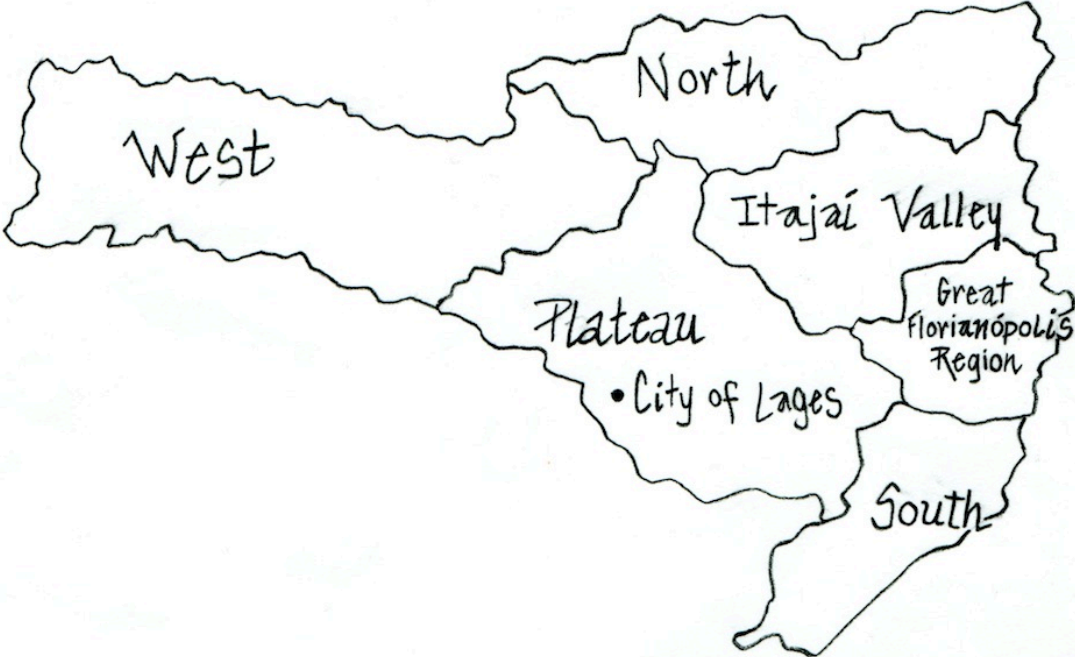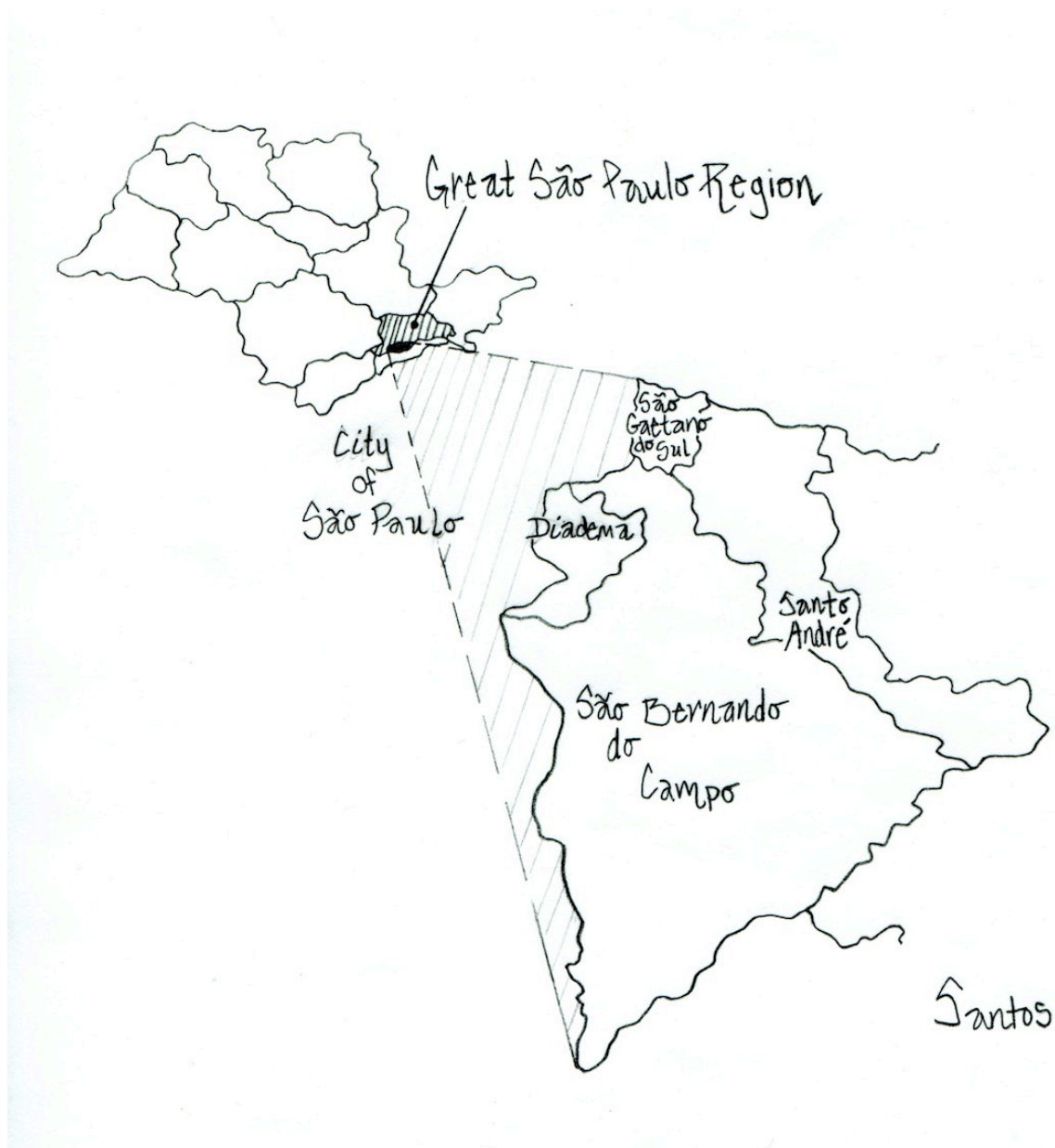Figure 3. Map of the Regions of the State of Santa Catarina

Figure 4. Map of the Regions of the State of Espírito Santo

Figure 5. Map of the ABCD Region of the State of São Paulo

Glossary of Foreign Terms

autêntico (*pl*. autênticos): the more radical members of the Brazilian Democratic Movement

bandeirante (pl. bandeirantes): colonial scout

cabo eleitoral (*pl*. cabos eleitorais): political canvassers

caboclo (*pl*. caboclos): Brazilians of mixed European and Indigenous backgrounds

celebração (pl. celebrações): the socializing part of religious gatherings

conscientização: consciousness raising

coronel (*pl*. coronéis): local strongmen (see definition on p. 5, fn. 1)

diretório and sub-diretório (pl. diretórios): party city chapters and party neighborhood chapters

mutirão (pl.mutirões): self-construction projects, most often the building of popular houses

paulista (*pl*. paulistas): of, from, or pertaining to the state of São Paulo

politicagem: politicking

pelego (*pl*. pelegos): co-opted union leader

reinvidicação (*pl*. reinvidicações): a demand to public officials grounded on moral or legal rights

tenente (*pl*.tenentes): lieutenant

tenentismo: political movement of rebelling lieutenants in the first half of the twentieth century

vendeiro (pl. vendeiros): owner of the local supply store and middleman of coffee trade