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PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT  
IN LATIN AMERICA \*/

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1. The emergence of the idea of popular participation in development

The idea of social participation has a long and rich history in the social sciences. It has been used in various theoretical contexts and thus the meanings attributed to it have varied considerably. However, a common denominator may be found in the recognition that participation is a structural, dynamic configuration which has an important historical projection.

One of the circumstances which complicates a clearer understanding of the idea of social participation with the dynamic meaning lately attributed to it is that it is part of a family of closely related concepts; in some cases we might almost say they are symbiotically related, so difficult is it to establish a clear separation between them. The concepts referred to are mainly the following: social development, social well-being, social policy, social progress, social planning and others which have been arising as the social problematic has been growing in instrumental and political importance.

In the current discussion in the United Nations of the problem of development, the idea of participation has its own history. While development was conceived primarily and almost exclusively as merely productive growth, the idea of social and popular participation was not included. Society was little more than the environment where consumption took place and human resources were provided to productive enterprises. As a result, participation was only considered in the framework of development of the community, which was a marginal problem with respect to the central body of reflection and practice of development. But it soon became apparent that development in general had little to do with the well-being of communities; they could almost be completely separated.

The crisis of both concepts, that of development as growth and that of the community as a self-sufficient unit capable of developing by itself, brought with it a new concept of development which has been developed and expanded in the past two decades. The International Development Strategy (IDS) of the United Nations, which came into being in 1961 as a response to the crisis, placed emphasis on the social and human aspects of development, incorporating them into a comprehensive interpretation and "unified approach". Later, placing emphasis on its substantive aspects, it was called "integral development".

Some ideas and attitudes which gained rapid acceptance in various academic and intellectual forums in different parts of the world were included in these changes in the concept of development. One of these affirmed the need for popular participation in development as an act of rejection of the State verticalism associated with the paradigmatic pluralism of the dominant classes. Development should above all ensure the satisfaction of the basic needs of the neglected masses. And in this context popular participation began to be valued more because it was a human right than because of its functional contribution to development.

The concept of integral development confirmed by the second IDS (1970) had a favourable welcome in Latin America. In the Quito Appraisal (1973), approved by the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL), the governments of the region adopted a doctrine which very closely related development with popular participation, so that both became inseparable elements of its concept of integral development.

"Integrated development cannot be achieved through partial efforts in particular sectors of the economy or the social system, but only through concerted progress in all aspects." /It is thus necessary to/ "observe to what extent concerted progress in all sectors is helping to promote a new type of society oriented towards rapid human development".

The following paragraph expands upon the idea: "The growth of economic variables has frequently failed to bring with it qualitative changes of equal importance in human well-being and social justice. This is shown by the continued existence of serious problems such as

/mass poverty,

mass poverty, the incapacity of the system of production to provide employment for the growing labour force, and the lack of economic and social participation of broad strata of the population".1/

In all the previous evaluations there was a constant concern on the part of the governments of the region that development should be understood as a national and international effort directed towards the attainment of well-being and social justice, with the popular participation and integration of the excluded urban and rural masses as the central objectives.

In the IDS Regional Programme of Action for the 1980s, the goal of participation was again a central aspect of integrated development.

"Economic growth is a necessary but not in itself a sufficient condition for ensuring full social and human development. In order to achieve this objective, the benefits of economic growth must be distributed more equitably among the deprived groups in the development process, so that with the participation of all social groups it will be possible to attain fairer and more integrated societies which are masters of their own destiny and in which human beings have real possibilities of developing their potential to the fullest degree" (underlining added).2/

The importance of social participation is even more strongly emphasized.

There is nothing more categorical than the following paragraph:

"The success of the social development policies will be associated with the implementation of objectives and policies to increase production capacity, so that the structure of production and consumption can be transformed in order to meet the basic aspirations of the majorities for a better life. Policies to this end must reconcile the fostering of dynamic economic growth, with greater social justice and the reduction of structural differences and social inequity. In order to achieve these goals the effective participation of the population in economic, social and human development process will be promoted. Policies will be prepared and implemented favouring participatory structures, processes and organizations" (paragraph 60, underlining added).3/

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1/ Quito Appraisal (para. 2 and 3) in "Regional Appraisals of the International Development Strategy", Cuadernos de la CEPAL No. 2, Santiago, 1975.

2/ CEPAL, Regional Programme of Action for Latin America in the 1980s, Cuadernos de la CEPAL No. 40, Santiago, 1981, p. 19.

3/ CEPAL, Regional Programme of Action for Latin America in the 1980s, op. cit.

The proposal of full participation in development has received universal recognition by being incorporated in the document of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, as may be seen in the following:

"The development process must promote human dignity. The ultimate aim of development is the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population on the basis of its full participation in the process of development and a fair distribution of the benefits therefrom. In this context, a substantial improvement in the status of women will take place during the Decade. In this perspective economic growth, productive employment, and social equity are fundamental and indivisible elements of development".1/

In the resolutions cited above there is a rich reflection of the efforts towards classification and conceptual elaboration recently being made. In this respect should be mentioned the work of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) of Geneva, which is carrying out a research programme on popular participation at the world level.2/ The Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) and the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) held a Seminar on Social Participation in Latin America (Quito, Ecuador, November 1980) 3/ where a series of important theoretical and empirical studies were presented, among which were various case studies on experiences in popular participation in the development of the region.

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1/ International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, Preamble, paragraph 8 (Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York, 1981, p. 2).

2/ A number of working documents and empirical monographs have already been published on the subject. The basic report, entitled "Participación popular: un enfoque de investigación", appeared in Socialismo y Participación, No. 9, Lima.

3/ A book containing the studies analysed in the Seminar is currently being prepared for publication.



2. The meaning of popular participation in development

In summary, it could cautiously be stated that the concept of popular participation prevailing in Latin America is one in which various characteristics may be observed, some of which are described in the following paragraphs.

Participation is a collective activity. No one would subscribe today to the idea that participation is merely a passive "being" or "belonging". Much more than this, to participate is to act, intentionally pursuing objectives and means whose combination assumes a strategy requiring organization, resources and an intelligent concept of the necessary and viable actions.

A collective action thus understood, which implies acting with others and against others, unfolds against a background of conflict which the actors themselves establish or bring up to date, although they may not be fully conscious of this. Thus, participation is inherently conflict-producing. And this is so because, more or less directly and ostensibly, it pursues changes in social relations which lead to redistribution of goods and incomes and, even further, social power. Any activity or process which leads to the expansion of popular participation will mean structural changes of some permanence which will tend to be irreversible. As examples we might cite agrarian reforms, formation of self-managing enterprises, rural-urban migrations, unionization of workers, establishment and activities of political parties and movements, inter alia. In any case, these new social situations produce a chain reaction, including resistance by the dominant élites to sharing income and power.

Since development is a part of a wider process of economic, social and political modernization, and to the extent that it deals with the social situation of various popular groups, sectors and strata which in different ways are affected by it, popular participation tends to take the form of strategies for survival in

/the new

the new conditions created by the modernizing process. This process is destructive of the pre-existing ways of life in the rural populations, since these populations lose control over the bases of their own survival when the old social institutions and practices are no longer effective. The articulation and convergent grouping of these strategies and aspirations occurs under what has been called an "encounter model", in which compromise solutions are reached, or there are breakdowns which are more difficult to overcome.<sup>1/</sup>

Finally, the dynamic of popular participation, whether at the local, rural or urban level, or at a more sectoral, widespread level, involves a pendular movement which swings from the executive and administrative planes of the State as a rationalized and planned strategy to the social pressures of the popular bases, leading to a variable burden of dissent and conflict. These social forces, moving out of their traditional environments, try to open new channels and conquer new areas of participation and frequently violate the legitimacy of the current order. Examples of these are the "invasions" of urban land by homeless migrants, or the cases in which the employees of bankrupt firms "take them over" to keep them active thus ensuring the continuity of their source of labour.

The fate of these social pressures will depend on the role the political régimes assign to the forces involved and on the extent to which they rely on them to ensure their continuity. Thus, the political dimension is an essential ingredient for understanding the social situations related to participation. Encouragement and political permissiveness or, on the contrary, more or less severe and coercive restrictions on the claims for participation contribute to defining the limits of possibility of the strategies of the various popular sectors.

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<sup>1/</sup> This idea was advanced by Andrew Pearse in a posthumous work prepared for a UNRISD debate. See, A. Pearse and M. Stiefel, "Abriendo el debate", in Diálogo sobre la Participación, No. 1 (UNRISD Geneva, June 1981) p. 8, et seq.

To the extent that any broadening of participation assumes transformations in power and distribution relations, it is obvious that they have a political significance.

Between these two poles of the problem lies a series of intermediate situations and processes. Although the technocratic nature of the State is rejected while the spontaneous, voluntary nature of the masses is affirmed, no one can deny that the former is undoubtedly an agent in the consideration of the problem of participation. Who participate, for whom, how much and how are questions which are answerable only by submitting them to social matrices which are legally and politically protected (private and public property system, institutions and norms relative to occupations, education, etc.) and whose importance cannot be exaggerated. The State is the guarantor of the social order and thus of the existing patterns of participation, which facilitate or prohibit the participation of one or the other social group, sector or level.

Thus there is a close relationship between social participation and political power, so that for some it is the essential question, without whose solution it is difficult to conceive of any progress towards new areas of participation for the marginalized masses. For this participation to be feasible, a radical transformation of the power relations in the society would be needed, which would give the control of the State to large majority sectors.<sup>1/</sup> And this is obviously in no way an easy matter.

In any case, the connexion between participation and political system exists and is a close one. Thus, a democratic system by definition has to be more open and participatory than an authoritarian one. However, this relationship is neither direct nor clear in the Latin American countries, especially considering the

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<sup>1/</sup> In this regard, see the UNRISD debate. Cf., Diálogo sobre la Participación, No. 1, op. cit.

segmentary nature of the participation. In fact, there may be very little political participation, while on the other hand social mobility and economic reforms may expand considerably, opening channels for new, extended forms of participation. This has occurred in the populist civil and military régimes which have given the masses access to control of the means of production and have redistributed income, while severely restricting political participation. A very obvious case of this contrast is that of Peru from 1968 to 1980, where there was a vigorous facilitation and promotion of social participation under a military régime without constitutional, parliamentary bodies or political parties authorized to exercise political representation of popular interests with respect to the State. This separation was deliberate and implied the denial of politics and its bodies as an autonomous sphere connecting the social level to that of the State.<sup>1/</sup> There thus arose a sui generis type of progressive corporatism which has not yet reached completion.

This is not the only case where authoritarian governments have paradoxically promoted a basic participatory democracy in labour co-operatives, collectivized and self-managed enterprises, trade unions and rural and urban communal organizations under the auspices and control of the State, which acted as a stimulating agent without, however, being free from exerting considerable paternalism over the mobilized masses.

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<sup>1/</sup> This experience gave rise to a considerable debate among intellectuals, ideologists and politicians on the possibility of consolidating a broad and profound process of development of popular participation in development without having at the same time a parallel, political counterpart. The rejection of the political party as an organ of representation and articulation of the interests of the public with respect to the political bodies of the State has been emphatic. Perhaps the most conspicuous representative of this current of thought is Carlos Delgado, in his book, Revolución y Participación, Lima, Ediciones del Centro, undated.

The reason for alluding to these cases is to emphasize the complexity of the question of participation, but this does not suggest in any way the existence of an organic separation from democracy. If these experiences are examined in the appropriate perspective, the conclusion that may be drawn is that they did not take root and remain as durable changes precisely because they lacked a more durable political support than that of the ephemeral governments which carried them out. When these governments fell and were replaced by opposite political currents, opposed to popular participation, the "achievements" made in the previous phase were easily overturned or corrupted, especially because they were vertical creations emanating from the State administration, without a popular social force or political claim to sustain it. In other words, the process of fundamental democratization of the society was weak, and lacked sufficient vigour and character to convert it into an authentic and spontaneous experience arising from the social base, so that the sectors involved might absorb it as something of their own with which they fully identified. A strong process of participatory expansion may only be attained when it derives from the strengthening of the civil society against the State, the permeability and flexibility of the social classes, and the collective practices and social values well-rooted in the area of collective management of economic production and social distribution. Finally, there must be an authentic political democracy with solid bases in a society open to popular participation.<sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> "Participation is a method and a means of strengthening democracy and not an end in itself. Participation is not for participation's sake, but is a way of carrying out social changes, making progress in the community, making sure that popular aspirations and interests are considered, and creating a social fabric which makes possible the consolidation of the democratic system. If not, it runs the risk of falling into a kind of social spontaneity, which has a negative impact on the same popular sectors one is trying to promote." From the inaugural speech of Mr. Osvaldo Hurtado, President of Ecuador, given at the Seminar on Social Participation, cit.

Besides social and political régimes, styles of development are particularly relevant, i.e., the way the economy is run and the distributive problems of allocating resources and incomes are resolved. In other words, it is a question of what, how, by whom and for whom development occurs.<sup>1/</sup> In this context the central characteristics of development processes are defined vis-à-vis popular participation in them. For example, if a style of development is forced to concentrate income in order to carry on, it will have to resort to the demobilization of the organized popular masses in order to avoid their trying to reverse the process. Thus, its consequences for participation as understood here will be very different from those of another, more open and equitable style of development, which achieves expanded participation of the social bases in the development effort. Other actual contrasts between styles of development could be shown which are certainly not a product of chance but rather intentional consequences of the decision-making centres promoting and guiding them, whose impact on popular participation is largely determinant of its possibilities for a spontaneous expansion and effective weight in development.

Besides the dynamic global configurations already mentioned, there are other important factors which in the interests of brevity will be mentioned only as illustrations: e.g., the size and spatial distribution of the population, the regionalization of economic and social activities, the productive profile and technological level, the occupational structure, the average income of the country, the average education and organizing experience of wage workers, and labour remunerations. Actually, a complete enumeration may be omitted because it is evident that the list would never be complete, since almost nothing is excluded from such a complex situation.

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<sup>1/</sup> The concept of "styles of development" has been elaborated in many CEPAL studies. See the studies by A. Pinto, M. Wolfe and J. Graciarena, in the CEPAL Review, first half of 1976.

No less varied are the problems of development related to popular participation. Looking at the overall picture it is possible to point out some salient aspects in different countries and subregions of Latin America. Problems related to popular participation in planning, rural development, production, urban life, as well as those with regard to women and youth will be considered briefly in the following paragraphs.

### 3. Towards a participatory planning

Traditional planning of development is an instrument for intervening in the economy, whose characteristics of formulation and application bring out a considerable degree of State verticalism. For this reason it has been severely criticized by those who reject the authoritarian methods of public bureaucracy and the hegemony of technicians. These critics, who have been joined by some governments, favour a new style of planning which promotes popular forms of participation throughout all the phases of the planning process.

Adopting these ideas, ILPES has formulated a proposal for participatory and compensatory planning, which suggests a modality based on a broad social agreement with the participation of all the sectors involved. It begins with a diagnostic study which consists of assuming that the limited powers and organizing ability of the dispossessed and marginal groups can be modified through "an outside intervention which implies a gradual overcoming of these deficiencies". This intervention is called "activation" and it supposedly brings about group organization and the acquisition of some general socio-cultural abilities which would improve the group's strategic position and its capacity for participatory pressure. "Ideally, activation should lead to a higher phase of organization of the group which will make its autonomous and effective participation possible, on a par with the big corporate interests. But given the initial conditions and the magnitude of the deficiencies

/... activation

...activation is an imperfect form of participation."<sup>1/</sup> Clearly the assistance component of planning has been considerably expanded, much beyond its original, primarily redistributive function, which was aimed at reducing social inequalities and satisfying basic needs. "The emphasis which tends to predominate today is certainly more inclusive. The by-products the capitalist modernization processes may create sizeable inequalities, but they are also a direct product of these same processes". What is now being attempted is more than to distribute goods as a palliative and aid, but rather to improve the structural possibilities and degrees of consciousness of marginal sectors in order to incorporate them into the planning process of development. These disparities in participatory opportunity are what compensatory planning is attempting to overcome.

The political framework of this type of planning should be such that it stimulates and welcomes the necessary motivations to implement the structural and dynamic changes assumed by the strategy of activation. And this can be none other than an open and democratic political system in a society which is gradually getting rid of its greatest rigidities, particularly those concerning the mobility of its social classes. Only in this way will it be possible to have a series of agreements and compromises among the various planning agents and social actors to lay the foundation for a planning process which is open to the effective participation of all interested parties.

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<sup>1/</sup> Cf. A. Flisfisch, R. Franco and E. Palma, Dimensiones de una Planificación Participativa, presented at the Seminar on Social Participation in Latin America, cit. This document has been extensively used for the preparation of this section. For this point, see especially: "What is compensatory planning?", pp. 42-44.

/With this



With this we have achieved no more than a basis for departure, since the problems remaining to be faced for implementing a planning project are so many and complicated that it will not be possible to discuss them all here. Some have to do with State bodies and the capacity, dedication and interest of their technical bureaucracies to carry out the necessary activation tasks. Others are found at the other side of the equation, since they refer to social groups and factors which need to be activated in order to incorporate them into development planning. In structurally heterogeneous societies, the vast poor and marginalized sectors with low educational levels have little capacity to organize and direct themselves when faced with the rapid modernizing processes which are changing them from above. However, the apathy and alienation of these sectors is not final and irrevocable. Their ability to adapt depends instead on the type of problems they are presented with and the facilities within their reach and competence to produce responses appropriate to their expectations. The same participation must be converted into a permanent source of learning and experience which enables them to confront more complex problematic situations, beyond the merely superficial level of the agents, and at the same time to strengthen the internal solidarity of their groups.

It is frequently maintained that the most dispossessed groups have organizational forms developed from within, spontaneously, which are the most appropriate to deal with the problems they face. This idea may be true in the case of rural indigenous sectors with a rich culture and autochthonous organization. However, there is nothing to ensure that these forms of organization will still be adequate under the intense and profound processes of modernization.

/It is

It is thus probable that the traditional organizations, in order to continue to exist and preserve their effectiveness, will have to undergo a complete readaptation if the situation of these rural groups and sectors is changed. Even more needy are the depressed urban sectors, largely formed by rural migrants who have lost a large part of their organizational and cultural baggage. We have here a real organizational vacuum which requires the action of outside activating agents such as the State, the churches, unions, parties, etc.<sup>1/</sup>

A participatory variant in planning is the opening up and decentralization of territorial communities, either communal or regional. This would be an attempt to integrate regional planning with national, reacting against the current centralizing tendencies. Spatial power would be redistributed, returning to the communes, municipalities and regions the capacity to participate in the decisions concerning them. This is an initiative which has been put into practice in a limited way only, and frequently with a predominantly ritual function.

The conceptual and objective difficulties are many; among these, autonomy, heterogeneity and initiative of the communities and regions, their effective power and degree of economic development and the political problems implied in the preparedness of the territorial units to participate on a national scale are the most difficult to solve. We cannot expand on these here, or on others perhaps equally as complex.

However, all would appear eventually manageable, and thus there is an insistence that "decentralized spatial planning" is not only feasible, but that

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<sup>1/</sup> Cf. A. Flisfisch, R. Franco and E. Palma, Dimensiones ..., op.cit., pp. 57-58.

it is an even more complete way of democratizing the planning process by linking it to the more primary, locally based social units. In this way a new source of social participation is incorporated into an activity previously almost impermeable to its influence.

In any case, the proposal for participatory and compensatory planning tries to democratize planning by favouring the formation of a participant society, actively involved in the processes of development. To the extent that the political will of governments is active and strong in this direction, progress will be made towards providing compensatory planning for unfavourable social situations in order to facilitate the emergence of favourable conditions and capacities for social participation in development. Planning would thus become an instrument of great importance for socialization of the decisions on the transformation of the economy and the democratization of society.

#### 4. Associative forms of production

Popular participation in Latin American production has some very early as well as more recent precedents, with some being more isolated while others form part of vast social experiences of social and economic transformation. There appear to be three basic forms of social participation in production included in the very wide variety of existing experiences in the various countries. Briefly, these associative forms are the following: (a) labour and production co-operatives; (b) associative self-managing firms; and (c) craft workshops organized on a family or joint basis. In these cases, the participatory forms in production are inserted in relatively different economic frameworks which determine their possibilities and realization. On this point we shall consider each one of the participatory forms.

##### (a) Labour

(a) Labour and production co-operatives

These are the oldest and probably most widespread form in the entire region. They clearly originate in the very vigorous solidarity movement in Europe since the second half of the nineteenth century. For this reason, these forms of productive organization were established originally in those countries or regions where the European immigrant flow was greater from the nineteenth century to the present. Particularly in the Río de la Plata countries, the phenomenon of co-operativism reached a considerable peak after the turn of the century, and even now it is there where the greatest development has been achieved. In 1979 in Argentina, there were more than 500 labour co-operatives spread over a considerable number of productive sectors, including the metallurgical industry, textiles, chemistry, food, agricultural production and others.

In some cases these enterprises were set up as co-operatives from the beginning, i.e., they functioned as such without deriving from another previous productive form. However, more recently the most frequent situation is that where the co-operative originated in an economic enterprise in bankruptcy, whose employees have taken over the responsibility of organizing it as a labour co-operative. For this purpose, workers, technical employees and executives become owners of the firm, assuming its risks and operating as if it were one more capital enterprise marketing its production at competitive prices.

A recent variety of classic production co-operatives is the labour community in Peru, which has many of the above characteristics but which also in the period following the change of political régime in 1968 had considerable support from the government: the latter established various co-ordination bodies and at the same time facilitated its activities through technical and financial support.

/These labour

These labour communities, like all production co-operatives, have had two major problems. The first, already mentioned, has been that of having to compete in a capitalist market with private enterprise, when they are actually part of a different social system, whose market places a higher value on social labour than on corporate profit. The medium and small-sized enterprises have shown a greater capacity for survival than the larger ones, whose competitive and functional ability has been lower.

The second problem has been the difficult relationship, frequently conflictive, with the trade unions of the productive branches where they operate. In the case of Peru, the labour union leaders were prohibited from being members of the boards of directors of the firms of the sector once they became set up as labour communities. Thus the labour unions, by remaining outside, could take up the defence of the employees of these communities, sometimes antagonistically to their board of directors.

One final difficulty of this type of organization, and not the least, has been its tendency towards oligarchization. This means that once set up the labour co-operatives were rarely open to the incorporation of new members, tending rather to resolve the problems of expansion of staff through the contracting of wage workers on similar terms to those of a capitalist firm. This naturally distorted the associative experience and exacerbated the tensions with the trade unions.

(b) Self-managing associative enterprises

This is a type of economic enterprise which has recently arisen and forms part of the experiences of profound change in the productive organization of some

/countries of

countries of the region.<sup>1/</sup> Particularly evident are the cases of Peru in 1968 and Chile between 1970 and 1973. The models which were applied in the two countries were not the same but, as they have some important points of similarity, they can be placed under the same heading. In both cases practices were promoted by the government establishing a social sector of the economy formed by non-capitalist associative enterprises, i.e., based on other principles than those of productive efficiency and market competitiveness.

Among the various objectives and manifest and latent functions in setting up this sector of associative enterprises was to socialize the most dynamic sectors of the country's economy. At the same time they were to become adequate instruments to correct social, income and consumption inequalities among the masses. It thus became very clear that the creation of this sector -and also its fate- depended on the success of a more general political plan which certainly involved other changes. An analysis of the functioning of the associative enterprises of the social property sector shows that while they functioned they had some relative successes which were manifested mainly in an increase in employment and production.<sup>2/</sup>

Although the State gave these enterprises decisive and generally effective support, they were still not able to overcome serious difficulties in various areas. To summarize, in many cases political criteria prevailed in the management of the enterprises, rather than either technical or economic criteria. This could not have been otherwise, considering the heightened political climate in which these

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<sup>1/</sup> The case of Cuba has not been considered, as it is considerably different, especially in relation to the more general social terms of the formation of associative units of production in a non-capitalist framework.

<sup>2/</sup> Cf. PREALC, Participación laboral: experiencias en Perú y Chile (Buenos Aires, Editorial Los Buenos Aires, 1982), passim.

/experiences developed.

experiences developed. Sometimes these tensions were resolved by the establishment of a kind of duality of command, which limited the already restricted powers of the administrators. The relations between the State and the enterprises also had a tendency to become vertical and authoritative. Moreover, the above-mentioned problems in the relationship between trade unions and enterprises hampered the operation of the labour participation bodies. It has also been mentioned that the individual participant actors in these experiences lacked a sufficiently developed self-management consciousness to handle the problems they had to face responsibly. Finally, the experiences lasted a very short time, which undoubtedly reduced the possibilities for bearing fruit. In the case of Chile, they lasted barely two years and in Peru slightly more, in any case until 1977 when the State support began to decrease decisively.

Probably the most important difference between the social property sector in Chile and that in Peru was that in the former case the participatory system in the associative enterprises developed in the framework of State property, which thus had the right to define the productive goals of enterprises and all the other parameters determining the decisions on its management.

In the case of Peru, a novel type of property was introduced in which this responsibility was exercised by the whole group of workers with the aid of the State. Here the workers took over all the property of the sectoral enterprises, converting them into veritable self-managed enterprises, since the right to participate in management was derived from the condition of being a worker and because the workers had now become owners. Actually, as shown in the above-mentioned PREALC study, in the Peruvian case the manager was the whole group of workers.

/There were

There were certainly many variations and attempts to combine these basic principles with other social arrangements directed towards facilitating participation in the management and operation of the enterprises of the social sector.

Also in the cases of social property enterprises, the greatest successes appear to have been achieved in medium-sized units, which would confirm similar experiences in other countries outside the region. In this respect it has been suggested that there would be an optimal size for achieving the full insertion of the workers into the social property enterprises. Beyond a certain size, their identification with the enterprises would tend to diminish, thus generating apathy towards the organization as a whole; their identification would instead focus on the particular units where each of them was working.

(c) Craft workshops

The third form mentioned is that of small productive units of the organized craft type, in associative forms, which are found in almost all the region. In some countries, particularly in Ecuador,<sup>1/</sup> they have been developed considerably. Here the family and associative types of organization are juxtaposed. The scale of production is small, and thus a large part of it can be carried out in the home or in a contiguous installation. Sometimes non-members of the family may participate in the work of the unit in different types of relationships. Despite the small size of these units, as in the case of Ecuador, the labour force of the sector which they absorb expands considerably. Women predominate to a very high degree. There is a limited tendency to form co-operatives. Organization for

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<sup>1/</sup> Mariana Mora, Algunas consideraciones para el análisis de las formas de producción popular: la artesanía en el Ecuador, was presented at the Seminar on Popular Participation, cit.



production is relatively precarious, as is marketing. They receive very little technical support and lack the access to the sources of banking credit and financing that larger units enjoy.

Some countries have created development organizations which protect this type of craft production, since there is considerable demand for it. However, the unit scale on which the work is done is small and does not for the moment allow the population to do more than elaborate survival strategies. These are possibly transition forms, which if the problem of increasing scale and technification is not resolved will tend to disappear, a casualty of the modernization trend.

#### 5. Rural popular participation

Over the last decade or so, most Latin American countries have assigned at one time or another, highest priority in their national development plans to stimulating popular participation by the rural poor. Some of the earliest efforts, connected with extensive agrarian reforms, have either been abandoned or seriously curtailed with changes in governments, as in the case of the Chilean asentamientos in which farm workers managed expropriated haciendas (latifundia) or the Peruvian production co-operatives (CAP) or large-scale land reform units (SAIS). Other efforts are new and include some novel elements, such as the Mexican Food System (SAM), and the Nicaraguan Agrarian Reform, have interesting implications for the design of institutional arrangements to promote effective rural popular participation, though it is too early to evaluate definite results.

In many other countries there are, currently, a somewhat patchwork mixture of farm workers' unions and regional level Integrated Rural Development programmes (DRI) directed to small farmers and poor peasants. The farm workers' unions tend

/to be

to be fundamentally different from urban workers' unions, in their composition, internal functioning goals and effectiveness in influencing national political structures.

Only a small proportion of farm workers have permanent jobs, while a majority in some countries may be landless peasants expelled within the last generation from haciendas that have modernized and mechanized or who have abandoned their small communities and their tiny plots fragmented by inheritance and exhausted by over-cultivation. In others, the majority are part-time workers who migrate to the large commercial farms at planting and harvest times, reassuming their peasant identity and returning to their communities and small plots during the rest of the year.

This diversity and mobility makes it extremely difficult to organize farm workers' unions that can promote true popular participation in decision-making and in increasing control by the poor over productive resources. Surprisingly, however, there is a high degree of agreement among various types of rural wage labourers concerning their basic goals: direct control over land and the support required to farm it themselves and a larger voice in the determination of prices and marketing arrangements.

This orientation, which contrasts so sharply with that of most urban labour movements, is probably due in large to the peasant origins shared by most rural wage labourers. This fact, added to the apparent deceleration of demand for agricultural wage labour, due to increased mechanization and other factors suggests that one of the most important area for popular participation for the near future is in the peasant sector.

/Integrated Rural

Integrated Rural Development programmes (DRI) in Latin America tend to share various characteristics though there are important exceptions in some countries. By and large, they are oriented toward promoting nuclear family farm enterprises, even though these are usually organized in local community co-operatives. They concentrate on credit, capital-intensive inputs, technical assistance and organizational supervision. On the one hand, these elements tend to promote increased productivity among the more "viable" peasants -those with more fertile land; on the other, they tend in practice to ignore or oppose the emergence of autonomous peasant political movements. One common effect is that the successful farmers tend to gain control of co-operative management, often diverting resources to improve their private "absorptive capacity" or distributing them on a patronage basis to gain political power and control over a peasant clientele that remains relatively poor.

In these cases, local-level popular participation can obviously be reduced to formal appearance of co-operative management that hides a highly anti-participative reality. In other, more successful cases of DRI, real participation commonly combines two basic features: (1) the origin and the exact form of local organization result spontaneously from efforts by peasants themselves to mobilize in order to obtain resources (either land in dispute or low-cost credit); and (2) local mobilization is supported and extended via regional or national peasant movements, that can oversee and pressure both the provincial administration of programme agencies and national-level executive powers.

Both of these conditions apparently exist, for example, in both the Mexican and the Nicaraguan examples. In the SAM, large volumes of resources and technical assistance are directed toward the poorest sectors, the non-irrigated areas

/of smallholders

of smallholders and collective ejidos. Both at the district and state (provincial) levels, both the ejidos and the National Peasant Confederation are represented in programme management bodies, such as the multipartite "committees for the promotion of socio-economic development" (COPRODES). In Nicaragua, in addition to the worker-managed commercial plantations expropriated from the dictatorship, about 2 500 somewhat informal peasant co-operatives sprang up in 1980, in order to qualify for government credit and subsidize inputs. In addition, the Association of Rural Workers, and the Association of Small and Medium Agricultural Producers organized in 1981, constitute mass interest groups that represent the concerns and demands of their members in regional and national level agricultural planning organisms.

These types of parallel structures -administrative and political- are designed to maintain vigilance against bureaucratic mismanagement and favoritism, and to guarantee that planning really leads to the objectives defined by the peasants themselves. It is, however, well known that peasant movements are also extremely susceptible to control from above, patronage structures and local dominance by "union bosses" or traditional caciques. This has, in the past, been a serious problem in the National Peasant Confederation that now plays an important part in the SAM, which could make the presence of peasant representatives in planning bodies a meaningless formality. In Nicaragua, the inclusion in the same Association of medium-size commercial farmers and extremely poor minifundista smallholders who work part-time as wage labourers for the former, might lead to serious internal conflicts in the movement.

In general, serious efforts to develop both popular participation in planning and the emergence of truly representative rural political movements have numerous problems of internal conflicts, efficiency, and so forth that would require a

/lengthy analysis

lengthy analysis to explore fully. However, the initial stimulation of participatory strategies among peasants is not as difficult as it is sometimes made out to be in Latin America. Peasants in various countries of the region have long been developing strategies, individual, communal and regional, to increase their participation in society-level decision-making and resource control, if only in order to survive in the face of efforts of more powerful sectors to extract a part of peasant production. Popular participation by Latin American peasant groups has almost always developed rapidly when there are clear benefits to be gained, when there is no repression or co-opting of autonomous peasant movements, and when there are possibilities of a "peasant-state alliance" such as that proposed in the SAM.

The difficulties facing rural popular participation in Latin America, as has often been stated, are mainly aspects of existing social structures. Specifically, in the process of agricultural modernization, most peasant communities are not becoming more "marginalized" from the larger economy, but are an integral though dependent part of the agricultural growth process. Both as cheap rural (and urban) temporary wage labourers, and more recently as potential suppliers to urban markets of food staples that could reduce current importation requirements, the continued relative poverty and powerlessness of peasants is of direct and real benefit to the more-favoured sectors of national societies. Moreover, satisfying the needs and demands that motivate genuine peasant participation and mobilization -more land and large investments for raising productivity- would mean a major redirecting of resources from their existing channels and the withdrawal of peasant labourers from commercial harvests.

/Although growing

Although growing in absolute terms, the national peasantries of most Latin American countries are already a minority of the total rural and urban labour force, and their proportional importance continues to decline. Thus, a real structural change, to make possible significant rural participation, would require the emergence of autonomous peasant movements, often in the face of governmental opposition or with only partial support by some factions of national governments, and also some degree of unification with sympathetic urban popular movements. Only in these conditions would a "peasant-state alliance" be workable in guaranteeing rural popular participation: participation has little meaning if the basic goals of the "participants" are ruled out from the start.

The local community (not as a locus of "community development" designed and imposed from outside, but as a conjunction of specific, unique social relations and informal participatory mechanisms) can be the basis and the source of an endogenous process of popular participation. Particularly in the case of indigenous groups of the Andean countries and Meso-America, common ethnic identity is also a key to rapid mobilization at the regional level. The traditional demand for land, in combination with the new sophistication and familiarity with the modern urban world that characterizes the emerging generation of peasant leaders, may lead to new and more effective forms of rural popular participation. In any case, the future evolution of these trends, much more than any improvements in policy design, will determine in large part the future success or failure of participation by rural Latin Americans in the development process.

6. Participatory structures in urban settlements

The extraordinary urban development which has taken place in Latin America since the war has mainly been produced by rural migrations, thus refocusing dynamic attention on the natural growth of the cities themselves, as in the case of the few countries which are at a more advanced stage of demographic development.

This rapid growth has resulted in varied forms of populating and settling of the urban spaces, which have certainly expanded considerably. The great majority has been composed of populations of rural origin who have been driven out for various reasons such as the pressure of population increases and thus an unfavourable relationship to landholding, as well as the dispossession resulting from the processes of agricultural modernization. Also important has been the attraction offered by the urban environment. These masses constitute its lowest social stratum, and since the origins of the migratory process they have been showing relative occupational diversity. The majority are travelling salesmen, service workers and domestic employees, while some are employees, labourers and workers in relatively well-established firms. They tend to be concentrated by areas or rural origin, with migrants living together who come from the same provinces and regions, and sometimes from the same local area. Except for the personal and family ties established in their places of origin, they have very little social organization and thus participate little or not at all in the collective sense.

In a second stage, which has variable origins according to countries, the dynamic of the urbanization process changes by increasing the migratory contingents and the types and number of settlements in the urban environment. There is also a diversification in the organization of the settlers, who live together in precarious /conditions, making

conditions, making progress in terms of education and economic insertion; moreover, among the residents of these precarious settlements it may be observed that the proportion of labourers and workers with greater urban experience increases. All of this gives rise to a greater social consciousness and degree of organization.

Generally speaking, in the history of these precarious urban settlements, the same sequence of events occurs with natural variations. First of all, the tenement is a form of settlement which is generally made up of dwellings in poor conditions in old, now decadent, aristocratic neighbourhoods located in relatively central parts of the cities. These dwellings are divided up and rented out by rooms, with their inhabitants sharing toilet facilities. Sometimes these settlements take other forms, such as precarious adobe constructions on urban empty lots. The major social problem of the tenement dwellers is the level of rent, which is one of their main expenses. The very limited organization established among themselves has generally consisted of groups organized to resist rent increases, trying to negotiate collectively on better terms.

Secondly, with the saturation of the tenements of the urban strata, the invasion of peripheral land begins, and the precarious settlements spread out around the city in so-called poverty belts. This new phenomenon, which also assumes varied forms, produces a greater dependence on the municipalities for the provision of the primary services required by the new dwellers. The organizational forms set up by these dwellers have been different, appropriate to their demands and the strategies used, whether they need to obtain electric light, pavement, sewage services, schools, health centres, etc., or whether they propose to acquire new land to move onto.

/A particular



A particular form of social conflict often results when urban middle and high level sectors abandon the urban setting to form suburbs in the peripheries, already partly occupied by precarious settlements, whose dwellers are in many cases illegal occupants but who may put up resistance when anyone tries to relocate them to another area.

At times of greatest migratory pressure, the most common form of land occupation has been the invasion of urban lots. This is because government housing projects have invariably been inadequate to absorb the needy population. In other cases the invasions also occur from within by the incorporation of new groups of family members and other new relatives of rural origin who join the established dwellers and rapidly overflow and create organized slum neighbourhoods.

Some of the most peculiar urban organizations arise when there are takeovers of land, constituting a form of sui generis social participation basically designed to resolve the problem of relocating the homeless. Thus committees are formed which plan new land takeovers with the support of neighbourhood organizations and churches, trade unions and political parties. In these cases of association for the purpose of taking over land there has been observed a significant participation by women, largely because many of them are heads of household and also because the presence of women may attenuate possible repression against the invaders.

The main priorities of these precarious settlements are, first, avoiding eviction and, second, obtaining the most indispensable services such as water, electricity and transport. Later the remaining services will be procured.

It has been pointed out that this urban dynamic varies by country according to political systems, and that in those which are democratic popular activity increases during electoral periods. Negotiation is usually hard and direct:

/electoral support

electoral support in exchange for concessions and improvements in the precarious living conditions of the urban dwellers.

The growing magnitude of urban settlements in Latin American cities has given rise to a greater experience and capacity on the part of urban dwellers to generate leaders and organizations, all of which leads to their gaining greater power as a pressure group. But at the same time, and especially due to their growing social heterogeneity, divergent and opposing interests have arisen which are weakening the purposes of the urban dwellers. Since the needs are different, the demands are also different and so are the urban organizations set up for such purposes. In some settlements we can observe a large variety of typical community organizations, such as neighbourhood boards, committees of the homeless or their relatives, mothers' centres, medical clinics, youth groups, etc. The greater or lesser importance of these organizations and the power they have will depend largely on the political system and thus on the ties between the community organizations and other external organizations which can give support to their demands. Sometimes conditions of protection or political patronage exist between community organizations and political parties. It is difficult to judge without further study the possible effect of these relationships between community associations and political parties and trade union organizations outside the neighbourhood environment. The consequences will depend on many factors, but mainly on the nature of the demands and on the existence of actual possibilities to satisfy them. Sometimes there have been almost insoluble political conflicts, such as the occupation of buildings constructed for popular sectors by neighbourhood groups who decided to appropriate them for themselves and for their own benefit. It may occur that various groups

/share the

share the same public shops, which, according to the circumstances, may aggravate the conflictive situation or, on the other hand, may facilitate its solution.

In any case -and although these risks exist- it is a fact that the social strength of urban dwellers' participation has been strengthened when they have formed part of broader national, social and political movements.

#### 7. Participation by women

Although women form part of the total population and of the various strata, sectors and groups composing it, due to the sexual differentiation their participatory activity in development is usually considerably different than that of men. Although the social conditions of the different sectors of society are largely shared, and thus mean relatively similar margins of opportunity and social positions, the way in which these conditions affect women differs from one social class to another and between rural and urban dwellers. Thus it is of primary importance to distinguish the specific forms of conditioning relative to the social class, rural and urban environment and other forms of insertion in the social structure.

Female participation in the labour force has been growing in Latin America in recent years, but this growth has not been the same or symmetrical. There are some focal points which bring out two structures of participation in the labour force corresponding to women of two very different social strata. On the one hand, between one-fourth and one-third of women who work outside the home do so in occupations of middle or high level, covering a range of occupations from administrative jobs in the public and private sectors to semi-professionals, professionals and executives. To this sector should be added what is probably the most important part of this contingent, which is the primary and secondary school teaching profession, where women represent by far the dominant proportion.

/Some women

Some women who come from or belong to sectors of the middle and upper middle class with high educational levels share their responsibilities as housewife with domestic employees from the lower sectors. This latter group is the other large contingent of women in the labour force, which represents, with differences between countries, a proportion similar to that already indicated for women in the middle sectors who work outside the home. These domestic employees come from popular sectors, and many of them are of rural origin, having migrated to the cities to take domestic jobs.

The complementarity between these two large sectors of the labour force is obvious, as is also the conclusion that the presence of a wage-earning domestic service makes it possible for women of the middle class to become professionals and at the same time conserve traditional patterns of having a large family. In the countries where domestic service has become much more expensive, there has been a reduction in the number of children in the middle-class families, a phenomenon which has also coincided with the expansion of these strata and a decrease in their income and relative social status.

The third sector of female participants in the labour force is more miscellaneous in nature, mostly formed by women from the popular sectors who are saleswomen, trade employees or industrial workers, or who are independent workers in small family workshops, who bring work home or who work directly as family aides.

The great majority of women who do not participate permanently in the labour force and who belong to the rural and urban popular sectors work within the home, which is an environment with complex characteristics. In the home, the members of the family live together and consume; but at the same time, especially in rural areas, the home is an important productive centre, not only for the family group

/but also

but also for the local market, in which the woman is not directly involved. This female role in the domestic household grows considerably in responsibility if the woman is head of household. In the rural sectors this is true for a considerable proportion of women -not less than one-third or one-half of households- temporarily or permanently.

This dual function, of the domestic household as family environment and productive centre, means that the same woman must carry out a double responsibility as housewife and head of household. Needless to say in this situation the living conditions of poor households reach levels of extreme poverty, since the productivity of the domestic unit is quite low, and consequently so is the income. A very high percentage of these households belong to the so-called sectors of critical poverty in Latin America.

Generally, the participation of women from the poor sectors is very limited, beyond their participation in the labour force. As such, women rarely organize with a view to the promotion of development except for the reasons mentioned, having remained isolated as heads of households, i.e., without permanent masculine company. But even so their complaints are much less concerned with their sexual condition than with the need and deprivation which they must face as women from the popular sectors. Many of them have joined the trade unions and other social organizations set up to meet specific needs. As already mentioned, particularly important is the participation of women in the marginal urban sectors in the establishment of neighbourhood associations and pressure groups for the resolution of housing problems, which affect women more closely and with much more dramatic consequences than they affect men. In this greater participation there are also tactical motives, as already indicated.

/Strictly speaking,

Strictly speaking, the women of the popular sectors have been and still are tied to economic activities, whether remunerated or not. Domestic labour, done by all of them, is very important because it has a real impact on economic production and the reproduction of the labour force. Domestic work, besides being defined as secondary labour, confines them to isolation which prevents them from perceiving their situation objectively, separates them from other social and political participation and makes them accept as "befitting their nature" the functions which have been socially assigned to them.

However, according to some studies, there are actual situations which mobilize women of these very heterogeneous sectors and which may help them acquire a class consciousness more willing to participate in organized social struggle. There may be as many as four central factors present in these mobilizations, mainly spontaneous, in which women move into action because of an event which affects the group. These factors are: (a) concentration in the workplace or home of many women with the same immediate interests; (b) some event that on the one hand aggravates the problems and on the other makes them see them collectively; (c) the existence of a neighbourhood, district or community organization; (d) the existence of an external motivating factor (political party, trade union, etc.). Once the emergency situation has passed, the participation of women drops or even disappears. The main demobilizing factors have to do with both the material living conditions of women and the ideological factors associated with their role in the sexual division of labour.

Middle-class women who are exclusively housewives have little organized and continuous participation outside the home, with the exception of some recreational and leisure activities. In some isolated incidents they have managed

/to manifest

to manifest themselves in a politically active way, but the rule is the discontinuity of this type of participation and the prevalence of a relatively generalized apathy. On the other hand, the women of the middle classes who work outside the home show greater variety and intensity in their level of participatory activity, although this lacks the features which typify it as a predominantly sexual activity. What occurs is that in social organizations, mainly the trade unions and professional schools where women predominate, their social disability becomes more noticeable and thus the conclusion is sometimes drawn that this is a specifically feminine participation. Actually, it is not so, for the reasons already mentioned, because their motive for participation has to do with their profession, not the condition of their sex.

However, recent years have seen the formation of a large variety of specifically women's organizations, some of which are more militant, such as the feminist movements, while others are more for the purpose of claiming their rights and promoting the comparison of their social situations with those of their male colleagues in institutions where discriminatory practices are carried out against them. Notable progress is being made through this specific form of female participation, tending to correct existing inequalities of opportunities in various areas of society. For now, unfortunately, it is a phenomenon which is rather limited to women of the middle sectors, with little penetration in the popular urban and rural areas. Obviously there cannot be a direct transfer of women's organizations from the middle classes because the daily-living problems and needs of the women of the popular sectors differ considerably. In this and in many other areas the differences of social class introduce variations of great importance in determining the participatory objectives and means which may be put into practice.

The United Nations has played an especially active and relevant role in the promotion of the participation of women in development. For many years, going back to the era of the League of Nations, various United Nations bodies have been promoting initiatives and carrying out activities directed towards encouraging the participation of women in various aspects of development. These activities have found a more consistent basis in the successive reformulations of the idea of development introduced by the International Development Strategy, which accentuates the social aspects of development and refers more directly to the persons who are agents and beneficiaries of it. Various regional international organizations, within and outside the United Nations, have contributed to this promotion. Its high point is the plan for the integration of women in development which was approved by the First Regional Conference called by CEPAL and the United Nations Secretariat and held in Havana in July 1977.<sup>1/</sup> The governments of the region agreed to adopt measures aimed at providing an organizational basis for the women of their countries to stimulate their participation in development.

The activities undertaken in the framework of this regional plan have continued with a growing intensity and depth and, although it is difficult at this time to make a rigorous evaluation, it is possible to say that considerable progress has been made at least in governmental activity and that of government-related groups in regard to the objectives put into practice at the international level by the United Nations Decade for Women.

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<sup>1/</sup> United Nations, Regional Plan of Action on the Integration of Woman in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America, Santiago, Chile, CEPAL, November 1977 (E/CEPAL/1024/Rev.1).



Perhaps the most important observation which may be made about this modus operandi is its verticalism, since it is an activity which is promoted almost exclusively by public and international bodies and which reaches down to the social bases in an attempt to obtain a response. The greatest response has come from the women of the middle classes. The time has been brief, and it would be difficult to say that all the conditions are given so that the actions of the governments and of the United Nations will have an equivalent response in the bases of society, which is where the most serious and top-priority problems exist. However, the first step has been taken, and we may reasonably believe that these initiatives will continue to take effect to the extent that they have the size and continuity necessary for reaching the consciousness of the various interested social agents.

#### 8. Youth participation

Youth participation may be considered from different perspectives and at various levels. Over-generalization on youth in Latin America, however, is as misleading as it is tempting. With its multiple facets tiers and cross-sections Latin American youth as a category of social analysis is complex. Not only is the fact of not yet having attained adult status and the generational problem pertinent, but also the different age sub-categories, social strata and cultural variations. In addition, given the significant difference existing in national situations, the participation of youth does not necessarily always have the same meaning nor imply the same goals. The expression and implications vary according to the concrete historical social context in which the participatory process evolves.

/Thus, the

Thus, the phenomenon of youth cannot be understood except in the context of society as a whole. As will be discussed later, in Latin America "youth revolts" often are actually not youth revolts at all because the issues raised even within the context of university reform reflect the current major problems of society and the struggle that ensures usually takes place between political factions of different classes and not between age groups. It is really the ability of youth to raise explosive issues and to act as avant-garde for larger social forces that gives them a potentially unique, if perhaps overstated, role in politics. At the base of this role is the acquisition of a value system, the process of socialization and the interaction between youth and the agents of socialization. Effective opposition to the inequalities and contradictions of society requires changes in present values. This perspective goes beyond participation in "political society" to all that which is involved in the so-called "civil society". The former is restricted to the encounter between a government pursuing development policy in ways satisfactory to its powerful support groups and people pursuing livelihood.<sup>1/</sup> It involves the State and its legal, administrative and coercive elements. Youth participation in the development processes of Latin America may be more profitably viewed from the latter viewpoint as well since it involves the entire socialization process of young persons and their interaction with societal agents to the extent that young persons exercise an active and full participation in "civil society", they move towards the development of their own individual potential and can fulfill the role often attributed to them of leading the way to alternative styles of development.

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<sup>1/</sup> UNRISD, An Approach to Development Research, Geneva, 1979.

Youth's interaction with its agents of socialization is complex. Among these agents the family is usually considered to be the most important. However, recent studies suggest a differentiation of socialization processes operating simultaneously in which other agents are key.<sup>1/</sup> Socialization within the family is decisive for certain spheres, while others are dominated by other institutions. The family seems to be the determinant with regard to concrete down-to-earth everyday-life attitudes and with regard to general problems and to the existence of value changes which occur in society as a whole. Sources of stability or change located outside the family include formal education, mass-media, students', ecclesiastical, political and international-based youth organizations as well as less formal but important peer groups.<sup>2/</sup> All of these agents have great significance for understanding the participatory processes of youth.

Although the foregoing represents an area where much work remains to be done, certain observations may be made on youth participation as a factor of (or in) present processes of social change in Latin America. The capacity of youth as an active agent in historical and social processes in the region has been greatly conditioned by the increasing influence of mass education in the secondary school system and in the universities over the last two decades. Simultaneously, the growing (if unmeasured) impact of the mass-media on the imagery of childhood,

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<sup>1/</sup> Klaus Allerbeck and Leopold Rosenmayer, "Youth and Society", in Current Sociology 27:2/3 (1979), p.15.

<sup>2/</sup> The latter represent organizational forms often unconventional, which under certain circumstances can be used as significant focal points for youth mobilization. Some examples in the region are: Steel band groups and "Rastafarians" in the Caribbean, youth gangs known as "porros" in Mexico, sports and social clubs throughout the region.

adolescence and youth has disinstitutionalized certain socialization processes within the family, school and traditional well-defined youth organizations, ecclesiastical, etc. Consequently, within the foregoing context it is essential to analyse youth participation within the context of stratified society and stratum-differentiated socialization.

(a) Urban middle strata youth

Over the last three decades the well-known processes of urbanization based on vast rural-urban migration and modernization of the economy through the relative expansion of the manufacturing, financial, commercial and other formal sector service industries has been accompanied by a significant growth of the urban middle strata. This transformation has been sustained by the exceptionally rapid expansion of secondary and higher education and the increase of bureaucratic positions, both public and private which often absorb the graduates. The heterogeneous "middle" strata of the urban areas, devoted mainly to non-manual occupations have grown much more rapidly than those strata of manual workers in industry and the basic services and even the groups classified as "marginal". Youth from this broad stratum of society have been the object of much debate on youth participation in large part due to the high visibility of the organizations which channel youth movements. Among these attention is directed to those which have been the most vocal on a national level: student federations and youth wings of political parties.

No other sector of youth has received the attention of analysts of youth participation as much as university-educated youth who have repeatedly been proclaimed as leading agents of social change. A careful examination of the

/history and

history and diverse periods in the evolution of student movements in Latin America,<sup>1/</sup> however, would suggest that a modification of this common image should be done. In the two decades following 1960 the process of massification of the universities has become clear as has also a change in the social composition of student enrollment. The latter has expanded into the lower middle and upper lower strata. Simultaneously however, increasing segmentation at higher educational levels has occurred and the obstacles to social mobility have become more complex and sophisticated. Throughout the 1960s, student movements seemed to act as vanguard of the expression of discontent of the middle and upper lower strata within prevailing social systems dominated by varying combinations of upper strata, military and technobureaucrat alliances.

In some countries the evolution of massive higher education changed the nature of student participation which generally until then reflected the concerted action of minorities if indeed significant ones, among educated youth. In the major urban areas of countries such as Ecuador and Peru university students have become as or more numerous than industrial workers. In other countries such as Argentina and Colombia a common student-worker front emerged.

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<sup>1/</sup> The following discussion draws from material in Francisco Leal Buitrago, "La frustración política de una generación. La universidad colombiana y la formación de un movimiento estudiantil 1958-1967", Desarrollo y Sociedad (julio de 1981, N° 6, pp. 299-325); Proyecto Desarrollo y Educación en América Latina y el Caribe, Desarrollo y Educación en América Latina. Síntesis General, UNESCO/CEPAL/PNUD, 1981, Vol. 3, pp.VIII-65-76; Marshall Wolfe, Styles of Development and Education. A Stocktaking of Myths, Prescriptions and Potentialities, UNESCO/CEPAL/PNUD, Proyecto Desarrollo y Educación, 1980; Robert E. Scott, "Student Political Activism in Latin America" in Seymour M. Lipset and Philip G. Altbach, Students in Revolt, Boston, 1969, pp.403-431.

The limitations to the capacity of student movements for criticism, mobilization and effective action were reached in many countries during the years ranging from the end of the 1960s through the mid-1970s. In many instances "massification" of the universities proved not to mean "democratization", with lower and marginal strata entry and group needs being excluded from the universities and student movement efforts. These, for the most part, remained linked to the middle strata which having gained entry to an educational level previously closed to them, began to perceive the horizon of frustration to their aspiration and inequality in the social system, which offered only token consolidation.1/

For these reasons in spite of the relatively large number of students, university youth federations often shared little common ground with youth from the poorest strata and in a number of national situations buttressed the evolving forms of social segmentation.2/ Moreover, the increased segmentation and atomization of post secondary education has been occurring since the closing years of the 1970s together with efforts to restrict university enrollments.

The capacity of student movements to effectively act as agents of social progress under existing conditions in many Latin American societies is segmented since the different combinations of higher education, institutional quality and class origins of students lead to different reactions and demands. Exceptional

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1/ Jaime Rodríguez, El concepto de masificación, su importancia y perspectivas para el análisis de la educación superior, UNESCO/CEPAL/PNUD, Proyecto Desarrollo y Educación en América Latina y el Caribe, 1978.

2/ For a recent review of the case of Uruguay see: Ernesto Rodríguez, Situación y perspectivas de la juventud uruguaya, Montevideo, Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana, 1978.

/conjunctures such

conjunctures such as have occurred in Cuba or Nicaragua may present the conditions to permit youth to take a leading role but other examples warn against over-generalization. Events since the late 1960s have also demonstrated that mobilization is likely to take forms easily repressed by the state or self-destructive through the internal conflicts it generates, its manipulation by factions and the divorce between its demands and tactics and those of other sectors of the society including those sought as allies by the mobilized youth.

Another common form of youth participation in Latin America are the youth wing of national political parties. Although youth participation in these organizations cuts across class lines to some extent ranging from worker youth to upper strata youth, the key expression is usually to be found in interaction with students of secondary and higher education and therefore generally are more representative of youth ranging from the upper lower strata and above.

Analysis of the political role of students, particularly those forthcoming from outside the region, have many times attributed activism to generational factors of immaturity, rebelliousness, or irresponsibility. "Student unrest" is characterized in these works as ideological and utopian, given to total solutions and the rejection of compromise. Such an appraisal like others that rely heavily on generational factors is inadequate. It reduces political factors like party organization and ideology to a residual status, making student political participation dependent on a vague and elusive level of maturity. But if organization and political discipline are to be taken seriously for other population groups, why not for students, where their importance in socialization is so obvious?

/The fact

The fact that student organizations are rarely autonomous bodies probably contributes to participatory processes in democratic societies of Latin America. However, the kind of mobilization found in authoritarian régimes attempting to impose from above a political consensus is an entirely different matter. In such systems this artificial construct is devoid of relevance for all but a minority of youth. To the extent that state sponsored youth organizations attempt to demobilize opposition to the system in existing youth groups and to consolidate a false consciousness among youth of shared generational interests and needs, a true process of "youth alienation" is generated. In those societies of Latin America where participatory roles have been imposed by national authorities in narrow and often harsh terms, youth from the middle strata may well present the more unmanageable challenges to the prevailing style of development.

(b) Lower strata and urban marginal youth

Contrary to other strata of youth which have received attention through studies of student movements or political parties, this sector of youth has been the object of few specific participation studies. What information exists comes from research on the marginal areas of cities in the region.

The participation of marginal youth is complex and contradictory. The latter because in many ways the passage from childhood to adult life is so rapid and abrupt that a conventionally understood period of youth is denied them. Premature insertion into the labour market and early common law or marital unions precipitates these young persons into adult responsibilities and full interaction with older people particularly with regard to negative sanctions which in their case often adopts the form of rough forms of punishment. Adolescents in this

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group are nonetheless still in the process of value formation even though many of them for reasons of necessity must adopt aspects of adult status with regard to independence in practical matters of everyday life.

Interaction and shared activities with parents is much less frequent among these youth than with middle strata youth and parental control is weaker. Whereas discussion appears to be the dominant medium of control for the parents of middle strata student youth, socialization of poor urban youth has a firmer footing in more supervisory forms of control. Aggression and its social presentation are shaped differently according to social strata. The frequent incidence of single parent households, changing adult male partners of the mother or the so-called family irresponsibility of the father often results in parents being rejected as "reference persons" from which young people may form an image of society and themselves.<sup>1/</sup> It is possible that at the micro-level of socialization poor urban youth perceive parents together with other adults with whom they interact often under harsh terms as representative of a life style which they reject.

One salient aspect of the participation of poor urban youth but about which unfortunately little is known, is that of peer group organizations. Of these perhaps the most important is the sports club. For the most part this is a participatory form which is predominantly masculine. The significance of these

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<sup>1/</sup> The high incidence of incomplete families in marginal areas of Guayaquil, Ecuador, was estimated to reach almost half of the poor households of that city. Only 51% of the households were headed by married men. In Colombia, although, the presence of the father is substantially more common reaching an average of almost 90% in urban areas, for marginal families with street children and adolescents ("gamin") it is only 40% on the average of five major cities. Carlos Luzuriaga Poverty in Ecuador, Agency for International Development, 1979; Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, et.al., El Gamin, su albergue social y su familia, UNICEF, 1978; Juan Carlos Tedesco and Rodrigo Parra, Marginalidad urbana y educación formal, UNESCO/CEPAL/PNUD, Proyecto Desarrollo y Educación, 1981.

clubs is that they are natural organizations formed by the youth of the "barriada", "población", "villa", etc. themselves and provide a mechanism of insertion into society going beyond sport activities. Recent studies have suggested that these organizations are key for understanding survival strategies of poor urban youth.<sup>1/</sup> They are intimately linked with reciprocal assistance networks in the marginal areas and are closely related to the informal modes of organization which serve as the interface between the formal and informal sectors of the urban economy.

An important policy area is involved in sports clubs and other informal organizations of youth in the potential offered by them as focal points for establishing concrete participatory channels for improving the livelihood of these youth. As spontaneous associations not artificially imposed from outside, the strength of "grass roots" organizational forms has, in fact, been perceived in the past both by state as well as ecclesiastical authorities. Mobilization efforts have even been resorted to for political ends occasionally with results which have alarmed the political intermediaries behind such events. An example of this use of unconventional youth organizational forms may be seen in the use of gangs in Mexico ("los porros") for street demonstrations, violence and infiltration of student movements in the first half of the 1970s.<sup>2/</sup>

It is plausible to expect many of the governments to ignore these autochthonous youth organizations and to devise mechanisms of mobilization from

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<sup>1/</sup> Larissa Lomnitz, Cómo sobreviven los marginales, Siglo XXI Ed., 1975, and "Mecanismos de articulación entre el sector informal y el sector formal urbano", Revista Mexicana de Sociología, 40:1 (January-March 1978), pp. 131-153.

<sup>2/</sup> Lomnitz, "Mecanismos de articulación ...", p. 149.

above and regimentation (including extended military service and civilian youth corps). Although these measures may provide the illusion of participation and social usefulness, their effectiveness will in all probability be quite limited. Until creative solutions founded in basic values of democracy and solidarity are forthcoming, such proposals will be received as ingenuous. Consequently, continuing indifference or resistance to these external mobilization trends by youth in the low social strata seems inevitable.