INTRODUCTION
Opening Up the Canon
of Democracy

Boaventura de Sousa Santos and Leonardo Avritzer

When recently asked what had been the most important event of the twentieth century, Amartya Sen immediately replied: the emergence of democracy (1999: 3). With a more pessimistic view of the twentieth century, Immanuel Wallerstein also recently questioned how it was possible that democracy had changed from a revolutionary aspiration in the nineteenth century to a universally adopted, though empty, slogan in the twentieth century (2001: 1). What these two positions have in common, despite significant differences, is the assumption that democracy has played a central role in politics during the twentieth century. Whether it continues to do so in the century we have now entered remains to be seen.

The twentieth century was, in fact, one of intense dispute about the question of democracy. This dispute, which took place at the end of both world wars and throughout the period of the Cold War, involved two main debates. In the first half of the century, the debate was centered on whether democracy was desirable (Weber, 1919; Schmitt, 1926; Kelsen, 1929; Michels, 1949; Schumpeter, 1942). If, on the one hand, this debate was resolved in favor of the desirability of democracy as a form of government, on the other, the proposal that became hegemonic at the end of the Second World War implied a restriction of broad forms of participation and sovereignty in favor of a consensus on electoral processes to form governments (Schumpeter, 1942). This was the hegemonic form of democratic practice in the post-war period, particularly in countries that became democratic after the second wave of democratization.

A second debate permeated the discussion on democracy in the post-Second World War period. This debate was about the structural conditions of democracy (Moore, 1966; O'Donnell, 1973; Przeworski, 1984) and also about the compatibility of democracy and capitalism (Wood, 1966). Barrington Moore generated this debate in the 1960s by presenting a typology according to which countries with or without democratic leanings could be identified. For Moore, there was a set of structural characteristics that explained the low democratic density in the second half of the twentieth century: the role of the state in the process of modernization and its relation with the agrarian classes; the relation between the agrarian and urban sectors and the level of rupture provoked by the peasants in the course of the modernization process (Moore, 1966). Moore's objective was to explain why most countries were not, and could not become, democratic without a change in existing conditions.

Meanwhile, a second issue was linked with the debate about the structural requirements of democracy—the issue of the redistributive potentialities of democracy. The debate about this issue stemmed from the assumption that as certain countries won the battle for democracy they, along with the form of government, began to enjoy a certain distributive propensity characterized by the arrival of social democracy to power (Przeworski, 1984). There would be, therefore, a tension between capitalism and democracy, which, once resolved in favor of democracy, would place limits on property and imply distributive gains for underprivileged social sectors. Marxists, in their turn, understood that this solution demanded a total reformulation of democracy, given that in capitalist societies it was not possible to democratize the fundamental relation between capital and labor on which material production was based. As a result of this, in the scope of this debate, alternative models to liberal democracy were discussed: participatory democracy, popular democracy in the countries of Eastern Europe, developmental democracy in countries that had recently gained independence.

The discussion on democracy in the last decade of the twentieth century changed the terms of the post-war debate. The extension of the hegemonic liberal model to the south of Europe, still in the 1970s, and later to Latin America and Eastern Europe (O'Donnell, Schmitter et al., 1986) made Moore's analysis outdated. The perspectives on democracy in the second half of the twentieth century, with their discussions of the structural impediments of democracy, seem somewhat irrelevant, given that dozens of countries have begun the process of democratization. There are enormous differences both in the role played by the rural classes and in the processes of urbanization in these countries. Amartya Sen is among those who celebrate the loss of credibility of the idea of structural conditions when he states that the question is not whether a given country is prepared for democracy, but rather that one should begin from the assumption that any country prepares itself through democracy (1999: 4). Furthermore, with the dismantling of the welfare state and with the reduction of social policies in the 1980s, the analyses of the irreversible distributive effects of democracy by authors such as Przeworski or Lipset seemed to be unconfirmed. Thus, the discussion about the structural
meaning of democracy was reopened, particularly for the so-called developing countries or countries of the South. As the debate on the structural meaning of democracy changed its terms, a second question also surfaced: the problem of the form of democracy and its variations. This question received its most influential answer in the elitist solution proposed by Joseph Schumpeter, according to whom the general question of constructing democracy should be seen from the perspective of the problems faced in the construction of democracy in Europe during the period between the wars. What might be referred to as the hegemonic conception of democracy is based on this response. The main elements of this conception of democracy are the much emphasized contradiction between mobilization and institutionalization (Huntington, 1968; Germaini, 1971); the valorization of political apathy (Downs, 1956), an idea stressed by Schumpeter, for whom common citizens possessed neither ability nor interest in politics, other than to choose leaders to make decisions for them (1942: 269); the concentration of the debate on democracy on the electoral designs of democracies (Lijphart, 1984); the treatment of pluralism as a form of sectarian incorporation and dispute between elites (Dahl, 1956; 1971); and the minimalist solution to the problem of participation via the discussion of scales and complexity (Bobbio, 1986; Dahl, 1991). None of these elements, which can be seen as constituting elements of the hegemonic conception of democracy, can adequately address the problem of the quality of democracy that resurfaced with the so-called “third wave of democratization.” The more the classic formula of low-intensity democracy is insisted upon, the less the paradox of the extension of democracy having brought with it an enormous degradation of democratic practices can be explained. Moreover, the global expansion of liberal democracy coincided with a serious crisis in the core countries where it had been most consolidated, a crisis that became known as the crisis of double pathology: the pathology of participation, especially in view of the dramatic increase in levels of abstention; and the pathology of representation—the fact that citizens feel themselves less and less represented by those they have elected. At the same time, the end of the Cold War and the intensification of the processes of globalization implied a re-evaluation of the problem of the homogeneity of democratic practice. The variation in democratic practice is viewed with great interest in the current debate on democracy, changing the very adjectives used in the political debate of the Cold War period—popular democracies versus liberal democracies. At the same time, and, paradoxically, the process of globalization (Santos, 2002) has given rise to a new emphasis on local democracy and on the variations of the democratic form within the national state, allowing the recovery of participatory traditions in countries such as Brazil, India, Mozambique, South Africa, and even Colombia, just to mention the countries studied in this project. We may, therefore, point to a triple crisis of traditional democratic explanation. There is, first, a crisis of the structural framework of the explanation of democratic possibility (Moore, 1966); second, there is a crisis in the homogenizing explanation of the form of democracy that emerged as a result of the debates during the period between the wars (Schumpeter, 1942); and, third, there is a new tendency to examine local democracy and the possibility of variation within national states based on the recuperation of participatory traditions that had been suppressed in the process of constructing homogenous national identities (Anderson, 1991).

In this introduction, we intend to move one step beyond and show that the democratic debate throughout the twentieth century got stuck on two complementary forms of hegemony: a first form of hegemony based on the assumption that the solution of the European debate of the period between the wars would have meant the abandonment of the role of social mobilization and collective action in the construction of democracy (Huntington, 1969); and a second form of hegemony that assumed that an elitist solution to the debate on democracy, with the consequent overvalorization of the role of the mechanisms of representation, could have become hegemonic without linking these mechanisms to societal mechanisms of participation (Manin, 1997). In both cases, the hegemonic form of democracy (the elitist representative democracy) proposes to extend to the rest of the world the model of liberal representative democracy that prevails in the societies of the northern hemisphere, ignoring the experiments and discussions coming from the countries of the southern hemisphere in the debate on democracy. Starting from a reconstruction of the debate on democracy in the second half of the twentieth century, we aim to propose a counter-hegemonic course for the debate on democracy, redeeming what was implied in the debate of that period.

THE HEGEMONIC CONCEPTION OF DEMOCRACY IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The debate on democracy in the first half of the twentieth century was marked by the confrontation between two conceptions of the world and their relation with the process of western modernization: on the one hand, the conception that C. B. Macpherson baptized as “liberal democracy” (Macpherson, 1966), and on the other a Marxist conception of democracy that took self-determination in the world of labor as the center of the process of the exercise of sovereignty on the part of citizens understood as individual producers (Pateman, 1970). From this confrontation stemmed the hegemonic conceptions within democratic theory that came to prevail in the second half of the twentieth century. These conceptions are related to the answer given to three questions: that of the relation between procedure and form; that of the role of bureaucracy in democratic life; and that of the
inevitability of representation in large-scale democracies. Let us examine each of the answers to these questions in detail.

The question of democracy as form and not content was the response given by the hegemonic democratic theory to the critique made by Marxist theory (Marx, 1871; Lenin, 1917). Hans Kelsen formulated this question in neo-Kantian terms, still in the first half of the twentieth century. According to him, the main point was to criticize the idea that democracy could correspond to a precise set of values and a single form of political organization:

Whoever considers absolute truth and absolute values inaccessible to human knowledge must consider possible not only their own opinion but also the opinion of others. Thus, relativism is the conception of the world assumed by the idea of democracy [...]. Democracy offers each political conviction the same possibility to express itself and to seek the will of men through free competition. Thus, the dialectic procedure adopted by the popular assembly or parliament in the creation of norms, a procedure which develops through speeches and replies, came to be known as democratic. (Kelsen, 1929: 105–6)

In its initial formulation, Kelsenian proceduralism sought to articulate moral relativism with methods for the solution of disagreements that included parliament, as well as more direct forms of expression (Kelsen, 1929: 142). This moral relativism implied the reduction of the problem of legitimacy to the problem of legality, a reduction that Kelsen took from an incorrect reading of Weber. In the period between the wars and immediately after, Joseph Schumpeter and Norberto Bobbio transformed the proceduralist element of the Kelsenian doctrine of democracy into a form of democratic elitism.

Schumpeter begins his reflection with the same element that would generate Bobbio’s political reflection: the questioning of the idea of a strong popular sovereignty associated with a content of society proposed by Marxist doctrine. In his classic book Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, Schumpeter criticizes this element by posing the question of whether it is possible for the people to govern. His reply is clear and involves a development of the procedural argument. According to him, we cannot think of popular sovereignty as a rational positioning on a given question by the population as a whole or by each individual. Therefore, the procedural element of democracy is no longer the way in which the process of decision-making refers to popular sovereignty, but precisely the opposite: “a political method, that is, a certain type of institutional arrangement to arrive at political and administrative decisions” (Schumpeter, 1942: 242). In this way, Schumpeter turns the procedural concern with the rules of decision-making into a method for the constitution of governments. The motive for excluding participation from this process is a part not of the procedural argument but rather of

a theory of mass society that Schumpeter smuggles into the procedural discussion.³

Norberto Bobbio takes the next step in transforming proceduralism into rules for the formation of the representative government. For him, democracy is constituted by a set of rules for the constitution of majorities, among which it is worth emphasizing the principle of one person one vote and the absence of economic, social, religious and ethnic distinctions among the electorate (Bobbio, 1979). Thus, it is important to recognize that the first route of affirmation of the hegemonic conception of democracy in the post-war period leads from the valorization of pluralism to the reduction of sovereignty, and then from a broad discussion of the rules of the democratic game to the identification of democracy with the rules of the electoral process. At no time in the route that goes from Kelsen to Schumpeter to Bobbio is it clear why proceduralism does not admit enlarged forms of democracy.² On the contrary, the reduction of proceduralism to a process of elections of elites appears to be an ad hoc postulate of the hegemonic theory of democracy. This postulate cannot provide a convincing answer to two major questions: the question of knowing whether elections exhaust the procedures of authorization on the part of citizens and the question of knowing whether the procedures of representation exhaust the question of the representation of difference. We will return to these two issues later when we discuss the new forms of participatory proceduralism that have emerged in the countries of the South.

A second discussion was central in the consolidation of the hegemonic conception of democracy: the way in which bureaucracy and its indispensability were brought to the center of democratic theory. This discussion also refers to the period between the wars and to the debate between liberalism and Marxist theory. Max Weber began this line of questioning of the classical theory of democracy by positing, within the debate on democracy at the beginning of the century, the inevitability of the loss of control over the process of political and economic decision-making by citizens and its growing control by forms of bureaucratic organization. The main reason why Rousseau’s conception of participatory management did not prevail was the emergence of complex forms of state administration, which led to the consolidation of specialized bureaucracies in most of the areas managed by the modern state. For Weber, “the separation of the worker from the material means of production, destruction, administration, academic research and finance in general is the common base of the modern State, in its political, cultural and military spheres” (Weber, 1919, II: 1394). Weber’s position, which is in direct dialogue with the formulations of Marx in The Civil War in France, is an attempt to show that the rise of bureaucracy does not derive from the class organization of capitalist society, nor is it a phenomenon restricted to the sphere of material production. For Weber, bureaucracy is
linked to the rise and development of the modern state, and the separation of workers and the means of production constitutes a general and wide-ranging phenomenon that involves not only workers, but also the military, scientific researchers and all individuals engaged in complex activities in the economy and the state. Weber, however, did not intend to associate sociological realism with political desirability. On the contrary, for him the phenomenon of complexity posed problems to the functioning of democracy insofar as it created a tension between growing sovereignty (the control of governments by the governed) and decreasing sovereignty (the control of the governed by bureaucracy). It is from this that Weber’s pessimism in the face of the double emergence of the “iron cage” of the “administered world” and of the danger of emotional actions that might instigate new charismatic powers stems.

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the discussion about complexity and the inevitability of bureaucracy became more intense as the functions of the state also increased with the institution of the welfare state in European countries (Esping-Anderson, 1990; Shonfield and Shonfield, 1984). With the growth of state functions linked to social welfare, the discussion about the desirability of the growth of bureaucracy changed in tone and acquired a positive connotation (the exception being the work of Michel Foucault). In the field of democratic theory, Norberto Bobbio was, once again, the author who synthesized the change of perspective in relation to the Weberian mistrust of the increase of the capacity of control of bureaucracy over the modern individual. For Bobbio,

As societies moved from a household economy to a market economy, from a market economy to a protected, regulated and planned economy, political problems which require technical skills increased. Technical problems demand, in turn, experts, specialists [...]. Technocracy and democracy are antithetical: if the protagonist of industrial society is the specialist, it is impossible that it could be the common citizen. (Bobbio, 1986: 33–4)

In other words, Bobbio radicalizes the Weberian argument by stating that the citizen, by opting for mass consumer society and the welfare state, knows that he is giving up control over political and economic activities in favor of private and public bureaucracies. However, one question does not seem to be resolved by the theorists who defend the substitution of the mechanisms of the exercise of sovereignty by citizens for the increase of bureaucratic control over politics: the skepticism about the capability of bureaucratic forms of management to deal with creativity and to absorb the information involved in public management (Domingues, 1997; Fung and Wright, 2003). The bureaucratic forms described by Weber and Bobbio are monocratic in the way they manage administrative personnel and in the way they advocate a homogenizing solution for each problem confronted in each jurisdiction. That is to say, the traditional conception of bureaucratic management advocates a homogeneous solution for each problem, at each level of administrative management within an administrative jurisdiction. However, administrative problems require increasingly plural solutions, in which the coordination of distinct groups and different solutions occur within the same jurisdiction (Sabel, 1997). Thus, the knowledge held by social actors becomes a central element not approiprable by bureaucracies for the solution of management problems. At the same time, it becomes increasingly clear that centralized bureaucracies are not able to aggregate or deal with all the information required for the carrying out of complex policies in social, environmental and cultural areas (Sabel et al., 1999). This is the reason for the reinsertion of the so-called “participatory arrangements” in the debate on democracy.

The third element of the hegemonic conception of democracy is the idea that representation constitutes the only possible solution to the problem of authorization in large-scale democracies. Among the authors of the post-war period, it was Robert Dahl who defended this position most emphatically:

the smaller the democratic unit, the greater the potential for citizen participation, and the lesser the need for citizens to delegate government decisions to their representatives. The larger the unit, the greater is the capacity to deal with problems that are relevant for citizens, and the greater the need for citizens to delegate decisions to their representatives. (Dahl, 1998: 110)

The justification for representation by the hegemonic theory of democracy rests on the question of authorization. Two main pillars support the argument of authorization: the first is related to the problem of the consensus of the representatives and came up, within classical democratic theory, in opposition to the forms of rotation in the decision-making process that characterizes direct democracy (Marin, 1997). According to this conception, the direct administration of the ancient city-states or Italian republics involved a lack of authorization, which was replaced by the idea of equal rights to occupy political decision-making posts. As the idea of consensus emerged within the debates on a rational theory of politics, the apportioning peculiar to the republican forms of decision-making no longer made sense and was replaced by the idea of consensus, that is, by some rational mechanism of authorization.

The second form of justification of the question of representation leads to John Stuart Mill and the question of the ability of the forms of representation to express the distribution of opinions at the level of society. For Mill, the assembly constitutes a miniature of the electorate, and every representative assembly is capable of expressing the dominant tendencies of the
electorate. Such an approach led the hegemonic conception of democracy to focus on the role of electoral systems in the representation of the electorate (Lijphart, 1984). By linking the problem of representation exclusively to the problem of scales, the hegemonic conception of democracy ignores the fact that representation involves at least three dimensions: authorization, identity, and accountability (the last of these was introduced into the debate on democracy very recently). If it is true that authorization via representation facilitates the exercise of democracy on a large scale, as Dahl argues, it is also true that representation makes the solution of the other two questions difficult: that of accountability and that of the representation of multiple identities. Representation through the method of decision-making by the majority does not guarantee that minority identities will be adequately represented in parliament. By diluting accountability in a process of re-presentation of the representative within a block of questions, representation also complicates the disaggregation of the process of accountability (Arato, 2000; Przeworski, Stokes et al., 1999: 32). Thus, we arrive at a third limit of the hegemonic theory of democracy: the difficulty of representing specific agendas and identities. We will return to this point in the final part of this introduction.

We can see, therefore, that the hegemonic theory of democracy, at the moment at which the debate on democracy is reopened with the end of the Cold War and the widening of the process of globalization, finds itself facing a set of unresolved questions that lead to the debate between representative democracy and participatory democracy. These are particularly pointed questions in those countries in which a greater ethnic diversity exists, especially among those groups that find it more difficult to have their rights recognized (Benhabib, 1996; Young, 2000), and in countries in which the question of the diversity of interests collides with the particularism of economic elites (Börön, 1994). In the following section, we will seek to recover what we refer to as a “non-hegemonic conception of democracy,” and attempt to show how the problems mentioned in this section can be articulated from a different point of view.

**NON-HEGEMONIC CONCEPTIONS OF DEMOCRACY IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

The post-war period witnessed not only the formation and consolidation of democratic elitism, but also the emergence of a set of alternative conceptions that might be referred to as counter-hegemonic. The majority of these conceptions did not break with Kelsian proceduralism. They maintained the procedural response to the problem of democracy, linking procedure with a way of life and perceiving democracy as a way of perfecting human relations. According to this conception, which can be found in the work of authors such as Lefort, Castoriadis and Habermas, in the North (Lefort, 1986; Castoriadis, 1986; Habermas, 1984; Habermas, 1995) and Lechner, Nun and Börön in the South (Lechner, 1988; Börön, 1994; Nun, 2002), democracy is an organizing grammar of society and of the relation between the state and society:

> democracy reveals itself to be, in this way, historic society par excellence, the society that by its form gathers and preserves indetermination, in marked contrast to totalitarianism which, constructing itself under the sign of the creation of the new man, in reality acts against this indetermination. (Lefort, 1986: 31)

We can see, therefore, that the concern at the origin of non-hegemonic conceptions of democracy is the same that is at the origin of the hegemonic conception, but that it receives a different response. It has to do with the negation of substantive conceptions of reason and the homogenizing forms of the organization of society, and with the recognition of human plurality. Nevertheless, the recognition of human plurality comes about not only from the suspension of the idea of the common good, as Schumpeter, Downs, and Bobbio propose, but also from two distinct criteria: the emphasis on the creation of a new social and cultural grammar and the understanding of social innovation articulated with institutional innovation, that is, with the search for a new democratic institutionality. We will go on to develop both these aspects next.

The problem of democracy in non-hegemonic conceptions is closely linked to the recognition that democracy does not constitute a mere accident or a simple work of institutional engineering. Democracy is a new historic grammar. Thus, the issue is not, as in Barrington Moore, that of thinking through the structural determinations for the constitution of this new grammar. Rather, it is that of understanding that democracy is a socio-historical form, and that such forms are not determined by any kind of natural laws. Exploring this vein, Castoriadis provides us with elements to think through the critique of the hegemonic conception of democracy: “Some think today that democracy or rational investigation are self-evident, thus naively projecting the exceptional situation of their own society onto the whole of history” (Castoriadis, 1986: 274). Democracy, in this sense, always implies a break with established traditions, and, therefore, the attempt to institute new determinations, new norms and new laws. This is the indetermination produced by the democratic grammar, rather than only the indetermination of not knowing who will be the new holder of a position of power.

Thinking about democracy as a positive rupture in the trajectory of a society implies approaching the cultural elements of this society. Once again, a space is opened to discuss proceduralism and its societal dimensions.
Within counter-hegemonic theories, Jürgen Habermas was the author who opened the discussion on proceduralism as a societal practice and not as a method of constituting governments. Habermas expanded proceduralism, reintroducing the societal dimension originally emphasized by Kelsen, by proposing the condition of publicness as capable of generating a new societal grammar. For Habermas, the public sphere constitutes a place in which individuals—women, blacks, workers, racial minorities—can problematize in public a condition of inequality in the private sphere. The public actions of individuals allow them to question their exclusion from political arrangements through a principle of societal deliberation that Habermas refers to as principle D: "Only those action-norms are valid which count on the assent of all the individuals that participate in a rational discourse" (Habermas, 1995). Postulating a principle of wide deliberation, Habermas reintroduces societal and participatory proceduralism into the discussion on democracy, introducing a new element in the route that leads from Kelsen to Schumpeter and Bobbio. According to this conception, proceduralism has its origin in the plurality of the ways of life in contemporary societies. Politics, in order to be plural, must count on the assent of these actors in rational processes of discussion and deliberation. Therefore, democratic proceduralism cannot be, as Bobbio supposes, a method of authorizing governments. It must be a form of collective exercise of political power based on a free process of presentation of reasons among equals (Cohen, 1997: 412). In this way, the recuperation of an argumentative discourse (Santos, 2000), associated with the basic fact of pluralism and the different experiences, is part of the reorganization of proceduralism and participation. Thus, the procedures of aggregation that characterize representative democracy are seen to be patently insufficient, and the experiments of participatory proceduralism of the Southern countries appear in evidence, such as participatory budgeting in Brazil or the experiment of the Panchayats in India.

There is still an extremely important issue to be discussed, which is the role of social movements in the institutionalization of cultural diversity. This issue, which was already anticipated in the critique of hegemonic theory by Lefort and Castoriadis, appeared more clearly in the debate on democracy from the theory of social movements. Starting with Williams (1981), for whom culture constitutes a dimension of all institutions—economic, social and political—various authors within the field of the theory of social movements began to bring up the fact that politics involves a dispute about a complex of cultural significations. This discussion led to a widening of the field of politics in which there occurred a dispute on the re-signification of practices (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998). Social movements would be inserted into movements for the widening of politics, for the transformation of dominant practices, for the expansion of citizenship, and for the insertion of social actors excluded from politics. The literature on the re-signification of democratic practices had a particularly strong impact on democratic discussion in Latin America, where it was associated with the transformation of societal grammar. Lechner states, in relation to the current processes of democratization, that

[In Latin America, the current revalorization of the formal procedures and institutions of democracy cannot be supported by established habits and recognized norms. It is not a question of restoring regulative norms, but of creating norms which constitute political activity: the transition demands the elaboration of a new grammar. (Lechner, 1988: 32)]

Thus, in the case of various countries of the South, redemocratization did not involve facing the challenge of the structural limits of democracy, as the discussion on democracy in the 1960s supposed. By inserting new actors into the political stage, what democratization did was to instigate a dispute on the meaning of democracy and on the constitution of a new social grammar. Giving rise to this type of dispute, the extension of democracy that began in southern Europe in the 1970s and in Latin America in the 1980s brought up again, in the agenda of the discussion on democracy, the three questions discussed above.

In the first place, it posed again the question of the relation between procedure and societal participation. Due to the strong participation of social movements in the processes of democratization in the countries of the South, especially in Latin America (Escobar and Alvarez, 1992; Alvarez, Dagnino, and Escobar, 1998; Doimo, 1995; Jelin and Herschberg, 1996; Avritzer, 2002), the problem of the constitution of a social grammar capable of changing gender, race and ethnic relations, as well as the private appropriation of public resources, placed in the order of the day the problem of the need for a new social grammar and a new form of relation between the state and society. This grammar implied the introduction of experimentalism in the very sphere of the state transforming the state into an absolutely new social movement (Santos, 1998: 59–74).

In the second place, the accent on social participation also led to a re-definition of the appropriateness of the non-participatory and bureaucratic solution at the local level, posing once again the problem of scale within the debate on democracy. The success of most of the participatory experiments in the recently democratized countries of the South is related to the ability of the social actors to transfer practices and information from the social level to the administrative level. At the same time, the institutional innovations that appear to be successful in countries of the South are related to what Castoriadis calls the establishment of a new eidos, i.e., a new political order based on the creativity of social actors.
In the third place, there is the problem of the relation between representation and cultural and social diversity. As the number of actors involved in politics grows, and the ethnic and cultural diversity of social actors and the interests involved in political arrangements increase, John Stuart Mill’s argument on representation becomes less convincing. The most socially vulnerable groups, the less favored social sectors, and ethnic minorities are not able to have their interests represented in the political system with the same ease as the majority or more economically prosperous sectors. Forms of relativizing representation (Young, 2000) or of articulating representative democracy and participatory democracy (Santos, 1998) seem to offer more hope for the defense of subaltern interests and identities. For these reasons, participatory democracy is considered in this research project to be one of the five great social and political fields where, at the beginning of the new century, social emancipation is being reinvented. In the next section we will present a synthesis of the case studies of this project.

PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY IN THE SOUTH IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The reinvention of participatory democracy in the countries of the South is intimately related to the recent processes of democratization that those countries underwent. We are dealing, therefore, with countries that, according to the hegemonic logic of the post-Second World War period, were not part of the so-called democratic field. Until 1975, Mozambique lived under the colonial yoke, and South Africa, until the end of the 1980s, lived under an apartheid regime. For most of the twentieth century Brazil alternated between authoritarian and democratic periods and Colombia lived in a severely restricted democracy truncated by successive states of emergency and civil war. The exception is India, the only one of the countries studied that remained democratic throughout the whole period, interrupted only by the declaration of a state of emergency in 1977. Even so, it was only with the so-called “third wave of democratization” that participatory experiments such as that of Kerala became possible.

All the countries included in this project have undergone processes of transition or democratic expansion from the 1970s. Brazil and South Africa were reached by the “third wave” in the 1980s and 1990s, the same happening in Mozambique, after having gone through a revolutionary and socialist stage in the first decade after independence. Colombia took a different route. It did not have an authoritarian military regime, unlike most Latin American countries, and it made, at the beginning of the 1990s, a great effort at social negotiation, which resulted in a new Constitution and a law of citizen participation. Among the countries of the South, India may be considered the one with the greatest democratic continuity, although some of the important processes of participatory democracy in the country are linked to decentralization and differentiated traditions of participation at a local level, which have been recently recuperated.

In all cases, along with the expansion of democracy or its restoration, there was also a process of redefining its cultural meaning or established social grammar. This process occurs in every trajectory of democratization. The inclusion of the case studies of Colombia is intended to show its presence, even in the most adverse conditions. Thus, all the cases of participatory democracy studied began with an attempt to dispute the meaning of certain political practices, with an attempt to expand the social grammar and incorporate new actors and new issues into politics. During the Brazilian process of democratization and the constitution of community actors, Arendt’s idea of “the right to have rights” became part of the redefinition of new social actors (Sader, 1988; Dagnino, 1994). The same redefinition is detectable in many of the cases referred to in this volume: in the case of the march of the cocaleros (coca farmers and pickers) in Colombia, Ramírez shows that the struggle against the fumigation of the coca crops expresses an attempt on the part of the peasants in the Amazon region to demand, in a context of external violence, the recognition of an alternative identity to the one constructed by the state. Considered as drug traffickers and guerrilla sympathizers by the state, these peasants demand to be recognized as independent social actors and citizens of the country and of Putumayo, identifying their condition of citizens with a voluntary policy of coca eradication being negotiated with the Colombian government. Ramírez shows how this movement implied associating citizenship with a definition of belonging. By demanding this recognition, the movement sought to achieve representation vis-à-vis the state as a differentiated group with its own voice able to decide jointly on policies concerning the welfare of the inhabitants of Putumayo.

Also relating to Colombia, Uribe’s study shows how the inhabitants of San José de Apartadó, by creating the status of a “community of peace,” demand the legitimacy of a self-representation alternative to that conferred on them by both the state and violent actors (guerrilla and paramilitary). The same concept of identity can be seen in the cases of India and South Africa. D. L. Sheth shows how the hegemony of the model of liberal democracy in India did not prevent the emergence of social movements energized by participatory ideals and principles of social solidarity interpreted in the light of a Gandhian concept of self-government (strong). Buhlungu shows the strength of the new forms of solidarity and identity that emerged at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s stemming from the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, in which two strong collective actors played important parts: the civic movement and the labor union movement.

The questioning of representation on the basis of the struggle for identity redefinitions, which, by their greater inclusiveness and openness to difference,
The document is a page from a book discussing the role of women in political movements in Mozambique, particularly in the context of the overall liberation struggle against colonial rule. The text is difficult to read due to the quality of the image, but it appears to be a continuation of the discussion on the intersection of gender and politics in the liberation movement.

The text at the bottom of the page is about the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The document also references specific events and individuals associated with the Mozambican struggle, such as the role of women in the National Resistance Movement (MNR) and the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO).

The text discusses the challenges faced by women in the context of the liberation struggle, including issues of representation, leadership, and家の相互接続

The document includes a section on the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, highlighting their contributions to the struggle against colonial rule and the subsequent development of women's organizations. The text mentions the need for gender equality and the importance of recognizing women's contributions to the liberation struggle.

The text also refers to the role of women in the Mozambican struggle, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.

The document also mentions the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.

The text also refers to the role of women in the Mozambican struggle, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.

The document also mentions the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.

The text also refers to the role of women in the Mozambican struggle, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.

The document also mentions the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.

The text also refers to the role of women in the Mozambican struggle, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.

The document also mentions the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.

The text also refers to the role of women in the Mozambican struggle, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.

The document also mentions the role of women in the Mozambican resistance movement, emphasizing their contributions to the liberation movement and the development of women's organizations. The text highlights the importance of recognizing the role of women in the liberation struggle and the need to address issues of gender equality.
DEMOCRATIZING DEMOCRACY

for women's intervention that this discourse provides as well as on the constraints that it creates. These discourses continue to establish and justify discriminatory practices based on sexual difference. The mobilization, by women, of a wide range of strategies and practices to contest these discourses and the constraints that accompany them points to specific forms of articulation of the identities of woman and worker and the recognition of both.

Thus, in conclusion to this section it is possible to demonstrate that, apart from many differences between the various political processes analyzed, there is something that unites them, a common trait that is related to the counterhegemonic theory of democracy: the actors who established new experiments in participatory democracy or who struggled for autonomous inclusion in pre-constituted institutions and public spaces put in question an identity that had been externally attributed to them by the colonial state, by an authoritarian and discriminatory state or by other social institutions. Claiming rights to locally distributed public goods (Brazil), and rights to participate and demand the recognition of difference (Colombia, India, South Africa, and Mozambique), implies questioning a social and state grammar of exclusion and proposing a more inclusive alternative.

What is at stake in these processes is the constitution of a participatory and inclusive ideal as part of projects of liberation from colonialism and social oppression (in India, South Africa, and Mozambique) or of democratization (Brazil and Colombia). India had an independence movement that was highly influenced by the philosophy and practice of Gandhi, which included the affirmation of an autonomous project for the country. As Sheth states, such a liberation movement, in its Gandhian dimensions, as well as its socialist and communist dimensions, implied a broad project of incorporation of the Indian masses—a movement that came together in a Constitution that was understood not only as a document of political organization, but also as an agenda for the social and political transformation of an independent India. This agenda emphatically included the idea of participation and political inclusion of poor and marginalized tribal castes. Buhlungu shows us a similar agenda in the case of South Africa, given that the struggle against apartheid was inspired by a participatory ideal that simultaneously postulated the equality of citizens and the recognition of difference. For Buhlungu, every struggle, as well as the vision of freedom or liberation that inspires it, always contains a promise of a decentralized or participatory kind of democracy that is inclusive rather than exclusive. In the case of Mozambique, the institutionalization of liberal democracy occurred in the aftermath of a revolutionary experiment dominated by the ideals of participation, although, in practice, often curtailed by revolutionary authoritarianism and sexist domination. Thus, a common trait in post-colonial movements is the importance of participatory democracy. It is important because, as Castoriadis states, it creates an imaginary post-colonial normativity in which democracy, as a project of social inclusion and cultural innovation, is put forward as an attempt to institute a new democratic sovereignty.

Likewise, the recent processes of democratization also incorporate the element of the institution of participation. In the case of Brazil, during the process of democratization, community movements in various regions of the country, and particularly in the city of Porto Alegre, claimed the right to participate in decision-making at the local level:

Participating means directly influencing and controlling decisions [...]. If the country is at a new stage, it is possible and necessary that the community movement advances and has a direct influence, presenting proposals discussed and defined by the movement on the [public] budget. (UAMPA, 1986; Silva, 2001: 122)

Among other benefits, this participatory drive came to bear fruit in the participatory budgeting experiments analyzed by Santos and by Avritzer. In the case of Colombia, the negotiation that led to the Constitution of 1991 generated a broad process of participation that led to greater political involvement and visibility of certain social actors. Among them, the indigenous movement that had been fighting for its recognition for some time must be emphasized. Uprinny and Villegas analyze the way this recognition was achieved at the level of the Constitutional Court, and in the third volume of this collection the indigenous issue will be dealt with in more detail.

THE VULNERABILITIES AND AMBIGUITIES OF PARTICIPATION

In the previous section we sought to show that the processes of liberation and the processes of democratization seem to share a common element: the perception of the possibility of innovation understood as the wide participation of different types of social actors in decision-making. In general, these processes imply the inclusion of issues until then ignored by the political system, the redefinition of identities and affiliations and the increase in participation, namely at the local level.

These processes tend to be the object of intense political debate. As we have seen, capitalist societies, especially in the core countries, consolidated a hegemonic conception of democracy (that of liberal democracy) with which they sought to stabilize and contain the tension between democracy and capitalism. This stabilization occurred in two ways: by giving priority to the accumulation of capital over social redistribution, and by restricting participation by citizens, as much individual as collective, with the aim of not "overloading" the democratic regime with social demands that could put in danger the priority of accumulation over redistribution. The fear of "democratic overload" presided over the transformations that, from the beginning
However, the authors show how a contradiction pervaded, from the beginning, the attempt to create a new institutional order, as both the government and the opposition assumed positions that worked against the pacification of the political arena and the expansion of participation and rights. The study Urrutia and Villegas concentrates specifically on the Constitutional Court created in 1992. For the authors, the case of the Colombian Constitutional Court shows how, in a situation of the demobilization of citizens, the demand for equality and justice can shift from the political field to the judicial field. Colombians' disenchantment with politics has led certain sectors to demand answers from the judiciary to problems that, in principle, should be debated and resolved by means of citizens' participation in the political sphere. This phenomenon is not exclusive to Colombia (Santos et al., 1995), but in this country the weakness of the mechanisms for political representation runs deep, a fact that has enabled the Court to assume a more prominent role. Thus, in the case of Colombia, we have a double dimension. On the one hand, as the authors point out, Colombia has a tradition of weak social movements. On the other hand, many of the actors that dominated the Constituent Assembly became weak in the following years. Thus, Colombia appears as a special case of the vulnerability of participation, revealing the ambiguous impact of a strong judiciary on social movements.

From different perspectives the chapters by Francisco Güíérrez Sain and Ana María Jaramillo and by Mauricio Romero address the vulnerability of participation by showing different ways in which participation may turn into submission, and inclusion into exclusion. Güíérrez Sain and Jaramillo lead us on a journey through Colombian society and what they call its “racist” tradition. This has been at the center of attempts to resolve the tension between two elements of this society: the stability of the macro-institutional, democratic forms and a long tradition of diffuse, chronic armed conflicts. The solution to this tension has involved pacts that have maintained an unstable dynamic of wars that have led to pacts, and pacts that have led to new wars, all within an institutional context in which power, including armed power, is “subject to multiple restrictions.” In this way, the “pendulum of war” has become the “attractor” of the dynamics of the conflicts in Colombian society. In the interplay between necessity and liberty, this social world, “governed” by an “attractor,” wavers between the articulation of resistance and social protest expressed in a pendular language and the possibility of a grammar of its own, defining a different space for participation, citizenship and democracy. However, taking into account the experiences of the last 20 years, if on a national scale the pacts are indispensable, on a local scale they appear undesirable. In fact, the pacts result in one of three possible situations: the physical destruction of their protagonists, the breaking of the pact or the anti-democratic concentration of power in the hands of one or more of the protagonists, with particular combinations of these situations.

of the 1980s, occurred in hegemonic democratic theory and practice in the core countries, being then exported to the semiperiphery and periphery of the world system. The idea of “democratic overload” had been formulated in 1975 in a report of the Tripartite Commission prepared by Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki (1975). They argued that the overload was caused by the political inclusion of social groups excluded in the past and by the “excessive” demands made by these groups on democracy. Thus, we can understand why at the moment when, via decolonization or democratization, the problem of the extension of democracy to the countries of the South was raised for the first time, the hegemonic conception of democracy theorized the question of the new grammar of social inclusion as an excess of demands. In the light of this, it is easy to conclude that the processes of democratic intensification that we have been discussing tend to be strongly contested by exclusionary elites, or “metropolitan elites” as Shieth refers to them. Because they go against hegemonic interests and conceptions, these processes are often fought, either as part of co-optation or integration. In this resides the vulnerability and ambiguity of participation, present in a number of the cases analyzed in this volume.

In the case of South Africa, Buhlungu shows how, as the democratic, post-apartheid regime was institutionalized, the state, the political system and the ANC itself, which had activated the whole social movement in the 1980s, came to discourage and even demobilize popular participation, which had been so important in the toppling of apartheid, under the pretext that representative democracy, now established, guaranteed the adequate representation of the various social interests.

The vulnerability of participation to adulteration, whether by power imbalances, by co-optation or by over-inclusion of social groups, or by integration in institutional contexts that erode its democratic potential, as well as its potential for transforming power relations, is well illustrated in several cases analyzed here.10 The Colombian cases presented here are particularly illustrative of the vulnerability and ambiguity of participation. Urrutia and Villegas show how the 1991 Constitution incorporated excluded and oppressed forces such as representatives of demobilized guerrilla groups, indigenous peoples, and religious minorities, thus diminishing the influence of the liberal and conservative parties, which, up until then, had dominated the political stage in Colombia. According to them, in this pluralistic framework, the diagnosis of many of the delegates to the Constituent Assembly was that exclusion, the lack of participation, and weakness in protecting human rights were the basic causes of the Colombian crisis. This explains some of the ideological orientations of the 1991 Constitution: the broadening of participation mechanisms, the imposition of the duties of promoting social justice and equality upon the state, and the incorporation of a meaningful bill of rights, as well as new judicial mechanisms for their protection.
being also possible. This dynamic brings with it the perversive consequence that these options define “the mental and moral horizon of the alternative options,” based on the articulation of “emancipatory languages and non-emancipatory materials.”

Two cases, that of the Medellín militias and that of Western Boyacá, dominated by entrepreneurs linked to the emerald trade, illustrate this situation. The pacts led to the realization of effective agreements, but with obvious costs: the armed groups can continue to do what they have always done, but now under the aura of a legality conferred upon them by the state, while the democratic rights of citizens can be sacrificed in the name of preserving the community and the peace. This makes it difficult for any emancipatory solutions, given that these “territorial dictatorships” are not compatible with the rule of law at a national level. The tension between stable macro-institutional forms and the dynamics of violence could become a common characteristic of those countries, especially in the South, in which the importation of formal democracy is merely one of the means of becoming incorporated into globalization. The authors suggest that perhaps Colombia is more indicative of the future of global capitalism than of the legacy of a pre-modern past.

The dilemmas of participation and the struggle for democratic rights within a weak state in which fragmentary forms of tyranny proliferate is equally well illustrated by Mauricio Romero, this time in a social domain with strong traditions regarding democratic struggle, namely the union movement. Romero positions us in a unique context with regard to the violation of human and union rights, if for nothing else because Colombia heads the world statistics in the number of murdered union leaders. Taking as its topic one of the most important mobilizations for social rights of the last three decades—the mobilization of banana workers in the Urabá region (next to the Panamanian border) conducted by the workers’ union of the agribusiness industry (Sintrabanagro), the author analyzes the way in which this unique experience appears to be upgrading the workers in the banana sector from the condition of “subjects” to that of “citizens.” Romero describes the way in which the banana workers of Urabá, accustomed to performing the role of victims, managed to get protection, security, and political participation in exchange for “loyalty to a political and economical order” enforced in the region by a non-state political and military actor, namely the paramilitary groups of struggle against the guerrillas. According to Romero, the rivalry among insurrectional political and military projects carrying a lot of weight in the region forced them to vie for the workers’ support, the paramilitary sector having won. Besides having improved their life conditions by becoming citizens, the banana workers of Urabá also earned international solidarity from Danish, Finnish, and Spanish unions, as well as from the International Union of Workers of Foodstuffs. To Romero’s mind, interna-

national activism was good both to counteract the relative isolation of Sintrabanagro at the national scale, by creating allies and supporters vis-à-vis eventual changes in the national political dynamics, and to confer to this very union “autonomy and independence vis-à-vis the dominant local powers.”

The same complexity of participation can be detected in Mozambique in the case study analyzed by Osório. Thus, according to the author, women’s occupation of political space can be as much a contribution to the challenge of male domination as a consolidation of it. The case of Mozambique demonstrates that, in situations in which democracy does not involve a renegotiation of a more pluralist grammar, expressed by the increase in female participation, the social grammar itself comes into conflict with the working mechanisms of the political model. The author identifies three strategies adopted by women in relation to political participation: the adaptation to existing hierarchies and, therefore, to male superiority; the adoption of the masculine model as universal, using the weapon of formal equality to further women’s power; and the vindication of an alternative model capable of subverting the dichotomies on which male power is based. Osório’s analysis leads to a reflection on the vulnerabilities of democracy. For her, the exercise of democracy, in the context of globally legitimated systems, fails to satisfy the demands of new groups, as is the case of women. This case illustrates the need for a more plural and transversal action in the different spaces of production of the political. Thus, the author shows that, even in situations where the increase in participation exists, this increase, to become emancipatory, needs to be adjusted to the attempt to recreate political forms.

We can now systematize some of the characteristics of the cases in which participation does not manage to come into being at the end of a process of decolonization or democratization. There are at least three different cases we can think of. In the first place is that of Colombia, in which the forms of participation did not lose their legitimacy, but could not be established as an alternative model due to the reaction of conservative sectors and non-state armed actors. In Mozambique the practices of participation did not lose their legitimacy either, yet there is a need for a pluralization of the political grammar itself so that the plurality of society may be assimilated by democracy. And finally, we have the case of Brazil, in which the forms of participation can be part of a process of co-optation but can also represent a fundamental innovation capable of generating counter-hegemonic models of democracy, as we will go on to show in the next section.

THE POTENTIALITIES OF PARTICIPATION

In light of the research carried out, Brazil and India are the cases in which the potentialities of participatory democracy are most clearly manifested. We would like to stress, however, that this project’s endeavor to broaden the
democratic canon concerns not only the hegemonic model of representative democracy but also models of participatory democracy prevalent in the specialized bibliography, especially in the last decade. The practices of participation and democratic deliberation occur in the most disparate contexts and answer to very concrete needs and demands. Because of this utter contextuality and the novelty of the social grammar into which they often translate themselves, such practices are not easily recognized by the conventional models of participatory democracy. To broaden our views on contemporary democracy we need, therefore, to take the social grammars and contexts as starting points, rather than the models. The strength of the democratic aspiration of peoples is more tenaciously asserted in difficult contexts.

In this project, the most salient example of a difficult context is unquestionably the situation of civil war and the state of generalized violence in Colombia. It is in this context that a remarkable experience of participatory democracy has emerged since 1997: the communities of peace. The communities of peace are communities of peasants caught in the crossfire of war. Victims of recurrent massacres, the peasants of these communities are often expelled from their villages and lands. These communities then organize themselves to force both the paramilitary, the guerrillas and the national army to abide by the norms of humanitarian international law, which distinguish between civil populations and combatants. Their self-organization amounts to the elaboration, by democratic deliberation, of a social and political pact, a kind of local Constitution or internal law, in the terms of which the members of the community commit themselves to severing all ties, whether direct or indirect, with the armed actors, be they paramilitary, guerrilla or the Colombian army. The internal regulations of the community are quite detailed, women and the youth playing a significant role in them. The commitment of a given community is presented to the armed actors and often there is negotiation to try to get from them the mutual commitment of allowing the peasants to return to their villages and there live in peace. Thus, a social grammar and a culture of peace, dialogue, and solidarity are created in the midst of the most anarchic violence. The objective is to let the peasants restore their communitarian bonds, retrieve their land, and resume agricultural production. This objective is synthesized in the projects of “life and hope” adopted by the communities of peace. Surrounded by violence and the culture of violence, the communities of peace are a fragile institution, but they do give strength to the populations that reject an armed solution for the conflicts.

The community of peace analyzed in this project is that of San José de Apartadó. In an eloquent and dramatic essay, María Teresa Uribe de H1 demonstrates the contradiction between participation, the pacification of political space, and civil war. Situated in a banana-growing area of Colombia, a sanctuary for guerrillas in the country, San José de Apartadó has a strategic geographical position in the Colombian conflict. The pact, called Comunidad de Paz, was announced in May 1997 with the help of the local diocese, the Intercongregational Commission for Justice and Peace and various NGOs. The strong international support for the declaration of the Comunidad de Paz obliged the paramilitaries to respect its neutrality. The fragility of the pact is, however, quite noticeable in the asymmetrical fact that it was wholly respected by the community and later violated by the armed actors. After the first incursion of paramilitaries in April 1999, there followed various incursions of the guerrilla forces. As of 2000, 83 people had been killed in San José de Apartadó. The case of San José de Apartadó clearly reveals the interdependence of the deepening of democracy and the need for the constitution of a new social grammar based on pacification, which implies political negotiations beyond a local scale.

In his text on participatory budgeting, Leonardo Avritzer shows the way in which the Brazilian Constituent Assembly increased the influence of various social actors in political institutions as a result of new participatory arrangements. Article 14 of the 1988 Constitution guaranteed “popular initiative” in legislative processes. Article 29, on the organization of cities, required the participation of popular association representatives in the process of city planning. Other articles establish the participation of civic associations in the implementation of health and social welfare policies. Thus, the Constitution was able to incorporate new cultural elements, which had emerged at the level of society, into the emerging institutionality, opening up space for the practice of participatory democracy.

Santos and Avritzer show how, among the various forms of participation that emerged in post-authoritarian Brazil, participatory budgeting acquired particular pre-eminence. In the case of Brazil, the authors argue, the motivation for participation is part of a common inheritance of the process of democratization that led democratic social actors, especially those from the community movement, to debate the meaning of the term participation. In the case of the city of Porto Alegre, this debate was linked to the opening of actual areas of participation by the political society, in particular by the Workers’ Party. This led to the emergence of effective forms of combination of elements of participatory and representative democracy, through the initiative of the administrations of the Workers’ Party to articulate the representative mandate with effective forms of deliberation at the local level.

Participatory budgeting emerges from this intention, which, according to Santos, is manifested in three of its main characteristics: (1) participation is open to all citizens without any special status whatsoever being attributed to any organization, including community organizations; (2) the combination of direct and representative democracy creates an institutional dynamic that attributes to the participants themselves the definition of the
proposals, shows the potential of the extension of successful experiments in participatory democracy.

In the case of India, the potential of participatory democracy is equally visible. Sheth discusses how the political and participatory actions that were organized from the beginning of the 1960s existed as fragments of the earlier political and social movements—movements that had their origins in the Freedom movement. They worked in small and marginal spaces available to them on the periphery of electoral and party politics. But within three decades of Independence new social and political spaces opened up for them. Nevertheless, Sheth equally emphasizes that these forms of participatory democracy, because they do not follow the model of liberal democracy, are considered by metropolitan elites and the middle classes to be suspect and vehicles of negative anti-development and anti-national values. It is because of this that the combination of initiatives in participatory democracy with representative democracy only occurs in specific political contexts, as, for example, in Kerala—the case studied by Heller and Isaac.

The democratic challenge in India is extremely complex because, in addition to differences of class, sex, ethnicity, religion and region, differences of caste must also be taken into consideration. This is then a challenge in the field of the so-called democratization of democracy. The caste system was reproduced within the Indian political system, and inserted hierarchical relationships and profound material inequalities into it (Heller, 2000). Sheth shows how the very project of constructing a shared democracy for all castes and all social groups, establishing a symbolic reference common to the whole population of the country, became gradually subordinated to the particularist agenda of political society.

Two main forms of democratization of the Indian political system can be pointed to at present. The first is a form of local democracy based on the rupture with a grammar of exclusion at the level of society itself. This is the form that democratization has assumed in the province of Kerala. Here, in contrast to other parts of India, the associational infrastructure does not reproduce the dominant pattern of religious organizations and castes that reproduce a culture of inequality. Kerala has the highest levels of trade union membership in the country, and, in contrast with the national pattern, the unions also reach workers in the informal sector. Kerala also possesses a wide range of women’s, student and youth organizations, sponsored by all the parties. Just the mass associations linked to the Communist Party of India have more than 4.7 million members.

We have here, therefore, a first case of a rupture with the restricted forms of democracy at the local level, a rupture that, in the case of Kerala, occurs first at the level of civil society, through the constitution of an associational grammar, and is extended to political society through the system of the Panchayats. This system was introduced by the Left Democratic Front
in 1996 through the launching of the so-called “People’s Campaign for Decentralized Planning.” This campaign achieved a high degree of devolution of decision-making powers to the Panchayats. All 1,214 local governments in Kerala—municipalities and the three rural tiers of district, block and gram panchayats (the all-India term for village councils)—were given new functions and powers of decision-making, and have been granted discretionary budgeting authority over 40 percent of the state’s developmental expenditures. The transfer of decision-making to the local level implied a process of qualitative change in participation and deliberation, involving assemblies in rural areas (gram sabha) in which more than 2 million people took part and development seminars (for the assessment of the resources and problems of the area and the formulation of a local development strategy) attended by more than 300,000 delegates, in addition to task forces involving 100,000 volunteers. We can, therefore, perceive an enormous process of participation unleashed by the transfer of the process of deliberation on the budget to the local level.

A second form of expansion of Indian democracy that is also related to the mobilization of the population at a local level is discussed by Sheth. It involves local movements that organize public hearings and popular courts with the aim of creating political and social constraints for local governments and thus force them to act in a more honest and efficient way. Sheth describes one of the most significant moments of these movements when, in December of 1994-95, several public hearings (Jan Samiti) were held in various states and were attended by journalists. These hearings culminated in a 40-day sit-in (dharna) that compelled the government to make its accounts public through the Panchayat Raj.

As much in India as in Brazil, the most significant experiments in change in the form of democracy have originated in social movements that question practices of exclusion through actions that generate new norms and new forms of control of the government by the citizens.

We can point to some similarities and differences between the two cases. As to similarities, both experiments, in Porto Alegre and Kerala, emerged from a process of social renovation. In the case of Porto Alegre, as Avritzer points out, the experiment derived from a proposal of budgetary participation formulated in the 1980s by UAMPA (the Union of Neighborhood Associations of Porto Alegre), and in the case of Kerala, as Heller and Isaac point out, from experiments in participation at the local level conducted by civil society organizations, in particular by Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad. In the second place, in both cases, a political party had to take the political decision of giving up decision-making prerogatives in favor of forms of participation. In Porto Alegre, the Workers’ Party fulfilled this role, and in Kerala it was the Communist Party of India. In both cases, the state plays a crucial role in legitimating participation and rendering it efficacious. Participation is in turn conceived of as part of a vaster political process of the state’s democratic reform. In the third place, the proposal of participation involved the elaboration of complex rules of participation in both cases, as Santos shows in the case of Porto Alegre, and Heller and Isaac in the case of Kerala. It is important to underline that these rules—which, in the case of Porto Alegre, predetermine the distributive character of the participatory budget and establish incentives to participation for the poor population and, in the case of Kerala, make public the criteria for beneficiary eligibility and prioritization—will be fundamental to the success of the form of participation. The two cases that we can deem successful present two extremely important characteristics: first, they stem from changes in societal practices introduced by the social actors themselves; second, they recover local democratic traditions at first ignored by the hegemonic forms of representative democracy in these countries. Porto Alegre and Kerala express an attempt to extend democracy based on potentials of the local culture itself.

We can also point out some important contrasts between the two cases. In the first place, despite the importance of the Workers’ Party in the experiment in participatory budgeting, the party has limited control of the process, and only a small percentage of participants in the participatory budgeting are affiliated with it. The control of the Communist Party of India over the process seems to be greater, which makes it dependent on an unstable political coalition in a state with a strong Islamic minority. In the second place, there is an important difference in the form of transference of prerogatives on the budget: the participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre and in Belo Horizonte decentrizes and democratizes only the process of deliberation, and leaves in the hands of the majority the process of the administrative implementation of the decisions. In this case, the control of the public administration is made by the Participatory Budget Council in Porto Alegre and by COMFORÇAS in Belo Horizonte, thus creating a mechanism of administrative control that is relatively invulnerable to processes of corruption, given the excess of public mechanisms and forms of control. In the case of India, the resources are transferred to the committees themselves, which leads to accusations of corruption, as Heller and Isaac point out. Finally, everything seems to indicate that, in the case of Brazil, the participatory budgeting provides electoral advantages to those who practice it, such that other parties want to implement it, while the continuity of the Indian experiment was put in question by the electoral defeat of the Left Front in 2001.

Thus, the cases referred to here present contemporary democratic practice with not only the inconclusiveness of the debate between representation and participation, but also the need for a new formulation concerning the combination of these different forms of democracy.
CONCLUSION: THESES ON WIDENING THE DEMOCRATIC CANON

There are more questions raised than answers given in the studies included in this volume. In this, they remain faithful to the central objective of the project "Reinventing Social Emancipation" in the context of which they were carried out. This project sought to draw new horizons for social emancipation, starting from practices that occur in specific contexts to provide answers to concrete problems. Therefore, it is not possible to draw from them universal solutions that would be valid in every context. At best, such practices are driven by wide aspirations of emancipation that they seek to realize in a partial and limited way.

Between the realization and the aspiration lies the imagination of the possible beyond what exists. This embedded imagination generates questions that constitute and shape the emancipatory horizons. These are not, then, just any questions, but questions that result from the excess of aspirations in relation to the realization of concrete practices. In the specific case of the theme of the project discussed in this volume—participatory democracy—the horizons are questions that address the possibility of widening the democratic canon. Through this widening, the hegemonic canon of liberal democracy is contested in its pretension to universality and exclusivity, thus giving credibility to counter-hegemonic democratic concepts and practices.

In what follows, we will pose some questions and provide answers, in the form of theses, to some of the questions.

1. The struggle for democracy is today above all a struggle for the democratization of democracy. Substantively, democracy concerns the quality of human experience and the social relations that it makes possible. It can be defined as the entire process through which unequal power relations are replaced by relations of shared authority. Liberal democracy confined democracy to the political realm, strictly conceived of as that field that concerns the state's areas of intervention. This rendered the democratic process susceptible to constituting an island of democracy in a wide ocean of social despotisms. Santos has been arguing (1995: 403–55; 2002: 353–416) that in capitalist societies there are six large forms of power, hence of unequal relations of power: patriarchy, exploitation, unequal differentiation of identity, fetishism of commodities, domination and unequal exchange. These correspond to six main structure-agency time-spaces: household-place, workplace, community-place, marketplace, citizen-place, and world-place. As a substantive ideal and practice, democracy has to be struggled for in all these time-spaces involving different social and political processes. The more democratic these time-spaces are, the more democratic human experience as a whole will be. In each one of these time-spaces there is a tension between what is public and what is private. The public space must therefore not be taken as a given, for that would mean to accept and legitimize the distributions of power presently in existence and the political actors already constituted.

The fact that the arena of democratic struggle has been confined so far to the time-space of the citizen-place calls for a sociological explanation, even though it has no political grounding. As amply demonstrated by the feminist movements, the ambit and constitution of the public space is open to dispute. From this substantive point of view, there is no true democracy, there is only democratization, a process without end. The fact that the following theses concentrate mainly on the conventional scope of democracy does not mean that we are not aware that the democratic range and aspiration is much vaster and deeper.

2. As is the case of biodiversity, demo-diversity must be preserved and, whenever possible, expanded and enriched. Democracy's modern history shows that there is not only one but rather many forms of democracy. The comparison between the studies and debates on democracy in the 1960s and in the last decade leads us easily to the conclusion that, on the global level, demo-diversity has been reduced in the last 30 years. By demo-diversity we mean the peaceful or conflictive coexistence in a given social field of different models and practices of democracy. In the 1960s, if, on the one hand, the hegemonic model of democracy—liberal democracy—seemed destined to be confined, as democratic practice, to a small corner of the world, on the other hand, outside Western Europe and North America, there existed other political practices that claimed democratic status and did so in the light of autonomous criteria, distinct from those that sustained liberal democracy. In the meantime, as these alternative political practices lost strength and credibility, liberal democracy gradually established itself as the sole and universal model. Its consecration was consummated by the Washington Consensus, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, when it was transformed into a political conditionality for the granting of loans and financial aid.

What this implies, from our point of view, is a loss of demo-diversity. The negativity of this loss resides in two factors. The first has to do with the justification of democracy. If, as we believe, democracy has an intrinsic value and not a mere instrumental utility, this value can in no way be assumed as universal. It is inscribed in a specific cultural context, that of western modernity. This context, because it coexists with others in a world that now is recognized as multicultural, can in no way claim the universality of its values. We know today that if this claim refuses to give the reasons that sustain it and to dialogue with others that eventually contest it, it will only be imposed by force as such; it will be nothing more than an imperial claim. And this imperial temptation is all the more noticeable as the overwhelming power
of neoliberal globalization and of the institutions that, in its name, impose the adoption of liberal democracy on a global level becomes more pronounced. It makes no sense to postulate the universality of the values that sustain democracy on the basis that there is nothing in other cultures that opposes them, as Amartya Sen does (1999). Such a convergence cannot be postulated as a starting point. It has to be, if anything at all, the point of arrival of an intercultural dialogue in which other cultures can present that which they propose autonomously.

We support such a cultural dialogue and believe it enriches all who participate in it. The convergences that result almost always in forms of cultural hybridization have to be achieved in the practice of argumentation and in the argumentation of practice. Regarding the practices analyzed in this volume, we can see this hybridization surfacing especially in the case studies on India, but it is present in one way or another in the case studies on Mozambique, Brazil, South Africa and Colombia.

The loss of demo-diversity is negative because of a second factor, which, although autonomous in relation to the first, is related to it. It has to do with the distinction between democracy as an ideal and democracy as a practice. This distinction is central to the hegemonic model of democracy and was introduced into the debate to justify the low democratic intensity of established political regimes when compared with the revolutionary democratic ideals of the late eighteenth century and mid-nineteenth century. The universal imposition of the liberal model exacerbated this distinction to such an extent that actually existing democracy is frequently so far from the democratic ideal that it does not seem to be more than a caricature of it. Indeed, this distance is sometimes greater in core countries than in peripheral countries, although the opposite might appear to be the case. It is this distance that leads Wallerstein to respond to the question of what to think of democracy as it has been fulfilled with the reply that Gandhi gave when asked about what he thought of Western civilization: "it would be a good idea" (2001: 10).

This volume describes and analyzes democratic practices and aspirations that, in the different countries integrated in this project, seek to have democratic aspiration taken seriously, refusing to accept as democratic practices those that are a caricature of democracy, and above all refusing to accept as a fatality the low democratic intensity to which the hegemonic model has subjected the participation of citizens in political life. In a very distinct manner, these practices seek to intensify and deepen democracy, whether by asserting the legitimacy of participatory democracy, or by exerting pressure on institutions of representative democracy in order to make them more inclusive, or even by seeking denser forms of complementarity between participatory democracy and representative democracy.

3. Representative democracy tends to be low-intensity democracy, a tendency that has deepened in recent times. The reason for this tendency is that democracy confines itself to the citizen-space, of which it has a rather narrow conception, mainly centered on top-down relations between the state and the individual citizen. For the past 20 years, the intensity of representative democracy has decreased considerably for three main reasons. From the nineteenth century a certain tension between democracy and capitalism was generated. It resided in the capacity of representative democracy to bring about some social redistribution as social groups earlier excluded from the social contract managed to be included as a result of their struggles. This inclusion had the political form of economic and social rights and called for an increasingly stronger intervention by the state. A new political form emerged, known as the welfare state in core countries and as the development state in peripheral countries. In very distinct ways, these new forms of state consisted in turning the state into an active source of non-mercantile interactions (in the domain of health, education, welfare, and so on). For the past 20 years, these new political forms have been attacked and dismantled. Today, in the neoliberal world in which we live, the state is an active agent of mercantilization of social relations, which earlier had not been subjected to the law of value. The tension between democracy and capitalism has thereby disappeared and democracy has in fact become a conditionality of neoliberal globalization. With the increase of social inequalities came the increase of social despotsisms. The latter lowered the intensity of a form of democracy that not only cohabits with them but also legitimates them.

The second reason for the loss of intensity of representative democracy resides in the increasing promiscuity between the two markets whose separation grounds the legitimacy of representative democracy: the political market and the economic market. The economic market is the outside border of representative democracy; it consists of the set of values that have a price and are exchanged as goods and services. The political market is its inside border; it is constituted of values and ideas that are discussed, combined, and articulated, but which have no price. During the last 20 years, the deregulation, privatization of public services, media-ization of politics and the financing of parties and political campaigns contributed to the contaminaton of the political market by the economic market. As a consequence, the political market ended up being subjected as well to the law of value. Extremely powerful economic agents ended up assuming public prerogatives (such as controlling the political agenda, obtaining monopolies over the provision of public services) by state delegation, thus bringing about new forms of indirect rule, typical of the colonial state.

The third reason for the loss of intensity of representative democracy resides in the rupture of the relationship between authorization and account-
ability. Elections have been the mechanism *par excellence* of authorization. Elections are indeed the means by which citizens give up the right to take decisions directly by delegating it to their representatives. Accountability has to do with transparency in the exercise of the representatives’ mandate and with the political content of the relations between the representatives and the represented. Originally, accountability was exerted through several mechanisms (consultation, recall, suspension of the mandate, and so on), elections being the last resort (the failure of representatives to be reelected as punishment for their unaccountability). For the past few decades, partly due to the above-mentioned factors, not only did the few mechanisms of accountability disappear but the elections themselves stopped performing this function. Thereby emerged the two pathologies of contemporary representative democracy: the pathology of representation (citizens do not feel represented by their representatives) and the pathology of participation (citizens stop participating in elections because they are convinced that their vote is irrelevant). With the loss of intensity of representative democracy we run the risk of entering a period in which many societies are politically democratic and socially fascist.\(^{12}\)

4. **Deepening democracy will increasingly depend on new complementarities between participatory democracy and representative democracy.** This is perhaps the question to which the studies collected in this volume provide the most answers. The solution given by the hegemonic theory of democracy to the problem of the relation between representative democracy and participatory democracy—the solution of scales—is not adequate because it leaves untouched the problem of social grammars, and offers a simplistic answer, which is exclusively geographic (the local as the only adequate scale for relatively non-complex citizen participation), to the problem of the combination of participation and representation.

The experiments studied in this project offer an alternative answer to the democratic problem. They show that the ability to deal with cultural and administrative complexity is not increased with an increase in scale. They also show, above all, that there is a process of cultural pluralization and recognition of new identities\(^{13}\) that leads, as a consequence, to profound redefinitions of democratic practice, and these redefinitions are beyond the aggregative process specific to representative democracy.

In our opinion, there are two possible forms to combine participatory democracy and representative democracy: coexistence and complementarity. The first implies the coexistence, on various levels, of the different forms of proceduralism, administrative organization and variation in institutional design. Representative democracy at the national level (exclusive power as regards the constitution of governments; the acceptance of a vertical bureaucratic form as the sole form of public administration) coexists with participatory democracy at the local level, accentuating certain participatory characteristics that already exist in some democracies in core countries (Mansbridge, 1990).

The second form of combination, which we refer to as complementarity, implies a more profound articulation between representative democracy and participatory democracy. It presupposes the recognition by the government that participatory proceduralism, the public forms of monitoring governments and the processes of public deliberation can constitute part of the process of representation and deliberation as conceived of in the hegemonic model of democracy. Contrary to what this model seeks to achieve, the objective is to associate with the process of strengthening local democracy forms of cultural renovation related to a new political institutionalism that reintroduces the questions of cultural plurality and the necessity of social inclusion into the democratic agenda. As much in the case of Brazil as in the case of India, the participatory arrangements enable the articulation between argumentation and distributive justice and the transfer of prerogatives from the national level to the local level, and from political society to the participatory arrangements themselves. Representative democracy is summoned to integrate proposals of cultural recognition and social inclusion into the political-electoral debate.

The concept of complementarity is different from that of coexistence because, as we have seen in the cases of Brazil and India, it implies a decision by political society to expand participation at the local level through the transfer and/or devolution of decision-making prerogatives at first held by governments. Thus, in the case of both participatory budgeting in Brazil and the Panchayats in India, regional assemblies or the decisions by councilors stem from the option taken by political society to articulate participation and representation. What is at stake is the democratic transformation of the state.

It seems obvious that the first form of articulation between participatory democracy and representative democracy (coexistence) prevails in the core countries, while the second (complementarity) begins to emerge in semi-peripheral and peripheral countries. If such is the case, it is possible to conclude that the deepening of democracy does not necessarily occur as a result of the same characteristics present in the core countries where democracy was first introduced and consolidated. The characteristics that enabled democratic originality may not be necessarily the same characteristics that enable its expanded and deepened reproduction. For this reason, the problem of cultural innovation and institutional experimentalism becomes even more urgent. If such a perspective is correct, the new democracies must change themselves into absolutely new social movements, in the sense that the state must change itself into a space of distributive and cultural experimentation. It is in the originality of the new forms of institutional experimentation that the emancipatory potentials still present in contemporary societies may be found. In order to be realized, these potentials need to be embedded in a
society that invests democratic imagination in the process of renegotiating participatory rules of sociability.

5. The strengthening of counter-hegemonic democracy must rely on articulations between the local and the global. New democratic experiments need the support of transnational democratic actors, especially in the cases in which democracy is of particularly low intensity, as became clear in the case of Colombia. At the same time, alternative, successful experiments such as that of Porto Alegre and the Panchayats in India need to be expanded in order to offer alternatives to the hegemonic model. Therefore, the counter-hegemonic shift from the local to the global level is fundamental for the strengthening of participatory democracy. On the other hand, the construction of dense complementarities between participatory democracy and representative democracy lies in the development of mediations between local scales and national scales.

We have emphasized the idea that the hegemonic model of democracy has been hostile to the active participation of citizens in political life and, when it has accepted it, has confined it to a local level. The counter-hegemonic alternative answer lies in the transnational articulations between different local experiments in participatory democracy or between those local experiments and transnational movements and organizations interested in promoting participatory democracy. Counter-hegemonic globalization is based on these articulations, which allow the creation of the counter-hegemonic local, the local that is the building block of the counter-hegemonic global. These articulations give credibility to and strengthen local practices by the simple fact of transforming them into links of wider networks and movements with a greater power for transformation. In addition, such articulations make possible reciprocal and continuous learning, which we believe is essential for the success of democratic practices that are energized by the possibility of high-intensity democracy. Because we chose in this project to analyze local experiments in deepening democracy, the articulation between the local and the global emerges as a question to which we cannot give an immediate answer, but which we deem fundamental to answer in the future. Even so, some of the cases suggest this articulation. In the case of the community of peace of San José de Apartadó, this articulation is explicit. Uribe shows the importance of the network of transnational solidarity in making visible, on a national and international level, the struggle for peace in this Colombian community. In the case of participatory budgeting, we know that similar experiments have been appearing in a number of Brazilian cities and in other countries of Latin America, that the most recent experiments have benefited from previous ones, and that there are even networks of cities, namely in the context of Mercosur, whose aim is to discuss the different experiments and models of participatory democracy, their limits, and their potentialities. The strength of counter-hegemonic globalization as regards the widening and deepening of democracy largely depends on the widening and deepening of national, regional, continental, or global networks of local practices.

6. The dangers of perversion and co-optation are imminent and can only be averted by constant democratic vigilance energized by the idea of democratizing democracy. We have seen how the nineteenth-century revolutionary aspirations of democratic participation were gradually reduced to forms of low-intensity democracy in the course of the twentieth century. In this process, the objectives of social inclusion and the recognition of differences became perverted and were converted into their opposite. The practices of participatory democracy are in no way immune to the danger of perversion and adulteration. These practices, which seek to expand the political canon and, by doing so, expand the public space and the social debates and demands that constitute it, may also be co-opted by hegemonic interests and actors with the aim of legitimizing social exclusion and the repression of difference.

Perversion can occur in many different ways: bureaucratization of participation, by the rigidification of the participatory institutions and by the emergence of professionalized active citizens; reintroduction of clientelism in new guises through the co-optation of participation by conventional top-down politics; sectarian instrumentalization by powerful actors able to reduce the scope of deliberative participation; exclusion of subordinate interests through the silencing or manipulation of participatory institutions; delegitimation of lay and popular knowledge by the techno-managerial colonization of argumentative and deliberative contexts; manipulative use of devolution by the state so that the latter withdraws from its responsibility as guarantor of economic and social rights, thus transforming participatory democracy into a sham. These dangers can only be prevented by constant learning and self-reflection, from which incentives to new ways of deepening democracy can be drawn. In the field of participatory democracy, more than any other, democracy is an unlimited principle, and the tasks of democratization can only be sustained when they themselves are defined by increasingly demanding democratic processes.

Notes

1 This debate began in the nineteenth century. Up until then, it was generally assumed that democracy was dangerous, and, thus, undesirable. Its danger lay in attributing power to government to those most ill-equipped to exercise it: the great mass of the population, who were illiterate, ignorant, and socially and politically inferior (Williams, 1981: 82; Macpherson, 1966).

2 Like almost every debate about democracy, this one was anticipated by Rousseau: see his statement in The Social Contract that a society could be
democratic only when there was no one so poor as to be compelled to sell himself, and no one so rich as to be able to buy someone.

3 We understand the concept of “hegemony” to be the economic, political, moral, and intellectual ability to establish a dominant direction in the form of approaching a given question, in this case the question of democracy. We also understand that every hegemonic process produces a counter-hegemonic process in which economic, political, and moral alternatives are developed. In the case of the current debate on democracy, this implies a hegemonic and counter-hegemonic conception of democracy. For the concept of hegemony, see Gramsci (1973).

4 The Schumpeterian doctrine of democracy adopts wholesale the argument of the manipulation of individuals in mass societies. For Schumpeter, individuals in politics yield to irrational and extra-rational impulses and behave in an almost infantile manner when making decisions (Schumpeter, 1942: 257). He never sought to differentiate between large-scale mass mobilizations and forms of collective action, which makes his argument about the manipulation of the masses in politics extremely fragile. For a critique, see Melucci (1996) and Avritzer (1996). The vulnerability of the Schumpeterian argument did not stop it from being widely used by the hegemonic conceptions of democracy.

5 Bobbio analyzes, in a different way from Schumpeter, the reasons why the participation of individuals in politics became undesirable. For him, the central element that discourages participation is the increase in the social complexity of contemporary democracies (Bobbio, 1986). The argument of complexity as well as its limitations will be discussed later.

6 It is possible, none the less, to see that the explanation of the question of consensus by the hegemonic theory of democracy leaves much to be desired (Manin, 1997). For hegemonic theory, the problem of consensus becomes relevant only in the act of constituting governments. However, the act of constituting governments is an act of aggregating majorities, and rarely leads to consensus in relation to the identity and accountability of the governing body. Thus, if the explanation for abandoning the system of rotation of administrative positions seems to be correct, it by no means leads to the recognition of the superiority of the forms of representation in relation to the forms of participation. It only points to the necessity of a different basis for participation—in this case, consensus in relation to the rules of participation.

7 Among the authors of the hegemonic field, Adam Przeworski was the one who most emphasized the problem of the indetermination of results in democracy. For him, “democracy is a process of submitting all interests to the competition of institutionalized uncertainty” (Przeworski, 1984: 37). However, for Przeworski, “institutionalized uncertainty” is the uncertainty of whoever occupies positions of power in a situation of democratization and whether this result can be turned around or not. The concept of democracy with which we are working here implies a higher level of indetermination insofar as it involves the possibility of inventing a new democratic grammar.

8 The position of Habermas, however, tends to focus on a proposal of democracy for certain social groups and countries of the North. Criticized for the limitations of his concept of the public sphere (Fraser, 1995; Santos, 1995; Avritzer, 2002), Habermas seems to have only made an effort to integrate social actors from northern countries (see Habermas, 1992).

9 For some authors, this priority is inscribed in the very matrix of the paradigm of Western modernity, with its emphasis on the idea of progress based on infinite economic growth. It is because of this that it occurred, although in distinct ways, as much in capitalist societies as in the socialist societies of Eastern Europe (Marramao, 1995).

10 Fung and Wright (2003: 33) identify the following problems confronting what they call empowered participatory governance: power imbalances; limitations on the scope of deliberative decision by external actors, rent-seeking, the balkanization of politics, unrealistically high levels of commitment, and unsustainability.

11 On this question, see also Sader, in this volume.

12 On the notion of social fascism, see Santos, 2002: 447.

13 The theme of identities and the principle of the recognition of difference are treated in detail in the third volume of this collection.

Bibliography


