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**NEW DEMOCRACIES, WHICH DEMOCRACIES?**

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Commentary  
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## NEW DEMOCRACIES, WHICH DEMOCRACIES?

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"New democracies" are those democratic regimes that have emerged since the 1970s, the first of which arose with the "revolution of the carnations" in 1974, in Portugal. This began a historical wave that has had its most recent manifestation in the political changes in Eastern Europe (1989) and the Soviet Union (1991).<sup>2</sup> The label fits, for example, political regimes such as the current ones in Spain, Brazil, or Poland; they have in common the recent demise of previous dictatorships, which led to the recovery of a democracy that was never really consolidated in their historical past.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Phillippe Schmitter and Terry Karl, "What Democracy Is . . . and Is Not," Journal of Democracy, Summer 1991, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> According to Samuel Valenzuela, in his comments on the first draft of this paper, new democracies are "cases of democratic transition out of authoritarian rule in the absence of a past consolidated democracy."

New democracies are democracies in the making. They are in the making under political conditions of a transition process that makes it inevitable for them to mix important legacies from their authoritarian past. They are in the making also in times of social and economic crises that accentuate situations of extreme and growing social inequality. As a result, they are taking on a peculiar institutional shape that puts more emphasis on delegation than on representation (or participation). Leadership (and such related institutions and attributes as political craftsmanship) matters for the consolidation of democracy. Thus, the consolidation of new democracies is more difficult than was the process of transition.

### 1. Democracies, Old and New

Cases of the failure of consolidated democracies, if always unpleasant, are also suggestive for the analysis of recent democratization processes.<sup>4</sup> The failures of old democracies should sound as a warning to the leaders of current democratic transitions because they suggest that some of the possible weaknesses seen in the new democracies today are to be found even in consolidated democracies. In this sense, the circumstances around the 1973

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<sup>4</sup> On this point I follow suggestions made by Juan Linz when he developed the implications of Karl Dietrich Bracher's study of the Weimar Republic. Juan Linz, The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes - Crisis, Breakdown & Reequilibration (Baltimore-London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

The same argument is revisited by Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan in "Political Crafting of Democratic Consolidation or Destruction: European and South American Comparisons," in Robert Pastor, Democracy in the Americas: Stopping the Pendulum (New York-London: Holmes & Meier, 1989).

coup d'état in Chile have a special (and valid) relevance in the Latin American political imagination and, more clearly than any other Latin American case could possibly do, they call (or should call) for a sense of responsibility within the leadership of the new democracies.

What political scientists call the stability and institutional strength of old democracies implies a permanent concern of leadership with improving decision-making processes.<sup>5</sup> In some cases, democratic enthusiasm is replaced by simple automatism and more or less mechanical habits. But being by definition competitive, "the very process of democracy institutes a double process of . . . selectivity in favor of convinced democrats: one among parties in general elections and the other among politicians vying for leadership within these parties."<sup>6</sup> In spite of the current waves of desencanto (disillusion) that characterize stable democracies today, there remains among the leaders enough consciousness and awareness to predict the permanent trend of reassuring the continuation of institutions and their balanced operation. So, the study of old democracies demonstrates, for better and for worse, that the distance between a new and a consolidated democracy may be shorter than we think. What is essential to democracies, old and new, is a texture of political relations and political institutions that antidemocratic (or incompetent) leadership might destroy. But that is also a texture that democratic and competent leaders can restore and rebuild.

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<sup>5</sup> Of course, stability implies more than this. It implies also, for example, a higher level of economic development and a certain level of efficacy of a democratic regime, as Seymour M. Lipset showed, even at risk of some economic determinism, in Political Man (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981).

<sup>6</sup> Dankwart A. Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy," Comparative Politics, Vol. 2, No. 3, April 1970.

If history, in a general sense, implies permanence and continuity, it draws its specific meaning from change. With democracy, a history of change is the rule. That is why we can talk, for example, of consensus democracy, mass democracy, liberal democracy, social democracy. Each represents different criteria used to describe different periods of democratic history. Even if we take for granted that some central core always remains--in this case, a general idea of democracy--as in any historical account, changes will take place around that central tendency. But if we can point to different periods of democracy, why not also to different types of democracy? In fact, it would be easier not to talk about typologies (or periods) and to predicate a general concept of democracy based on the modern Western European (or American) experience. The next step would be to see if new democracies measure up or not. In most cases, the differences would be so large as to amount to a negative correlation, and the new democracies might be characterized as "non-consolidated" and in some cases, even as "non-democracies".

Then what types of democracies are the new democracies? Much has to be done before we can arrive at consistent and persuasive explanations in building a typology of new democracies. A good place to start, however, is to consider new democracies from the standpoint of a set of historical, institutional, and social conditions, giving special attention to institutional structures, leadership (and the processes of recruiting leaders), mass participation, and the economic context.

## 2. Institutions: Mixed Regimes

Mixtures of institutional mechanisms are not a novelty in politics; on the contrary, most genuine political regimes are mixed in some measure. In fact, some of the most modern representative systems have been combined with direct participation and/or with corporatist mechanisms. In some governments, presidential regimes are mixed with parliamentary procedures in such a way that it becomes difficult to determine whether we are dealing with modified parliamentarism or a modified presidentialism. In a more general sense, liberal democracy is an institutional mixture--one that was very difficult to achieve and took a lot of time to evolve into the form we know today. The point here is not the opposition between mixture and nonmixture, but rather that new democracies are a particular kind of mixture. What kind? To answer this question, I will take up Philippe Schmitter's suggestion that to know what the chances of present (or future) consolidation are, look at the past--that is, at the transition.<sup>7</sup>

New democracies are political regimes in which transition led the democratic institutions to be combined with important legacies from a recent authoritarian past. These legacies refer at least to the following: first, the relative permanence of the state structures of the previous authoritarian regime; and second, the relative permanence (or "conversion") of leaders of the previous regime. The first refers to institutions like the army (in some

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<sup>7</sup> I am taking from Schmitter only his general perspective about the relations between transition and consolidation. He expands this idea in "The Consolidation of Democracy and the Choice of Institutions," East South System Transformations Working Paper #7, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, September 1991.



cases including the "intelligence community"), state banks, and other public enterprises, and any kind of institution dealing with economic intervention, asserting the predominance of executives over parliaments and the subordination of civil society associations to the state apparatus. The second point, about leaders and related institutions, will be considered later.

The democratic assumption here is the classical one, which concerns the autonomy of civil society in relation to the state apparatus. As with many others, this democratic idea--originally a liberal idea--has taken a very general form (and legitimacy) and has acquired a meaning that has outgrown its origins. We can also trace general ideas about the autonomy of civil society in anarchism and in some forms of socialist thought ("workers' control," "self-regulated society," etc.). Different trends in political thought consider that there is no democracy where there is no autonomy of civil and political societies in relation to the state apparatus. This does not mean that autonomy would be considered a sufficient condition for democracy, but it would be a necessary one.

The fact is that situations of complete autonomy of civil society toward the state are uncommon. And often those who are directly involved in the political tension between civil society and state have different views about "mixed situations." Some might consider them only from the point of view of a possible loss for democracy, others from the view of a possible gain. Mixed regimes should certainly be considered a victory for democracy when compared with the totalitarian dictatorships that they were able to overcome. That is probably the case with some countries in Eastern Europe, especially Russia, and it was certainly the experience of Brazil between 1978 and 1984,

when it left behind the hard period of the Médici and Geisel dictatorships and experienced an abertura, tightly controlled from above.

What is relevant here is the spectrum of possible situations. An example of an institutional mixture is the trade unions' subordination to the state in Brazil during the period of populist democracy (1945-1964) and during the new democracy (after 1984). That subordination was not only a matter of dependent-oriented behavior by the workers in their relations with the state. It was also a matter of institutional constraints that resulted in a complex structure built after 1945 to preserve the legacy of the Estado Novo dictatorship (1937-1945), which created a specific set of legal institutions, including constitutional definitions, a labor ministry, social security institutions, and a union structure and a "union tax" collected by the state with the specific purpose of financing union activities.<sup>8</sup>

The 1988 Constitution--the main institutional basis of the Brazilian new democracy--preserved most of those authoritarian institutions. But it also introduced some significant democratic changes, such as the recognition of the right to strike, the independence of unions from the Labor Ministry, and the recognition of the workers' confederations. These changes were, of course,

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<sup>8</sup> This complex structure has been examined in a number of sociological and political studies in Brazil, beginning with Evaristo de Moraes Filho, O Problema do Sindicato Único no Brasil (São Paulo: Alfa-Omega, 1952), and Azis Simão, O Sindicato e o Estado (São Paulo: Dominus, 1966). An impressive list of articles and books have been written about this topic, those by Leôncio Martins Rodrigues and José Albertino Rodrigues deserving special attention. In English, the best analysis of Brazilian corporatism is Phillipe Schmitter, Interest Conflict and Political Change in Brazil (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971). Good analysis of union history and structure can be found in Kenneth Erickson, The Brazilian Corporative State and Working Class Politics (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977).

limited in scope, and tensions between the constraints of the state and the pressures of the trade union movement remain today, but it is difficult to reject the view that they also meant real improvements in autonomy vis-à-vis the state for a specific segment of civil society.

Another kind of mixture occurs when political institutions are unable to subordinate the military. The progress of political democracy in Chile was evident in the elections that gave way to Patricio Aylwin. But it is also clear that this democratic progress has yet been unable to define a means for subordination of the military. The agreement that gave shape to the transition, within the institutional framework of a new democracy, included the continued presence of Pinochet, the ex-dictator, serving as chief commander of the army. Pinochet was ousted from the government, but not from the state (or not from all of the power he had in the state). In the complex process of the Chilean democratic transition, other positions were established to provide for the "stability" of hundreds of public officials. This means that the democratically elected government is obliged to work with part of the previous dictatorship's administrative apparatus and it is unable to exercise the normal democratic procedure of appointing new officials for those same positions.

Yet another example of a mixture is decretismo, or the use of "emergency measures" by the executive as a usual, administrative routine. The practice of government by decree implies the subordination of the Congress, and by extension, the subordination of the political parties and the political elites. Decretismo is supported in Brazil by a distortion of the Constitution that allows "provisional decisions" (medidas provisórias) to be

temporarily employed in exceptional, critical occasions. In reality it has been used in an almost permanent way: the Sarney government issued 142 "emergency decisions" during the 525 days that he governed under the new Constitution (which is equivalent to one emergency decision every four days); in 1990, the Collor government issued an additional 150 decisions (which is nearly one every two days).<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Leaders: Continuismo and Conversion

The greatest expression of a democratic leadership is to take action to help consolidate democratic institutions. That is, at least part of the problem of creating a new democratic leadership is the problem of creating (and consolidating) new democratic institutions. New democracies have had considerable success with institutional reforms, such as constitutional reforms, and the establishment of new laws about elections, political parties, associations, and so forth. Achievements in this area offer hope for the future formation of new democratic leaders. However, building political institutions (and political leadership) also implies a reformist course with which new democracies have had no success--policies aimed at social and economic reform. Failures in this sector undermine political institutions and demoralize political leaders.

The democratic assumption here is that leadership--and related institutions, such as parties, schools, the press, unions, and churches--plays a

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<sup>9</sup> Timothy Power, "Politicized Democracy: Competition, Institutions, and 'Civic Fatigue' in Brazil," mimeo., Department of Government, University of Notre Dame, 1991.

part in the consolidation of democracy. First, the chances of democratic consolidation are greater if leaders are democratically self-conscious. As Rustow suggests, the chances of success of democratically minded leaders are greater in an established democracy. But the process of political transition, a time when democracy is not yet established, adds relevance to the role of democratically conscious leaders.<sup>10</sup> Second, the chances are smaller if leaders are authoritarian (those who think it is bizarre to talk of democracies with authoritarian leaders should consider Russia and Boris Yeltsin). Third, compared with the previous case, the chances are only slightly better if leaders, although being democratic, are not conscious of the role they play in the consolidation of democracy or are part of a diffuse grouping playing personal or sectoral games.

To readers of Machiavelli I would say that democratic consolidation is not only a matter of fortuna, but also of virtu, in this case, the democratic virtu of the leadership. Even democratic politicians will be unable to build (or consolidate) democracy without the proper circumstances. But it is also obvious that any definition of the appropriate conditions for democracy should include the presence of a democratic leadership. There is no such thing as democratic consolidation by "spontaneous generation." The appropriate conditions for democratization are not necessarily the most pleasant. Mixtures of regimes as well as of leaders have something to do with the hardships of transition. Frequently, democratization processes entail a high degree of conflict and even violence. It is in this context that we can consider modern

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<sup>10</sup> In Rustow's terms, we are using a "genetic" perspective, focusing on the genesis of political democracy, which is different from a "functional" approach that studies the working of established democracies. See Rustow, "Transitions."

theories of democracy, such as Robert Dahl's basic theoretical axiom that democracy is the outcome of a situation in which foes consider coexistence less expensive than reciprocal destruction or Przeworski's basic proposal that democracy is an outcome of conflict.

Modern theories of democracy go one step further than the classical theories of the state, as proposed by Engels or Weber. A state is necessary, says Engels, because without it, society divides itself among incompatible fighting camps; thus, the state's primary function is to maintain the cohesion of society.<sup>11</sup> Weber says the state is an agglomeration of individuals that has successfully vindicated the legitimate exercise of violence in a given territory. This means that violence (public, legal violence) is a "privilege" of the state and that state-building is a process of the centralization of violence, of "expropriating" private persons (or groups) from their capability for violence.<sup>12</sup> This is one major difference between theories of the state and theories of democracy: state-building is a process of (private) violence suppression, while democracy-building is a process not of suppressing but of institutionalizing conflict.

Political theory can serve different functions, one of which is to remind us that scenarios of the birth or consolidation of democracy (as well as state-building) are not necessarily clean and/or clear (consider, for example,

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<sup>11</sup> From Friedrich Engels, mainly; see The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972).

<sup>12</sup> The Weberian definition can be found in "Politics as a Vocation," in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958).

Yugoslavia, Rumania, Georgia, etc.). Even when theory shows real progress toward freedom and popular participation as a general trend, most cases of democratic transition, in fact, boast a democratic leadership that obviously was not born democratic. If democracies are born out of conflict and violence, most of their leaders are born out of dictatorship. In this sense, Czechoslovakia's Havel and Poland's Walesa are exceptions in the East, while the general rule is given by Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and others. Other than a few very well-known cases of previous dissidents who became leaders, most transition leaders become democratic during the transition process itself. That is the hope, at least.

The presence of democratic opposition leaders--like Argentina's Raúl Alfonsín and Carlos Menem, Chile's Patricio Aylwin and Ricardo Lagos, or Brazil's Ulysses Guimarães, Mário Covas, Leonel Brizola, and Luís Inácio da Silva, or "Lula"--is perhaps more important in the transition process in Latin America than it is in Eastern Europe. Some of those Latin American leaders remained from previous democratic regimes or had a political chance inside the, as Juan Linz put it, "limited pluralism" of authoritarian regimes; Eastern Europe during most of that time provided no opportunity for any pluralism. But even in Latin America the new democracies contain a number of newly converted democratic leaders, for example, Brazil's José Sarney and Fernando Collor, who were known previously as "men of the system," that is to say, the previous authoritarian system.

We can assume that these "converts" have changed, or are changing, their views about the state and society. But that is not the real question. Whether in Brazil or Russia, the basic question is how deep does this change

go and what influence will it have on prevailing political elite behavior and on the country's political culture. Besides their own legitimate political interests, are the new democracy leaders also working for the achievement of general goals that could help consolidate political democracy as a whole?

It is not easy, in certain situations, to distinguish between what remains from the authoritarian (or totalitarian) past and what is really democratic and new. For comparative purposes, it is the relative degree of continuity (or, alternatively, rupture) found in a given transition process, as compared with others, that is most relevant. This approach is helpful if we want to understand some important differences between Latin American and Eastern European transitions. Considering transition as a whole (that is, as a process that affects not only political institutions but also political power structures and social and economic structures), relative rupture is typical of Eastern transitions and relative continuity is typical of Latin American transitions.

Given the general differences outlined above, it is still relevant to consider some Eastern experiences from a Latin American standpoint. The Hungarian sociologist Elemer Hankiss speaks of a "conversion" of the old ruling class in Hungary to a new type of ruling class.<sup>13</sup> Of course, this involves a form of ruling class continuity in an economic and political regime undergoing change. If this were not the case, the ruling class conversion as such would not be necessary. According to this interesting conceptual suggestion then, we should make space for clear distinctions even within the

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<sup>13</sup> Elemer Hankiss, "A Grande Coalizão (As Mudanças na Hungria)," *Lua Nova*, No. 22, CEDEC, São Paulo, December 1990, pp. 35-68. It is also chapter 9 of Hankiss, East European Alternatives: Are There Any? (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).



area of Latin American continuismo, not only because there are different forms, but also because some forms of continuismo are very close to Hankiss's conception of conversion.

In Brazil's transition, for example, continuismo was not only imposed by military groups leaving power but was also a political choice for most democratic forces. It was a compromise between moderates from both sides and an expression of the reality of power in the country. This compromise, rejected only by small groups from the left, discloses the real nature of the new democracy in Brazil as the outcome of a "conservative transition." In the democratic quality of the leadership, conversion and continuismo can be seen as alternate routes toward the formation of "mixed regimes" that are new democracies.

#### 4. Political Democracy and Social Inequalities

In describing different political regimes, we must distinguish true democracies from dictatorships that have "imported" some democratic forms and symbols. Theoretical criteria are needed to serve as a limit to conceptual relativism. According to Norberto Bobbio, these criteria are the "rules of the game," or the inner core of institutional rules that give meaning to representative democracy.<sup>14</sup> Robert Dahl, in his classic Polyarchy, termed them "requirements for a democracy."<sup>15</sup> They are implied in the procedural

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<sup>14</sup> Norberto Bobbio, The Future of Democracy - A Defense of the Rules of the Game (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

<sup>15</sup> Robert Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), chap. 1.

definition that political scientists have termed the "minimal definition" of democracy: secret vote, universal suffrage, regular elections, party competition, right of association, and executive responsiveness.<sup>16</sup> In some sense, the mainstream of contemporary political thought admits the fundamental criticisms of Joseph Schumpeter (in his celebrated Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, first published in 1942) of the concept of classical democracy as an instrument of the common good. And, even with slight differences and sometimes important addenda, they endorse his basic idea that democracy is a method of acquiring power based on the peaceful competition between leaders.<sup>17</sup>

How do these criteria apply to a given political situation? The Brazilian democracy from 1946 to 1964 inherited many authoritarian legacies from the 1937 to 1945 dictatorship. General Eurico Dutra, the former Army Minister during the dictatorship, was elected president in 1945 with a majority of the popular vote. He had the support of Getulio Vargas, the previous dictator. Getulio Vargas himself was elected president in 1950 and, even after his death in 1954, remained a major political-ideological influence in Brazilian politics until 1964, inspiring some of the most important parties and leaders of the country. Why do we call this mixed regime a democracy? Because in spite of all kinds of continuities, conversions, and other possible "mixtures," Brazilian leaders during this period experienced, as Przeworski put it, the

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<sup>16</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, Transitions from Authoritarian Rule - Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

<sup>17</sup> Joseph Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975), chaps. XXI and XXII.

"organization of uncertainty" that characterizes representative democracy. The Brazilian regime from 1945 to 1964 was most likely an "unstable democracy" characterized by intermittent military intervention in politics (through pronunciamentos and, eventually, threats of coup d'état). It was a weak democracy, but it was a democracy.

However, this minimal definition requires further elaboration. I do not propose to change the definition as such, but rather to add one interpretative point: the minimal procedural working of a political democracy implies certain minimal social conditions. This is a point clearly stated in different ways in the late 1950s by political scientists such as Dahl and sociologists such as Seymour Martin Lipset but probably forgotten by many social scientists studying the new democracies in the 1980s.<sup>18</sup> Most of them accept the minimal definition of democracy as if the "rules of the game" were empty forms, without any social content. In a paradoxical way, they behave as strange bedfellows of those who reject the minimal definition of democracy on exactly the same grounds because they also believe that it is only a formal set of rules.

I would reject the position that conceives of rules as empty forms and submit the argument that forms always have some content; in this case, some social content. This seems especially appropriate for the study of transitions, particularly since most new democracies are emerging in societies characterized by strong social inequalities such as, for example, Brazil,

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<sup>18</sup> Dahl's Polyarchy has three chapters about socioeconomic questions. Seymour M. Lipset's classic, Political Man is intended to be a "sociology of politics"; let us underscore that the subtitle of Political Man is The Social Bases of Politics.

characterized by strong social inequalities such as, for example, Brazil, Guatemala, and Peru. Other countries, like Argentina, are experiencing growing social inequalities, or "inequalization."<sup>19</sup> It seems reasonable to assume that in both cases these new democracies face the burden of prolonged economic stagnation. Looking to the East, it is clear that the economic circumstances facing those new democracies are very different in that they have an entire economic structure to change. And this difference makes the processes of growing inequalities even greater. Recent electoral reactions in Poland (and public opinion in Russia) to government price liberalization measures show something about the "inequalization" ingrained in the economic policies of privatization.

The assumption that the minimal requirements of democratic participation apply to the adult population of nations is normally taken for granted by sociologists and political scientists.<sup>20</sup> When we speak of the minimal concept of democracy, we are not talking about democracies that arose in slave societies (antiquity) or of political regimes that mature in a society based on servitude. Rather, we are referring to citizens in the context of the modern nation-state. These people are considered citizens because they are supposed to be prepared to follow the minimal rules of democratic participation. In the ancient city-state, individual identity was given in the context of the definition of the citizen. In the typical political regime of the Middle Ages, participation was conceived of, not on the basis of the individual

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<sup>19</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell, "Democracia Delegativa?," Novos Estudos CEBRAP, 31, October 1991, São Paulo. The Portuguese word for "inequalization" is "desigualização".

<sup>20</sup> Samuel Valenzuela, "Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transitional Settings: Notion, Process, and Facilitating Conditions," ms., Kellogg Institute, 1990.

or the citizen, but on the basis of different kinds of privileges associated with status. In the modern nation-state, citizenship--a political (institutional) reality--is different from the social reality of the individual, but the political reality of the citizen is supported by the social reality of the individual. The "minimal" definition of democracy suggests an important point about relations between political and social conditions. The political reality of citizens in modern nation-states requires certain minimum institutional as well as social conditions. That is, the democratic equality of citizens demands the assumption of some level of social equality among individuals.

I am not referring here to social equality in the Marxian sense but in a Tocquevillean sense, which defines social equality as the equality of individuals as such.<sup>21</sup> Even when Tocqueville thinks of democracy as a type of society, as opposed to aristocracy, for example, the individualization typical of modern societies is a necessary condition for the proper functioning of political democracy. Sartori's definition of "social equality" goes right to the basic point of the Tocquevillean revolution: "Social equality, understood as equality of status and of consideration, thus implying that class and wealth distinctions carry no distinction."<sup>22</sup> In contrast to Marx, Tocqueville's fundamental idea of social equality means "égalité de condition," i.e., the

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<sup>21</sup> Tocqueville is my classic reference for the relation between social equality and political freedom. Contemporary discussions on the topic can be found in Dahl, Polyarchy, chap. 6, "Equalities and Inequalities"; and Giovanni Sartori, The Theory of Democracy Revisited (Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, Inc., 1987, chap. 12, "Equality."

<sup>22</sup> Sartori, Theory, p. 343. Sartori defines different types of equality: juridico-political equality, social equality, equality of opportunity, economic sameness. Social equality means also "to everyone the same social importance, that is, the power to resist social discrimination" (p. 345).

opportunity for an individual to be treated as an individual by others. So mild a notion is sufficient for my purpose here. The Tocquevillean revolution contrasts with situations in which deference is the primary meaning of the predominant patterns of behavior as, for example, in aristocratic societies or in situations where clientelistic relationships prevail. It contrasts also with situations of preeminence of status, typical of hierarchical societies, and situations of extreme social inequalities or processes of growing inequality, which are so frequent in new democracies.<sup>23</sup>

Beyond Tocqueville's critical suspicion toward democracy and equality, his concept of social equality remains a prerequisite for the political equality of citizens in modern societies. The fact is, however, that such a "minimal" social condition is absent from many new democracies. This can help to explain these countries' typical democratic instability and some of their typical political experiences: Vargas (and the Vargas tradition) in Brazil; Perón (and the Peronist tradition) in Argentina; the Mexican regime based on the dominant role of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI); Haya de La Torre and the Alianza Popular Revolucionario Americana (APRA) in Peru as well as the government experience of Peruvian General Velasco Alvarado; and so on.

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<sup>23</sup> It would be appropriate to mention T. H. Marshall and his seminal essay about "Citizenship and Social Class," in his Class, Citizenship and Social Development (London: Anchor Books, 1965). But it is also appropriate to remember that Marshall's theory of development of democracy (from civil rights to political rights to social rights) suggests a different discussion. Tocqueville saw an important trend toward "égalité de condition" in the United States, at a time before any discussion about social rights was possible. Marshall's reference to social rights is, in fact, a reference to the welfare state. This is important by itself but goes beyond the discussion I am suggesting here.

The political consequences of extreme and growing inequalities make today's situation a bit complicated. I do not think that the new democracies will repeat the populist experiences. Populist experiences, which vary from country to country, are always nurtured by some important moment of economic growth, such as in Argentina during the first Peronist government, or by an entire period of economic growth, like Brazil between the 1930s and the 1960s.<sup>24</sup> Populist regimes occurred in countries where massive sectors of traditionally dependent popular classes experienced growing social equality and social progress, even if that meant moving up only one step from the lowest social occupational echelon. Thus, for most people, populist regimes were associated with obtaining more individual independence at the social level even if they still remained politically dependent. This cannot be said about East European countries, bearing in mind the totalitarian character of their political regimes during most of the socialist period. But we can have no doubts about the radical nature of their equalizing experience. In this sense, they had something in common with populism, even if in a more radical way.

In the 1980s, the age of new democracies, the process of political democratization occurred at the same moment in which those countries suffered the experience of a profound and prolonged economic crisis that resulted in social exclusion and massive poverty, diminishing the individual's basic sense of independence. In turn, the basic assumption of a minimal social

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<sup>24</sup> About populism, see my "Estado y Masas en Brasil," Revista Latinoamericana de Sociología, Buenos Aires, 1965; published also as "State and Masses in Brazil," in Irving Louis Horowitz, ed., Masses in Latin America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970). See also Torcuato Di Tella, "Populism and Reform in Latin America," in Claudio Velliz, ed., Obstacles to Change in Latin America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965); and Octavio Ianni, La formación del Estado Populista en América Latina (México: Ediciones Era, 1975).

equality of individuals was discredited, with serious effects for the working of political democracy. Some of these countries are building a political democracy on top of a minefield of social apartheid (e.g., Brazil, Peru, and Guatemala) or on top of growing inequality (Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay). In a more profound and radical way, this seems to be also the experience of most people in Eastern Europe. But there is no need for deterministic economic or sociological theories that lead to pessimistic conclusions about the success of political democracy. These theories would have the additional fault of not being able to explain the growth of political democracy during the 1980s, specifically during the crisis.

One of the functions of comparative politics is to reveal a spectrum where before we saw only one color. Even if comparisons do not give us highly optimistic views (this would be too much to ask!), they can help keep pessimism under control. In this sense, it is useful to recall that it was possible for the United States to have a consolidated democracy even in periods of harsh economic crisis (as in the 1930s) or in areas of social and racial apartheid (as in the South up to the 1950s). If comparisons with the United States appear too far-fetched, perhaps the case of India will serve us better. It is readily accepted that India is a special case of a consolidated democracy, in a hierarchical society, facing situations of social and racial apartheid.

To the question of whether political democracy is possible in societies marked by a high degree of inequality (Brazil, Peru, Guatemala) or by a process of growing social inequality (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay) my answer is yes. However, this answer carries with it many real constraints on the type of



democracy it is possible to build under such conditions. A contradiction exists between, on the one hand, an institutional system based on the political equality of citizens (and, thus, a basic social equality of individuals as individuals) and, on the other hand, societies characterized by extreme inequalities (or by processes of growing inequality). While I do not think that this kind of contradiction creates a dead end for new democracies, it certainly opens the field for tensions, institutional distortions, instability, and recurrent violence. Extreme inequality (or inequalization) does not nullify the opportunity for political democracy, but it does make a difference.

To the question of whether, under such conditions, the consolidation of political democracy is possible, my answer is no. For example, Brazil today has a democracy but not yet a consolidated one. This also applies to Brazil from 1945 to 1964. Some of the institutional factors that characterize nonconsolidation were the same then as they are now, differing only in degree: low party institutionalization (this condition is worse now than during the 1945 to 1964 period), intermittent stalemates between the presidency and Congress (this is also worse now than before), and military presence as a legacy of the previous authoritarian regime (this condition is less important today than from 1945 to 1964). But there is more to consider than just the institutional level and, as I have noted before, on the social level, the present situation is worse.

Should Brazil, Mexico, Peru, and Guatemala be considered extreme cases of a general trend in the new democracies? Perhaps. If they are extreme cases of extreme social inequality, this does not mean that they represent a general trend at the politico-institutional level. Situations of growing social

inequality, like Argentina and Uruguay, suggest different types of new democracies. What are the possible political effects of growing social inequality in such countries? What are the possible ways that growing inequality can distort institutional democracy? My conjecture now would be that "inequalization" is much more difficult to accept than simple "inequality." The more equitable the society, the more difficult it is for people to accept even small inequalities.

##### 5. Democracy: From Movement to Delegation

Following some New York Times headlines concerning the difficulties of the Eastern European new democracies, Sheldon Wolin commented that the day after the destruction of dictatorship is the day to worry about the stability of democracy.<sup>25</sup> One main feature of the universal diffusion of democracy throughout the Second and Third World since the 1980s is the split between democracy as movement and democracy as regime. Many new democracies in Latin America seem to be similar to modern democracies in Europe in at least one way--desencanto. What increases the feeling of frustration is that these democracies appear almost anti-climatic. As political regimes, they seem to represent a narrow and ineffectual space for expressing the broad political participation and social and economic reforms proposed during the period of democratic resistance and the overthrowing of dictatorship. Even if the new democracies are efficient enough on the institutional side, there is a general feeling that they have failed when faced

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<sup>25</sup> Sheldon Wolin, "The Deconstitution of Democracy," ms., 1990.

with the social and economic reforms previously proposed by democratic movements.

One Brazilian economist who criticized the social inequalities in Brazil called it "Belindia," meaning that the rich Brazil is small like Belgium, and the poor Brazil is big like India. A colleague of mine then asked: What is the meaning of political democracy in Belindia if governments are elected by people from "India" and the real power is controlled by people from "Belgium"? This metaphor about Brazil as a country of extreme social inequalities, suffering a kind of "social apartheid," is also suggestive of the specific "distortions" (or features, to be neutral) that new democracies are acquiring, some of which are defined by Guillermo O'Donnell as "delegative democracies." "Delegative democracies have support in this basic assumption: the man (or, eventually, the woman, that is, Corazon Aquino, Indira Gandhi and, perhaps, Isabel Perón) who wins a presidential election gains the authority to govern the country as he (or she) thinks appropriate . . . . The President is the incarnation of the nation, the principal arbiter of the national interest, which he himself (or she herself) defines."<sup>26</sup> If representative democracy is, at least ideally, a democracy of equal, independent individuals able to represent themselves, then delegative democracy would be a democracy of unequal, dependent individuals unable to represent themselves. By definition, this type of democracy would be so weak (because it would be built on the basis of individuals unable to represent themselves) that we would wonder how it could exist in reality.

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<sup>26</sup> O'Donnell, "Democracia Delegativa?"

In Le Contrat Social, Rousseau considered impossible a "delegation de la volonté"; no one could delegate one's will. Thus, representation was an illusion, a promise impossible to keep. As a consequence, Rousseau rejected representation as such, and also rejected the idea of a democracy based on representation. While there is much debate about his exact views, Rousseauian democracy would probably be a direct democracy or, somewhat paradoxically, a plebiscitary democracy. I do not accept the impossibility of representation; I agree with O'Donnell that representation always includes some amount of delegation.

This does not mean that Rousseau's ideas have disappeared. Although ill-suited to the institutional organization of nation-states, they remain part of democratic political (and social) movements. Modern nation-state political systems, which are not in a Rousseauian world, choose a type of democracy in which delegation and representation are not only supposed to be possible but also are part of the same democratic (conflictive) family. Other political regimes (or political situations) show a similar, or even stronger, predominance of delegation. For example, the European illuminist liberalism, until the beginning of the twentieth century, justified itself as a type of delegation. (Here it is interesting to note a conversation between Max Weber and Erich von Ludendorff, when Weber defined democracy as the election of a leader who is then given full authority).<sup>27</sup> The same strong emphasis on

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<sup>27</sup> Ludendorff: Then what do you mean by democracy?

Weber: In a democracy, the people choose a leader in whom they trust. Then the chosen leader says, "Now shut up and obey me." People and party are then no longer free to interfere in his business.

Ludendorff: I could like such a democracy.

Weber: Later the people can sit in judgment. If the leader has made mistakes--to the gallows with him!

Gerth and Mills, From Max Weber, p. 42.

delegation would characterize the coronelismo in Brazil during the first decades of this century, or the gamonalismo in Peru; both employed a powerful and broad clientelistic system. Under coronelismo, most electors were socially and economically dependent on the candidate. That is to say, most electors were half-citizens and most leaders were citizens in full. Probably the best classical example of delegative democracy is that of Napoleon III, in which, as stated by Marx, the representative leader faced the people who elected him as if he were their lord.

While populism, coronelismo (gamonalismo), bonapartism, and so on, are all examples of delegative democracy, delegative democracy is not limited to any one of these specific forms.<sup>28</sup> Delegative democracy is a particular kind of representative democracy, which displays a preponderance of delegative behavior and relations within an institutional pattern defined by the representative system. It is characterized by a general predominance of, for example, personalistic leaderships, plebiscitary elections, clientelistic vote, and so on, over parliamentary relations, party relations, et cetera. In spite of the fact that institutions are defined according to a representative pattern, the behavior of the population as well as of the leadership is predominantly delegative.

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<sup>28</sup> After writing this paper I read the interesting suggestion by Alfred Stepan that "delegative democracies" would be "one of the predictable pathologies of presidentialism" and that "the multiple logics of pure parliamentarism seem to work against delegated democracy." See Alfred Stepan and Cindy Skach, "Meta-Institutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation," ms., January 1992. Unfortunately, I have no space to elaborate on this idea here.

Perhaps the best examples are Brazil and Peru. The 1989 presidential elections in both countries showed a predominance of plebiscitarian and personalist aspects. Both elected presidents (Fernando Collor and Alberto Fujimori) are examples of the "politics of anti-politics." The same could be said of their main competitors: Lula and Mario Vargas Llosa. (Even though Lula is an important union leader who is forming a new political party and becoming a politician, his public image for the majority of the electorate was that of a non-politician. Vargas Llosa, the great writer, and in some sense also an important social and political thinker, was also perceived by the majority of the electorate as a non-politician). It is important to note, however, that the Brazilian as well as the Peruvian elections were games organized by the representative rules of democracy and marked by the typical uncertainty of this kind of game. Something similar could be said of the election of Carlos Menem in Argentina, with the difference that Menem and his main foe were political party leaders with defined political profiles in a country where parties are considered to be decisive parts of the political system.

It is still an open question whether Brazil and Peru are cases of neo-populism. I would insist that populism, from the 1940s to the 1960s, represented degrees of social progress, that is to say, it represented some growth of social equality, much more than Collor and Fujimori (or Menem for that matter) could ever imagine. As politicians in countries characterized by extreme social inequalities and, moreover, suffering a prolonged economic crisis, the election of Collor and Fujimori demonstrates that common and poor people are asking for someone to solve their immediate and urgent economic problems. The economic methods or the political formulae to be adopted are

unimportant. For the people who voted for them, Collor and Fujimori are the promise of solving economic problems now. This is what matters.

Populism was based on social protest and the social ascension of the popular masses. The current situation is different. It is one of social despair, approaching social anomie and disorganization. It is typical of this kind of situation that people do not worry if their leaders change their minds about economic matters after taking office. As a rule, the new delegative presidents (such as Fujimori or Menem) do not have political parties, and even if they do, as in the case of Menem, they are prepared to change political and economic programs at a moment's notice. The majority of their constituents do not require particular policies, not even the mild and vague programs of the populist period. During the Argentine elections, Menem said "Siganme" (Follow me). That was his real "program": to get the trust of the people. He went on to change his mind about most economic problems the day after the election. Collor did give a preview of his general economic program. But who would have predicted the economic violence of his first plan, for example, "freezing" private assets in the banks? Looking to the East, the scenario in Walesa's Poland is similar: weak parties, strong personalist leaders, the "politics of anti-politics."

If we do not accept the label of populism (or neo-populism), what should we call a new democracy? Some speak of "poor democracy," of a vanishing democracy, or the lessening power of democracy.<sup>29</sup> Others talk

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<sup>29</sup> The expression "poor democracy" is suggested by Dante Caputo and Jorge Sábato, "La Integración de las Democracias Pobres: oportunidades y peligros," ms., Buenos Aires, 1990.

about a "pauper's democracy," implying that democratic mechanisms are being used more frequently by the poor. They suggest that this occurs at the same rate at which those democratic mechanisms lose real power. Still others talk of "empty democracy." All of these expressions are attempts to say the same thing, albeit from different angles.

Like many terms in the social sciences, the expression "empty democracy" imparts more than its simple definition. The main point seems to be that parliamentary elections and representative relations are no longer co-extensive with most power-making processes in the state and in the society. Elections and representative relations are only a part of this power-structuring process, and not the most important. They are being overshadowed in various countries and situations by social movements, techno-bureaucratic groups, military corporatisms, special interest groups, social and/or institutional corporatisms, et cetera. The growing importance of these new forms of creating power in the state and society gives an impression of the emptiness of "traditional" representative democracy. In viewing democratic representatives of the people--mainly in parliaments, but also in some elected executive functions--the observer gets the impression that the real power lies elsewhere.

This is not new; similar processes occurred in the European old democracies as well. What is specific to new democracies is precisely that one can use old labels to discuss them. One can describe democracies that are resuming their history (or restoring their shape) according to representative patterns, and observe at the same time that those representative patterns are being displaced by other power mechanisms. What is sad, and at same time



fascinating, is that new democracies seem like late democracies; that is, they appear not to be vanishing, like old democracies, but rather unfeasible or, worse, still-born.

Empty democracy, pauper's democracy, poor democracy--all those expressions are names for a common truth; that is, new democracies are weak democracies. And, probably, there are different kinds of democratic weakness. In any case, these expressions do not describe a static situation but a process in flux, a trend toward the displacement of traditional, representative, power-making processes.<sup>30</sup> In this dynamic situation, an important test of strength is the capacity of a democratic political regime to deal with the economy and society. This means that in an era in which public opinion calls for reforms, social and economic reforms could give "content" and "meaning," and by the way, some solidity, to new democracies. Examples of the need for such reforms are everywhere. But, unfortunately, the need for reforms is as widespread as disenchantment, apathy, political alienation, and loss of participation. Demands for reforms are as widespread as the frustration with the democratic governments, which were supposed to be in charge of the reforms in the first place.

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<sup>30</sup> By reviewing different studies about Central America we can ascertain whether their pessimistic views about that region have something to say about the general situation of democracies in other Latin American countries. See the studies by Edelberto Torres-Rivas, Centroamérica: La democracia posible (San José, Costa Rica: EDUCA and FLACSO, 1987) and Susanne Jonas, The Battle for Guatemala (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1989), and, from different theoretical perspectives, Giuseppe Di Palma, "The European and the Central American Experience," in Giuseppe Di Palma and Laurence Whitehead, The Central American Impasse (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986) and Terry Karl, "Dilemas de la democratización en América Latina," in Julio Cotler, Estrategías para el Desarrollo de la Democracia: en Perú y América Latina (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos [IEP], 1990).

Descriptions of this democratic malaise recall the Latin American state crises of the 1930s, which some sociologists used to define as vazios de poder (power vacuums). It was an historic moment of economic crisis (the 1929 crash and depression that followed) and of general concern about the need for social and economic reforms. It was also a moment in which governments seemed to lack support from anyone in the society and were unable to make effective decisions about the economy. This description applies to countries like Argentina, Brazil, and Peru today. It could also describe Poland, and possibly other countries of the East.

While comparisons with that historical period seem to be useful, I would suggest that they not go too far. We should avoid equating our current empty and poor democracies with the façade democracies of the end of nineteenth century and the beginning of this century in Latin America. In Latin American political thought of the 1930s and 1940s, façade democracies was the term used to describe oligarchic democracies, which were in crisis at that time. They were "façade" not because they lacked a social and economic content, but, on the contrary, precisely because they had a social and economic content: an oligarchic one. For the same reason that they were oligarchic democracies they were neither poor democracies nor pauper's democracies.

Today we do not think of an institutional-political façade that "hides" social-economic content, about a political formal "illusion" that veils the "reality" of economic and social power structure. We see a democracy that is weak because it conceals decisions taken by real power that lies in other

places, but, in most cases, these "other places" are only authoritarian state legacies of the most recent past.

## 6. A Democracy without Leaders?

In most countries, the weakness of the democratic regimes contrasts with the strength of democratic forces during the resistance period. This is not only a matter of subjective feelings, alternating optimism and pessimism, hope and deception. This shifting of attitudes also says something about the real weakness of the political elites in the new democracies. The leadership of new democracies fits the pattern of an unstable grouping barely unified by democratic competition and by an atmosphere of democratic feelings predominant in the public opinion. In any case, they do not fit the pattern of leaders conscious of their role as a group (stratum, class, or elite) in the consolidation of democracy. In Latin America, Chile and Uruguay--if we can think of those countries as "new democracies"--seem to be the exceptions.

Let us return to Schmitter's proposal: to understand consolidation, look at the transition. The general truth about transitions seems to be that liberalization came from above, democratization from below. Democratic forces were able to mobilize (in some cases, to organize) most sectors of civil society in the liberalization period. In some countries, like Brazil and Poland, this was done to an extent never known in their previous histories. Countries like Chile have seen a "resurrection of civil society."<sup>31</sup> Possibly the same expression could be used for other countries in Latin America, but, certainly,

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<sup>31</sup> O'Donnell and Schmitter, Transitions.

such a "resurrection" was much more dramatically true for Eastern Europe in 1989.

Liberalization came from power fractures; democratization came from society's pressures for participation. This helps in understanding consolidation because it suggests that democratic movements were more effective in opposition than in government. In a way, we are facing an inversion of Madison's idea about democracy. Madison said that the first condition for a nation to have a democracy is a society able to build up a government and the second condition is a society able to control the government. Until now, our societies have been more able to oppose a dictatorial government than to build up a democratic one.

Let us look at some examples. In the Brazilian resistance period, the Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (MDB) provided impressive evidence of the pressures of society toward democracy. In national government, after 1985, the PMDB (the substitute of MDB following the party reform of 1979) has been a half-failure. It has had success on the institutional side (constitutional reforms, etc.), sharing the general movement of society toward political democracy but it has been an almost complete failure at economic and social reforms. The victory of Collor in the 1989 elections in which the PMDB candidate, Ulysses Guimarães, received only 3% of the votes, might be considered a measure of PMDB failure in social and economic reforms. Would Collor have a better chance than Sarney? Events of his first year and a half in government suggest not.

The same question should be posed for Argentina, under Raúl Alfonsín, with the difference in the rupture of the military regime. We could pose the same kind of question about any other new democracy in Latin America. Chile is again an exception because economic reforms there began during the dictatorship and were followed in the democratic government of Patricio Aylwin. In the East, the Solidarity movement that was an impressive resistance movement in Poland during the 1980s became divided when in government. Will Lech Walesa, who was elected president with 75% of the vote, be more successful than the previous premier Mazowiecki, who arrived in government with important support, lost his support, and resigned after a humiliating defeat that was considered the major feedback on government attempts at economic reform? The last parliamentary elections in Poland suggest a negative answer. If Tadeusz Mazowiecki was defeated in the 1990 presidential election because his government tried to implement economic reforms, President Walesa was defeated in the October 1991 parliamentary election on the same grounds. In the meantime, Solidarity disappeared and today Poland has twenty-five parties, not one with more than 12% of the support of the electorate.

Schmitter's idea is suggestive also from another point of view. It is possible that the success of social movements yesterday help us to understand the failure of democratic governments today. This relates to social movements and political regimes as well as to the nature of the economic crisis and to the process of centralization of state controls during the authoritarian regimes. Social movements tend to create a mixture of demands for rights and for socioeconomic reforms. For example, workers demand higher wages, more employment, and more freedom of organization; urban

movements demand participation in decisions concerning development planning and more government investment in housing. However, it is well known that this capacity of social movements to express demands does not mean that they have an articulated view of an alternative society and state. They do not have a program defining prospects of a new state and a new society, nor do they have a government program.

The success of social movements during the 1970s and 1980s had to do with an economic crisis that condemned to obsolescence most of the previous relations between state and economy as well as traditionally centralized forms of organization and politics. The state, governed by military (or communist) dictatorships, was under the pressure of economic crisis and unable to respond to it. In the atmosphere of economic and social crisis in which they shaped themselves, social movements developed more appropriately as defensive movements rather than as a point of departure for a new conception of economy, society, and state. The governments they were able to create were not much different from the governments they helped to destroy. As suggested by Przeworski, "the debt crisis makes all governments equally debtors and equally willing to pay, without having money for it."<sup>32</sup>

In a more general sense, economic crisis "equalizes" all governments in the same condition of weakness and pushes entire societies into a process of fragmentation. This makes building new national institutions and new national leadership more difficult. The difficulties faced by workers and social movements when they arrive in the political scenario are basically the same

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<sup>32</sup> I am quoting from my notes on Przeworski's participation in the East-South System Transformations Seminar, Budapest, 1991.

as those faced by any other sector of society that traditionally provides political and cultural leadership. Mutatis mutandis, bankers and industrial entrepreneurs, for example, have the same kind of "fragmented behavior" toward the state and society in general that we can observe in other social sectors. As they are more "privatist" than their workers, as generally occurs with property owners, they are also more "sectoralist" when they are able to organize themselves as pressure groups. They are not unified in their political behavior and they do not help to unify other sectors of society. This leads to a "balkanization" of society.

The old Marxist (Gramscian) theory of an economic dominant class that transforms itself into a political and cultural ruling class does not find, as a rule, adequate performers in the new democracies. The same could be said about any other theory that defines political leadership by assuming the paradigm of a unified political actor. I do not think, for example, that Mosca's perceptions of the ruling class (or any other theory of elites) would be more appropriate. The balkanization of society is not only the result of state crisis but also the result of a prolonged economic crisis that disorganizes society. And it is as such a pervasive problem. Within the working class level as well as within the middle sectors and upper class, we can detect "factions," "fractions," "sectors," "fragments," and "corporatisms."

Old images of a unified society were related to old images of a unified state. Old images of political class and political elites were inspired by some concept of the state (or the state bureaucracy). For example, political parties, a typical instrument of political elites that is in a permanent process of crisis in most new democracies, always have something to do with the state

structure. This is clear when parties are mainly based on public opinion, but it is not much different when they are class-based. Such similarities between party and state reach the extreme point of fusion in totalitarian regimes. But even when a political party is assumed to be a part of a plural universe, creating a political party always paves the way to the state. Parties in parliamentary systems, and particularly in shadow cabinet mechanisms, are examples of the fact that a party is always a project-proposal to the state. So, they always speak as if they were the state, or as if they were to become the state. And this gives them a "unified" character as well as the capacity to "unify" a social class or large parts of public opinion.

I have doubts about the existence of any new (or old) political class, if this means something like concerted behavior. The major problem seems to be that democratic movements, while arriving at a general idea of democracy, did not arrive at a new general image of the state. The democratic movements encompassed all the general democratic values in society during the period of dictatorships. This could be said about the MDB (later PMDB) from 1974 until 1982 in Brazil. Possibly the same could be said about the Solidarity movement in the 1980s in Poland. Paradoxical as it might be, the downfall of the dictatorship was also the beginning of the breakup of the democratic movements. In the case of Brazil, at least, this was a process of distortion, fragmentation, and the vanishing of the identity of a democratic movement.

Democracy was new; the state was old. In Brazil, between the general democratic resistance movement and the new democratic governments that paved the way for a new political regime in 1985, a somewhat strange transition process displayed strange moments. In 1982, for example, there



were many "governments of opposition" in most provincial states of the country. That self-contradictory expression had a specific meaning: the provincial state government was in the hands of the PMDB, representing the national opposition, and the central (federal) government was in the hands of the military, representing the real power of the state. This was forgotten after 1985, but I think that much of its import has remained. Many members of Sarney's government spoke a language different from that of other parts of the same government. Some of them, at least in the social area, behaved as if they were still members of the old opposition. As sectors related to the previous military regime continued to exert influence in Sarney's government, this confusion between government and opposition disclosed something more than an ideological problem of identity. Parts of the government behaved as if they were part of the democratic movement; other parts behaved as if they were part of the previous military regime. Between the democratic movement and the old regime, the "Nova República" faced major difficulties in defining its own place as a new democratic regime.

What kind of leadership do the new democracies have? They have personalistic leaders more than national leaders; political groups (and "groupouscules") more than political parties; and ideological trends and intellectual proposals that make for a democratic atmosphere but not a national project under discussion. They have a fragmented group of leaders barely unified by the predominant waves of public opinion toward democracy and by democratic competition as such. But they do not have a political class (or political elite) imbued with a general consciousness of its role in the process of democratic consolidation or of the building of a new democratic state. Most of the leaders of the new democracies behave as if democratic

consolidation was already achieved, and as if the new democratic state is ready. Most of them take the emergence of a democratic culture and the exhaustion of the previous authoritarian alternatives in the country and in the world as a sure sign of the inevitability of democratic consolidation. This could be a mistake.

Is it possible to have a democratic situation or regime without the presence of a democratically-minded leadership and self-conscious politicians? Yes. That is the situation in most new democracies. Is it possible to consolidate a democratic regime without the presence of a democratically-minded leadership and self-conscious politicians? No.

I agree with Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan in that, if political democracy is consolidated in a given country, it is possible to maintain it without self-conscious politicians, provided that they are not anti-democratic in a militant way.<sup>33</sup> But, coming back to Rustow's distinction between "genetic" and "functional" perspectives, I do not think this is the case when we have to face, from a genetic perspective, the process of consolidation as such. I agree again with Stepan and Linz that, with regard to leadership, the worst situation is that in which leaders are manifestly opposed to democracy. At least from this standpoint, the situation of the new democracies is not so bad. Democracy collapses when politicians and civilian leaders assume authoritarian discourse. In the European experience of the 1920s and 1930s, as well as in the Latin American experience of the 1960s, most political leaders behaved based on the false assumption that the death of democracy was their best chance for

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<sup>33</sup> Linz and Stepan, "Political Crafting."

survival. This is not the current situation in the new democracies, in which politicians benefit from the general democratic atmosphere.

But this is not enough. In order to consolidate democracy in countries with weak democratic traditions, a general effort of leadership directed to that end is required. As suggested by most authors, the task of democratic consolidation requires statesmanship. This should be considered particularly true in a situation of economic crisis and growing social pressures. Only part of the democratization movement program was accomplished, mainly on the institutional side. This is not little, but it is not enough. Other parts--related to state, social, and economic reform--are only in the beginning in some countries and untouched of them. They remain also as possible banners that can lead new steps in the process of democratization, if political leaders are prepared to relate them to prospects for social progress and social equality. If not, we will have to face the reality of the permanent instability of new democracies and, in some cases, the risk of authoritarian regression.

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What are the characteristics of and what direction are many new democracies taking or likely to take in the future? What are the relationships between these characteristics and the likely direction given the brutal economic crisis and the situations not only of deep social inequality but also in many cases of vast inequalizations? How and to what extent are these processes--these characteristics and the democracies associated with them--linked? As Weffort makes clear in his paper, once the issues are considered this way, it becomes apparent that they are are not geographically bounded. These issues have to do with the direction of important parts of the contemporary world; they are relevant to America, but they are as relevant to Eastern and Central Europe, Korea, Turkey, to the Philippines, et cetera. In considering the work of Latin Americanists, East Europeanists, and East Asianists, wherein we learn about each region on its own and the difficulties of dialogue among scholars, Weffort goes against the trend of over-parochializing these issues. But there is apparently not much progress on the theoretical and practical questions that he raises in his discussion.

Perhaps because we do not have a good definition of or good criteria for how to recognize when a democracy has consolidated, Weffort refers to the prevailing definitions without accepting any particular one. So he, like me, shares the problem that we do not yet know clearly when, after a transition from totalitarian rule, a new democracy becomes consolidated.

Part of the problem is that the existing theories of democracy are theories about working or representative democracies. But when one looks at other countries, from Argentina to Poland to the Philippines, including, of course, Brazil, there are too many elements, practices, weak institutions, assumptions about the proper exercise of authority, and links between citizens and the state that just do not fit the assumptions--explicitly or implicitly--under which existing theories about representative democracy have been formulated. Among other things, we must discover what kind of animals these regimes are. Are they in the same family as representative democracy? As has been theorized already, they do not seem to be democracies, but if they are different, which of the differences are relevant?

First, are these democracies? As Weffort points out, in terms of the existing theories about democracy--what, in the jargon of political scientists, is called polyarchy or political democracy--these are democracies in the sense that elections are free. Anyone who has the resources can create free associations. There is freedom of expression, of opinion, et cetera. So they pass the test of polyarchy or political democracy. But there are still too many elements in the actual workings of these democracies that clearly go beyond or beside existing theories and assumptions about what democracy should look like.

A way out of the problem is to assume a sort of evolutionary perspective and argue that after a certain amount of time, which is undefined, these democracies will come to look like some of the existing democracies. So it would be a sort of birth defect or a stage of infancy or insufficiency that is

resolved when these babies become adult democracies. But this assumption can be very dangerous. Social scientists are tired of demystifying theological views of history, and this could be another case of that. I also wonder if there is a core image of democracy. We know that the differences between existing democracies in the world are great. And the only criterion that the new democracies, which do not look like representative democracies, meet is the test of polyarchy. So this issue is complex, confusing, and challenging. Weffort tries to clarify and discuss it, and I think that he makes an important contribution.

It is not much consolation that in Latin America today, two countries appear to be representative democracies: Uruguay and, with all the caveats of what Samuel Valenzuela calls the reservedom of the authoritarian domain, Chile. Chile and Uruguay work under the existing theories of democracy, which do not work in Peru, Guatemala, or Argentina. On the other hand, as Weffort observes, we can get into the definitional problem again if Chile and Uruguay are considered redemocratized countries. Are they then consolidated democracies? Given the lack of a good definition, we have only trivial and vague criteria by which to recognize a consolidated democracy.

The United States is a consolidated democracy, although I doubt Weffort's assertion that the United States was a consolidated democracy during the period of slavery. If we accept his argument about the social condition of citizenship, then a consolidated democracy that has slavery and has to have a civil war to eradicate it may not have been so consolidated. According to conventional wisdom, Venezuela, until the recent attempted coup, was one of the paramount examples of a consolidated democracy. (The

Soviet Union, perhaps, was a paramount example of a consolidated totalitarian regime before it collapsed.) In this sense, once-consolidated Venezuela has been deconsolidated. Chile, in the 1970s, was deconsolidated and has since been reconsolidated. This says a great deal about the work that has to be done in terms of clarifying the concepts we now have. This kind of preparatory analytical conceptual work, to which Weffort's work contributes, is tiresome at times. However, it is a professional obligation.

It is also possible that some of the new democracies that meet the test of political democracy are not moving at all towards representative democracy. They may be consolidating into another type of democracy where the dominant features are socialist, neopopulist, and delegative. This would be a definition of becoming consolidated. As Weffort properly points out, can we not think of representative, delegative democracy with plebiscitary elections? With emerging parties and almost nonexistent party systems? Or is it only (as Weffort suggests and I agree, though I think we are very much in the dark in terms of the type of linkages that create these characteristics) that they are basically the products of weak or truncated citizenship characterized by increasing social inequalities.

Can such democracies exist? As Weffort puts it properly, if we can think of these stable democracies as existing, then it is likely that they are working, and that their behavior patterns and political articulation are likely to be very different. This again has not been conceptualized. Of course, India is the paramount, perhaps the only, example of this type of weak social basis of citizenship. India is an old democracy of fifty years or more. Is it a consolidated democracy? Is India still a democracy? It does not look that

way. To all those who watch the news it is evident that if India was consolidated, it now seems to be sharply deconsolidated and even perhaps disintegrating as a national state. Is that the pattern? Can we--and I think India under Nehru and then Indira Ghandi is a great example of delegative democracy--think of this as a long-term future for countries? Is India's fifty years of delegative democracy, which has been very stable basically, with deteriorating institutions, including a very strong civil service, the future? Today there are even fewer elements to lead us to believe that India will look like a typical representative democracy in the future. So I think it is worthwhile to bring India into the picture for comparative purposes.

Weffort seeks to address these issues, to search for debate, to make a plea for conceptual clarification. This is a proper way for the social sciences to pose these problems, especially when we are considering the enigmatic origins of these strange new animals, these new democracies, which are not representative.



## DISCUSSION

RUBENS RICUPERO (Brazilian Ambassador to the United States): I am participating as a private citizen, and my comments express only my private views. Professor O'Donnell asked if India is a democracy. I think we could ask that question of many countries. For instance, if political parties alternating in power is the essence of democracy, is Japan a democracy in the Western sense of the concept? It is not easy to answer these questions if we do not have clearly in our minds what kind of a democracy we mean. Does each country have its own variety of democracy? Or should we have some objective criteria?

How does Venezuela fit into the theoretical framework that was presented here about delegative democracy and about the difference between old and new democracies? It is difficult to pretend that Venezuela is a new democracy. The Venezuelans have had an uninterrupted democratic system for thirty-four years and, from the point of view of the two main parties alternating in power, it is practically a perfect example of democracy. It would also be difficult to understand Venezuelan politics as a delegation of power to the president because it is more a delegation to one of the two main parties, although they have had some strong personalities. How should the Venezuelan system be described in terms of Weffort's theoretical framework? In addition, why did Venezuela experience such an unexpected and violent outburst of military dissatisfaction, which was not confined to a small group? We know now that about one hundred fifty officers were arrested. They are all young officers. It reminds one of the tenentismo movement in Brazil, some sixty to seventy years ago.

How could this be explained in terms of consolidation of democratic institutions? What were the important factors? Was it a correction? Was it extreme nationalism on the part of the military? But it was not confined only to the military; there was widespread popular apathy. The Venezuelan population seems to have had sympathy for the plotters. Is one of the possible explanations that it was, at least in part, a consequence of the austere economic adjustments being proposed everywhere as one of the steps toward the consolidation of democracy? That is, first you have to obtain macroeconomic stability, but for such stability to occur a country must adopt the right macroeconomic policies, or austerity measures, to be able to improve the lot of the poor. Then it can become a consolidated democracy. How would you describe, according to this concept of delegative democracy, the political systems of Mexico and Colombia? Colombia is also an interesting case because it has an enormous degree of social inequality. But it has had a very stable regime in terms of the two political parties alternating in power and in terms of producing economic policy success.

If we all accept that in order to consolidate democratic institutions we need improved distribution of wealth and income, the precondition of macroeconomic stability and a return to economic development, and if we also assume that the right policies are the structural adjustment policies being implemented now, is it possible to go from austerity programs, to macroeconomic stability, to economic development and social improvement? Do the speakers believe it is possible to go all that way with real democracy, with all the high-level criteria of a formal democracy, or would it be easier to reach those results with a more restricted democracy?

To illustrate my point, I take the case of Chile. It has been pointed out quite often that the best example in Latin America of a country that was successful in implementing all of these recipes for economic adjustment has done so under extreme authoritarian conditions. The regime, of course, is democratic, but it has benefited from what was achieved in the previous authoritarian regime.

WEFFORT: I must first say that Mr. Ricupero is not only Ambassador of Brazil, he is also Professor of International Relations at the University of Brasília.

I would say that Mexico is a case of delegative "something." We could discuss what kind of democracy there is in Mexico; I think it is some kind of democracy working inside the institutional system. But I would say that it is delegative in the sense that I understand the concept. I do not have enough information about Colombia to give a reaction about that country, but let me address the case of Venezuela, because the question really suggested a point that probably was missing from my paper and that I think is important. With regard to Venezuela, we should also have a theory of the crisis of consolidated democratic regimes. Perhaps we should think of new democracies as countries that have had the recent experience of authoritarian regimes and are now facing a transition and/or an attempt at consolidation.

The cases of Chile and Uruguay are difficult because we should probably argue that they are old democracies according to the traditional pattern that we have used to distinguish between old and new democracies. But the issue

of Venezuela is suggestive of the need for more analytical clearness about the concepts.

MONICA PERALTA-RAMOS (Consultant): I am confused by this effort to develop a typology of democracy that has not yet been defined with objective criteria. It seems to me that this effort is centered on an analysis that is formal procedure with no substance to it. When we talk about democracy, the first question that comes to my mind is the idea of legitimacy of power. If we talk about legitimacy of power, we are talking about social demands, the conflicting demands of people, individual groups, et cetera. If we have different demands, we may have compromises, and we will have different ways of letting them express themselves.

If we introduce the problem of substance in the sense of conflicting demands, how does it fit into your example? I am not just talking about social inequalities; there are many examples of democratic systems that have been threatened not merely by the demands of the poorest sectors of society but particularly by the demands of the upper classes. Absence of a clear harmony of interests among those who have access to power has threatened democracies in different parts of the world and is still doing so today. I would say Argentina is a good example of this, although the country does not have a very traditional democratic system.

How does one introduce the problem of substance, of democratic legitimization of power in democratic situations, and in this sense--coming back to your distinction between new and old democracies--is there not a sort of historical bias? When one takes into consideration what we now consider

traditional democracies, did they not also pass through historical periods of mixed characteristics? If we analyze history from the French Revolution onwards, I would not say that we had an immediately pure democratic system in any part of the world in a historical sense. How do you assess this in view of the new democracies that are emerging now?

WEFFORT: First, I assume as a point of departure a general concept of democracy and I understand that we can take as a point of departure the idea of a procedural democracy. This is the idea of working democratic mechanisms. But I do not think this forum is empty at the theoretical level. I would say the working of this mechanism is appropriate to certain general social conditions. Second, is the question about equality or degrees of inequality, situations of extreme inequality or situations of growing inequality. I do not think that this is the only way in which one can put substance, to use your word, into this kind of analysis. We could perhaps find different ways of putting some social substance into this kind of analysis.

I am trying to propose as a point for discussion that the minimal operation of political democracy in any part of the world cannot occur without a certain minimal level of social equality. Certain countries require a whole program of social reforms to attain this minimal level. In the case of Brazil, for example--or Peru, Guatemala, and a lot of other countries--the operation of political democracy requires putting a variety of demands, to use your term, on the agenda of democratization.

I am seeking to understand the working of these institutions under certain social conditions. But I understand that in the absence of certain modern social conditions, democracy does not work. That is my problem.

BRADY TYSON (Professor of International Relations, The American University): Francisco Weffort and Guillermo O'Donnell as well have outlined for us the weaknesses of institutions, the weaknesses of democracies, the mass poverty, the social conditions, and the inadequate leadership that prevent the consolidation of democracy. But the major factor that has been ignored is the problem of os donos de poder, or the ruling class. The same kind of elite, the owners of power, are preventing the consolidation of democracy, meaning the expansion of democracy, in Brazil, Mexico, and in the United States. I think that to blame the leadership for this weakness is a bit unfair.

In the case of Brazil, there have been maybe five or six coups or semi-coups in the past sixty years, destroying leadership that was organizing and expanding participation. Mexico is a bit different. But if one is going to talk about consolidation, one must also measure the competence of the elite and the power that the owners of power have. These classes are very sophisticated and they have a new, ever-expanding menu of social control mechanisms. So if one is talking about consolidation, one must look at who is causing democracy to stagnate, as opposed to helping it expand.

The definition of democracy is written in four words over the great portal of the Supreme Court of the United States. It is a process of equal justice under law. Justice means participation, among other things, and in all

the nations that I am familiar with there is an elite that is determined, in its own subtle way, to contain the expansion of participation and the creation of a more just society. We see this very well in the case of Brazil.

WEFFORT: I agree. But what about the elite groups facing the problem of democracy in a country like Brazil? The elites of the oligarchy in Brazil from the end of the nineteenth century until 1930 had a certain national view about a certain institutional framework for the working of something they called political democracy. This could be said about other countries as well. But in Brazil today, we do not have a power elite with a national view, with a sense of the nation. We do have, of course, economic development according to international conditions. But what I see are private unions of entrepreneurs, sectors of elites facing the national problems more or less like the workers on the other side. We have a kind of fragmentation of society; that is obvious. I do not see this national dominant class prepared in the case of Brazil, and I would say of other countries, to have a particular national project for the country. I do not have any kind of geographical, historical, or political attachment to the Brazilian oligarchy prior to 1930, but I have to acknowledge that they had a general view about the country.

What we have is a difficult, fragmented process of building a system of institutions in the country in which those different groups work through the institutional system in a certain way. It seems to me that it is necessary to go through the analysis of the failure of these people inside the institutional system.

One example is the constitution in Brazil. Brazilians were pressing for a new constitution for twenty years. There is now a new constitution. In the process of writing the new constitution, we had only pressure groups pushing for their own particular interests. The approved constitution was not supported by any important or relevant national sector of the country. It is therefore easier to see how we have more people criticizing the constitution than supporting it.

MARGARET DALY HAYES (Consultant): You may have put your finger on an important organizing element of democracy, and that is that if we cannot agree that there is a single model, such as Westminster parliamentarism or American presidentialism, at least a democracy seems to require an organizing world view in which people believe. And perhaps that is not only the trouble with democracy in Brazil today, but in many ways it is the problem that the United States and some of the parties in the United States are confronting as they try to perfect the message that they express to the people. Perhaps this would be an interesting way to pursue the issue.

You talked throughout about consolidating democracy, and you made it sound as though there was a final form, a best way that democracy works. Yet I think history demonstrates that this is not the case, and perhaps these systems are far from a perfect model. Maybe that model does not exist but, in the best of circumstances, societies seek to perfect the way the people participate in their own governance, and that is a process of moving in the direction of a better government as opposed to a consolidated democracy.



Rather than consider leadership, the president or the congress, perhaps in the future you could look at the institutions that permit equal justice under law or more participation by the citizenry in decision-making about national priorities, such as education and the delivery of services. At what point does a citizen have access to and become able to make a demand upon the delivery system? It seems to me that as we look particularly at the evolution of democracy in Eastern Europe, it is the functioning of institutions, particularly the justice system, but certainly all of the other delivery systems, that is going to make democracy viable. And political parties, as opposed purely to elections, or even as opposed to legislatures, are an important element in that participatory process.

If there is not a means of access in the party structure, or at least for getting your message to your representative or your delegate, then democracy or participating in your own governance is not going to function as effectively.

ARTURO VALENZUELA (Professor of Government and Director, Center for Latin American Studies, Georgetown University): I agree with the emphasis on leadership. I agree very much with the emphasis on statecraft. I think that these are important elements to rescue in this discussion, even though we must not at the same time lose track of some of the other elements that you have touched on. Certainly the question of the social base of democracies is an important one. But let me suggest that there are two elements that I find missing in the way this issue has been articulated. First, constitutionalism and, second, institutionalism. In some ways they are related.

By constitutionalism I mean the notion that in any democracy there is a constraint on democracy; there is a contradiction in a sense between the notion of constitutionalism and the notion of democracy itself. After all, as democracies have evolved in the West we have found that an essential element of democratic practice is to be able to constrain the passions or the humors of the majority, and constitutionalism evolved in that direction.

In a sense, it is the protection of the minorities, and this is done through a host of different institutions. Some of those institutions are evolving even today in new democracies such as Germany or Spain, which I submit, of course, are new democracies. The whole notion, for example, of the constitutional court in Germany is a fascinating way in which democracy has consolidated itself by developing an instrument that is essential to the notion of constitutionalism and not necessarily of democracy. That is, they developed an organization, an institution, a body that is able to protect the minorities, to protect certain values that are critical to democracy but not necessarily critical to the notion of majority rule. This is a notion that needs to be incorporated into our thinking about this issue.

How is it that these institutions, these practices, come about over time? How do they become habituated? It is not just statecraft and not just leadership--it is the building of these institutions at various levels of society that leads to this complex dialectic between democracy on the one hand as a majoritarian concept and constitutionalism on the other hand as a constraint on the notion of pure democracy.

My second point has to do with the notion of institutions, and here there is an overlap with the notion of constitutionalism, but it is a different analytical point. When one looks at the range of experiences, as you point them out, between representative democracies and delegative democracies, we have to pay specific and clear attention to the nature of the institutions that exist. It is no accident that most of the examples of delegative democracy that we are talking about are in fact presidential regimes. I do not think this is a trivial issue, and this is a point that Juan Linz and I have been working on rather extensively recently. Incidentally, I do not think that India, which is a case of parliamentary democracy, is an exception. It may have some delegative characteristics and I agree that it may be breaking down, but the Congress Party plays a fundamental role in the parliament as a majoritarian element with its many nexuses with society. I think there is a fundamental qualitative difference between that parliamentary experience in India and some other kinds of democratic experiences under presidential forms of government in other places of the world.

It is no accident that the Latin American cases are primarily presidential, and that the presidential case has a much more delegative quality to it than a parliamentary case. We need to pay attention to the way in which institutions then contribute to different kinds of outcomes in this respect, either delegative or representative. And it is not only the institutions as a regime, but also the interplay among institutions at different levels, that I am strongly concerned about. We are talking about, for example, the interplay of electoral systems, party systems, and regime types, and I do not think that we can look at them individually. We must think about them as a whole and consider how they affect other areas.

So if we are going to make comparisons between countries, if we are going to look at Brazil and Peru, if we are going to look at examples of a certain kind of democracy, let us be very clear in considering the various additional components of the institutional fabric of these societies and see how they interrelate. Let us add those two elements, constitutionalism and institutionalism.

WEFFORT: I agree that the points made by Margaret Daly Hayes and Arturo Valenzuela probably should have a stronger emphasis. When I think about leadership, I am thinking not only about the presence of the leaders, but also the institutions of leadership. I would say that parties, et cetera, are among the set of institutions that are part of this process of leadership. But I agree, this should be clearer and more fully discussed. Of the issues raised by Arturo Venezuela, institutionalism as it relates to political statecraft would probably be best to consider at this moment. For example, if we need stronger political parties, we need changes in the electoral law. We should be prepared to understand the weakness of parties by viewing not only social conditions but by considering in a straightforward fashion how the electoral system works. I agree that we should consider examples in which the working of electoral systems is anti-party as such and consider what is created with this political intention.

I agree with the idea that constitutionalism could produce a certain constraint on political behavior within a working political democracy. And I come back again to the example of our experience in writing a new constitution in Brazil. I think it was a very sad experience for the democratic

movement. We have had a very strong democratic movement seeking a new constitution, as required by the constitutionalist interpretation for democratic expansion, for twenty years. But then it was written probably in the most unhappy way possible from the political point of view. We have a constitution that is a kind of reflection of different societal pressures and interests. It is difficult to find a general national view in the constitution, probably because we have had more than one view. Thus, I am now making a direct observation about something akin to political culture.