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Accounting for Outcomes in Participatory Local Urban Governance through State-Civil Society Synergies

Antonio Postigo¹

Summary

For over two decades Latin America has been home to a number of innovative experiences in local participatory governance. Building on works recognizing the role of state institutions in the emergence and maintenance of participatory avenues and on theories of state-civil society synergy, the manuscript analyzes and compares three cases of participatory budgeting in Latin American. The framework used here acknowledges the existence of multiple interests and actors within both the state and civil society and using spatial conceptualizations of participation explores the ways they interrelate and mutually transform each other across public and political spaces. We found that these polity-led interventions had a transformative impact on societal spaces and actors by creating a context that nurtured the growth and democratization of civil society. In turn, increasing activism within a newly politically conscious citizenry also boosted the efficiency and legitimacy of the polity and the local institutions of representative democracy.

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1. Introduction

Three decades after most countries in Latin America (LA) introduced competitive elections and extended civil and political rights, societal demands in much of the region continue to be served through patronage networks. Yet, since the mid-1980s LA has pioneered a number of experiences in participatory governance that opened new hopes for democratic renewal. Particularly celebrated have been dozens of programmes of participatory budgeting (PB) through which, in a wide array of forms and scales, citizens prioritize demands for government investment.² Theoretical analyses of PB have been lagging behind empirical accounts that dominate the PB literature. It has been only recently that greater attention has been placed on exploring how PB experiences come about in the first place.

PB institutions bring together a range of state and civil society (CS) actors thus providing an excellent model for exploring their interplay.³ Over the last couple of decades dominant narratives in the literature envision CS a separate from the state while, at the same time, the source of democratization for state institutions (e.g. Putnam 1993). That perspective has informed seminal and influential studies in participatory local governance in LA (Baierle 1998; Wampler 2000; Avritzer 2002). Later works have, on the other hand, claimed the prime role that governments and political parties have had in the adoption and evolution of participatory schemes (Baiocchi 2003; Koonings, 2004; Gurza-Lavalle et al. 2005; Castello et al., 2007; Goldfrank 2007). While it is beyond the aim of this manuscript to elaborate a new model of state-CS relations, it will try to raise some concerns against *civil society-centered*⁴ interpretations of PB and advance a more nuance perspective of state and CS actors and their relations in order to account for variability in the origin, evolution and outcomes of participatory experiences.

A significant body of work on PB has centered on the impacts that institutional design has on *internal* parameters of “success” such as increased participation, empowerment, improved accountability, redistribution, etc. (Wampler, 2000; Fung, 2003,2006;Fung & Wright, 2003). The main interest for theorists in this deliberative democracy tradition lays in

² See Goldfrank (2007) for a discussion on definitions of participatory budgeting

³ “State” will also be used here in reference to local governments.

⁴ As coined by Houtzager et al.(2003:2).

finding best-practice institutional features that would encourage participation and empowerment of marginalized groups. For authors in the CS-centered perspective and social movement theory increased participation is only be possible through mobilization of an active CS making demands on the state (Alvarez et al 1998; Baierle, 1998; Avritzer, 2002). Instead, the present study explores variables shaping the origins and evolution of particular participatory experiences as a way to understand their outcomes, not only in terms of internal PB parameters but, more importantly, the impacts that PB has on CS and the state. Drawing from secondary literature and building on spatial conceptualizations of participation and theories of state-society synergy, the manuscript explores how power dynamics within and between CS and state determined the emergence, evolution and outcomes of participatory spaces in three LA cities. Our comparative analysis supports the fundamental role that governments and political parties played in opening spaces of participatory governance and—reversing the direction of influence in CS-centered accounts—the ways these government-sponsored initiatives could contribute to: a) the mobilization and democratization of CS and, the same time, b) transform the institutions of the state and representative democracy.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. Next section briefly reviews CS- and polity-centered perspectives of participatory governance in LA. Section three lays out the variables and analytical framework for the case studies compared and discussed in section four. Section five closes summarizing our findings and outlining future possibilities in participatory governance.

2. Civil Society- and Polity-centered perspectives of democratization in Latin America

The expansion of liberal democracy around the world has paradoxically coincided in many countries with a crisis of participation and representation, contradiction that has been all the more evident in LA. If we take democratization as the transformation of prevailing balances of power (Chandhoke, 2002), expansion of procedural forms of democracy have barely altered entrenched power structures in most LA countries. Instead, electoral competition has fostered populist and clientelist dynamics and undermined normative concepts of equality in

the distribution of public goods (Veltmeyer, 2007).⁵ In parallel, innovative experiences such as the well-known PB in Porto Alegre (Brazil) have been able to address some deficits of representative democracy.⁶

Like democracy or CS, the concept of participation lends itself to multiple interpretations. In neoliberalism, participation is often no more than consultation pursued for instrumental reasons such as improved efficiency or lower public expenditure (World Bank, 1997). For those inspired by the radical democratic tradition, participation refers instead to the empowerment of excluded groups by involving them in formulating policies that affect them and monitoring their implementation (Abers, 2000:11). Controversy nevertheless remains about how empowered participation is engendered, maintained and expanded. In the wake of democratization in Eastern Europe during the 1980s and 1990s some authors contended that participatory initiatives emerged spontaneously within CS in response to historical events (Nylen, 2003). Civil society is conceptualized as a homogeneous entity separated from the state and encompassing “all benign elements in public life”. The main concern within this *civil society-centered perspective* is how to organize and self-sustain these spurs of civic activism while maintaining its autonomy from the state.⁷

A well-elaborated and influential rendering within the CS-centered perspective in the context of LA has been the *participatory publics theory* (Avritzer, 2002). The PB in Porto Alegre and the movements against human right violations and electoral fraud in Argentina and Mexico, respectively, constitute examples of participatory publics.⁸ Central to this theory is the social capital generated within CS through what Putnam (1993) coined as horizontal civic networks. Civic associations originated during the democratic transition in LA acted as depositories of democratic values, practices and strategies that were later transferred to *political society* thus contributing to the democratization of the state. Under this liberal perspective the role of the state is reduced to acceptance and willingness to incorporate and institutionalize these participatory venues.

⁵ At the same time, elitist practices and neoliberal policies have often reinforced each other increasing exclusion and undermining the legitimacy of representative democracy (Nylen, 2003)

⁶ PB experiences have also provided institutional solutions to the problems of scale and complex administration often invoked against participatory democracy beyond small-scale settings (Fung, 2004)

⁷ CS-centered perspective brings together neoliberal scholars with those in the deliberative democracy and empowered participation literatures. While the latter depart from neoliberals in their central concern with empowered participation and deepening democracy, they all share an essentialist view of CS. See a critique of CS-centered narratives in Chandhoke (2002), Harriss (2002).

⁸ *Participatory publics* refer to open public and egalitarian arenas where citizens engage in face-to-face deliberation about issues of community concern. Other works in this strand include Avritzer 2006; Wampler and Avritzer, 2004; Hernandez-Medina, 2006; Wampler 2007, 2008. For Gilbreth & Otero (2001), the emergence of movements against electoral fraud in Mexico was inspired by the call for democracy embodied by the 1994 Zapatista uprising in Chiapas.

This CS-centered perspective has been challenged by authors stressing the role of state institutions in opening and consolidating participatory avenues (e.g. Koonings, 2004; Gurza-Lavalle et al. 2005; Goldfrank 2007). Guided by such *polity-centered perspective* this manuscript aims at developing an analytical framework that not only moves away from essentialist conceptualizations of CS but that also recognizes the contingent and dialectic interactions between societal and polity actors. It is our contention that PB spaces—by providing for continuous interaction of a wide range of political and societal actors with different interests and levels of power—provide possibilities for the mutual and synergistic transformation of CS and state. Understanding the emergence and evolution of PB experiences requires we first set participatory institutions within a larger context exploring power dynamics operating in CS and polity spaces and not only, as it is often the case in the literature, within the limits of PB institutions.

Being budgets an area traditionally exposed to clientelism, opening them to participation has been an important step towards democratization.⁹ More than half of the 300 cities worldwide with some sort of participatory approach to budget allocation are in Brazil and the experience in Porto Alegre, one of the earliest, has become *the* international reference. In this study we compare the case of PB in Porto Alegre with participatory experiences in Montevideo and Mexico City during the period up to mid-2000s. These cases share a number of features. All three cases were established early in the democratization of their countries by parties of the LA *New Left* with deep roots in social movements (Lievesley, 2005). Their municipal administrations faced national governments of conservative ideology often hostile to PB. On the other hand, comparing these cases could provide important insights about the bearings that different political and institutional settings—between countries and across time—have on the emergence and evolution of diverse forms of PB and in the larger context of state-CS relations.

3. Setting participatory local governance within spatial and power contexts, a framework for analysis

⁹ Through PB citizens prioritize municipal investments—mostly basic infrastructure and public services—out of the discretionary part of the budget, around 5-20% of the total.

Participation in social settings is often conceptualized in spatial terms. As argued above, for scholars in both the neoliberal and deliberative democracy traditions, civil society is a space autonomous from the state and the source of democratic innovations. For Habermas, the *public sphere* was also a space separated from the state and the market where citizens engage in non-strategic deliberations about public issues.¹⁰ It is only through argumentative discourse and influence that positions from the public sphere are later taken by the state (Calhoun, 1992). Gramsci, in turn, saw CS and political society as a whole, as mutually dependent and interacting spheres engaged in hegemonic struggles (Cox, 1999; Gramsci, 2006). In Gramscian terms “political society” is the realm of domination and coercion while CS is the arena that not only sustains the existing social order—of state hegemony and capitalist domination—but at also its transformation. Since ruling by the state is not just an exercise of coercion but also of acquiring consent Gramsci allows for contingent interactions—and potentially mutual transformations—between CS and the institutions of the state, a notion that has later animated the literature on state-civil society synergy which at the core of our analysis.¹¹

Public spaces are nevertheless far from homogenous. Based on their origins Cornwall classified public spaces into *invited* and *popular*.¹² *Invited spaces* are—like the PB cases studied here—created by governments at their own initiative or responding to popular demand (Cornwall 2002a, 2002b). These spaces can be merely consultative but also arenas for empowerment and decision-making; they could be spaces for dissent but also foster CS-state collaboration. In turn, *popular spaces* are established by participants themselves around specific issues or identities and used for self-help, protest or government control. We will add here a third category, *polity spaces*, for those spaces inhabited by the institutions of representative democracy.¹³ While these are usually closed to citizen participation between elections, exploring the power dynamics at play within polity spaces and between them and public spaces—invited and popular—will be essential in understanding participatory experiences.

¹⁰ Positions in the public sphere are achieved through consensus rather than by the aggregation of votes

¹¹ For an excellent Gramscian perspective of PB in Porto Alegre see Novy & Leubolt (2005).

¹² Gaventa (2003) further elaborated Cornwall’s model by adding two additional dimensions: geographical scale and visibility of power.

¹³ We use the term *polity* rather than *political-society*—a term that has been used by different authors with different meanings—to recognize the political character that also animates public spaces, not just polity spaces. To the two original spaces conceived by Cornwall, Gaventa (2003) added “closed spaces” in reference to policymaking spaces closed to public participation which although may be often the case it is not the defining characteristic of our “polity space” category, as PB experiences illustrate.

Conceptualizing PB experiences as social spaces constitutes a useful device in their analysis. While public policy is formulated within the realm of polity spaces PB forums offer possibilities to open policymaking to direct participation. Building on Lefebvre, Bourdieu and Foucault, Cornwall also embedded power dynamics in her typology of public spaces. Social spaces are never neutral but means to exercise control and domination (Lefebvre 1991, Cornwall 2002b). Action within invited spaces is specified and shaped by the agency of those who entered them and, as a result, spaces could be expanded or closed, reproduced or multiplied. Imagining PB in spatial terms help us therefore to explore how power relations develop within PB institutions and between PB and other spaces. Old patterns of social interactions within public spaces could be transferred into new spaces perpetuating structures of power. Participatory spaces cannot be insulated from inequalities and power systems existing outside them. On the other hand, as relations of power are constantly reconfiguring, spaces can also be transformed and participatory spaces created by the powerful to reproduce hierarchical relations or neutralize social activism can be converted into spaces of empowerment. Then again, inclusive spaces could be closed as balances in power change.

Traditional CS-centered analyses of PB establish as pre-requisites for their success the existence of: 1) an active CS and 2) willingness and commitment on the part of political authorities to implement participatory systems (Baierle, 1998; Wampler, 2000; Avritzer, 2002). However, by themselves, these two variables fail to explain the extraordinary diversity in PB experiences. Explaining why some PB spaces are created and able to sustain participation or generate civic engagement while others were gradually closed requires a model that not only takes a disaggregated view of both the state and CS but also considers polity agency beyond willingness to institutionalize participatory settings. In sum, one needs to delve into how power and conflict played out at public and polity spaces. From that perspective our case studies will be first analyzed and later compared under four dimensions:

a) Setting institutional design into political context. Excluded groups often lack the organizational skills, education and/or time to participate effectively in PB settings. Consequently, different institutional designs have been devised to promote their involvement (Wampler, 2000; Fung, 2003). However, a focus on best-practice features fails to problematize how institutional design comes into existence in the first place and preclude us

from examining the wider political context, how the balance of power among actors and across spaces influences PB institutional design.

b) Problematizing civil society. Authors within the CS-centered approach share an essentialist and unambiguous democratic view of CS, predicated on its pluralism, community roots and autonomy from the state (Putnam, 1993). This idealization of grassroots movements and suspicion of state institutions is equally shared by neoliberal conservatives and communitarians of the left. Instead, along with other (Jenkins, 2001; Chandhoke, 2002; Houtzager, 2003; Harriss 2002), we contend that such notion of CS is distorted on several accounts. First, it is undifferentiated, ignoring the heterogeneity of values and discourses within CS, not all necessarily democratic and inclusive. Secondly, it is naïve assuming as unproblematic the coordination of multiple associations in producing collective action at large scale. Finally, CS is envisioned not only as autonomous and separated from the state but existed as against it.¹⁴ Instead, we argue for the need of unpacking the different actors and interests co-existing within CS and examine whether and how state-led initiatives such as PB affect the organization and nature of CS. Only from such perspective we could later inquire into the ways state and CS may (or may not) cooperate to advance democratization of public and polity spaces.

c) Problematizing polity spaces. Traditional PB analyses in the participatory publics and deliberative democracy theories have also failed to problematize the polity reducing its role to the simple transmission and institutionalization of the democratic demands emerging from CS (Avritzer, 2002). This minimalistic model lies on the presumption that initiatives for democratic deepening cannot emerge from the state as this only represents the interests of dominant elites. Instead, works by authors such Fox, Skocpol, Evans or Migdal have demonstrated the possibility for autonomous state policy action (e.g. Evans 1996; Migdal 2001). As with CS, the polity realm needs to be disaggregated to account for its different dimensions and actors. In a vertical dimension we need to examine the interplay between central (CG) and local governments (LG). Critical to any PB programme is the level of decentralization and jurisdiction of LGs to control resources and implement the projects approved through PB. This is particular important when, as shown in our case studies, local

¹⁴ Even though for Gramsci CS was a space of counter-hegemony and struggle against domination, it formed a whole with political society and was not necessarily an unambiguous and always benign space of freedom and democracy as postulated by those in the CS-centered perspective.

and central governments have different political orientations. At the horizontal level, we will need to explore the relations between local executive (mayor) and legislature (municipal council) and how PB challenges their spheres of power.¹⁵ A final variable of analysis refers to the incumbent political party. PB has to be placed within the—often conflicting—ideological, governmental and electoral logics that leftist radical parties face once in power.

d) Connecting actors across spaces. The design and outcomes of PB are influenced by how participants relate to those occupying other spaces. Problematizing CS and polity allow us to account for synergistic relations between CS and state actors: progressive actors within the state—independent from elites—cooperating with autonomous groups in CS to promote the interests of weaker groups through PB. Our enquiry will therefore delve into the ways in which CS and polity actors interact with each other within *but also* outside the PB space and explore whether creation of such CS-state linkages transform the identities, goals and capacities of the actors involved. Recalling again Lefebvre, such transformative effects in power relations will eventually permeate across institutions and spaces. Our analysis also differs from those of the CS-centered perspective confronting the values of participatory spaces and representative polity institutions. Instead, we will explore modes in which participatory and representative institutions could reinforce each other in the context of PB.

4. Participatory Governance in Three Latin-American Cities

A) Porto Alegre, Brazil (1985-2004)

Porto Alegre, capital of the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul, underwent during the 1970s a period of rapid urban growth that, unmatched by investments in infrastructure, left large areas of the city without access to basic urban services (Santos, 1998). During the 1970s and early 1980s Brazil experienced a surge in civic activism by NGOs and social movements resisting dictatorship. By the return to democracy in 1985, Porto Alegre had one of the most active neighborhood association (NA) movements in the country (Koonings, 2004; Veltmeyer, 2007).¹⁶ During this researched period, Porto Alegre witnessed two different administrations.

¹⁵ The initiative to establish PB comes ultimately from the mayor and devolving decision-making over the budget to PB institutions undermines council's authority.

¹⁶ Community movements in Porto Alegre during this period were also more assertive than in other Brazilian cities (Avritzer 2006).

PDT Administration (1985-1988). In 1983, the left-populist PDT (*Partido Democrático Trabalhista*) sponsored the creation of a federation of NAs (UAMPA) that had popular participation in governance among its foundational goals. UAMPA's support to PDT proved critical for its victory at local elections in 1985. Once in office, the PDT established *Popular Councils* as district-level forums to discuss local needs. However, pressured by UAMPA, PDT restricted participation in the Councils to NAs, not individual citizens. Popular Councils lacked real decision-making power with fulfillment of demands depending on NA loyalty to PDT. This patrimonial system led to a civic demobilization and by 1988 only five districts had functioning NAs (Baiocchi, 2005). Demobilization was also part of a larger process of decline in social activism in Brazil and other LA countries upon return to democracy (Veltmeyer, 2007). Public infrastructure in Porto Alegre deteriorated even further and popular disaffection with the PDT resulted in its demise at the 1988 local elections won by the PT (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*).

PT administrations (1988-2004). Despite substantial ideological and strategic evolution since its foundation in 1981 the PT has maintained strong ties with a wide range of social movements—labor, NAs, some revolutionary groups, etc. (Hunter, 2007).¹⁷ The 1988 Constitution granted significant municipal autonomy allowing for participatory forms of governance.¹⁸ Fearing of the links that UAMPA had with PDT, the PT opted for PB assemblies opened exclusively to individual citizens (Abers, 2000; Gurza-Lavalle et al, 2005; Goldfrank, 2006).¹⁹

In its first year PB faced important difficulties (e.g. lack of civic mobilization, financial and organizational disarray) that almost brought it to the brink of collapse. In order to encourage participation in districts with low associational life and to mainstream PB within local administration new municipal agencies were created.²⁰ Although the PT originally intended to allocate PB resources exclusively to the poorest neighborhoods, opposition from NAs forced the PT administration to compromise on a distributive formula that although reaching all districts still favored those with greatest needs (Goldfrank, 2003).

¹⁷ The early PT maintained strong ties with urban labor unions as well agricultural workers groups in the Rural Landless (known by its Portuguese acronym MST) and Small Farmers Movements (MPA)

¹⁸ Despite being a cornerstone of PT's electoral platform the institutionalization of participation remained ill-defined leading to heated debates inside the PT about its form and purpose once it reached office (Goldfrank, 2003). Learning from failures of PT administrations elsewhere in Brazil, the administration in Porto Alegre decided to maintain existing local institutions but use PB to democratize them.

¹⁹ Although citizens participate individually activists from NA and leftist parties are over-represented.

²⁰ A *community relations office* (CRC) was created to promote popular participation in demobilized districts. A *planning office* (GAPLAN) was also established to coordinate and mainstream PB institutions within other agencies in the administration.

PB revival proved crucial in the reelection of the PT administration in 1992. Trying to overcome narrowness and fragmentation in investment proposals, the LG encouraged participants to look beyond their districts integrating the PB with *Thematic Forums* where long-term plans for the whole city were discussed.

Following local reelection of the PT in 1996 and 2000 opposition parties in the local legislature tried to limit the jurisdiction of PB. However, backed by community groups in CS, the administration succeeded in maintaining PB's institutional structure. The PB process starts with plenary assemblies in each of the sixteen districts and five thematic areas that review the implementation of the previous budget, define investment priorities and elect district/thematic delegates (Menegat, 2002; Koonings, 2004). Over the following months delegates discuss proposals at neighborhood-level meetings. Specific demands are then consolidated at second-round plenary meetings that also elect district/thematic delegates to serve in the *Council of the PB*, where proposals are reviewed and resources allocated by districts/themes. A final proposal passes to the mayor who puts it up for deliberation and approval by the municipal council.²¹ Throughout the process municipal employees assist participants with information and technical support.

The success of PB in many cities governed by the PT contributed to the victory of its national leader, Lula da Silva, in the 2002 presidential elections. However, conflicting ideological and governmental logics and unpopular economic policies at the national level eventually waned support for the PT in several cities including Porto Alegre where a coalition led by the PPS (*Partido Popular Socialista*) won the 2004 local elections.²²

Outcomes within the PB space:

1. Service Provision: Resources channeled through PB increased steadily from 1989 onwards and by 2003 the entire discretionary budget in Porto Alegre was allocated via PB with implementation of 90% of the projects approved. Since 1991 public services (e.g. water, sanitation, municipal schools) improved, especially in the neediest districts (Menegat, 2002; Viero, 2003; Goldfrank, 2007).

²¹ The municipal council usually made no changes as to avoid the electoral costs of countering popular will.

²² The new administration introduced changes to the PB process and launched the "local solidarity governance" programme. Studying outcomes under the new administration remains outside the scope of this study.

2. *Participation and empowerment.* During the 1989-2004 period, participation at PB meetings increased steadily (Menegat 2002; Novy & Leubolt, 2005). While initially most participants were highly motivated members from NAs or the PT, participation later grew particularly in those districts originally lacking a vibrant CS. To ensure that poorest areas were adequately represented at assemblies, the administration sent employees to these communities encouraging their participation and helping them to organize. The PB became a forum for empowered participation where citizens, including many of the poor, have real decision-making power in prioritizing municipal needs and monitoring LG. Although conflicts pitting neighborhoods against one another were not uncommon, over time and with the encouragement from the administration, participants have learned to care for the encompassing good of the city beyond their own district.

Outcomes outside the PB space

1. *Interrelations between PB and CS.* Since early 1990s Porto Alegre witnessed an increase in the density of civic associations (NAs, housing cooperatives, sport/cultural, etc.), especially in districts demobilized during the PDT administration (Abers, 2000). There was also greater interaction among civic groups as evidenced by the increasing number of People's Councils.²³ With PB as the main space for making demands on public goods, clientelism declined and, as a result, NAs became internally more democratic and active (Baiocchi 2005).

2. *Interrelations between PB and polity.* PB reduced patronage practices within the municipal legislature improving the efficiency, accountability and legitimacy of LG. As discussed above, PB became a showcase for the PT and a major factor in its success at national and local elections.

3. *PB and other public spaces.* The PT administration created other participatory spaces that although independent of PB became eventually linked the PB cycle.²⁴ While *People's Councils* were not created by the administration PB also facilitated their emergence. Since PB was established most non-political civic associations adopted a district-level and temporal organization mirroring that of PB.

²³ *People's Councils* were umbrella bodies at district-level where representatives from NAs and individual citizens discuss and coordinate activities

²⁴ For instance, the *City Congress*, citywide assemblies to discuss on long-term strategic planning issues.

B) Montevideo, Uruguay (1990-2005).

Once known for its relatively high standards of living, economic decline and rapid urban growth in Montevideo since the 1960s led to a progressive deterioration of urban services, especially in poorer areas (Goldfrank, 2002). Administratively, Uruguay is divided in nineteen departments, one being Montevideo. The Montevidean administration is responsible for the provision of most urban services, which are financed through central transfers and local taxes.

Uruguay enjoyed for decades a stable two-party democracy (conservative *Blancos* and progressive *Colorados*) only interrupted by the military government of 1973-1984. Increasing social and labor unrest prompted some segments of the left to form in 1971 *Frente Amplio* (FA), a coalition of labor activists, communists and former Tupamaro movement members (Luna, 2007).²⁵ Mobilization by labor unions, with strong ties to the FA, was key in the collapse of the military junta.

At the 1989 elections, the FA won the Department of Montevideo while the conservative Blancos gained the national office. The FA had centered its electoral programme on decentralization and popular participation as a mean to promote a more equitable access to urban services but foremost to deepen local democracy (Canel, 2001). Participatory programs in Montevideo under the FA could be divided in two periods.

Participatory Programme 1990-1993. Soon after taking office, mayor Vazquez divided Montevideo in eighteen zones and created administrative outposts, *Zonal Community Centers* (ZCC) (Goldfrank, 2002). These ZCC were in charge of organizing *Zonal Deliberative Assemblies* and *Thematic Commissions* where individual citizens and representatives from civic associations met to prioritize demands on public services. Investment proposals passed then to the mayor and the legislature for approval.²⁶

From the beginning, Blancos and Colorados tried to undermine the participatory programme through all means available to them including their control of the media and bureaucracy, ties with some NAs, cutting transfers from the central government and even

²⁵ The Tupamaro—also known as National Liberation Movement—was created in the early 1960s with the goal of bring about peaceful social change through labor union struggle. During the late 1960s and early 1970s the group resorted to violence but eventually lay down arms upon Uruguay's return to democracy in 1984 when they formed the Popular Participation Movement, the largest party within FA.

²⁶ The municipal legislature was controlled by FA and approved investment proposals without changes.

challenging PB legality in the parliament. Although many NAs favored the participatory scheme they did not mobilize in its support leaving the FA with no choice but to yield to pressure and reform the participatory programme in 1993 (Chavez, 2004; Goldfrank, 2007).

Participatory Programme 1993-2004. Reforms introduced in 1993 ensured its survival but also had important negative implications (Canel, 2001; Goldfrank, 2007). Under the new design ZCCs continued as administrative posts but were now headed by a senior bureaucrat. Being the bureaucracy controlled by unions close to the two traditional parties, the latter gain ascendancy over the entire process. Secondly, the new programme also introduced *Zonal Local Boards* (ZLBs),²⁷ political bodies where the decision-making power actually rested. Finally, Zonal Deliberative Assemblies were replaced by *Zonal Local Councils* (ZLCs) that, contrary to their predecessors, were essentially representative bodies elected by popular vote. Although ZLCs propose initiatives for investment and monitor their implementation their role is primarily consultative as proposals need approval by the political-led ZLB.²⁸ After the mayor has decided on the allocation of funds to each zone, ZLCs and thematic commissions convene to establish priorities. While there were not established procedures to prioritize demands many ZLCs bypassed popular input while others limited it to suggestion boxes. Proposals approved by ZLBs went then to the mayor and legislature for final approval.

Public support for participatory governance helped mayor Vazquez to win the 2004 presidential elections and the FA to conquer mayoral offices in eight departments—including Montevideo—in the local elections of 2005.

Outcomes within the PB space

1. Services Provision. Better assessment of local needs—even under the new design—has contributed to a substantial improvement in public service provision, although there has not been the level of redistribution experienced in Porto Alegre (Masdeu-Manginelli, 2004).

²⁷ ZLBs are formed by three members from the ruling party and two from the opposition.

²⁸ In addition, decisions among ZLC members were not made by consensus but rather by simple majority. The old Thematic Commissions were maintained but they were stripped of real decision-making authority.

2. *Participation and empowerment.* The original design encouraged from the start high levels of civic participation in the programme.²⁹ However, participation declined sharply following revamping of the scheme in 1993 (Goldfrank, 2007). The new ZLC resembled other institutions of representative democracy and the few ZLC meetings open to public were sparsely attended. Under the new structure decision-making take place mostly at ZLB meetings, closed to popular participation. The post-1993 design has also failed to create a participatory space for the empowerment of excluded groups. Contrary to the old Zonal Assemblies—and paralleling other institutions of representative democracy—the poor are rarely elected as councilors in the ZLC. ZLCs also lack the reasoned discussion and consensus that characterized the old assemblies. While other factors may have contributed to declining participation, the lack of decision-making authority of ZLCs should clearly be factored in.³⁰

Outcomes outside the PB space.

1. *Interrelations between PB and CS.* Between 1989 and 1992 there was not only a surge in the number and activity of local civic organizations, especially NAs, but these were also more independent from political parties and internally more democratic than older associations. By contrast, since the mid-1990s—paralleling lower participation at the new PB—Montevideo experienced a decline in associational life (Goldfrank, 2002).

2. *Interaction between PB and polity.* Improvements in public service delivery and distribution brought about by PB were instrumental to the electoral successes of FA in Montevideo and at the national level. Increased accountability and efficiency also enhanced the legitimacy of the local administration.

3. *PB and other popular spaces.* In 1992, 1996 and 2005 the administration set up the *Montevideo Forum*, an invited space to discuss on long-term plans for the city. While the 1990 event drew similar participation than zonal assemblies in the PB of that year, participation dropped by over 85% in 1996, mirroring lower participation in the PB space after 1993. Participation at other popular spaces also declined since 1993 (Goldfrank, 2002; Masdeu-Mangenilli, 2004).

²⁹ In fact, participation in the early years was similar to that achieved in Porto Alegre only after several years (Goldfrank 2004).

³⁰ Disenchantment also pervaded ZLCs with average attendance of councilors to meetings at around 50% (Chavez 2004).

C) Mexico City, Mexico (1997-2005)

Local and national politics have been always intertwined in Mexico City with the 1997 local elections hallmarked as the watershed of democratization in the country. While Mexico enjoyed active associational life during the 1980s, the Zapatista uprising in 1994 prompted a surge in CS organization and mobilization (Gilbreth & Otero, 2001).³¹ In the early 1990s, half of the population of Mexico City lived in illegal settlements without access to basic infrastructure thus sustaining a sizeable popular movement around housing and land tenure issues that favored more participatory forms of local governance (Davis & Alvarado 2004; Sanchez-Mejorada 2003).

Reforms in local administration introduced in the mid-1990s allowed for direct election of the mayor of Mexico City, its legislative Assembly and representatives to neighborhood committees (NCs). The city is divided in 16 delegations whose chief, initially appointed by the mayor, has been popularly elected since 2000. The 1997 elections in Mexico City brought to the mayoral office the national leader of the PRD (*Partido de la Revolución Democrática*), Lazaro Cárdenas. The PRD was created in 1988 as a coalition of socialists, communists, CS activist and dissidents from the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) around a programme of social justice and radical democracy (Davis & Alvarado, 2004).

First PRD Administration (1997-2000). In the 1997 elections the PRD won over 70% of the popular vote securing not only the post of mayor but also a majority in the City's Assembly. Although the PRD was strongly committed to popular participation as a principle for Cardenas—who planned to run for the 2000 presidential elections—participation was also a mean to build nation-wide support. In any case, implementation of any form of participatory governance was first contingent on achieving for the city the same level of autonomy enjoyed by other Mexican states. These changes needed approval by the Mexican National Legislature that was controlled by the two traditional parties, PRI and PAN (*Partido de Acción Nacional*) that, fearing that participatory governance could weaken their control over NAs, blocked any political or financial devolution to Mexico City.³²

³¹ For Gilbreth and Otero (2001), the 1994 uprising by the Zapatista movement (EZLN) inspired collective action and mobilization within CS not only to stop military escalation but also to take on EZLN's call for bottom-up democratic renewal. In their view, the EZLN played a greater role in the democratization of Mexico than opposition parties, linking the EZLN uprising to the creation of electoral anti-fraud commissions and an overall surge in pro-democracy movements.

Tensions within the PRD regarding participatory governance exacerbated as Cardenas, eager to gain middle-class voters, moved towards the center. Cardenas tried to court NAs by enacting the *Participatory Act* that maintained most investment decisions outside the participation of individual citizens and NCs (Zermeno 2006). As a result, elections to NCs in 1999 drew scant participation and by early 2000 60% of the NCs had ceased to function.

PRD Administration of 2000-2005. The inability of PRD to deliver on electoral promises alienated much of its popular base. Cardenas not only failed to win the 2000 presidential elections but the local PRD lost its majority in Mexico City's Assembly and only barely retained the mayoral office in the person of López-Obrador. Nevertheless, in these elections—the first in which delegation chiefs were elected—the PRD managed to control ten of the sixteen delegations. López-Obrador, who traditionally enjoyed a strong support from housing movements, built his electoral campaign on promoting popular participation. As mayor López-Obrador allocated new budgets to the moribund NCs but, lacking majority in the City's Assembly, failed to get passed his *Participation Law* (Davis & Alvarado 2004, Zermeno, 2006). With the highest level of popularity ever enjoyed by a politician in Mexico, López-Obrador retained his post at the 2003 local elections and regained a majority at the City Assembly. It was only then the new Participation Law got through the Assembly although dependence of much of the city budget on federal institutions out of PRD's control limited implementation.³³

Opening of delegation chiefs' offices to popular election led some delegations to launch their own participatory programmes. During the researched period, two delegations under the PRD, Cuauhtemoc and Tlalpan, set up embryonic participatory schemes. Although neither reached the comprehensiveness of their Porto Alegre or Montevidean counterparts, the programme in Tlalpan became an exemplary experience in Mexico (Alianza-Cívica, 2003; Rodriguez-W, 2003; Flores 2005).

Tlalpan is the most heterogeneous delegation in the city ranging from residential middle-class neighborhoods to shanty irregular settlements. The participatory process in

³² Using their control over the National Legislature, PRI and PAN limited the distribution of financial and human resources to Mexico City and opposed the creation of new participatory institutions (Zermeno 2006).

³³ The law created *Neighborhood Assemblies* and granted NCs the power to monitor the local government functions. On July 2005 López-Obrador resigned as mayor amid allegations of corruption brought against him by PRI and PAN wary of his options to win the presidential election.

Tlalpan starts with the establishment of *Proposal Posts* at each of Tlalpan's five zones where delegation employees help citizens in formulating demands that are later evaluated and formalized at *Elaboration Workshops*. The next stage involves *Follow-up Teams* formed by individual citizens and representatives of NAs that, with advice from administration experts, discuss and consolidate proposals into lists that are prioritized by popular vote. A final *Operative Programme* is then passed to the mayor before going to the City's Assembly for final approval.

Outcomes within the PB space.

Internal divisions within the PDR and lack of financial autonomy limited the scope of participatory programmes during Cardenas' term. Although López-Obrador did not push participation as far as originally planned he provided for some popular participation in housing and infrastructure projects. By contrast, the participatory experience in Tlalpan has been relatively successful and allowed for a prioritization of popular demands—the share of delegational budget allocated through the programme increased from 36% to 58% in the first two years. Civic participation increased at all stages and zones including poorer areas (Alianza-Cívica, 2003).³⁴ While the process has responded to local demands it does not assess zonal needs and lacks a redistribution system like the programme in Porto Alegre.

Outcomes outside the PB space

López-Obrador's reforms prompted a resurgence of NAs although most remained highly politicized. The administration also established invited spaces in other areas like citywide programmes to prioritize expenditures in security, culture and sports. Monitoring of implementation by NCs in Tlalpan has also improved the transparency of the delegational administration (Alianza Cívica, 2003).

5. Comparative Analysis and Discussion. Understanding outcomes of participatory governance within participatory spaces and beyond

The participatory experiences presented here varied not only from city to city but also across time within each case. Discussions on PB have overwhelmingly focused on impacts *within* the PB space (e.g. participation, empowerment, fair distribution of public services) and, in

³⁴ Civic participation in middle-class neighborhoods has been mostly restricted to the final voting phase.

the case of the CS-centered perspective, interpreted based on the presence or absence of an active CS and political willingness on the part of local governments. While such framework has greatly contributed to our understanding of the variables affecting PB outcomes in a large number of cases studies they could not explain by themselves the full variability of outcomes observed in our comparative, even within the PB space alone (Tables I, II and III). As argued earlier in this study, institutional designs, social interactions and power relations transcend spaces. Outcomes should be therefore considered under such dynamic context so an outcome in a given space (invited, popular or polity) may operate as “input” in other spaces.

Low citizen participation and empowerment in the participatory institutions of PA-1,³⁵ MV-2 and MC-1 cannot be explained by the existence of a weak CS alone (Tables I and II). In fact, at the start in all these three scenarios there were initially large numbers of associations, mostly neighborhood associations.³⁶ How a CS-centered perspective that envisions participatory initiatives as emerging from CS could explain low participation and empowerment in these three cases? Demobilization of CS *followed*, rather than preceded, low (lower) participation in existing participatory institutions.

By contrast, in the most successful cases of PA-2, MV-1 and MC-2 local administrations initially had to face clientelistic-oriented and highly politicized civic associations that in the case of PA-2 and MC-2 were also demobilized (Tables I and II). Still, these administrations were able to overcome civic disengagement and launch successful participatory spaces. Once again, a CS-centered perspective cannot account for the emergence of these empowering participatory spaces in the context of an initially demobilized CS.

In the three cases, outcomes within the PB institutions eventually impinged on other public and polity spaces (Table III), observation that confirms our initial contention regarding the need of contextualizing PB within power relations across actors and spaces.

➔ Insert Tables I, II and III around here

³⁵ Abbreviations for the case studies: PA-1: Porto Alegre (1985-1988), PA-2: Porto Alegre (1989-2004), MV-1: Montevideo (1989-1993), MV-2: Montevideo (1993-2005), MC-1: Mexico City (1997-2000), MC-2: Mexico City & Tlalpan delegation (2000-2005).

³⁶ Early in Porto Alegre and Mexico City these NAs had close ties with traditional political parties, not supportive of PB

Understanding variability in the impacts of PB inside *and* outside PB spaces requires breaking away from undifferentiated and static notions of CS and polity and return to the four dimensions of our original framework. Instead of exalting unidirectional democratization influences from CS to the state or *vice versa*, our model explores ways in which polity actors not only influence societal actors but synergize with them in transforming public and polity spaces, CS and the state. It is from the vantage point of such discriminating perspective that we now turn to compare the three cases.

a) Setting institutional design into political context

Deliberative democracy literature emphasizes the relevance of adequate institutional design of participatory spaces outlining “exemplary institutional features” and “recipes” to create empowering deliberative spaces (Fung, 2003, 2006). Indeed, our case studies illustrate how particular institutional designs affected who participated in the PB. For instance, the limited decision-making power and consultative nature of participatory institutions in PA-1, MV-2 and MC-1 contributed to their low levels in participation (Tables I and II). However, some of the positive outcomes in MV-2 or MC-2—where “exemplary institutional features” were clearly lacking—cannot be easily accounted by the literature. More importantly, assuming the existence of universal institutional blueprints precludes us from inquiring on the origins and evolution of specific institutional choices.

We rather contend that the outcomes of PB experiences were not *determined* by institutional features but rather had to do with what Khan (1997:77) referred as the *political settlement*, “...the balance of power between those [actors] affected by an institution”. Participation cannot be established by design, let alone empowered participation. Creating institutional incentives for poor groups to participate is not enough to guarantee their deliberation in equal footing with the powerful. Contrary to neo-institutional economics, institutions do not operate in level-playing fields but within political arenas in which actors are endowed with different levels of power (Harriss, 2002). In our case studies PB designs evolved as power relations among and between polity and CS actors were renegotiated (e.g. changing political affiliation of the central government, the implementation of decentralization, support/lack of to PB by civic associations, etc.).

In the three cities, empowering marginalized groups required the active role of local officials encouraging participation and introducing pro-poor redistributive criteria. Local governments—and not just institutional features—acted as “countervailing powers” (as referred in Abers, 2000) to neutralize powerful actors and structural inequalities in society. Beyond institutional features, outcomes were also influenced by the meanings and expectations ascribed to PB spaces by their participants. The failure to meet expectations in PA-1 or early in MC-1 shaped how these participatory spaces eventually developed. The PDT (or in early times the PRD) opened participation largely for instrumental reasons—to gain allegiance from NAs and votes. Disillusion among participants led to these spaces becoming places of protest.

b) Problematizing civil society

The cases examined here challenge conceptualizations of CS as an unambiguously homogeneous, pro-democratic and autonomous entity. In fact, early in all three PB programmes, existing neighborhood associations supported the perpetuation of clientelism in the distribution of public services.³⁷ In the view of the *participatory publics* literature PB in Porto Alegre emerged chiefly from the initiative of UAMPA but others have argued that this association actually sought the exclusion of individual citizens from participating in the PB process (Goldfrank, 2002). Had PB programmes been restricted only to pre-PB NAs, it is very likely that PB institutions would have been pervaded by patronage politics.

This study also disputes the assumed all-encompassing and inclusive character of CS. Initially most participants in PB were moved exclusively by self-interest and had little concern for other district's need. Neighborhood associations in Porto Alegre resisted proposals by PT to direct resources to the poorer districts. In all three cases, LG played a critical role overcoming disputes and nurturing a culture of social justice among participants. It was only in the context of PB that NAs start perceiving and considering needs in other districts.

Most significantly, these cases question the separateness of CS and state argued by CS-centered perspectives. The opening of participatory policymaking spaces by the state had profound transformative effects on CS. Rather than isolated groups making demands on the

³⁷ Existing ties between NAs and traditional parties prompted the PT and FA, and later PDR, to establish open assemblies in PB.

government, PB provided incentives for collective action fostering the creation of new civic associations. As noted earlier, administration officials helped organize associations in demobilized neighborhoods. When PB spaces were reduced (as in MV-2) or co-opted (as in PA-1) CS demobilized. By raising critical consciousness among citizens and provide them with skills to participate in other spaces, PB became “*schools of democracy*” where many start their engagement in public life (Baiocchi, 2003; Novy & Leubolt, 2005). Secondly, PB also contributed to increase interconnectedness within CS. The participatory spaces created by local administrations facilitated coordination among otherwise atomized local associations helping them overcome their narrow agendas towards larger goals. Finally, the creation of rule-based spaces helped the democratization of CS by introducing a “*language of accountability*” and public good (Baiocchi, 2003). Older associations were not well equipped to operate in PB spaces and it took several years of “selection process” for these *new* associations to arise and challenge clientelism.

c) Problematizing polity spaces

Authors within the participatory publics literature presents the state as a homogeneous apparatus at the service of dominant elites, negating not only its autonomy but also any hope that democratic impulses could originate from the polity. At the other side, theorists in the Weberian tradition envision the state as invariably autonomous and insulated from social forces. Both conceptualizations share nevertheless the same monolithic notion of the state. In line with Skocpol, Fox or Migdal, this paper recognizes the possibility for actors within the state to act autonomously (e.g. Migdal, 2001). Only from that perspective it is possible to account for the heterogeneity and complexity of the participatory experiences here examined.

The way power structures within the polity transform—and are transformed by—PB became evident in our cases in the relationships between local and central governments. In this regard, the degree of decentralization enjoyed by the local administration proved of paramount importance. In Porto Alegre, the PT administration benefited from the devolution of power and resources granted by the Brazilian Constitution. On the other hand, it was eventually the lack of local autonomy what forced the FA-led administration in Montevideo to overhaul the participatory programme adopting a more restricted form or limited the possibilities for a more comprehensive scheme in the Tlalpan case. Different levels of local autonomy also set the background for the political conflicts between governments of

different political hues. For some periods, these local administrations faced conservative central governments that felt threatened by the way PB could boost leftist chances to higher offices. Political differences between local and central administrations were particularly relevant in the Uruguayan and Mexican case studies. This was not only due to their limited local autonomy but, especially, because of the dominant role of traditional parties within the respective political systems.

Introduction of participatory governance also altered the balance of power at the municipal level with the municipal legislature losing significant power in local investment decisions. By improving transparency in administration, PB also undermined prevailing clientelist practices within the local bureaucracy.

The political parties in all three cases were leftist coalitions with roots in social movements and originally seen as “outsider” political parties. As with other leftist parties, the exercise of government generated electoral/ideological dilemmas and factional conflicts within their ranks that often include radical groups at odds with the traditional institutions of representative democracy. In that sense, the introduction of participatory programmes helped to deflect internal party tensions and fostered ideological renewal (Lievesley, 2005). PB was decisive in the success of these parties at the ballot box and the eventual demise of PT in Porto Alegre—to a large extent related to national level policies—further supports our thesis.

d) Connecting actors across spaces

As argued from the outset, power relations within a given social space do transcend to other spaces (Table II). In the case studies explored here, PB provided opportunities for linkage among progressive actors across spaces. Reformist groups within the local government—represented by a leftist party—established ties with non-clientelistic and pro-democratic groups in CS. Regardless how well organized and active local associations are, community participation needs to be connected to the political process if it is to achieve meaningful change at large-scale (Evans, 2002). For autonomous NAs, establishing connections with progressive local governments and parties was critical in their ability to challenge elitist interests inside the state apparatus and CS itself. Ties with progressive administrations also transformed the nature and goals of societal actors. While history in LA has its large share of governments trying to weaken, co-opt or bluntly repress CS (Abers 2000), devolving

decision-making authority to participants and making the PB process transparent averted the risk of co-optation.

Establishing links with these new social actors also impacted the state. At its most instrumental level, exchanging information about local needs improved public service delivery and government accountability, currencies in short supply in many LA democracies. But in the most successful cases PB helped transforming and democratizing local governments. To bring PB into reality these three progressive parties had to struggle within the corridors of polity spaces. PB was decisive for these parties to dismantle entrenched systems of power within municipal administrations and carry out their programmes of social justice and local democratic deepening. In turn, the balance of power within the polity also depended on the effectiveness of their allies in CS—as Evans (2002) argued: “...[state actors] need to mobilize communities to turn their ideas into realities”. At some points in our case studies, mobilization of NAs in support of PB proved crucial for these parties to overcome private interests within the polity.

Evans and other showed us how synergism between societal and state actors could create new capacities for action. These alliances between autonomous polity and societal actors have nothing to do with the static interactions of statist theories but rather represent a process of mutual transformation as postulated by Migdal (2001). At the minimum PB in our case studies provided for state-CS complementarity (e.g. exchange of information) but the most successful cases of PA-2, MV-I or MC-2 constitute clear examples of synergy.

Finally, and more importantly, participatory budgeting has not only provided the context for synergies between polity and societal actors but also across spaces and institutions—a virtuous circle in which participatory and representative institutions reinforced each other rather than competing in legitimacy. Establishing spaces for participatory governance in these cities was contingent first of all upon the existence of representative democracy and the election of progressive political parties. Once these parties accessed the institutions of representative democracy they opened PB spaces. Under the pressure created by the electoral process itself these parties had to follow upon societal demands emanating from PB. The popular support for PB also had a significant weight in the reelection of these parties as well as in the increase in legitimacy and credibility of representative institutions in these cities.

6. Final Remarks

The study was set to raise some concerns against CS-centered interpretations of participatory governance. We approached PB from a deeper and wider perspective that acknowledges the existence of constellations of interests and actors within state and CS and explores how they interrelate across public and polity spaces. Our comparative analysis found that in all three cases institutions of the state—from national to local level—and political parties were prime actors in establishing invited spaces like PB. These state-led interventions had a transformative impact on societal actors by creating a context that nurtured the growth and democratization of CS. In turn, in an interdependent process, increasing activism by this new politically conscious citizenry boosted the efficiency and legitimacy of the institutions of representative democracy.

Three decades after democratization started sweeping across the region, hopes for more egalitarian and inclusive societies seem to have been postponed in many Latin American countries as a majority of the population remains economically and politically excluded (Veltmeyer, 2007). It is against such background that PB experiences appear all the more remarkable. One anticipated lesson from this study is that there are not institutional paradigms and that the possibility to reproduce PB outcomes is contingent on cultural, political and historical contexts rather than on best-practice designs as predicated by some in the literature. At the same time, the study tempers pessimism about the possibility of establishing participatory programmes in communities where there is little civic activism. These cases evidenced that PB programmes could succeed if civic disengagement is *actively* reversed and PB spaces are maintained open through *continuous* political struggle both inside and outside PB institutions.

Events during the 1990s in Eastern Europe advanced the narrative that democratization initiatives rest exclusively on forces coming from CS. Instead, this paper submitted that democracy—as an ongoing project—could not solely depend on the historical and fugacious impulses from below. Constructing a politically aware and engaged CS cannot simply rely—*à la* Putnam—on horizontal links among apolitical and uncoordinated civic

groups. Instead, this study substantiates arguments about the possibility for civic engagement to be constructed from above and, contrary to Putnam's long-term path-dependence models, over the period of only a few years.

Participatory budgeting has not only created a more inclusive model of urban development but it has also strengthened local democracy. Nevertheless, the capacity of PB to counter economic and political exclusion should be set in context. Most poverty dimensions are not only beyond the realm of PB but also of local government's scope of action. Nevertheless, it could be argued that more important than achieving a fairer distribution of urban services, PB has brought to the open the existence of urban inequalities and fostered a sense of social justice among participants. By introducing a culture where urban infrastructure and services are considered civic rights, PB has created politically conscious citizens that become aware of the importance of electing parties that advance their demands. In that sense, as posited by Szreter (2002), the crisis of electoral participation in many democracies may have to do less with factors endogenous to CS than with "the inability and/or unwillingness of states (and political parties) to politically engage citizens through the provision of public goods".

Notwithstanding these extended effects, PB will be self-limiting if restricted to urban infrastructure at the local level. To that effect, the three administrations in this study also extended the principles and practices of PB to new issues and created participatory spaces on topics ranging from racial discrimination and AIDS to women's issues or the environment. In Brazil, the demonstration effect of local PB programmes led to the establishment of participatory schemes at the state level and the inclusion of popular participation in some federal programmes. Although the complexities involved at larger levels have limited the outcomes of these experiences, there have been some successful stories (Goldfrank & Schneider, 2006).

Opening spaces for participation to new policy areas and scales raise expectations about multiplying the effects of local PB programmes. Likewise, introducing new state and societal actors and establishing new links of cooperation and synergy could help democratize other spaces within the state and CS. Expanding these virtuous circles at larger scales and around new issues offers the possibility of realizing a project of sustained democratic

renewal, a dynamic and ongoing process of progressive inclusion and radical transformation that defines the essence of democracy.

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Table I: Summary of initial conditions

	Institutional design	Civil Society Actors	Polity Actors
Porto Alegre 1 (PA-1) 1985-1988	Participatory governance restricted to NAs	High civic associational density at the start. Later on, civic demobilization Clientelistic NAs linked to the PDT NAs participated in PB moved by self-interest	Limited local autonomy Instrumental utilization of participation & co-optation of NAs by the PDT
Porto Alegre 2 (PA-2) 1989-2004	Participatory governance through open deliberative assemblies Pro-poor redistributive criteria	Demobilized civil society at the start. Later on, civic collective action through PB Early, NAs sought restrictive PB. Later on, new NAs supportive of deliberative PB Initially, participants moved by self-interest. Later, culture of social justice	Local autonomy (1988 Constitution) Commitment to participation by the PT Local officials encouraged participation & raised consciousness about neediest districts
Montevideo 1 (MV-1) 1989-1992	Participatory governance through open zonal deliberative assemblies Pro-poor redistributive criteria	High civic mobilization at the start NAs with links to traditional parties (Colorados, Blancos) did not support PB Initially participants moved by self-interest. Later, culture of social justice	Limited local autonomy Commitment to participation by the FA Local officials encouraged participation & raised consciousness about neediest districts Opposition to PB by central government & traditional parties
Montevideo 2 (MV-2) 1993-2005	Participatory governance reduced to consultation at zonal local councils Pro-poor redistributive criteria	Some civic demobilization after PB reform Participants mostly moved by self-interest through vote aggregation	Limited local autonomy Commitment to participation by the FA Local officials encouraged participation & raised consciousness about neediest districts
Mexico City 1 (MC-1) 1997-2000	Participatory governance mostly restricted to NAs	High civic associational density at the start. Later, civic demobilization Clientelistic NAs linked to the PRI & PAN Participants moved by self-interest.	Limited local autonomy Commitment but also instrumental utilization of participation by the PRD Opposition to PB by central government & traditional parties
Mexico City 2 & Tlalpan (MC-2) 2000-2005	After the Participation Law of 2003 participatory governance in Mexico City through NCs but limited implementation Participatory governance through proposal posts and other venues in Tlalpan	Demobilized NCs at the start. Higher civic mobilization after 2000 in Tlalpan & citywide after 2003 Resurgence of civic associations although many maintained clientelistic links with political parties Initially participants moved by self-interest. Later, culture of social justice	Limited local autonomy Stronger commitment to participation by the PRD. Participation Law enacted in 2003 Local officials encouraged participation & raised consciousness about neediest districts During 2000-2003, lack of a majority in municipal legislature. Opposition to PB by traditional parties in local & central legislatures

Note: See text in Sections # 4 and # 5 for further details and source of data. Please note that outcomes emerging from a particular space/actor may operate as initial conditions (input) for other spaces/actors. Within each city changes are referred in relation to the previous period. NA: neighborhood association; NC: neighborhood committee; PB: participatory budgeting

Table II: Summary of Outcomes within the PB space

	Service Provision	Redistribution to poor areas	Participation	Deliberation & Empowerment
Porto Alegre 1 (PA-1) 1985-1988	Decline respect initial situation	No	Low levels	No (clientelist networks)
Porto Alegre 2 (PA-2) 1989-2004	Improvement	Yes	Higher than PA-1	Yes
Montevideo 1 (MV-1) 1989-1992	Improvement respect initial situation	Yes	High levels	Yes
Montevideo 2 (MV-2) 1993-2005	Similar to MV-1	Yes	Lower than MV-1	No (representative through vote aggregation)
Mexico City 1 (MC-1) 1997-2000	Little change respect initial situation	Little change respect previous	Low levels	Limited (mostly through clientelist networks)
Mexico City 2 & Tlalpan (MC-2) 2000-2005	Some citywide improvement after 2003 & in Tlalpan after 2000	Some improvement respect MC-1	Some improvement respect MC-1	Some improvement respect MC-1

Note: See text in Sections # 4 and # 5 for further details and source of data. Please note that outcomes emerging in a particular dimension may operate as initial conditions (input) for other dimensions. Within each city changes are referred in relation to the previous period

Table III: Summary of Outcomes in other spaces. Connecting actors across spaces

	Popular Spaces	Other Invited Spaces	Polity Spaces
Porto Alegre 1 (PA-1) 1985-1988	Decrease in the number, activity & coordination of popular spaces respect initial condition	No new invited spaces were created in this period	Decline in local gov. accountability Decline in popular support for the PDT (respect initial condition)
Porto Alegre 2 (PA-2) 1989-2004	Increase in the number, activity & coordination of popular spaces	Increase in the number & activity of invited spaces	Increase in local gov. accountability, Increase in popular support for the PT
Montevideo 1 (MV-1) 1989-1992	Increase in the number, activity & coordination of popular spaces respect initial condition	Increase in the number & activity of invited spaces respect initial condition	Increase in local gov. accountability Increase in popular support for the FA (respect initial condition)
Montevideo 2 (MV-2) 1993-2005	Decrease in the number, activity & coordination of popular spaces	No change in number of invited spaces but decrease in their activity	Same accountability as MV-1 Increase in popular support for the FA
Mexico City 1 (MC-1) 1997-2000	Little change in the number, activity or coordination of popular spaces respect initial condition	Little change in the number, activity or coordination of invited spaces respect initial condition	No change in local gov. accountability Decrease in popular support for the PRD (respect initial condition)
Mexico City 2 & Tlalpan (MC-2) 2000-2005	Increase in the number & activity of popular spaces	Increase in the number & activity of invited spaces	Increase in local gov. accountability Increase in popular support for the PRD

Note: See text in Sections # 4 and # 5 for further details and source of data. Please note that outcomes emerging from a particular space may operate as initial conditions (input) for other spaces. Within each city changes are referred in relation to the previous period.