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NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN CONTEMPORARY BRAZIL
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Abstract- New social movements support a process of democratization of Brazilian society and polity, which challenges authoritarian political and cultural traditions and conservative government policies. This paper describes a recent new social movement in Brazil (Part 1), reviews some interpretations about the earlier emergence of new social movements in Europe (Part 2), relates these interpretations to similar movements in Brazil during and after the process of formal democratization (Part 3), and comments on current comparisons between institutional/cultural problems in Brazil and other processes of democratization in the *Mercosur* (especially Uruguay).
Keywords – democratization, social movements, political culture, political integration.

1. Rediscovering Brazil: "For Another 500th Anniversary" *("Por Outros 500 Anos")*

(Presentation of a 10 mts video news coverage of the official government celebration of Brazil's 500th Anniversay in Porto Seguro, April 22, and of the police repression nearby on the popular oposition demonstration "For Another 500th Anniversary").

This section of the paper reports on a recent social movement in Brazil, to show how popular social movements coordinate successfully the strategic, identity and politico-cultural dimensions of their actions. (these dimensions will be defined in the next sections of the paper). The following example shows that this coordination can be done by people usually considered very "simple", illiterate or "pre-modern" (peasants, native peoples, slum dwellers, etc) – and not only by leaders and militants of organized opposition and political groups.

The young man who faced police repression with open arms in the demonstration is Gildo Jorge Roberto, 18 years old, a member of the Terena ethnic group. The images of his action appeared nationwide and worldwide, in the news coverage of the repression on the march against the official celebration of the country's 500th Anniversary in Porto Seguro, Bahia, April 22. This march was organized by several popular movements under the demand "For Another 500th Anniversary". Gildo was interviewed later on (April 25) and he told the newspaper that he had travelled more than 2000 miles, from his village in central Brazil, trying to reach Porto Seguro. On April 22 he had marched six miles, with more than 3000 people, representing 140 groups, native, Afro-Brazilians and others, when the military state police attacked them on the road. He said:

"We were prepared to participate in a peaceful demonstration. I carried a poster which said 'We Want Another 500th Anniversary'. This means we want to rebuild what has been lost. We have already had too much repression, pain, violence."

Such was the ambitious (utopian?) strategic project of the movement: nothing less than to rebuild what had been lost in 500 years of Brazilian life. And he specified the immediate aim of the demonstration:

"We did not intend to spoil anybody's party. If we could have only seen the President, that would have been good enough for me. For then he would have known that we were there, present and alive, protesting against neglect."

The strategic dimension of the demonstration was thus clearly defined, both in the long run and in the short term, as a non-violent action of popular protest, against historical oppression and neglect by government officials.

On the symbolic-identity level, the demonstration revealed a movement defined by a sense of pluralism and respect for difference: it was formed by around 3000 people, representing 140 natives, Afro and other groups, said the newspaper. In a previous report, the newspaper stressed the fact that the "Landless Rural Workers Movement" (MST) had tried to join the demonstration, but was stopped by police barriers on the road. In any case, several other popular groups, such as slum dwellers, church communities, union members, local sections of political parties, etc. joined the march (a handful of priests, one Catholic bishop and one national MP of the Workers'Party, PT, marched also as "a personal testimony"). The different native peoples and Afro-Brazilian groups marched adorned with their various colors and clothes. Gildon says that *"We were marching happily and were singing when hell fell on our heads"* (police repression, which he describes below).

Another striking aspect of Gildo's identity, which also characterizes other social movements, is a sense of ambiguity towards the mass media. Gildo says in the interview that he approached a police officer during the repression, grabbed a walkie-talkie from his belt and threw it away: *"This was a protest, because I wanted to forget the humiliation I had just suffered. Perhaps that radio had recorded everything, and I was ashamed, and started to cry again."*

Then Gildo was hit by a club on his head, blacked out, and was taken away by his friends. One can understand Gildo's revolt and shame, in facing a public record of his humiliation. Various students of native cultures have noticed their fear of the power of the media, even of its ability to record the normal events of daily life, because it might reveal their weak spots to strangers, in a debasing and undignified way. Imagine then Gildo's terrible situation, a young warrior portrayed as falling under repression with his bare hands... However, three days later Gildo agreed to a newspaper interview, and this may be seen as part of his aim of "rebuilding what has been lost", his self esteem, "For Another 500th Anniversary".

The politico-cultural dimension of the movement "For Another 500th Anniversary" is a linking thread throughout Gildo's interview:

"We were marching when the police started to throw bombs at us. I did not know what it was, I did not understand what was happening, for (where I live) *I have almost no contact with the city. It was horrible, lots of noise, the women weeping, the children crying, I did not understand anything. I had never before taken a close look at a firearm or a bomb..."*

The mutiny squad threw, at random, "moral effect" and teargas grenades, and shot rubber bullets indiscriminately into the crowd; at the end of the day, 150 demonstrators had been arrested, and several others were (luckly not seriously) injured. But in the beginning Gildo had confronted the attackers with his open arms, trying to stop them:

"...'Don't kill my people; we are already so few and you want to finish us'. I knelt before them, begged, cried, shouted. I asked them why were they doing that and they answered 'we're just following orders, you have to go back; you're not going to spoil the celebration'. I insisted, and begged them to kill me. 'You may kill me but let the native people demonstrate. We're poor and humble, but we also have rights' (...) One of them pushed his gun into my chest and I fell to the ground."

A political culture based on civic rights pervades Gildo's discourse. It sounds like a textbook case of the civic culture, with its participatory emphasis, and personal commitment to justice, peace and plurality, against government arbitrarity and violence. Gildo is reaffirming his traditional identity as a Terena native, in cooperation with various other identity groups, in a common struggle for "Another 500th Anniversary"—for *"we are poor and humble, but we also have rights"*. Gildo's "rank-and-file" testimony shows a capable and persuasive coordination among the (apparently fragmentary and diverse) identities and strategic and politico-cultural dimensions of the movement's action.

This action carefully combines and articulates the modern cultural foundations of Western civilization with traditional (apparently pre-modern) aspects of community life, in a way which some would perhaps call "postmodern". (A similar combination can be seen in the much more radical example of the current "Zapatista" movement of Chiapas in Mexico; see Yúdice, 1998). Such a combination is not an occasional *"bricolage"* of circumstantial elements, a burlesque farse of the official history, as we are used to seeing in the Brazilian carnival . Rather, it is a serious dramatic action, an intelligent, acute and satiric denunciation of the official historic celebration of Brazil's 500th anniversary. In fact, the official celebration was revealed, by this very action, as a political disaster and a tragic parody of Brazilian history, from its beginning up to the present. At the end of the interview, Gildo states:

"I wish the President would reconsider what happened (to us) *in Porto Seguro. It looks like the beginning of our history, when the Portuguese and the colonists* (Bandeirantes) *finished us off"*. (1)
Thanks to Gildo and to so many others, we are not yet finished.

2. New Movements: Strategies, Identities and Political Culture

There is a large literature on the characteristics of the "new" social movements which appeared in the Western countries in the last three decades of the 20th. century. (2) It usually describes their individual peculiarities in typological terms, in contrast to those of the "old" movements, such as the union and neighbourhood organizations. These are valuable studies, but as has also been the case with many other developments in the West, we find that in Latin America many of these contrasts tend to appear enmeshed in specific case studies, overlapping historical times and periods of our own political life.

Therefore, in order to understand "what's new" in the new union and social movements, it is necessary to consider the general historical traits of their initial

appearance in the West, instead of dealing only with their individual peculiarities. In this section we shall look at the events of May 1968 in France, which many scholars consider as the first public emergence of so-called "new" social and union movements. We shall see that the studies of these events offer different, and even apparently contradictory interpretations of their general significance. But one may ask whether these interpretations cannot be considered as convergent, and even complementary accounts of the events.

As it is well known, in May 1968 the students of Paris went on strike, built barricades and confronted the police for a whole month on the streets, gathering support from radicalized sectors of the industrial workers and labour unions. They demanded a complete restructuring of the authoritarian rules of university life, and other centralized aspects of French society. One of the first interpretations of the events was proposed by the conservative sociologist and professor Raymond Aron, who considered them as an "elusive revolution"(3) – a reaction of youth to the tightly controlled and centralized characteristics of French society, and to the bureaucratization of the school system. He saw the revolt as a "cathartic farse" or "collective psychodrama", against the arrogance of French intellectuals and bureaucrats, and anticipated the students would soon return to the usual routines of their daily life.

However, Aron also advised the government to beware of the "Trojan Horse" this revolt offered to the Communist and other leftist parties. For, in the context of the Cold War, he saw this threat raised to the establishment, as a possible imitation of the Russian revolution in 1917 -- when leninist revolutionaries took advantage of a massive revolt against authoritarian rule, replacing it with a yet more repressive and centralized regime. Surely, this was a partial and conservative interpretation of the events, from a purely strategic point of view, and one which was widely shared by the French establishment. This was seen when Pres. Charles De Gaulle finally smashed the revolt with army tanks in the streets, receiving ample support from the electorate and the French public.

Another interpretation of May 1968, literally "from the other side of the barricades", was that of Cornelius Castoriadis, a Greek emigré and philosophy professor at the University of Paris. He maintained that the revolt was   not "cathartic" or momentary, but a real political drama, as the starting point of a crisis of the entire Western civilization. (4) To start with, he saw in the revolt a deep questioning and delegitimization of the representative political system, when it brought to the streets of Paris the demand for direct popular participation, in the processes of political planning and decision making. The revolt was thus seen not only as anti-authoritarian but also as anti-parlamentarian, for the movement rejected from the beginning the mediation of professional politicians, party leaders, and labour unions, university and government officials.

Secondly, for Castoriadis, the revolt was not only maintained by the students and young workers, as specific social groups. It was a social movement held by a *new historic subject*, namely the individual westerner in the search for a lost citizenship, which had to be reconquered. This citizenship had been curtailed by the development of mass society, under the oppression of organized capitalism, the alienation of the cultural industry, and the instrumental rationality of centralized politics.

Therefore, this emergent social subject was individually present in the demonstrations against the *status quo*: students, workers, unemployed, housewives, beggars, and all those excluded and oppressed in French society. Their new identity, whatever their social role or function under the oppression of organized capitalism, was

that of a *free subject*, who had raised to replace the working class -- the revolutionary subject of classic Marxism.The aim of this emerging revolution was to rescue the meaning of democratic life and participation, against the totalitarianism of science and rationality, imposed by industrial society and economics through the state institutions. Hence its symbolic expressive orientations, libertarian and anarchic – its red and black flags waved together on the streets, and its graffitti everywhere urging "Be realistic: demand the impossible!", or "Power to the imagination!", etc.

This interpretation of the events in Paris emphasized acutely its deep-rooted and widespread meaning, as a crisis of Western civilization and industrial society, against the command of state power and big business. It did not consider the revolt as a struggle for state power, but rather as a long-term and radical search for a new identity and a maximum ambition: the suppression of state politics and industrial capitalism which colonized the lifeworld and the political and social activity of individuals   This interpretation also helped us to understand the meaning of the new social movements which emerged in the following decade, stressing also the crisis of Western civilization – namely, the feminist, ecologist and pacifist groups, which have spread all over the world. These movements have checked, and helped to precipitate, the limits of the welfare state and the balance of military power held during the Cold War.

Nevertheless, one must recognize that Castoriadis' interpretation of May 68 is also a partial account of those events. For, in spite of its acute perceptions and widespread scope, it mainly emphasizes the crisis of Western civilization as a search for meaning and identity, where the symbolic-expressive dimension appears relatively isolated from other (strategic and politico-cultural) considerations.

A third interpretation of May 68 was offered later on by Agnes Heller, and it considered the events in terms of "civil disobedience". (5) This definition requires some specification, for these terms usually describe opposition and resistance within the liberal concept of government. However, Heller emphatically stresses the radical connotations of this and other concepts of political liberalism -- like those of pluralism and tolerance -- in contrast with the usual relativism of liberal theories. Her account of May 68 considers civil disobedience to be a form of action and movement which is mainly ethical, intersubjective and institutional. In fact, she maintains that May 68 was a revolutionary form of action, for it challenged law and public order, established authoritatively in society, economics and government. Not only this, but it also emerged in defence of civil rights and liberties already present in the constitution, which had been both previously disregarded by the authorities and discredited by the citizenry.

She considers that May 68 proves that these rights and liberties should be reassured, exercised and expanded, in the growth and deepening of the democratic regime, both through the expansion and reform of public institutions and the radical-pluralistic acceptance of new forms of life among the citizens. This revolution amounts to a deep change in the political culture of Western societies. For example, she believes that De Gaulle's allies in the conservative governments of France would not have been ousted later on by socialist François Mitterand were it not for the ethical changes in consciousness and the civic actions of the citizenry started in 1968. She also relates the emergence of the new social movements, feminist, ecological and pacifist, as well as a new unionism relatively autonomous from political parties, to this overall transformation of Western political cultures, after the events of Paris 68.

Therefore, Heller points to a participatory change in the political culture, which combines the aims of government reform and popular civic action in daily life. She sees these democratic reforms as questioning the authoritarian logics of both capitalism and industrialism in western society. The logic of democratic participation is therefore considered as diverse and conflictual, *vis à vis* the dominance of industrial capitalism, for it combines elements of the plural forms of daily life, liberated from cultural and political constraints. Thus, this interpretation skilfully integrates the strategic and identity dimensions of the two previous interpretations of May 68, while it also stresses a new dimension of "civic disobedience" as a means of long-term change in the political culture.

Nevertheless, Heller's account may also be seen as a partial theory on new social movements, for it begs the question of how intersubjective changes can be achieved and articulated by groups and individuals. Moreover, she does not specify how such changes may eventually relate to institutional transformation, beyond the exceptional cases of civil disobedience. (6)

These three different interpretations are mentioned here as alternative approaches to the study of new social movements because they emphasize what the analysts consider to be more important in the actions of these movements. But these interpretations were not simply "invented" by the analysts, for each analysis mainly stresses one of the dimensions which was already present in the action (and could eventually become dominant in the outcome). For instance, even Aron's strategic emphasis on a Communist "elusive revolution" in May 1968 was not as far fetched as it may sound with hindsight: the French Communist Party did attempt to control the movement, but with no success. And, in any case, De Gaulle and the majority of public opinion seriously believed in this threat and acted accordingly. Moreover, the movement had its own strategic aims and methods, which sounded unlikely at the time, but proved effective in the long run (for instance: university reform, student participation, factory union representation, etc.) In sum, empowerment of civil society (instead of assault on state power) was the main strategic threadline, specifically displayed by the movement from its inception.

Surely, the movement's strategic aims and outcomes cannot be appraised in isolation from its identity and other politico-cultural dimensions. This is why it is suggested here that the different approaches mentioned above should be seen as complementary, for they bring to light aspects of social reality that are often interrelated (even when one of these dimensions is, or can become, dominant). But it is necessary to explain at this point that the consideration of those approaches as complementary is neither a proposal to overlook their deep theoretical controversies (for example, their divergent concepts of democracy) nor a relativistic suggestion that everything they say and emphasize is considered to be true. On the contrary, a complementary outlook on the dimensions emphasized by those approaches may reveal both the shortcomings of each approach and whatever is true and valuable in their contributions.

3. New Movements in Contemporary Brazil

It has been suggested elsewhere (7) that new social movements in Brazil, and in Latin America as a whole, articulate their priorities within the identity and strategic and politico-cultural repertory of the processes of democratization – and that the fate of democracy in Latin America will mainly depends on this fact. To put it differently, this means that democratization is a historical process of learning new values, identities and

political strategies, that enables groups and individuals to create and sustain a new way of life and new institutions in order to organize this lifeworld. Our own history tells us that this can be done in the midst of outrageous social inequity and authoritarian politico-cultural traditions. For   current processes of democratization share everywhere the reflexive and intersubjective character of the present global stage of Western modernity – be it considered "late modernity"or "postmodernity", as many prefer to call it.

Surely, a process of democratization may be blocked or reversed at any time, by local structural, cultural, psychological and other factors (prejudice, impatience, sectarianism, stupidity, laziness....you name it). But the worldwide success of the new movements such as feminism, ecologism and pacifism testifies about their intersubjective ability to articulate identity and strategic and politico-cultural priorities, in their individual and collective actions, attracting growing alliances and supporters among the public (even when there are very few members within each movement). This ability was tested in Brazil during and after the establishment of formal democratic rights in the new constitutional regime (1988). The new context allowed an expansion of the public sphere, whereby social actors and movements acquired (and developed) new strategies, identities and a 'civic culture'— albeit incipient and limited by the political transition from authoritarian rule.

This institutional change facilitated the emergence of many new actors, such as the "new unionism" independent of state control (there are now three central union organizations, with different political orientations); various popular neighbourhood confederations in the main cities; the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST), and other diverse groups of workers in the countryside. Certainly, many of these groups began their organization during the previous military regime, and their actions influenced the process of transition to formal democracy. There were others also, that vanished after the transition, or adopted new aims and strategies *vis à vis* both the government and their social allies or adversaries. The convergence and cooperation of these popular groups with other movements empowers their capacity of intervention in the public arena, to influence the political system and public opinion as a whole.

Jürgen Habermas (8) described this intervention of new social movements, in his theory of "communicative action", as a capacity to mobilize "criteria of intersubjective validity", for a process of "decolonization" of the lifeworld from the control of the marketplace and the political system. It is interesting to recall that Habermas was among the critical opponents of the 1968 student movement, denouncing its ephemeral traits when it first emerged in Germany -- though he already recognized then its novelty and anti-systemic potential. (9) In his later work, he further elaborated on the positive aspects of the new movements, distinguishing between those described as "offensive" (for example, feminism, and the US civil rights movement in its early stages) and the "defensive" ones (i.e, the youth and alternative movements) *"whose common focus is a critique of* (economic*) growth, centered on the themes of peace and ecology"*. (10)

His main point is that communicative actions of new social movements rely on criteria of intersubjective validity, which coordinate strategic, symbolic and politico-cultural ("normative", he says) interactions. Such interactions may transform the public sphere, for they emerge from capabilities already present in a "rationalized" lifeworld, struggling "*for the fulfilment of promises anchored and long recognized by the universalistic foundations of law and morality*". (11) This appeal to intersubjective criteria is easy to understand, in reference to day-to-day and face-to-face interactions: it constitutes

the basis of dialogue routines everywhere. However, it becomes crucial to democratization processes when they refer to the fulfilment of universalistic ethic and rational contents already present in public law and morality. As he states in his more recent work on Law and Democracy:

(There is) "*...a 'dual politics' in 'new' social movements, that pursues simultaneously both 'offensive' and 'defensive' aims. Through their* (universalistic*) offensive actions they advance themes which are relevant to society as a whole – i.e., defining the main issues, contributing to problem-solving, adding information, interpreting values differently, mobilizing good arguments, denouncing bad arguments, -- in order to support a consensual atmosphere, capable of modifying the legal parameters for the formation of a political will to exert pressure on parliament, governments and courts in favor of certain policies. On the other hand, they try to preserve 'defensively' certain structures of the public and associational spheres – producing subcultural public counter-spheres and counter-institutions, strengthening collective identities, and achieving new groundwork – through a reform of the institutions and an expansion of their rights."* (12)

This is a process we have been studying in Brazil and elsewhere. And the studies are showing that the new movements are facing hard challenges and obstacles, on both sides of their "dual politics". On the one hand, they face strong opponents against their universalistic "offensive" actions towards intellectual, political and business elites, the party system, and also the overwhelming institutional inertia of government buraucracy. On the other hand, they face "defensive" divisions within their own ranks, competition among ego-centered leaderships, uncertainty about their identities (past, present and future), and deep-seated traditions of self-debasement and prejudice. Such obstacles are compounded by the effective "divide and conquer" policies of both national and international neoliberal forces, which almost entirely control the media, the marketplace and the government.

These obstacles are so great that one wonders how new movements can even emerge at all. But they are there nonetheless, and tend to become ever more important and widespread with the unfolding of the process of democratization. We shall now look more closely at some of these obstacles in Brazil, in reference to similar processes of democratization in Latin America.

4. Institutional democratization and political culture

Brazil is going through a process of democratization that remains unfinished, for here the "incomplete tasks of modernity" are paramount. Both the legacy of Western modernity and the current influence of so-called "postmodernity" arrived in this country by biased and discriminatory means. (13) One of the results is that Brazil's economy is 11th in size, but its income distribution is among the most unfair in the world. This is a society which may be called "hierarchical", in comparison with Western liberal societies, to follow the categories proposed by John Rawls. (14) Rawls maintains that hierarchical societies do not uphold the liberal doctrines of individualism, and therefore do not consider most of their nationals as citizens -- i.e, as "free and equal moral persons". But hierarchical societies may be considered "well ordered societies" — and as such accepted by the Western world – as far as they respect the human rights of their members, represented by groups, movements and institutions organized through a "decent hierarchical

consultantion", based on a religious worldview and/or other forms of tradition such as natural law.

For instance, a study has maintained that the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST) can be seen as a democratizing force within a hierarchical society, both for its joint appeal to formal constitutional rights and natural law on the one hand, and for its challenges to landowners and government through a "decent hierarchical consultation" -- within the movement itself and *vis à vis* the party system and state agencies -- on the other hand. (15) The success of this movement in the politico-cultural dimension is shown by the support it has received so far from public opinion (national and international), despite the enormous obstacles it faces in confronting the ruling elites.

Its strategic aim of land occupation for farm production has skilfully attracted alliances with other movements, NGOs, and opposition political parties – while simultaneously maintaining its independence as an autonomous movement. Moreover, the identity of its members, as peasants or rural workers, has expanded throughout the process, to include a sense of self-reliance, civic courage and cooperation in daily life, as well as a recognition of the right to difference, in constant dialogue with other sectors of society. (16) Certainly, all these conquests may be suppressed or reversed in the future, but they show that a popular movement can raise and achieve progress for its cause, despite the enormous obstacles it faces, in a society with undemocratic traditions.

Various similar examples of popular movements in Brazil exist. Thus, it is necessary to recognize that many contemporary Brazilian movements are "new" movements, distinguished from the "old" ones, which only defended particularist corporate interests and/or a traditional worldview – such as the "anti-modern" peasant movements from the early 1900s, or even the "old unionism" controlled by the state since the 1930s. However, it is important to note that many of the new movements still maintain , but with a different meaning, certain communitary emphases of the old ones. For instance, it has been argued -- since the 1988 constitution formally established civil and political rights — that the "grassrootism" prevailing among many popular movements (i.e., their refusal to occupy positions in the political arena, or even to interact with formal politics) is no longer a traditional anti-authoritarian defence mechanism. It may be seen rather as the beginning of a difficult process of social democratization of the lifeworld, similar to others that previously took place in countries which earlier established a fuller democratic regime, and a participatory political culture. (17)

This is why it is so important to compare the Brazilian process of democratization to similar processes in the Southern Cone countries. For this helps us to understand the enormous challenges faced by new union and social movements in Brazil, connected with the heavy load of tradition in Brazilian political culture and institutions. Thus, the mainline of studies on Latin American democratization, named "regime analysis" (18), posits Brazil as an extreme case of "party underdevelopment". (19) Brazilian political parties are weak and unstable, with scarce roots within society, and their political representatives enjoy complete autonomy *vis à vis* their constituency, which facilitates an extremely high interparty mobility. For this very reason, parties and politicians suffer from a vast deficit of credibility among the electorate, who show the highest degree of apathy and scepticism in Latin America.

Other studies have stressed some important changes in the last decade, in Brazil and Uruguay (and to some extent also in Argentina), resulting in the electoral growth of leftist and opposition parties. For instance, Constanza Moreira argued that Brazil

and Uruguay "*are the only Latin American countries that have relatively autonomous and active labour unions, having organic links with leftist parties*". (20) In both countries the Left has consolidated an electoral basis, even to the point of arriving at national presidential elections as the second electoral force. And not by chance "*both countries experience a similar legacy from the previous authoritarian regimes: the introduction of 'liberalizing' economic models which continue up to this day*". (21)

Moreira's study argues that this growth of the opposition is part of a "third wave" of the Left: "*The post-dictatorship Latin American left, with distintive characteristics: it emerged and spread after the end of the Cold War, in opposition to the neoliberal influence of the 'Washington Consensus'; it is state-orienting, Keynesian, and it favours social movements and Social Democracy, and has a strong appeal among social movements.*" (22) The study recognizes differences between the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT) and the Uruguayan "*Frente Amplia*", but insists on the similarities, which challenge the established political order:

"*a) In both countries the consolidation of an autonomous labor union movement was decisive for the emergence of a leftist political party able to overcome its origins, as a small 'ideological' party, to the point of becoming a 'massive' popular party; b) these processes occurred after the crisis of industrial developmentalism, influenced by the Latin American movements of the 1960s, `Terceiristas', etc. This accounts for their pacifism, their trying to gain access to power through elections, and their engendering of a specific political culture (egalitarian, grassrootist, state-orienting, and movement-appealing) disinterested in the traditional monopoly of political representation; c) in both cases, an alliance between the suport of the unions and that of the middle classes seems to determine the chances of electoral victory for the Left .*"(23)

Most certainly, the growth of the Left in Brazil and Uruguay are important processes that bear some similarities. However, the differences are perhaps much greater than Moreira's study seems to recognize. For instance: Uruguayan mainstream parties are very stable, and were formed in the 19th century; Uruguay's political system established liberal institutions in the early 20th century, as well as a welfare system considered for long to be the most successful in Latin America. One of the results of this democratic tradition is that income distribution is one of the most equitable in the region, in spite of the fact that most of the electorate considers it now to be unjust, with immediate consequences in the political arena. We have seen above that Brazilian institutions and traditions are at the opposite pole of this liberal historical legacy.

Moreover, as long as the Brazilian PT continues to remain strongly linked to social and union movements, it will probably continue to suffer from a certain "schizophrenia" between political and social action (contrary to what happens in Uruguay). One example is "*the gap which often occurs between union and parliamentary struggles, or between the struggles of the popular movements and the need for the party to formulate a clear cluster of proposals, to be presented within and outside the Parliament, to induce government to solve those problems.*" (24) A recent example of this gap was the PT's lack of success in mediating between the government and the movement "For Another 500th Anniversary", last April in Porto Seguro. Newspapers reported that PT national leader José Dirceu met with the leadership of the movement, on the eve of the demonstration, trying to convince them to open negotiations with the government, but that he was not successful (which apparently justified police repression of the demonstration). Another important difference is that in Brazil there are three Central Union organizations, whereas

in Uruguay there is only one, closely related to the *Frente Amplia*. The Brazilian union organizations may eventually oppose jointly certain government policies, but they have different political orientations and only one is in line with the PT.

Notwithstanding the many contrasts between Brazil and Uruguay, it is certain that their leftist parties have similar electoral profiles: they recruit their constituencies from among the youthful, better-educated, urban voters who live in the large cities, and among organized workers. Research indicates that party identification is higher among these constituencies than in the electorate at large. Thus, Moreira's study explains party growth of the Left in Brazil and Uruguay (and to some extent also the growth of the Radicals in Argentina) as a phenomenon opposed to current regional integration through neoliberal policies. Also, it emphasizes at the end some of the crossroads faced by the Left, as it becomes the main alternative to the *status quo* in Brazil and Uruguay:

"They lost the 1998 Presidential elections, but increased their representation in parliament; they conquered new ground at municipal level, and started the new century with two decisive challenges: a) to conquer votes in the countryside, in less modernized, less urbanized, and especially in less politicized towns; b) to create an alternative programme of government, not only to continue to mobilize discontent against current processes of economic reform, but also to achieve a higher consciousness about the risks of opposition to a model of development each day less 'domestically controllable'." (25)

These challenges could eventually be met by the Left (or opposition) parties in the Southern Cone (though De la Rua's Radical government in Argentina is showing that these are no easy tasks...). In fact, even if the opposition parties achieve a successful government programme, alternative to current neoliberal domination, it is to be seen how the electorate will react to such changes.

Our present studies on changes of political cultures in the *Mercosur* countries indicate that there is a great heterogeneity within each country, even among the younger cohorts of the electorate – supposed to be the main supporters of alternative political programmes. Previous research on the NAFTA and European countries has stressed an emergent "postmaterialist" (and even "postmodern") trend (perhaps related to an ecological "culture of sustainability") among the younger cohorts of the electorate, whose growth in the last decades facilitated successful processes of regional integration.(26) Our present studies of the Southern Cone suggest that this theory should be revised, or at least adapted to a large extent, in order to face the greater heterogeneity of our countries.

In Latin American countries, generational change is a controversial topic, due to internal socioeconomic heterogeneity, the extreme diversity in the capabilities for political integration of each country, and the heavy load of nationalist and/or authoritarian traditions in the political culture of some countries. (27) For instance, Paraguay has been described as a case of "democratization without modernization", due to still prevailing traditions of *caudillismo* and rent-seeking economics. In Argentina, there is a minority ecological subculture, whose relations to "postmaterialism" could not be established – for its origins may be a long-lasting tradition of *"higienismo"* and urbanized *"civilization"* in that country.

We have noted above the sharp constrasts between Brazil and Uruguay, in spite of the common electoral growth of the Left. This political trend has been supported by many ecologists, but the State-orienting tendencies of the Left's constituency raise doubts (to say the least) about the relevance of "postmaterialism" to either parties or movements. The main thrust of this reseach is now to study the diverse historical contexts of

socialization, in which the generational cohorts of every country have been brought up, in order to understand these local and generational diversities in the political cultures, and their prospects for the future.

These findings provide a warning for us to be cautious about the trend to overgeneralization, and undue homogenisation, of current theories and proposals of regional integration and modernization – which, as always happenned in the past, come from the advanced Western countries to Latin America. Certainly, there is nothing intrinsically wrong in this Western origin, except for our past Latin American experiences of colonialism, with its enduring legacy of economic dependence and political arrogance. This is why we have made abundant use of other Western intellectual sources in this paper, which help us to be more modest and self-conscious, in our appraisals of Latin American cultural and institutional life.

However, this is not to say that current dominant projects of neoliberal (or other forms of imported) integration could not succeed in the long run in Latin America. But in order to succeed, they would have to take root in each country in a manner that would certainly be different, from case to case. And, in many cases, such success might be very costly, both to winners and to opposition. For the young people in a number of these countries – both the younger cohorts of the electorate, and those who organize in new labour and social movements — seem to be the most vocal against current dominant policies, as well as the least integrated in the political establishment. Thus, the immediate future may include scenarios of growing political confrontation, if Latin American social, economic and cultural heterogeneities, among the younger sectors of the population, do not find (real and authentic) political alternatives of national and regional integration.

Endnotes

(1) Interview with Celso Bajarano Jr., "Terena wanted to die", <u>Folha de São Paulo</u>, April 26, 2000, 1/6.

(2) For instance, Claus Offe, "New social movements: Challenging the boundaries of institutional politics", <u>Social Research</u>, 52(4): 817-868, 1985. On a more theoretical level, see also Jean Cohen & Andrew Arato, <u>Civil Society and Political Theory</u>, Cambridge, MS: MIT Press, 1994; 510-522.

(3) Raymond Aron, <u>The Elusive Revolution</u>, London: Pall Mall, 1968.

(4) Cornelius Castoriadis, <u>La Société Française</u>, Paris: UGE, 1979.

(5) Agnes Heller & Ferenc Feher, <u>Anatomía de la Izquierda Occidental,</u> Barcelona: Península, 1985.

(6) For a more specific and theoretical account, see Agnes Heller, <u>Beyond Justice</u>, London: Basil Blackwell, 1987.

(7) P.J. Krischke, "Movimentos sociais e democratização no Brasil: Necessidades radicais e ação comunicativa", <u>Ciências Sociais Hoje</u>, São Paulo: ANPOCS, 1990: 128-155. P.J. Krischke, "Atores sociais e consolidação democrática na América Latina: Estratégias, identidade e cultura cívica", in E.Viola *et al*., <u>Meio Ambiente, Desenvolvimento e Cidadania: Desafios às Ciências Sociais</u>, São Paulo: Cortez, 1995.

(8) Jürgen Habermas, <u>Teoría de la Acción Comunicativa,</u> 2 Vols., Madrid: Taurus, 1985.

(9) Jürgen Habermas, <u>Toward a Rational Society. Student Protest, Science and Politics</u>, Boston: Beacon Press, 1971. Here he asserts that "*these students...belong to the first generation that openly perceives the disproportion between the potential wealth and potential gratification of the masses in that society. They are the first generation that no longer understands why, despite the high level of technological development, the life of the individual is still determined by the ethic of competition, the pressure of status -seeking, and the values of possessive individualism and socially dispensed substitute -gratifications. They do not undeerstand why the institutionalized struggle for existence, the discipline of alienated labor, or the eradication of sensuality and*

aesthetic gratification should be perpetuated – why, in short, the mode of life of na economy of poverty is preserved under conditions of a possible economy of abundance. On the basis of a <u>fundamental</u> lack of sympathy with the senseless reproduction of now superfluous virtues and sacrifices, the rising generation has developed a particular sensitivity to the untruth of prevailing legitimations." (p.24-25, italics in the original).

(10) Jürgen Habermas, 1985, Op. Cit, Vol. II :558.
(11) Ibid.
(12) Jürgen Habermas, <u>Direito e Democracia: entre Facticidade e Validade</u>, 2 Vols., Rio de Janeiro: Tempo Brasileiro, 1997. Vol. II: 103.
(13) See for instance Luis Felipe Alencastro, <u>O Trato dos Viventes</u>, São Paulo: Cia. das Letras, 2000, for a historical account of the 330 years of slave traffic, and its lasting effects, on Brazilian society and polity.
(14) John Rawls, <u>The Law of Peoples</u>, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.
(15) P.J. Krischke, "A cultura política pública em John Rawls: contribuições e desafios à democratização", <u>Filosofia Política</u>, Nova série, 2: 85-98, 1998.
(16) Maria Ines Paulilo, "MST: O julgamento das vítimas", <u>Revista Lugar Comum</u>, 9-10, UFRJ, 2000.
(17) P.J. Krischke, "Social movements and political participation. Contributions of grassroots democracy in Brazil", <u>Canadian Journal of Development Studies</u>, 11(1): 167-178, 1990.
(18) P.J. Krischke, "Problems in the study of democratization in Latin America : Regime analysis vs. Cultural studies", <u>International Sociology</u>, 15 (1): 107-125, March 2000.
(19) Scott Mainwaring & Timothy Scully, <u>Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America</u>, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995.
(19) Constanza Moreira, "La izquierda en Uruguay y Brasil: cultura política y desarrollo político-partidário", in Susana Mallo & Constanza Moreira, <u>La Larga Espera</u>: <u>Itinerarios de la Izquierda en Argentina, Brasil y Uruguay</u>, Montevideo: Ed. Banda Oriental (Forthcoming), pag. 4 of the typescript.
(20) Ibid. p.1.
(21) Ibid.
(22) Ibid. p.7.
(23) Ibid.
(24) José A. Moisés, <u>E Agora PT? Caráter e Identidade</u>, São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1986.
(25) Constanza Moreira, Op.Cit., p. 11.
(26) Ronald Inglehart<u>, Modernization and Postmodernization. Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies</u>, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997. Ronald Inglehart, Miguel Bazáñez & Neil Nevitte, <u>Convergéncia en Norteamérica: Comércio, Política y Cultura</u>, México: Siglo XXI, 1994.
(27) Paulo J. Krischke (Ed.), <u>Ecologia, Juventude e Cultura Política. A Cultura da Juventude, a Democratização e a Ecologia nos Países do Cone Sul</u>, Florianópolis: UFSC Press, 2000. (Forthcoming)
(28) George Yúdice, "The globalization of culture and the new civil society", in Sonia Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino & Arturo Escobar (Eds.), <u>Cultures of Politics and Politics of Cultures. Re-visioning Social Movements in Latin America</u>, Boulder: Westview, 1998.