

Prospects for Democratization in a Post-Revolutionary Setting: Central America*

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Prospects for democratization in those Central American countries that experienced revolutionary processes are discussed in the light of recurrent structural constraints — such as incipient structural differentiation, overwhelming poverty, dependence on foreign financial subsidies — and specific socio-political variations, i.e., uneven modernization of traditional rule; tensions between the recent mobilization of both "old" and "new" social actors; and political institutions and actors (such as parties, unions, parliaments, government and multilateral agencies) which, in some cases, lead to current social demobilization and electoral apathy and, in others, prevent the effective uprooting of political violence; persistence of traditional authoritarian culture and its articulation as the new ingredient of the post-war political and socio-economic setting.

Democracy and the Central American Crisis

Issues posed by processes of democratization vary from one country to another. The specific content of the concept of democracy is forged by the socio-cultural history of a country, which suggests that any generalization about democracy should be made with extreme caution. The development and strengthening of democratic regimes rely not just on political will but also on economic resources, administrative capabilities and technical skills.

As with any other political regime, democracy has both substantive and formal dimensions. The substantive dimension refers to the links between the political system, the socio-economic structure and cultural patterns, and expresses itself in the content of the demands the political system is expected to process and in the way it processes them; in its capacity to mobilize resources and make pertinent decisions; and in the room for legitimate action of both state agencies and the marketplace through the involvement of individual and collective actors. In a number of developing countries, various sources of social confrontation — political, economic, ethnic and religious — tend to overlap, thus leading to an additional polarization of conflicts. Gender differences usually exist in the access of men and women to resources as well as in their ability to influence political or social events.

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The formal dimension refers to procedures and institutions framing those relations, procedures and institutions agreed upon by every actor in the system. While it is hard to think of democratic decisions made through authoritarian procedures unless benevolent authoritarianism, paternalism or enlightened despotism are included under the democratic label, non-democratic decisions arrived at through democratic procedures are perfectly conceivable, as a revisionist literature on democratic transitions is beginning to accept.¹

Although there is no linear correlation between political systems and socio-economic structures, the existence of some kind of congruence between one and the other has been stated since the very beginnings of political science. Over the centuries, political scientists as well as sociologists and historians from Aristotle and Cicero to Barrington Moore Jr. and Seymour Martin Lipset, through Montesquieu and Max Weber, have pointed to a consistent relation between socio-economic structures, culture, and politics.² However, it would be misleading to reduce a political regime to its structural foundations. In modern societies, political rule and socio-economic hierarchies are subject to processes of unfolding which give rise to a relative reciprocal autonomy between the two, and which include the ability of political regimes to reshape, and not just reproduce, structural and cultural foundations. Hence, the way the former is constituted is as relevant as the structuring of the latter for the purpose of inquiring into the characteristics of political regimes.

Democracy is one of the core issues in the recent revolutionary cycle in Central America. As usual, different actors approached it from different perspectives, and with different projections. From the standpoint of the insurgents, democracy was one of the dimensions of the struggles they waged against harsh dictatorships, such as *Somocismo* in Nicaragua, or, as in Guatemala and El Salvador, against political regimes combining military rule, sustained electoral fraud, and repression. Democracy was viewed as encompassing far-reaching social and economic changes in addition to political and institutional ones. It was envisaged as an overall shift in power relations supported by people's direct participation. The revolutionary approach did not reject elections; but it either assigned them a secondary role or put them on hold until socio-economic change was achieved. This way of focusing on democracy was an outcome of both ideological definitions and historical experiences all over Central America — Costa Rica being the only contemporary exception.³ Electoral

procedures were discredited by manipulation, fraud, violence and repression of opposition parties, thus making political pluralism and the electoral promotion of social and political reforms a difficult and unsafe task. It is worthwhile to point out that this historical dimension of democratic failure was present even in the minds of the actors who were pressing for more moderate reformist options.⁴

From the elites' perspective, democracy was under severe threat due to the revolutionary challenge. According to them, the goal of the insurgent movements was to bring about totalitarian regimes of a Castro-communist type committed to crushing individual and economic freedoms. Democracy — a word that was alien to their public discourse until very recently — was basically reduced to its procedural dimension: electoral competition among the propertied classes supported by the clientelistic manipulation of the captive vote of the rural, illiterate masses.

The United States government viewed democracy as an alternative to revolutions and an instrument to reduce the revolutionary appeal among social actors who nevertheless opposed the elites' authoritarian rule. In addition to an emphasis on more competitive elections, the U.S. perspective included some degree of structural change in rural areas. This approach gathered support from Christian Democratic parties, social groups opposed to the traditional elites and, most of all, the middle classes, for whom the revolutionary prospect was too radical in its scope or its methods. The U.S. approach was also combined with open-handed economic and military assistance to the Salvadorean government — also to a lesser extent provided to Guatemala and Honduras — together with financial and logistical support for the Nicaraguan "Contras", within the framework of the so-called "low-intensity warfare". Yet, despite its appeals to democracy, U.S. policy was more anti-Sandinista and counter-revolutionary than pro-democratic.⁵

The Central American revolutionary cycle is now over. The insurgents did not achieve their objectives, but the traditional order underwent mutations that are far from irrelevant. As I have argued elsewhere, although many of these changes are unconnected with the designs of the revolutionaries or involve a different approach to social and political change, they could hardly have been brought about without such an intense confrontation.⁶ Above all, transformations have been brought about in institutional variables related to the political dimensions of the

Central American revolutions. Restrictive authoritarian or openly dictatorial regimes succumbed and were to be replaced by more open, competitive ones supported by fair electoral systems. The militarization of political life has likewise been significantly, albeit unevenly, reversed.

On the other hand, the socio-economic conditions that precipitated the revolutionary movements remain virtually unchanged and, indeed, in some respects they are more pressing than three decades ago. Central America has re-emerged from its traumatic recent past with large segments of its population living in poverty or under quite unsatisfactory health conditions, education and housing standards, with high levels of unemployment and underemployment, diminished earnings, and a disturbing level of daily violence — particularly directed against women and children. Social inequalities related to sex, race and class are still deeper than in other hemispheric areas.⁷

In what follows I will discuss the prospects for democratization in the isthmus, addressing mainly, although not exclusively, the countries directly involved in the revolutionary conflict. The focus will be extensive, pointing to the broad set of ingredients that make for democracy as a multi-dimensional process. While trying to avoid the trivialization of the controversial term "democracy", the article refers to the political, institutional and social dimensions which underlie both the reformist and the revolutionary understanding of it: universal citizen's participation through open and competitive elections combined with grassroots participation in an institutional setting committed to the effective observance of civil and human rights, personal and collective rights and liberties — including indigenous rights — rule of law and military subordination to civil authority, as well as access to basic social resources such as nutrition, health, employment and education, which afford some very basic conditions for citizenship. Democracy refers to a political system as well as to the social relations and structures in which it is embedded.⁸ My approach thus departs from the predominant trend in studies on democracy, which stresses the elites' interaction and accommodations, without much regard for the socio-economic settings in which actors operate or for interactions between structure and agency. While that lack of regard may be understood as a reaction to the much criticized "structural imperialism" which pervaded Latin American studies not long ago, it usually leads to an homologous one-sided reductionism.

The Structural Framework

Structural foundations

Marginal participation in the international markets leads the Central American economies to behave as price-takers, i.e., they are in no position to settle the international prices for their exports, which restricts their scope and options for development. The growth of national income depends on one of three basic conditions, or on a combination of them: (1) increasing export earnings; (2) earnings derived from savings in import expenditures; and (3) increased income due to lower production costs. Due to its very nature, a price-taker economy has little room for maneuver with regard to (1) or (2), while (3) is also relatively rigid since the disarticulation of the productive structure causes a large proportion of the inputs for export production (such as fuel, machinery, raw materials or spare parts) to come from abroad. Consequently, the only flexibility lies in domestic production costs, which basically consist of the labor force. Furthermore, when marked cleavages exist between production for exports and production for domestic consumption, modernization and increased productivity in the export sector do not significantly impact either upon production for domestic consumption or on the costs of production of labor. Agrochemicals dispersed by planes over export crops coexist with corn-planting with a digging stick (*espeque*). Thus, not only the external profitability but even the very reproduction of the export system, rely on an intense downgrading of the employment and living conditions of direct producers: low salaries for wage workers, low prices for peasants.

Since most tropical export economies display an abundant and consequently cheap supply of labor,⁹ and since some of Central America's exports are also produced by more developed economies with higher wage levels — such as sugar cane agriculture in southern USA, or fisheries — the competitive advantage of labor costs has a low ceiling. Central American producers are driven to adopt technical improvements in order to raise productivity standards, but in the short run these can increase production costs which, in turn, leads to additional pressure upon labor. Finally, labor is not paid according to its marginal productivity but according to its costs of reproduction and, in extreme cases, below it. Subsequent differentiation of Central American exports through *maquila* production, new agricultural staples, or light manufacturing,

does not change the fact that international competition continues to rely on the availability of cheap labor.

Realization of the export sector's surplus via imports, dependence on a stable flow of imports for the operation of the export sector, and more generally a high overall propensity towards imports, all serve to inhibit the development of the domestic market and to impede more advanced integration of productive chains. As long as production is not directed to a domestic market and does not process domestic inputs, labor is viewed by entrepreneurs as an expense rather than as an investment leading to the generation of surpluses. This is a "prefordist" approach to capital accumulation.²⁰

It may then be argued that an economic structure like this is biased towards the generation of authoritarian or exclusionary political regimes characterized by deprivation of the civic rights of broad segments of the laboring classes, particularly in the countryside, and the prohibition or repression of unions — both reinforcing extra-economic compulsion upon the labor force.²¹ In such conditions, any opening up of the political system threatens to bring about changes in the social framework of production which will negatively affect the process of capital accumulation, the external profitability of the economy, and international competition as well as the terms of political rule by the elites. It is therefore easy to understand why most proposals for political reform during the last four decades involved a degree of criticism of the economic structure, inasmuch as proposed structural transformation threatened changes in both power relations and the configuration of the state, and so were doomed to face the opposition of power-holders. It was the very structural design of Central American societies, far more than the ideology of the oppositionist actors, that made proposals for change in the sixties and seventies so tremendously conflict-ridden. Moreover, the intense exposure of the Central American societies to fluctuations in the international economy reinforced tendencies towards institutional volatility.²²

However, no structural determinism exists; suitable policies can introduce structural changes, diversify foreign trade, and broaden the economy's external degrees of freedom. Costa Rica is a good case in point, demonstrating the feasibility of forging a stable political regime under structural constraints biased towards authoritarianism and instability. But, as again suggested by the Costa Rican case, for this to happen,

timely and far-reaching reforms in power relations have to be brought about. On the other hand, within the parameters of the common setting outlined above, variations exist from country to country in both the political and socio-economic domains, which account for the particular dynamics of political conflict in each of them.¹²

Growth of poverty

Poverty is a structural feature in that Central American agro-export specialization and subsequent changes in land use, technologies, and relations of production delivered a surplus population lacking opportunities for insertion in the productive structure or the means to satisfy basic, even fundamental, needs. Yet poverty is also the outcome of both political conditions and public policies: the former referring mainly to the impact of the recent conflict and the latter relating to policies implemented by the Central American governments. During the eighties, people living in poverty increased by 52 percent and encompassed almost 70 percent of the entire Central American population. Poverty tended to become urban, though at a slower pace than in the rest of Latin America. In absolute terms, poverty is greater in the countryside, yet cities accounted for 60 percent of poverty growth during the last decade. The urban poor increased by almost 73 percent while the rural poor grew by 43 percent (Table 1).

The tendency towards the urbanization of poverty is mostly an outcome of flight from areas of war and harsh repression, or from deteriorating living conditions in the countryside. Although security has improved in many of these areas in recent years, migration turned out to be a one-way flow. Most migrants remained in the cities, further degrading living standards there, as may be easily seen in the overcrowded poor barrios in San Salvador, Guatemala City, or Managua. This produces a growing mass of "new urban poor" — some seven million at the beginning of the nineties or close to one-third of Central America's population. People are denied basic living standards, and social conditions downgraded in the course of a few years as an outcome of the the conflict, crisis and government economic policies.

A flourishing economy is not incompatible with authoritarianism, but an economy in crisis makes it harder to build a democratic regime. In the context of a recession or very slow recovery, and within the framework of

Table 1.
Central America: Estimates on Poverty, 1980 and 1990

	Central America		Costa Rica		El Salvador		Guatemala		Honduras		Nicaragua	
	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990
	Millions											
Total population	20.8	27.6	2.2	2.9	4.7	6.5	7.4	9.2	3.7	5.1	2.7	3.9
Urban	8.4	12.2	1.0	1.6	2.1	2.9	2.5	3.9	1.2	2.2	1.5	1.6
Rural	12.4	15.4	1.2	1.3	2.6	3.6	4.8	5.3	2.5	2.9	1.3	2.3
Poverty	12.6	19.2	0.5	0.6	3.3	4.9	4.6	6.9	2.5	3.9	1.7	2.9
Total	4.0	6.9	0.1	0.2	1.2	1.8	1.4	2.4	0.5	1.5	0.7	0.9
Urban	8.6	12.3	0.4	0.4	2.0	3.1	3.2	4.5	2.0	2.3	1.0	2.0
	Percentages											
Poverty	61	69.5	25	20	68	71	63	75	68	76	62	75
Total	48	56.5	14	11	58	61	58	62	44	73	46	60
Urban	69	79.9	34	31	76	85	66	85	80	79	80	85
	Distribution per country (%)											
Poverty	100	100	3.9	3.1	26.2	25.5	36.5	35.9	19.8	20.3	13.5	15.2
Total	100	100	2.5	2.9	30.0	26.1	35.0	34.8	12.5	23.2	20.0	13.0
Urban	100	100	4.6	3.2	23.2	25.2	37.2	36.6	23.2	18.7	11.8	16.3
Rural												

Source: CEPAL, *Bases para la transformación productiva y generación de ingresos de la población pobre de los países del Istmo centroamericano*. LC/MEX/G3/Rev. 2, 6 January 1992.

a price-taker economy, unequal access to resources leads people and their organizations to express their demands in a reciprocally exclusionary manner, thus introducing additional tensions in the institutional political system. Democracy always involves some minimum of equalization between citizens; but even if reduced to legal issues, or vis-a-vis the state (as in the liberal conception), such equality has to be supported by socio-economic foundations. This remains true even though levels of tolerance of inequality vary from country to country, among social groups, and over time.

Extreme poverty jeopardizes the very concept of citizenship, inasmuch as such poverty excludes people from access to services and basic resources — jobs, health and education — which are considered to be basic preconditions for personal autonomy and meaningful political participation. Poverty also undermines confidence in the capacity of the political system to handle even the most urgent problems which, in turn, usually leads to an ambivalent situation:

1. Demands stemming from the mobilized poor tend to become more intense as such demands become increasingly related to questions of survival. A democratic regime presupposes the existence of institutional devices for the expression of dissent, which implies a dissent that does not question the foundations of the political system. When large segments of the mobilized population consider the political system no longer able to process their basic demands, keeping dissent within institutional limits becomes a rather complex issue. Conversely, to the extent that elite well-being is in some way associated with collective poverty, these power holders will resist any kind of institutional bargain that would imply a setback to their political or economic primacy.

2. However, extreme poverty also tends to undermine beliefs in one's own ability to change things and improve life. Fighting for everyday survival demands incredible amounts of time, effort and resourcefulness. Insecurity and fear have violence and anger as their usual counterparts. Both dimensions complement each other. The absence or very low level of involvement in some kind of civic politics — through parties, civic associations, unions — combines with clientelism and a number of forms of "direct action". Such actions produce violent yet usually intransitive explosions of outrage or, at best, cannon fodder for someone else's battles.

Recent studies point to the reinforcing impact of social inequality upon poverty growth even during periods of economic reactivation, as well as to the negative effect of deep overlapping social inequalities upon economic growth.¹⁴ Table 2 reveals a marked but uneven polarization of income in the five Central American republics. Guatemala and Honduras are, after Brazil, the countries with the worst inequality indices in all of Latin America, Guatemala's income polarization tripled in a single decade, which helps to explain the high levels of violence against peasants and indigenous communities in those years. The poorest 10% of Guatemala's population (about one million people) dropped from a 2.4% share of national income to 0.5% (or some US\$3 person per month), whereas the richest 10% increased its share from 40.8% to 46.6%. State-directed violence, much more than market compulsions, was necessary to produce this outcome.¹⁵ Nicaragua's pattern of distribution is closer to that of Costa Rica. This is a lingering consequence of the 1980s reforms, as well as the long-standing importance of middle-size farmers in the land tenure structure, which is greater than her neighbor.¹⁶ Income polarization almost doubled in El Salvador. The figures point to the impact of war and forced migrations to cities on the life standards of large segments of the lower classes (though the second measurement refers only to urban households). The peace process has not yet produced a mitigating effect upon social inequalities. According to most analyses, this has to do with the fact that the accords were signed after the basic macroeconomic policy commitments had been unilaterally made by the ARENA government, whose will to honor the accords is a matter of dispute, to say the least.¹⁷

Poverty growth was accompanied by a rapid expansion of the urban informal sector (UIS). In 1982, the UIS accounted for one-third of Central America's metropolitan employment. By 1988-89, it amounted to more than 40 percent and even more in both Guatemala City and Managua. The UIS expansion mainly took place in self-employment in petty trade and personal services, which at the end of the 1980s ranged between one-half and two-thirds of informal urban employment. Sustained growth in the UIS and the acceleration of recent years tend to confirm the opinion of those who maintain that an extended informal sector constitutes a structural feature of the Central American economies, and is not merely a passing incidental or conjunctural fact.¹⁸ Furthermore, an extended informal sector has impact upon issues that go well beyond the informal labor market or the informal economy. It affects the development of

Table 2
Household Income Distribution in Central America (in %)

	1 Lowest 20%	2 Second quintile	3 Third quintile	4 Fourth quintile	5 Highest 20%	6 Top 10%	5:1
Costa Rica							
1971	3.3	8.7	13.3	19.8	54.9	39.5	16.6
1989	4.0	9.1	14.3	21.9	50.7	34.1	12.7
El Salvador							
1977	5.5	10.9	16.4	23.3	43.9	30.1	8.0
1990-91*	3.5	8.4	13.4	20.6	54.1	38.4	15.4
Guatemala							
1979-81	5.5	8.6	12.2	18.7	55.0	40.8	10.0
1989	2.1	5.8	10.5	18.6	63.0	46.6	30.0
Honduras							
1989	2.7	6.0	10.2	17.6	63.5	47.9	23.5
Nicaragua							
1993	4.2	8.0	12.6	19.9	55.3	39.8	13.1

*Urban households only

Sources: World Bank, *World Development Report*, several years. World bank, *El Salvador: The Challenge of Poverty Alleviation*, Washington, D.C., 1994.

alternative (although not marginal) networks of solidarity, legitimacy and subservience which flow through their own channels and create conditions for differentiated power configurations, thus reinforcing the clientelistic and fragmented characteristics of the political system.¹⁹

Dependence on external subsidies

By the end of the 1980s, over 1.3 million Nicaraguans, Guatemalans and Salvadoreans had migrated to the United States. The scale of this movement resembles that of the Dominican Republic in the aftermath of the U.S. military invasion of April 1965. As in that case, the outflow of Central Americans engendered an inflow of family remittances equal to or even larger than export earnings. At the micro-level, remittances have helped relatives left behind to survive, opening up strategies for "managing somehow", with the obvious consent of the U.S. government. During

1980-89, family remittances to El Salvador totaled \$3.3 billion. The figure for Guatemala was \$1.7 billion and \$294 million for Nicaragua. In 1989 alone, some 575,200 Salvadorean migrants sent home over 300 million dollars from the United States; half a million Guatemalans sent home \$284.1 million, and 255,000 Nicaraguans sent almost \$60 million. Remittances amounted to 15% of El Salvador's GDP (or 96.7% of export earnings); in Guatemala the figures were 2.9% and 16.4% respectively; and in Nicaragua 2.4% and 17.4%. El Salvador's peace accords have not stopped this inflow. During 1992-93, remittances were 14% higher than earnings. According to estimates by the Ministry of Planning, the 1994 inflow was expected to amount to some \$890 million.²⁰

Research conducted on other expatriate communities suggests that dependence on remittances fosters a reformulation of political loyalties in local communities. The expatriates gain great influence, perhaps leading to tensions with local governments or social organizations.²¹ Although such research has not yet been conducted in Central America, it can be hypothesized that such situations are likely to affect the matrix of political involvement, at least at the local level. Personal commitment to the making of institutional decisions concerning everyday issues may weaken when private sources of income such as remittances are available. If one has an income that permits the purchase of a domestic generator, it may make little sense to join a neighborhood association demanding electricity. It becomes tempting to save the time and risks that joining collective action may involve. When remittances make possible the purchase of a second-hand car, involvement in mobilizations for improved public transportation or for affordable fares will tend to recede.

The impact of huge extra-regional inflows of income on the reproduction of people's living conditions is a key dimension of Central America's heavy dependence on international assistance — particularly in the countries that were most exposed to political and military conflict. Nicaragua was the recipient of 42% of all development aid to Central America during the 1980s, amounting to an average of \$667 million every year — not including military assistance.²² The United States provided Guatemala with \$574.9 million in military and economic aid from 1980 to 1988; \$3.9 billion were sent over the same period to El Salvador in both development aid and military assistance — an average of \$357 million

per year.²³ Reliance on external aid was also strong in both Costa Rica and Honduras, two countries that gained particular relevance in the U.S. counter-insurgency strategy. From 1980 to 1988, Costa Rica received over one billion dollars in U.S. economic and defense assistance, while Honduras received \$1.4 billion.²⁴ As will be shown later, inflows of foreign funds also point to the deep involvement of foreign actors in the Central American conflict and its aftermath. In 1984, the Kissinger Bipartisan Commission estimated Central America's need for 1984-90 multilateral aid at \$24 billion. It was claimed that this would enable Central America's GDP to grow at a 6% annual rate, thus returning by 1990 to the 1979 income level. On the eve of the peace accords (January 1992), Salvadorean president Alfredo Cristiani estimated that, in order to attain full recovery, his country would need to receive an inflow of \$2 billion. In turn, Nicaragua's vice-president Virgilio Godoy stated that from the inauguration of President Chamorro's government, U.S. assistance to Nicaragua amounted to a daily average of two million dollars.²⁵

El Salvador's case is particularly expressive of extreme dependence on foreign funds. During the 1980s, El Salvador received more than \$7.3 billion in U.S. aid and family remittances, in addition to about \$315 million in official aid for development from Europe, Canada and Japan — an overall amount of \$7.6 billion, slightly exceeding export earnings over the same period. Things have not changed since the Peace Agreements. Due to the ARENA government's strong commitment to neoliberal economic policies, the implementation of the accords has relied since the very beginning on foreign funds.

Socio-political Factors

Persistence of traditional rule

Rigidity of the economic structure reinforces the ability of traditional elites to retain political power, and to block initiatives for peaceful social reform and democratization. The negotiated character of the post-revolutionary peace process enabled traditional groups to preserve or recover part of their influence. This obstructs or delays the chances of building new ways of linking social activation to institutional, non-violent political participation. Tensions in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador with regard to demilitarization, the end of police/military impunity, human rights observance, the struggle against corruption and privileges,

privatization, property rights, among others, conspicuously express the complexities of the new setting and the challenges confronted by political actors and institutions.

Central America's elites display a tight articulation of economic features (such as concentration of land ownership and commercial or manufacturing assets) as well as of kinship ties, which is more open than in other Latin American societies. Complex and extended networks of family relations endowed Central America's traditional ruling groups with solidity and the resources either to resist efforts towards social change, or to redirect them. The interplay of diverse but concurrent criteria of social hierarchy based upon profound social inequalities, together with racial oppression, reinforces a political culture of exclusion. Shared material interests and political perspectives are coupled by a consciousness of caste which increases the exclusionary nature of social domination, and endows the elites with a feeling of being above the law and beyond institutional constraints.

A small number of family names of Spanish origin persists over the centuries in positions of political and business leadership. Thirty-three out of forty-four presidents of Costa Rica from 1821 to 1970 are direct descendants of just three original settlers, and 350 out of 1,300 members of the Costa Rican Congress are descendants of just four original settlers.²⁶ Costa Rica's incumbent president Jose Maria Figueres Olssen is the son of Jose "Pepe" Figueres Ferrer who became president in 1948 after overthrowing president Rafael Calderon Guardia, the father of Angel Calderon Fournier, who was Costa Rica's constitutional president just before the election of Figueres Olssen. A handful of Guatemalan families runs throughout the country's political history. Their almost uninterrupted political power as well as oligopolistic control over the most strategic sectors of the economy has lasted since colonial times. In the 1980s, a group of 18 Guatemalan notable families were united through 155 intermarriages.²⁷ Four presidential candidates in the November 1995 elections were direct offsprings of very traditional families whose origins go back to the eighteenth century: Alvaro Arzu Irigoyen (who was the successful candidate), Fernando Andrade Diaz Duran, Luis Chea Urruela and Acisclo Valladares. In revolutionary Nicaragua, the family networks cementing the oligarchy enabled it to achieve a high level of decision-making power despite the political turmoil and economic ups and downs of the 1980s; descendants of traditional, conservative

families were more abundant in the Sandinista regime than under the Somoza dictatorship.²⁸ Not long ago the ruling elite in El Salvador was known as "the fourteen families".²⁹

This tight interrelation of both material and cultural features helps to explain the flexibility of the Central American elites as well as their typical approach to politics and power relations. The elites' view involves a belief in a supremacy based upon economic, political, and cultural patterns and racial prejudices. Holding political power naturally flows from and is legitimated by cultural and racial superiority:

It would have been better to exterminate the Indians; this would have created a higher civilization. Not exterminating them was a mistake we are now paying for.

It is impossible to inculcate culture into someone who has nothing in his head; they are an obstacle to, and a dead weight on, development; it would be cheaper and faster to exterminate them.

The only solution to Guatemala is to improve the race, import Aryan studs to improve it. For years I had a German manager on my estate, and for every Indian woman he impregnated, I paid him an extra 50 dollars.³⁰

The combination of such a mentality with the Guatemalan army's counterinsurgency doctrine delivered devastating results for the indigenous communities. United States President Bill Clinton's decision to open government archives made it possible to ascertain the involvement of senior officials in Alfredo Cristiani's ARENA government, as well as members of the traditional Salvadorean ruling families, in sponsoring, covering up or funding death squad operations.³¹

Yet economic crisis, revolutionary challenges and changes in the international setting have brought about a number of changes in both the perceptions and the styles of Central America's elites. Modernizing segments making use of updated entrepreneurial skills (including college training in the United States) used the turbulence of revolution to advance their own perspectives and proposals. Today, the direct involvement in politics of modernizing businessmen contrasts with the traditional delegation of political affairs and state administration to the

military.³² Having to defend its class interests, this new generation of entrepreneurs has criticized several aspects of the U.S. counterinsurgency strategy for being unable to defeat the guerrillas while feeding military corruption. In El Salvador, they violently opposed agrarian reform and the nationalization of the banking system and foreign trade that was implemented by the 1979-80 juntas and by the U.S.-supported Christian Democratic government of Jose Napoleon Duarte. In Guatemala, they managed to block a number of items in Vinicio Cerezo's Christian Democratic reformist program. In both countries, private business associations sponsored and conducted public rallies to challenge government initiatives for economic or social reform.³³

The active involvement of businessmen in politics, together with the projection of their particular interests as national goals, hitherto justified under the banner of anti-communism and the need to keep Central America within the realm of the "free world", is now legitimated under the neo-liberal recommendations of the multilateral financial agencies. Opposition to labor unions, earlier excused in the name of anti-communism, is today explained as a dimension of flexible accumulation and the need to secure competitive advantages on an international scale.

Modernizing segments of the economic elites accepted the U.S.-backed electoral strategy as a response to the armed conflict and a means to neutralize radical options, forcing the guerrilla organizations to transform themselves into political parties, which would mean operating in an institutional setting where most of them lacked relevant experience. In El Salvador, these are the entrepreneurs who make their voice heard through ARENA, via the group led by former president Alfredo Cristiani — the so-called "golden ring"; in Honduras they supported the neo-liberal and corruption-ridden government of Leonardo Callejas and later on helped neutralize the initially progressive outlook of the overwhelmingly elected Carlos Roberto Reina's Liberal Party government. In Guatemala, business elites first backed Jorge Serrano Elias, and then abandoned him at the very last minute, switching to what turned out to be a frustrated reentry of former-dictator-turned-democrat Efraim Rios Montt. In the November 1995 elections they ended up closing ranks behind the candidacy of right-wing aristocrat Alvaro Arzu. In Nicaragua, the entrepreneurial elites are still trying to recover from the severe crisis precipitated by the Somocista debacle, the Sandinista revolution and the post-Sandinista conundrum.³⁴

Through a network of think-tanks, private colleges, mass media, and training programs, these updated segments of the traditional ruling classes have played a central role (notably in El Salvador and Guatemala) in redefining democracy as an extension of the free market, even before the motto of "market democracies" began to be disseminated from the top ranks of the U.S. government.³⁵ Yet their own modernization has been uneven. A public discourse favoring free markets and deregulation coexists with rent-seeking behavior, inbred corporate practices and clientelistic ties. The rhetoric of state reform goes hand in hand with the manipulation of government budgets to nourish political loyalties.³⁶ Such a hybrid combination of ingredients and attitudes may baffle observers excessively impressed by the neo-liberal discourse, yet it is in no way incompatible with the goal of profits and enrichment which, discourse aside, always inspires capitalist dynamics.³⁷ To have relatives, to know "someone" in the government, to have friends, to belong to a "good family" — all these constitute assets as strategic to access to power or profits as the abstract, impersonal endowment of individual rights and capabilities. In this way, the dissemination of a modernizing ideology through a battery of think-tanks and mass media, or the cheering of the values of citizenship, representative democracy and free market, can readily coexist with the reproduction of patterns of clientelistic loyalties and solidarities based on kin, friendship and race.

Involvement of external actors

Central America displays a long history of foreign interventions. From William Walker in the mid-nineteenth century to recent U.S. support for oppressive governments coexisting with human rights concerns, passing through *gun boat diplomacy* and *banana diplomacy* in the early twentieth century, the direct involvement of extra-regional actors has helped to develop and strengthen a political culture among domestic actors for whom recourse to external backers became a conventional ingredient of politics. The extensive and profound involvement of foreign military, economic, political and ideological actors in the recent Central American conflicts and their resolution falls into this historical and cultural pattern.

The U.S. government has been a traditional as well as the most prominent actor in Central American politics, economics and society. The role of the United States during the recent crisis is documented and discussed in literature on the "low intensity conflict" and its aftermath.

Direct support to the Salvadorean military was of the utmost importance for confronting and eventually neutralizing the FMLN guerrillas.³⁸ Its training of Central American intelligence officers, which started before the revolutionary outburst,³⁹ continued throughout the conflict and was accompanied by an ominous record of human rights violations. Disclosure of U.S. government documents in 1994 confirmed the UN Truth Commission's impression that 75 percent of the Salvadorean Army officers directly involved in eight massacres of civilians were graduates of the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia. Nineteen of them — including Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, one of the founders of El Salvador's death squads and of ARENA — were also involved in the killing of six Jesuit priests in 1989. In turn, four out of five senior Honduran Army officers charged in 1987 by Americas Watch with organizing the death squad known as "Battalion 3-16" were also trained at the School of the Americas. "Battalion 3-16", which was initially led by one of its founders, General Luis Alonso Discua — Commander-in-Chief of Honduras' Armed Forces until the end of 1995 — is held responsible for the documented disappearances of at least 184 persons for political reasons during the 1980s.⁴⁰ More recently, evidence has been produced of the on-going indirect involvement of U.S. government agencies in human rights violations in Guatemala.⁴¹

European and U.S. non-governmental organizations mushroomed in the region during the eighties and early nineties. They were critical for opening up Central America's social dynamics and raising the political debate on new issues.⁴² In some cases, the supply of material and financial resources contributed as much to their acceptance as the new perspectives they brought with them; in others, the bias derived from a direct transplant from the developed and industrial North to the impoverished and distorted societies of Central America raised issues such as ethnic identities, or gender subordination of women in such a way as to arouse tensions and conflicts which slowed their effective acceptance by the involved population; obstacles similar to those which had arisen decades before in response to initial attempts to conduct class analysis in societies with only an incipient capitalist class differentiation. On the other hand, a number of U.S. government agencies as well as NGOs attached to them developed strategies tending to buttress the less radicalized forms of social unrest as a way to neutralize the more radical ones.⁴³

The scope and intensity of this involvement, dramatically upgraded during the 1980s, point to the very internalization of external actors, i.e., to their performance as constitutive elements of the domestic setting, while keeping the comparative advantages associated with their external articulations.⁴⁴ Throughout the 1980s, USAID assumed a leading role in the design of both Costa Rican and Salvadorean economic policies and strategies and their financing. To a slightly lesser extent this was also true in Guatemala. After the February 1990 elections in Nicaragua, it began to play a similar role in this country as well.⁴⁵ As in other Latin American countries, current state and sectoral reforms (such as in health, education and welfare systems) are decisively subordinated to the approaches, recommendations and conditionalities imposed by multilateral financial agencies. As USAID's role recedes — due to domestic U.S. policy shifts — there is increased room for the big banks to expand, while preserving the traditional subordination of government agencies to foreign ones. Thus, Guatemala's IADB-led program for health reform promotes an across-the-board privatization of health services and specifies 43 out of 63 relevant issues (68.2 percent) where the Guatemalan Ministry of Health has to get the previous explicit agreement, authorization, or approval from the Bank in order to move to the following step.⁴⁶

The involvement of external actors in closing the revolutionary cycle is also worth stressing. Both Contadora and Esquipulas peace processes provided for OAS (the Organization of American States) and UN participation in regional negotiations, as well as in both Nicaragua's and El Salvador's peace talks. In Guatemala, President Ramiro de Leon Carpio requested UN participation in the dialogue between his government and the URNG, a decision that led to the marginalization of the Guatemalan Catholic church's mediating role.⁴⁷ In 1989 and 1990, the Nicaraguan electoral process was decisively shaped by opinions and recommendations from a broad array of external actors: US congressmen, Latin American and European governments and multilateral organizations. This intervention, which proved strategic for overcoming impasses, falls into a long tradition in which Central American political actors look for diverse forms of external involvement in the handling of domestic political conflicts. Something similar can be said of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's deep involvement in the settlement of the property rights controversy in Nicaragua in 1995.

Yet, it is not an easy task to discern the extent to which the handling of these conflicts responds to the interests, perceptions and timetables of the domestic actors, and to what extent it expresses the perceptions, interests and urgencies of foreign actors. In this vein it is worth noting the contrast between the speed of the Salvadorean peace talks — particularly in the final months of 1991, when then UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar was about to end his term in office — and the slower (or more cautious depending on the observer's perspective) pace displayed by the Guatemalan process; there is also a contrast between the interest of Guatemala's indigenous human rights and labor organizations, seeking somehow to get involved in the peace process, and the interest of external actors — such as multilateral financial agencies or foreign governments — wishing to speed up the negotiations even at the expense of the involvement of social organizations.

Social mobilization

The revolutionary surge involved an intense and far-reaching activation of social actors which had in previous decades lacked a differentiated identity or whose identities had been expressed as subordinate to other protagonists of collective action: women, indigenous communities, settlers in marginal neighborhoods, church-based communities — an extensive array of actors which were frequently depicted as "new social subjects". Yet the novelty lies not in the actors themselves, many of whom (like women or native Americans) had always been present — at least as a demographic reality or as an economic category — but in their ability to express themselves in an autonomous way, addressing their own perspectives and demands in the political realm. The revolutionary conflict afforded them social visibility, and they, in turn, added fuel to the bonfire of political confrontation. With uneven degrees of efficacy this variegated spectrum of actors and organizations broadened out the agenda both for social change and for democratization from a predominantly class perspective to a more plural one with open gender, ethnic and cultural extensions. It also expanded the institutional focus of democracy, while endowing it with explicitly social overtones.

Mobilization of these "new" actors combined with the activation of more traditional ones such as labor or peasant organizations. Frequently old and new joined up. In Nicaragua and El Salvador, agrarian reforms introduced profound changes in rural land and other resource allocations.

Agrarian reform was a central ingredient of the overall Sandinista revolutionary design; in El Salvador, it was part and parcel of the 1979 civic-military coup's program, later on becoming a chapter in a strategy of pre-emptive change aimed at reducing the level of rural support for the guerrillas of the FMLN.⁴⁵

Changes in patterns of land tenure improved levels of organization and mobilization among rural workers and peasants. They also disrupted landowners' authority, challenging their traditional rights to dispossess peasants, and forcing the political system to accept the legitimacy of rural protest. Following the Sandinista defeat in the 1990 elections, the issue of whether to maintain or reverse agrarian reform (e.g., debates over land distribution to former Contras, privatization and restitution of holdings affected by the agrarian reform) lay at the heart of Nicaragua's political and social tensions. In turn, the Chapultepec accords signed on January 1992 by the Salvadorean government and the FMLN, explicitly included the issue of land in "conflict areas", i.e., land held by the peasants in areas under the guerrillas' control. Yet accords on this particular subject are still on hold, while the land issue proved to be one of the toughest items in the agenda of Guatemala's peace talks between the government and the URNG guerrillas.⁴⁹

Indigenous communities became one of the most dynamic elements of social activation in both Guatemala and Eastern Nicaragua. The explicitness of these indigenous ethnic identities and their projection into the institutional political arena have challenged conventional conceptualization of processes of democratization and citizenship as dimensions of progressive social individualization. The political involvement of the indigenous populations is based on the self assertion of their "historic" identities and rights. Their demands for political, social and cultural participation, as well as for legal reforms, appeal much more to communal than to individual entitlements or to voluntary associations based on personal will or inter-individual contracts. Indigenous demands involve a broadening of democratization together with a questioning of the ethnic and cultural biases of the predominant conceptualization of democracy. Here we must include the standard class approach of a number of political and labor organizations from the Left.⁵⁰

The rapid growth of evangelical denominations has fostered social and economic differentiation inside indigenous villages, peasant

communities, and poor barrios, and also within the traditional elites. In more recent years, privatizations in Nicaragua have deepened economic differentiation among the members of the business community between those who, due to their links with government agencies, were able to secure opportunities of enrichment, and those who lack such links. This process resembles that already observed in El Salvador. Inside Sandinismo, the ability of a number of leaders to appropriate state assets before leaving office (either on behalf of themselves or the FMLN) — the so-called *piñata* — increased the distance separating them from the FSLN's rank-and-file. All over the region, inflows of foreign economic and military aid (either open or covert) have poured in billions in financial resources whose final destination is still under discussion and investigation.

Popular, community and social participation was reactivated as institutional and political conditions improved. A rich variety of grassroots organizations emerged in a number of areas: health, human rights, nutrition, gender, environment, ethnicity and community development, to name a few. This upsurge of grassroots participation links a succession of activity that developed during the 1980s and even earlier, usually in the face of extremely aggressive conditions and even drastic repression. In this sense, one interesting element of the current Central American scene is the apparent enthusiasm for participation expressed by governments and state agencies which until very recently had viewed it as something to be prevented.

Participation ranges from informal organization to NGOs and business associations, as well as more traditional organizations such as churches and unions. They perform a wide variety of tasks and focus on a multiplicity of goals: (1) enlarging the agenda for democratization to include new dimensions and approaches — such as gender, ethnicity, environmental, or cultural issues; (2) training people in social and public accountability and increasing their basic feeling of public efficacy; (3) improving access to resources (material, human, organizational or any other); and (4) reducing the implementation costs of social and development policies at the local level just when macroeconomic adjustment policies undercut public resources. Due to this diversity of ingredients, participation is approached by specific actors from different perspectives. They may attempt to develop it in multiple directions or channel it into specific realms: from moving the agendas of democracy and development beyond formal or institutional dimensions, to generating

local level cost-saving effects in order to cope with budget shortages; from people's actual involvement in policy-making to unpaid (predominantly female) labor contributions to investment projects; from combating poverty to survival strategies. There is an unyielding tension between the concern of governments and financial institutions with the containment of participatory experiences within the borders of current state-sponsored policies, and grassroots initiatives aiming to go beyond that and establish organizational as well as political autonomy, in what might be considered a true strengthening, and even a rebuilding, of civil society.⁵¹

The disjuncture between social mobilization and political actors and institutions

Our preceding discussion has pointed to a number of processes occurring both at national, regional and local levels which have stimulated a steady differentiation of social actors. These have involved political tensions as they expose the unresponsiveness of political actors and institutions. Government agencies, legislatures, political parties and the like have displayed low capacity for channeling and processing their social demands — an inability which might lead to an "overload" of political institutions thus creating the conditions for ungovernability.⁵² Political parties and parliaments still face difficulties in setting themselves up as legitimate mediators of society's demands and as arenas for non-violent political interaction. Moreover, the very activation of social actors through channels other than the institutional ones may be interpreted as a response to the inability of the political system to manage their demands for democratization and social change. Deep social fragmentation, together with ethnic and regional cleavages, make it very difficult to articulate this broad range of sectoral and even local demands into an overall coherent country-level design.⁵³ The new expressions of social mobilization are geared to complaining, rallying or protesting, rather than to devising alternative proposals for political or social change.

A number of elements reinforce this tension-ridden setting in addition to the already-mentioned structural ingredients. During the 1970s and 1980s, several social actors expressed their grievances and hopes through links with revolutionary organizations. Social mobilization was speeded up by revolutionary appeals to popular participation through a variety of collective direct involvements. These appeals blamed representative democracy and political parties for complicity with

oppression and social privilege or, at least, an inability to counter them. In contrast, in the current political setting, representative democracy substituted for direct participation, and former guerrilla organizations are turning into political parties and parliamentary entities. As usual, such shifts are easier to understand and accept at the level of leadership than in the rank-and-file.

Moving from guerrilla warfare to representative politics has proved to be a difficult leap for both the FSLN and FMLN. Both organizations experienced internal splits, and face hard times in order to reconcile attachment to representative democracy with commitment to socioeconomic and political reforms, and the ability to retain leadership of mass mobilizations. In El Salvador, dissidents from the FMLN opted to build the new, tiny Partido Democratico, and submitted a "San Andres Pact" to political parties and the government. Focusing on economic policy issues, the Pact reproduces the on-going government program of macro-economic adjustment and has been repudiated by the entire opposition. The Pact was eventually signed by its proponents together with ARENA and the Executive, thus creating the impression that former guerrillas have simply attached themselves to the political leadership of EL Salvador's right wing hard-liners.⁵⁴ Organizations remaining in the FMLN decided to dissolve themselves in order to transform the Frente into a political party made up of several internal tendencies — much like Mexico's PRD. Yet the new party's emphasis on the still unaccomplished socio-economic and human rights commitments of the Peace Accords — such as land distribution and effective dismantling of death squads — puts FMLN in a defensive stance vis-a-vis the government, ARENA and the Partido Democratico who argue for a forward-looking agenda and the dropping of past disputes. In Nicaragua, the issues at stake in the Sandinista split combine personal competition for nomination in the October 1996 presidential elections and controversies concerning FSLN relations with the rest of the opposition and with the government, together with questions of how to link mass mobilizations to representative politics and how to formulate an alternative socioeconomic policy response both to state interventionism and to the current harsh macroeconomic adjustment strategy.⁵⁵

Traditional political parties face no easier challenges. Conservative and Liberal parties have behaved like groups led by notables operating through patron-client relations and only appealing to their rank-and-file

on election day. The breakdown of the traditional order renders them unable to handle the new social dynamics or to channel demands stemming from an enlarged social differentiation. In both El Salvador and Guatemala they survive, thanks to the opportunities afforded by systems of proportional representation and election with two rounds, which enable them to make bargains and deals with larger entities — ARENA in El Salvador, or notables in Guatemala. In Nicaragua, the parliament has become an arena where traditional parties have been able to position themselves to deal with both the Executive and the FSLN. Yet there is a sharp contrast between the many civic organizations, "think-tanks" and NGOs which express the new orientations of Central American business people and the troubles facing the political parties and also the state agencies — such as the military — which had represented them up to the 1970s. El Salvador's ARENA is still a quite unique case of a political party voicing the viewpoints of modernizing entrepreneurial elites — always provided that the already mentioned limits to "modernity" are kept in mind.

Big losers in the transition to a new institutional setting are reformist parties such as MNR and Christian Democracy in El Salvador, as well as Christian Democracy in Guatemala. The latter has been severely discredited due to the allegations of corruption surrounding Vinicio Cerezo's government; it was defeated in the 1990 elections by Rios Montt's candidate Jorge Serrano Elias, and kept a very low profile during the May 1993 crisis which led to the dismissal of Serrano and the interim appointment of Ramiro de Leon Carpio. As for MNR and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) in El Salvador, the 1994 elections delivered bad news for both of them: the PDC collected 16% vis-a-vis almost 50% for ARENA, while the MNR scored a meager 8% as its contribution to the combined voting for the FMLN-sponsored presidential candidacy of Ruben Zamora which gathered almost 25%. The poor performance of both Christian Democratic parties stands in contrast to their high profiles during the 1980s, when they served the electoral strategy of the U.S. government, which sought reformists who could be presented as a competitive alternative to the revolutionary challenge.⁵⁶

Rousseau was well aware that representation always involves an element of delegation or, as has been recalled in our days, representative democracy may be founded upon the principle of majority rule but it generates outcomes that are predominantly a product of negotiations

among leaders of political forces rather than of a universal deliberative process.⁵⁷ Yet fully-fledged political parties with internal democratic procedures, rank-and-file as well as cadre involvement in leadership selection, primary elections, and the like, would enhance the chance that the cleavage between leaders and followers might be kept within manageable limits. In this case, decision made at the upper levels of the party or the government could bear some plausible relation to initiatives, complaints and expectations in the middle and lower levels. There are also various institutional devices for making the representative responsible *via-a-vis* his or her constituency. However, this is not the Central American experience. There, the combination of weak party structures, persistent personalist leadership, and family networks, reproduces and updates a traditional political culture of back room dealings and bargains among leaders; a culture which by deepening the distance between them and their constituencies opens the gates to direct conflict, violence and repression, as well as to apathy or feelings of powerlessness. As shown in several South American cases, poverty, unemployment and insecurity can provide the conditions for the unexpected reemergence of *caudillo* politics-*cum*-social unrest under the disguise of post-transitional representative democracies, even in mature party systems.⁵⁸

In several Central American countries, high levels of electoral abstention may be interpreted as an expression of this uneven dynamic between the political system and social actors (Table 3). In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, both Guatemala and El Salvador experienced some high levels of abstentionism, even in elections that — as in El Salvador in 1994 — were rated by some observers as the "elections of the century".⁵⁹ Whereas a number of additional factors have prompted heavy abstentions — such as the already mentioned population resettlements, lack of personal documentation (such as birth certificates that are usually costly or hard to get), complex bureaucratic procedures for registration or voting, long or expensive trips to the voting places — the table suggests that as it functions in these two countries, representative politics does not appeal to a large portion of the citizenry.⁶⁰

Yet, as the figures show, there is a wide variety of cases. Voting abstentionism ranks from very low in the 1990 Nicaraguan Elections, to moderate in Costa Rica and Honduras, to high or very high in already mentioned Guatemala and El Salvador. As for the performances of guerrillas-turned-into-parties, there is a sharp contrast between the

Table 3
Central America: Electoral Absenteeism, 1980-1994

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1985	1986	1988	1989	1990	1991	1993	1994
Costa Rica			21.4 ^a			18.2 ^b			18.2 ^b			24.2 ^c
El Salvador			24.8 ^a	20.7 ^b	38.5 ^c		30.3 ^c	45.3 ^a		48.1 ^b		40.4 ^c
Guatemala			54.2 ^a		30.8 ^b				43.6 ^a		63.1 ^b	
Honduras	18.6 ^a	22.1 ^a			15.1 ^a			20.6 ^a			25.2 ^b	
Nicaragua			24.6 ^a									13.8 ^b

- 1 As percent of total registered voters
 a Presidential elections
 b Elections for Constitutional Assembly
 c Congressional elections
 d Presidential, congressional and municipal elections
 e Referendum on constitutional reforms

Sources: 1980-1991: Edelberto Torres-Rivas, *Imágenes, siluetas, formas, en las elecciones centroamericanas: Las lecciones de la década*.

Polemica, vol. 14:15, no. 2 (May-December 1991), pp. 2-21; 1993-1994: *Tendencias*, vol. 20 (April 1994) and newspaper information issued by electoral authorities.

FSLN registering about 330,000 affiliates in mid-1994, and the FMLN losing the 1994 municipal elections to ARENA in areas such as Chalatenango, Morazan, Cabanas, Usulután, San Miguel — where the insurgents had been able to gather consistent support during the war.

In the Guatemalan elections of 12 November 1995, abstention exceeded 50 percent — the highest level for a presidential election since 1982 — in spite of appeals from the URNG and from independent public personalities such as Nobel Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu for strong participation. High abstention was also registered despite the participation of the brand new Frente Democrático Nueva Guatemala (FDNG). An umbrella for a broad set of human rights, social, labor, women's and indigenous organizations, FDNG was created a few months before the poll and this was its electoral inauguration.

Meanwhile, parliamentary politics harvested a significant victory in Nicaragua. Several constitutional amendments have strengthened the attributions of Congress and have set limits to presidential centralization and to traditional family politics. In addition to rules debarring close relatives of incumbent top officials from running as candidates, other reforms include a requirement for congressional approval of international agreements on diplomatic, commercial, financial or other matters, thus reducing presidential attributions concerning several of the most sensitive policy issues — such as foreign debt negotiations, dealing with multilateral financial agencies, access to and management of external resources, and the like. This is worth stressing, since congressional politics, and subsequently party politics, have been subservient to the Executive throughout Nicaragua's political history from Independence to Sandinismo.

Institutional weaknesses

Most Central American states display a persistent inability to assure societal compliance with government decisions as well as to ensure a monopoly of coercion. The rule of law and the public accountability of government officers are still quite unsatisfactory; holding a government office turns into a source of perks and privileges for the incumbent as well as for his or her relatives and friends. Patrimonialism and particularism are still ingredients of the Central American political culture which clash with the accountability and efficacy of state agencies and officials, and which reinforce an environment of impunity and a feeling of "everyone for

him or herself'. More often than not, the judiciary proves to be weak, unskilled, resourceless and an easy target for particularistic manipulation.

Governments are weak in terms of resource extraction, allocation and mobilization, as well as in strategic policy-planning and -making. Central America's tax coefficients are very low, and the region has a regressive tax structure. Guatemala's tax coefficient hovers around 5-6% of GDP, while in El Salvador it is slightly higher. In 1993, the Guatemalan government's income was 9% of GDP rising to 12.5% in El Salvador, while it was over 28% in both Honduras and Costa Rica, and 29.5% in Nicaragua.⁶¹ Recent tax reforms have put much more emphasis on indirect taxes such as VAT than on direct ones (such as income tax or taxes on assets such as land estates) thus strengthening already existing biases against mid- and low-income groups in addition to perpetuating instability in fiscal earnings, since they remain tightly attached to the ups and downs of economic transactions. Over the last decade, direct taxes went down from 23.4% of Costa Rica's total tax receipts to 18.4%, while indirect taxes grew from 76.6% to 81.6%. In Nicaragua, direct taxes decreased from 19% of all tax income in 1991 to 11.7% in 1994.⁶² Beyond the technical arguments, regressive tax biases are linked to the uneven power structure and deep social inequalities which enable high income groups to successfully oppose progressive tax reforms. Thus, there is an elitist disjuncture between the two basic ingredients of citizenship — voting and paying taxes. The Central American elites keep on voting, though they do not pay corresponding amounts of tax.

Furthermore, this meager capacity for resource mobilization points to the limited institutionalization of Central American political processes (once again Costa Rica marks an exception) together with the subordination of the legal-rational type of rule to patrimonialism and particularism. The separation between public and private spheres is still at an incipient state, to say the least. The absence or weakness of impersonal institutional controls favor an on-going "prebendalist" approach to the performance of government functions, turning the state into a source of booty for those who hold public office. Yet, since the state has insufficient resources for all claimants — either through its own inefficiency, the economic crisis, privatization or the existence of too many contenders — competition for state resources increases the level of tensions in the political arena.

Although the division of power is an ingredient of every Central American constitution, in practice there is no stable separation. The effective punishment of human rights violations is one of the most difficult questions in the post-revolutionary setting, due to the vulnerability of the judiciary. In Nicaragua, relations between the Executive and the Legislature have been the source of institutional clashes since 1990. The Nicaraguan case points to the inability of Central American presidentialism to function where the opposition holds a relevant proportion of seats in parliament. The implicit dominant institutional scheme is one of permissive parliaments, not of parliaments involved in political negotiations and trade-offs with the Executive.

Reforms sponsored by multilateral agencies such as the World Bank or the Inter-American Development Bank, or by government agencies such as USAID, have had a mixed impact. On the one hand, and as long as they emphasize efficiency, decentralization and the development of managerial skills, they may improve performance in both public and private sectors. On the other hand, as these efforts are a specific dimension of economic adjustment strategies including severe scarcity of financial resources and the scaling back of government resources and policy instruments, they further reduce the scope for effective public intervention on issues directly related to living standards of low income groups — such as social and economic infrastructure. Furthermore, since the Executive is responsible for dealing with multilateral agencies, decisions related to economic and administrative reforms tend to become the exclusive competence of this particular branch, thus reinforcing the traditional institutionalization of local parliaments.⁶³

In countries such as Nicaragua and El Salvador, neo-liberal reforms involve a sharp reduction of state resources and instruments precisely when social demands are most pressing. As in other Latin American countries, privatization and deregulation involve not just a shift in property rights or in management criteria, but also a reorientation of services and resources. In post-cold war scenarios like those of Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, this implies a withdrawal of basic services from those segments of the population most in need, as well as growing unemployment. Although in some cases state dismantling has been followed by grassroots involvement and decentralization, neither has been systematically backed by concomitant resource allocation. More often than not, deconcentration of responsibilities has not been matched

by decentralization of resources or decision-making. In such conditions "community self-management" may mean in practical terms, everyone for her or himself.⁶⁴ Neo-liberal reforms reinforce the already existing class and ethnic biases in the social structure and in access to resources as much as they preserve power relations. Illustrative of this conservative approach is the fact that, despite extreme land concentration being one of the core issues in El Salvador's long history of social and political confrontations as well as in the recent revolutionary crisis, not even a paragraph is devoted to that subject in the World Bank's report on poverty in that country. In the same way the IADB country report refers to the land question only once (in just six lines) out of 16 recommendations — referring to the central government's management reform — while employment/underemployment receives no mention at all.⁶⁵ In a similar vein, emphasis on flexible accumulation and a managerial approach to efficiency has undercut employment and job stability and therefore union bargaining power, thus freeing the hands of owners of capital — be they profit-making entrepreneurs or plain rent-seekers.⁶⁶

The weakness of the state's monopoly of coercion is reflected in the ruling elites' persistent use of private armies and the hiring of public ones for private purposes, as much as in their capacity for manipulating courts and evading legal systems. The diffusion of coercive power may also be regarded as a hangover from the recent conflict: the reluctance of former combatants-revolutionaries, counter-revolutionaries, or ex-military personnel to lay down and return weapons and observe civil rule; the reappearance of death squads; armed gangs combining banditry with social distribution through direct action. Institutional vulnerability can also be seen in the state's inability to impose the rule of law upon actual social conduct, which points to a cleavage between legality and legitimacy. Economic hardship, regressive public policies, diminished government extractive and allocative capacities, frustration at unfulfilled promises and unrealized expectations, extensive availability of weapons — all these contribute to a notorious increase in daily violence in Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador. The diffusion of weaponry is in fact a source of, as well as a response to, fear and insecurity, and a reflection of traditional male culture. Brutal violence is perpetrated above all on women and children, linking traditional machismo to current frustrations.⁶⁷ Weakening of the, in any case inefficient, limited and weak traditional mechanisms of social integration — such as schooling, welfare and church-sponsored charities — pushes increasing numbers of population

to the margins of the institutional system: street gangs, children in the streets, petty delinquency, and once again, violence.⁶⁸ As usual, the state reacts by resorting to physical coercion: repression is selected as a disputable compensation for political weakness and crumbling legitimacy.

Institutional weaknesses refer then to something more than just administrative or technical matters. They have to do with the very deep social polarization and the persistence of an elitist political culture which places certain groups above the law and institutions. When income inequality ranges from 1 to 30 as in Guatemala, or from 1 to 23 as in Honduras; when from two-thirds to three-quarters of the population live in poverty as in Nicaragua, or between two-thirds and four-fifths as in El Salvador, it is hard for those on top to avoid considering themselves to be, and acting as, true lords of the country, while thinking of and dealing with those below them, as second if not third class people. All the more so when ethnic prejudice reinforces and justifies social exclusion.

Brazilian political scientist Francisco Weffort suggests that when deep socio-economic polarization renders agreement on substantial issues hard to reach — due to this combination/accumulation of class, ethnic, gender conflicts — the only feasible agreement might be that on the procedural dimension of democracy. Weffort calls this a "conflict democracy," i.e., a democracy relying on a sound legitimacy of rules and procedures, thus giving manageability to the intense conflict over substantive social or economic matters.⁶⁹ Yet a recurrent trait in Central America is the reluctance of the ruling classes to honor constitutions and legal provisions, a trait favored by the already mentioned weakness of the judiciary. The recent power clash in Nicaragua between the National Assembly and the Executive concerning constitutional reforms is a clear illustration of the reluctance of traditional elites to come to terms with rational, legal, typically bourgeois rule. Moreover, as indigenous rights are acknowledged, the national legal fabric comes under further criticism since it is considered to institutionalize the ethnic subordination of the indigenous majorities.⁷⁰ By its very dynamics, then, "substantive" democratization questions the feasibility of "procedural democracy".

Demilitarization of politics

The militarization of recent political conflicts and their rapid transformation into open war with the active involvement of extra-

regional forces, has made demilitarization a strategic precondition for further democratization. Costa Rica's experience is a particularly instructive one: the dissolution of the military by the 1948 revolution deprived the most regressive social actors of a traditional political instrument, eliminating the danger of military uprisings and coups. Abolition of the army forced traditional actors to come to terms with subsequent political and social reforms, thus endowing the political systems with greater stability. Although it might be argued that in today's democracy it is the World Bank with its financial conditionalities which has substituted for the authoritarian role once played by the military, demilitarization is in any case the shared goal of a broad array of domestic social and political forces, as well as of extra-regional ones. In its favor stands a wide range of arguments running from sustainable democratization to budget constraints.

Demilitarization poses a complex set of questions. It involves a revision of the assumptions underlying armed conflict and the technical and political approaches of past decades. The closing of both the revolutionary cycle and the Cold War era call for a restatement of both the objectives and the functions of the military security forces, as well as of their relation to political power — which involves much more than reshaping their physical dimensions, firepower and budgets. Demilitarization relates also to actual subordination of the military to civil government, an issue which ranges from the effective observance of civil supremacy to financial accountability. In both Nicaragua and El Salvador, the demilitarization of security forces has been conducted with uneven success; professional goals have frequently been achieved at the risk of civic failure, since the renewed police bodies tend to reproduce the traditional repressive patterns when dealing with mass rallies or workers' protests.⁷¹ In any case, demilitarization of the security forces in both countries is in sharp contrast with the preservation of traditional patterns in Guatemala and Honduras. Yet effective dismantling of the "death squads" in El Salvador is still an unfulfilled item of the peace agreements. On the contrary, a number of new para-military squads have shown up, while in Guatemala, political violence keeps going on as well as massive killings of peasants by the armed forces.

Part of the complexity of demilitarization derives also from the fact that within the framework of the recent conflict, the armed forces in some Central American republics have become front-line business actors. The differentiation of economic elites discussed above was complemented by

the active involvement of high-ranking officers of the Guatemalan, Honduran and Salvadorean armed forces in economic dealings, at least from the 1970s onwards. Taking advantage of policies of peasant land evictions, together with their privileged access to information and with the manipulations of government agencies and resources — such as credit — high ranking Guatemalan and Honduran officers have turned into large businessmen, landowners and financial investors. In Guatemala, the personal involvement of generals and colonels has been combined with the institutional insertion of the Army in the business world. It operates banks, pension funds, airlines and real estate projects, among other things.⁷² In El Salvador, the *Instituto de Prevision Social de la Fuerza Armada* (IPSFA) channeled millions of dollars into real estate and commercial investment, favored by the inflow of U.S. military aid, expanded defense and security budgets, and loose institutional oversight. The management of state agencies and state-owned corporations mobilizing huge budgets (such as in telecommunications, power, customs, water and sanitation) has been a traditional assignment for high-ranking officers. After the February 1990 elections, the Nicaragua army has joined this entrepreneurial tendency via the privatization of state assets pushed forward by the current government.⁷³

Central America's involvement in drug trafficking is also linked to the rapid conversion of officers and armies into front-line economic actors. At least since 1970, the isthmus has become a strategic channel for South American drugs into the U.S. market. Several sources point out that the U.S. government's counter-revolutionary strategy during the 1980s included the involvement in drug dealings of Honduran military officers, the "Nicaraguan Resistance" (Contras) as well as Costa Rican and U.S. government officials. The U.S. government took advantage of already existing drug trade networks and expanded them in order to sustain support for the Contras in spite of Congressional opposition. Aircraft supplying arms and rations to the Contras were also utilized on their return flights to carry drugs; money from drug trade and financial support to the Contras frequently circulated along the same channels.⁷⁴ The militarization of United States-Central American relations, together with the undercover nature of both drug operations and support to the Contras, contributed to the growth of the drug trade. Because of its clandestine character, drug trafficking relies on the control of air space, customs, ports and airports as well as maritime routes and coastlines. That is to say, facilities which are controlled either by the military or by

security forces subordinated to them. Despite post-1990 U.S. policy shifts concerning Central America, the channels opened and the interests shared in the previous political context have persisted into the post-conflict present.

Finally, demilitarization has to do with law enforcement and the ending of impunity, particularly with regard to human rights abuses. Armed forces personnel in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala have been charged with massive human rights violations during the 1980s and early 1990s. In El Salvador, this led to the establishment of a Truth Commission which investigated the charges and confirmed them, though without revealing names or leading to legal incrimination. In Honduras the involvement of high ranking officers in political torture, abduction and killings as well as in drug traffic is the main source of tensions between the government of Carlos Roberto Reina — a former president of the OAS Interamerican Commission on Human Rights — and the military. As the Guatemalan peace talks proceed, the moment approaches when the issue of impunity and reconciliation will have to be openly faced. Although the experience of South American countries confirms the obstacles to effective prosecution of politically motivated human rights violators, it also points to the need for at least a public moral revindication of the victims. Otherwise, the everyday co-existence of victims and their families with murderers and torturers makes the prospects for a democratic and peaceful life even more problematic.

Political culture

Our preceding discussion suggests that the development of a democratic political culture still has a long road to traverse. Political culture is neither a self-sustaining reality nor is it just a symbolic dimension of political life. It is the way (or the ways) people behave, understand, think of, attach meanings to, and evaluate politics and their involvement in it, as well as the involvement of others. Political culture, like culture at large, emerges from an objective social, economic, ethnic, gendered and institutional setting. Yet, at any particular moment in its development, cultural patterns achieve a remarkable autonomy vis-a-vis structural features and the formal institutional network, and can significantly influence subsequent political and socio-economic events. Structural traits reproduce themselves as cultural patterns⁷⁵ as much as the latter recreate the former. Cultural change usually happens at a much slower

pace than institutional, political or economic change. Formal political institutions — such as parliaments, elections, ombudsmen, or any other — can be “exported” and subsequently “imported”, but this does not imply that they will operate in the new setting as they do in the original one: people adapt institutions to their own necessities, abilities, and expectations. Eric Wolf has pointed out that formal political and economic power exists along informal structures which interact with it and develop in a parallel manner; informal structures make up for a petty fabric of “interstitial relations” which supplement the formal system and contribute to the everyday working-out of larger institutions.⁷⁶ Throughout its history, Central America has undergone successive waves of institutional importation and infliction: initial colonial settlement in the sixteenth century, late eighteenth century Bourbon reforms, nineteenth century positivism, early twentieth century U.S. Marine Corps invasions, 1960s Alliance for Progress-supported reforms. The current rush towards “state reform” inserts itself into this extended historical record of achievements, frustrations and adaptations through that daily matrix of “interstitial relations”.

Despite the emphasis placed by several Anglo-Saxon authors on Catholic and Iberian inheritances of the Central (and Latin) American countries as handicaps to democratization,⁷⁷ the cultural roots and projections of Central American authoritarianism should be looked for elsewhere. After all, Costa Rica carries as much Iberian-Catholic inheritance/burden as neighboring Nicaragua, which has not prevented observers from celebrating the democratic stance of her political system. Similarly, rapid growth of U.S.-influenced evangelism in both Guatemala and El Salvador has not yet had an asserted one-directional impact upon the converts’ political attitudes or behavior. It may also be argued that U.S. Senator Eugene McCarthy enjoyed an indisputable popularity among his Anglo-Saxon fellow citizens, as much as Austro-German-Lutheran Adolf Hitler or Slav-for-sure-atheist Joseph Stalin did among their own countrymen.⁷⁸

Central American authoritarian cultural patterns are nurtured both by socio-economic structures and by ruling class political practices, which inevitably tend to be reproduced and adapted way down the social ladder by subaltern actors with a relative autonomy of ideological definitions or party affiliations. Political rule has an implicit pedagogical dimension which should not be underestimated. If any relevant meaning is to be

attached to Marx's statement that "the dominant culture in every society is invariably the dominant class' culture,"⁷⁹ it is that the dominant class' culture sets the parameters within which the cultural patterns of subaltern actors develop and interact with the former. Theology and pastoral practices afford a pertinent illustration: in few parts of Latin America — perhaps other than Colombia — has liberation theology displayed such confrontational political overtones as in El Salvador or Guatemala; yet it is hard to find elsewhere in Latin America such an intimate and regressive articulation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy with political and economic power.

In societies where illiteracy ranks high, schooling is consequently low — particularly in the countryside — and mass media have scarce diffusion, the poor and the powerless experience the political pedagogy of the power holders in the most direct, physical, brutal manner.⁸⁰ The Kantian imperative is alien to societies as such; people tend to deal with others in much the same way as others deal with them; retaliation as a perverted version of reciprocity. In such a setting, solidarity or cooperation can hardly go beyond the borders of kin, ethnicity, or locality. This is "civil society" in the crudest Marxian sense of economic relations, rather than in the Gramscian meaning of hegemonic practices.

In such a setting it is control, not legitimacy, that is the cement of statewide political and social relations. Dealing with the opposition tends to be a matter of confrontation and would-be repression, as much as dealing with the subaltern members of society — be they poor, workers, peasants, indigenous populations, women, children. This is a matter of verticalism, manipulation or violence. Yet the very concept of political opposition varies widely, e.g., when referred to an integrative and rather homogeneous social environment such as Costa Rica's, or when alluded to in the extremely fragmented Guatemalan setting. Such divergent meanings are apparent in the above quoted opinions of the white, Europe- and U.S.-trained Guatemalan gentlemen of Spanish and German descent concerning their indigenous workers. This can also be shown, albeit in a more sophisticated way, by the Salvadorean elite's persistent refusal to contribute their own share to the funding of the Peace Accords and subsequent economic reconstruction, even when coffee earnings skyrocketed — as they did in 1994-95. Democracy is hard to achieve or to strengthen when there is such an absence of a basic feeling of togetherness. Authoritarianism can also be seen in the peculiar larger

Central American grassroots' tolerance of police abuses: if you come to deal with the police or any other authority, you are supposed to risk some physical mistreatment; the notion of "human rights violations" has a higher threshold here than in other societies.

Looking Ahead: Democratization and Governability

It would be one-sided to confine Central America's prospects for further democratization to the many critical factors already discussed, just as it would be misleading not to take them into account. Our discussion points not to the unfeasibility of democracy in Central America, but to the need to bring about the very conditions for it as a prerequisite for actual democratization — or to strengthen them when they already, to some extent, exist.

War is over but development, well-being, and a safe life are still to be achieved. Such a landscape jeopardizes both the sustainability of peace and the prospects for democracy as long as one and the other are conceived of as something more than just the end of open civil war or as the formal implementation of legal institutions. If peace and democracy are to be solid and permanent, they will have to be built on sounder social and economic foundations. On-going social downgrading and the inability of political actors to reverse it may drive large sectors of the Central American population into apathy and depoliticization, fostering a resurgence of practices of patronage and clientelism which have never been entirely discontinued, and reducing democratization to a set of formal institutions covering up dealings among leaders and *caudillos*.

It may be argued that several of the issues referred to in the preceding pages are related to the chances of building governable political systems and not just democratic ones — such as tensions between societal activation and institutional response, and resource mobilization. As shown by longstanding Central American experience, governability has no necessary relation to democracy. However, given the actual social and political conditions in the region, it is difficult to conceive the former without the latter. The chances of governability are strongly conditioned by those of democratization. Once again Costa Rica is a good case in point. Central America's current political setting combines efforts to persuade the citizens to scale back the level of their demands to match actual government capabilities or current power relations, i.e., versions

of what Offe referred to as a conservative approach to governability⁶¹ with efforts to broaden and strengthen government and party system responsiveness and civil society's self-management capacity. The latter is an alternative, more progressive approach which usually involves confronting established power structures.

"It is easier to democratize the polity than society," asserted a leading Central Americanist.⁶² Yet democratization of the polity is hard to achieve if not accompanied by a society's democratization, which will involve a sharp reduction of its deep economic and cultural cleavages. For a majority of Central Americans, the prospects for democratization remain linked to prospects for social improvement. Recent shifts in the institutional setting due to the closing of the revolutionary cycle call for different ways to handle social conflict; but social conflict is still there.

It would be hazardous for the prospects of democratization and social change in Central America to present the question once again in sequential terms: first one thing, then the other. This is a view that was shared by several actors on both sides of the recent conflict; it suggests a merely formal approach to democratization and a purely economic conception of social change, usually leading to delays of both.⁶³ The challenge of democratization in Central America is rather how to combine institutionalization of conflict management and the capacity of the political system to transform socio-economic structures and overcome cultural rigidities. One cannot expect a process of such a magnitude to come to fruition in the short run. The impatience of observers or the "fast track" defined by external actors may be as threatening to its success as the resistance of the old guard. From this perspective, the way the Guatemalan peace talks are being carried on, so as to combine both dimensions of democratization, can lead to more promising achievements.

Although prospects for democratic advance and consolidation are strongly linked to the strengthening and activation of civil society, not every activation of civil society leads to democratization.⁶⁴ Democratization is neither a random nor a spontaneous outcome of chance. Democratization — like Machiavelli's *fortuna* — is something that has to be worked out even in the most propitious socio-economic and cultural conditions; all the more so if a number of those conditions have still to be brought about. Democracy, then, is a question of agency which in the Central American case involves fostering its own pre-requisites through a significant re-shaping of current power relations.

Finally, it should be acknowledged that not everyone in Central America is interested in democratization or social progress. Until a few decades ago, Central America's ruling elites did very well without democracy, and the democratic discourse they pronounce today emerges primarily as the outcome of the dreadful experience they underwent in the recent past, of the need to regain social control, or of an opportunistic attempt to keep in touch with the prevailing currents in the international arena. But even from this limited perspective, democratization implies a political blueprint for social and institutional integration that contradicts the marginalizing inertia of economic structures and cultural relations. The effective promotion of democratization may very well lead, therefore, to renewed political and social tensions insofar as traditional actors insist on preserving ways of life and social organization that are intolerable to most of Central Americans, and are anachronistic from any point of view. ●

Notes

- * In this paper, "Central America" is referred to in the traditional Central American way: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.
- 1 Guillermo O'Donnell, "Estado, democratización y ciudadanía", *Nueva Sociedad* 128 (November 1993) 62-87, and "Delegative Democracy", *Journal of Democracy* 5 (1) 1994:55-69. The danger of the majorities oppressing minorities through democratic procedures inspired one of de Tocqueville's most appealing discussions. Yet, it does not look to be a threat to democracy in contemporary Central America.
- 2 For recent restatements, see Marshall Wolfe, "Las estructuras sociales y la democracia en los años noventa". *Revista de la CEPAL* 40 (April 1990) 55-71; John F. Helliweli, "Empirical Linkages Between Democracy and Economic Growth", *British Journal of Political Science* 24 (1994) 225-48.
- 3 However, allegations of electoral fraud were one of the ingredients prompting the revolution led by José Figueres Ferrer in 1948.
- 4 See the interview with Salvadorean businessman Abraham Rodríguez, one of the founders of the Christian Democratic Party and El Salvador's Vice-President (Primer Designado) during José Napoleón Duarte's government, in *Tendencias* 26 (December 1993) 15-20. See also Enrique Baloyra, «Reactionary Despotism in Central America», *Journal of Latin American Studies* 15 (November 1983) 295-319; Walter LaFever, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, New York, 1984.
- 5 U.S. Government, *Report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America*, Washington 1984; the Commission was chaired by former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. See also Lilia Bermúdez, *Guerra de baja intensidad*, México City, 1987; Terry Karl, "Exporting Democracy: The Unanticipated Effects of U.S. Electoral Policy in El Salvador", in Nora Hamilton et al (eds.), *Crisis in Central America. Regional Dynamics and U.S. Policy in the 1990s*, Boulder, 1988:173-91; Thomas Carothers, "The Reagan years: The 1980s", in Abraham F. Lowenthal (ed.), *Exporting Democracy: The United States and Latin America*, Baltimore, 1991:90-122.
- 6 Carlos M. Vilas, *Between Earthquakes and Volcanoes. Market, State, and the Revolutions in Central America*, New York, 1995, chapter 4.
- 7 For an updated quantitative overview, see CEPAL, *Indicadores sociales básicos de la subregión norte de América Latina y el Caribe, 1950-1994*, Mexico City, LC/MEX/L/266 (April 1995).

- 8 For a discussion of this approach see Carlos M. Vilas, "Una patria para todos: Revolución, subdesarrollo y democracia en Nicaragua", in Pablo González Casanova & Marcos Roitman (eds.), *La democracia en América Latina. Actualidad y perspectivas*. Madrid, 1992:387-426. On citizenship as a pluridimensional process, see Bryan S. Turner, "Contemporary Problems in the Theory of Citizenship", in Bryan S. Turner (ed.), *Citizenship and Social Theory*. London 1993:1-18; on "embeddedness", see Peter Evans, "The State as Problem and Solution: Predation, Embedded Autonomy, and Structural Change", in Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman (eds.), *The Politics of Economic Adjustment*. Princeton, 1992:139-81.
- 9 As in the well-known model by W. Arthur Lewis, "Economic Development with Unlimited Supply of Labour", *The Manchester School of Economics Studies* XXII (1) January 1954:139-91.
- 10 Joaquín Arnola & José Antonio Candray, *Derechos prohibidos. Negociación colectiva y sindicatos en El Salvador*. San Salvador, 1994:49 ff.
- 11 It is worth recalling that the effective enfranchisement of low, middle, and labouring classes in Argentina, Brasil, Mexico, Uruguay, coupled the development of domestic markets and the expansion of urban mass consumption. Carlos Zubillaga, "El batllismo: una experiencia populista", in Carlos M. Vilas (ed.) *La democratización fundamental. El populismo en América Latina*. Mexico City 1994:177-213; José Murilo de Carvalho, *Desenvolvimento de la ciudadanía en Brasil*. Mexico City, 1995, *passim*.
- 12 See Mark Lindenberg, "World Economic Cycles and Central American Political Instability", *World Politics* XLVII (3) April 1990:397-421.
- 13 Regional diversity may be appreciated through the UNDP's Index of Human Development (IHD). Costa Rica ranked as having a "high" IHD (position 39), while Nicaragua ranked 106, Guatemala 108, El Salvador 112, and Honduras 115. UNDP, *Human Development Report 1994*. UNDP, 1994 table 1.
- 14 Pedro Vusković Bravo, *Pobreza y desigualdad en América Latina* (México 1993); Oscar Altimir, "Cambios de la desigualdad y la pobreza en América Latina", *El Trimestre Económico* 241 (1994) 85-133; Nancy Birdsall, David Roos & Richard Sabott, "La desigualdad como limitación del crecimiento en América Latina". *Oikos* 8 (September 1995) 42-7.
- 15 UNICEF/SEGEPLAN, *Análisis de la situación del niño y la mujer*. Guatemala City, 1992. Figures refer to cash or cash-equivalent income.
- 16 Carlos M. Vilas, *The Sandinista Revolution*. New York 1986, chapter 2.
- 17 See Alexander Segovia, *La implementación de los acuerdos de paz y las reformas económicas en El Salvador*. San Salvador, 1994; Alvaro De Soto & Graciana del Castillo, "Obstacles to Peacebuilding", *Foreign Policy* 94 (Spring 1994) 69-83; C.M. Vilas & Björn Feuer, *El Salvador: El desarrollo socioeconómico reciente y el avance de los Acuerdos de Paz*. Stockholm, January 1995; James K. Boyce et al., *Adjustment Toward Peace: Economic Policy and Post-War Reconstruction in El Salvador*. San Salvador, May 1995.
- 18 Juan P. Pérez Sainz & Rafael Menjivar (eds.), *Informalidad urbana en Centroamérica*. Caracas, 1991. While in Nicaragua the UIS has grown consistently during the 1990s, there seems to be an opposite evolution in El Salvador, where UIS shrank from 50.8% of EAP in 1990 to 46.6% in 1993 —though growth in formalization refers almost exclusively to the male labor force. Renato Aguilar & María Rosa Renzi, *Empleo y desempleo en Nicaragua*. Managua, 1992; FESSAL, *Informe laboral 1994*, San Salvador, 1995.
- 19 Maxwell A. Cameron, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in Peru*. New York, 1994; Eugenio Tironi, "Mercado de trabajo y violencia", in Victor E. Tokman (ed.), *El sector informal en América Latina. Dos décadas de análisis*. México City, 1995:561-88;
- 20 CEPAL, *Remesas y economía familiar en El Salvador, Guatemala y Nicaragua*. LC/MEX/R.294, 1991, and author's interviews at El Salvador's Ministry of Planning (October 1994).

- 21 Robert Smith, "Los ausentes siempre presentes". *The Imagining, Making and Politics of a Transnational Community Between New York City and Ticuani, Puebla*. ILAIS, Columbia University, Working Papers on Latin America, 1994.
- 22 Pedro Vúskovič Céspedes, "Los actores externos: Presencia y proyectos". *Cuadernos de CRIES* 19-20 (Managua 1991).
- 23 Brenny Cuenca, *El poder intangible. La AID y el estado salvadoreño en los años ochenta*. San Salvador, 1992:27-30.
- 24 Raul Benitez Manaut, "La guerra en Centroamérica: Dinámica del proceso de militarización y tendencias". *Síntesis* (January-April 1989) 130-57.
- 25 *Excélsior* (Mexico City) 17 April 1992:2.
- 26 Samuel Z. Stone, *La dinastía de los conquistadores*. San José, 1975.
- 27 Marta Casaus Arzú, *Guatemala: Linaje y racismo*. San José, 1992.
- 28 Carlos M. Vilas, "Family Affairs: Class, Lineage and Politics in Contemporary Nicaragua". *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24 (2) 1992:309-41.
- 29 Eduardo Colindres, *Fundamentos económicos de la burguesía salvadoreña*. San Salvador, 1977.
- 30 Statements by members of Guatemala's traditional families, in Casaus Arzú, cit. 259, 287, 289 (interviews were conducted in the mid 1980s).
- 31 *La Jornada* (Mexico City) 12, 13 June 1993; 4, 29 November 1993; 14, 16 December 1993; *Excélsior* (Mexico City) 10 November 1993.
- 32 From 1932 to 1980 all Salvadorean presidents were army officers, while all the ministers of agriculture or economy were members of the coffee bourgeoisie. From the 1963 military coup on, all of Guatemala's ministers of economic affairs were directly appointed by CACIF (Comité Coordinador de Asociaciones Agrícolas, Comerciales, Industriales y Financieras). Sara Gordon, "Guatemala y El Salvador: Dos regímenes de exclusión". *Polémica* 10 January-April 1990:12-23.
- 33 See INFORPRESS Centroamericana, *Los empresarios centroamericanos ante la crisis*. Guatemala City 1988; Gabriel Gaspar Tapia, "La modernización de las clases dominantes centroamericanas", in C.M.Vilas (ed.), *Democracia emergente en Centroamérica*. México City, 1993:51-62.
- 34 See Rose J. Spalding, *Capitalists and Revolution in Nicaragua, Opposition and Accomodation, 1979-1993*. Chapel Hill, 1994.
- 35 "Our overriding purpose must be to expand and strengthen the world's community of market-based democracies", stated president William Clinton in his speech at the U.N. General Assembly on September 27, 1993; National Security Advisor Anthony Lake advanced a similar concept when lecturing at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies: "The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement -- enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies" (September 21, 1993).
- 36 I found a very illustrative example of this articulation of modernization and traditionalism in several sugar estates in Escuintla, Guatemala. Over the last years a number of the largest sugar *fincas* in this coastal area have been improving housing and sanitary conditions for their seasonal workers, in what may be understood as a shift from a traditional approach to labour as an expense, to a capitalist focus on labour as an investment. At the same time, their owners opposed Vinicio Cerezo's government tax reform in mid 1980s, still keep private armies watching over the estates' premises, and bribe government officials and military officers. A PAHO officer in Guatemala City told me (May 1995): «It is easier to conduct an inspection in a military barrack than in a sugar estate», while the comparative perspective of a Ministry of Health regional official was more blunt: «It is easier to hold up a bank, than to get into a *fincas*».
- 37 A good case for this modernization *cum* patronage is afforded by the privatization of El Salvador's banking system conducted by Alfredo Cristiani's ARENA government, where most of banks were handed over Cristiani's clique: see Francisco Sarto & Alexander

- Segovia, "Hacia dónde se dirige la privatización de la banca", *Revista de Política Económica* 12 (1992) 3-25. A number of my own interviewees in San Salvador on March 1995 interpreted Armando Calderón Sol's government new wave of privatisations as oriented to come to terms with the claims of Calderón Sol's clique who had been marginalized from the privatisation benefitting Cristiani's "golden ring".
- 38 The strategic role of US military support was openly acknowledged by general Adolfo Blandón, El Salvador's Armed Forces Chief of Staff from 1984 to 1989, in a recent interview: *El Financiero* (Mexico City) 11 September 1995:72; *La Jornada* 11 September 1995:58.
- 39 LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*, cit; Edelberto Torres-Rivas, "Centroamérica: Guerra, transición y democracia", *CINAS, Cuadernos de Divulgación*, December 1986:5-25.
- 40 Allan Nairn, "De Kennedy a Reagan. El Salvador y la disciplina de la muerte". *Nexos* July 1984: 27-36; Michael McClintock, *The American Connection. State Terror and Popular Resistance in El Salvador and Guatemala*. London, 1985 (two volumes); Comisión de la Verdad, *De la locura a la esperanza. La guerra de 12 años en El Salvador. Informe de la Comisión de la Verdad para El Salvador*. San Salvador, March 1993; Douglas Waller, "Running a «School for Dictators»". *Newsweek* 9 August 1993:31-3.
- 41 *El Financiero* (Mexico City) 25 March 1995:26; Richard Cohen, "Guatemala Shame", *The Washington Post*, 4 April 1995:A23; Tim Weiner, "C.I.A. Director Admits to Failure in Disclosing Links to Guatemala", *The New York Times* 6 April 1995 A1-A14; Clifford Krauss, «Guatemala's War: Ideology is the Latest Excuse», *The New York Times* 9 April 1995:E5; Allan Nairn, «C.I.A. Death Squads», *The Nation* 260 (15) 17 April 1995, 511-13.
- 42 See Sergio Reuben Soto, "El papel de las ONG en la cooperación europea hacia Centroamérica", in Raul Rubén & Govert van Oord (eds.), *Más allá del ajuste*. San José 1991:337-68; Peter Sollis, "Multilateral Agencies, NGOs, and policy reform", *Development in Practice* 2 (3) 1992:163-78. Almost 75% of all development NGOs working in El Salvador from the 1960s on (or 139 out of 186) registered during the 1980s (88 or 47.3%) and in 1990-92 (51 or 27.4%). UNDP, *Directorio de instituciones privadas de desarrollo de El Salvador, 1992*. San Salvador, November 1992.
- 43 Tom Barry & Deb Preusch, *AIFL in Central America: Agents as Organizers*. Albuquerque, 1986; Roy Prosterman & Jeffrey M. Riedinger, *Land Reform and Democratic Development*. Baltimore, 1987, esp. chapter 6.
- 44 Héctor Dada Hreiz, "Los acuerdos de paz y la democratización". *ECA, Estudios Centroamericanos* 558 (April 1995) 367-76.
- 45 Breny Cuenca, *El poder intangible*, cit; Carlos Sojo, *La utopía del estado mínimo. Influencia de la AID en Costa Rica en los años ochenta* (Managua, 1991), and *La mano visible del mercado* (Managua 1992); Jorge Escoto & Manfredo Marroquín, *La AID en Guatemala* (Managua, 1992); Angel Saldomando, *El retorno de la AID. El caso de Nicaragua* (Managua, 1992); Herman Rosa, *AID y las transformaciones globales en El Salvador* (Managua, 1993).
- 46 Gobierno de Guatemala, *Programa Sectorial de Salud*. Guatemala City, May 1995, Annex III-1.
- 47 See J. Patrice McSherry, *Civil Conflicts and the Role of the International Community: The Cases of Guatemala and El Salvador*. The Ralph Bunche Institute on the United Nations' Occasional Papers Series, CUNY, New York, October 1994.
- 48 Eduardo Baumeister, "La agricultura centroamericana en los 80s". *Polémica* 14/15 (December 1991) 53-79.
- 49 See David Stanfield, *Insecurity of Land Tenure in Nicaragua*. Madison, 1992; Ricardo Santamaría, "El problema agrario y los acuerdos de paz". *ECA, Estudios Centroamericanos* 559-560 (May-June 1995) 505-17. On October 31 1995 Salvadorean president Armando Calderón Sol announced that the implementation of the peace

- accords had been «officially accomplished» though land distribution to more than one third of the beneficiaries was still pending. *La Jornada*, November 1 1995:53.
- 50 The agenda of peace talks between the Guatemalan government and the insurgent URNG included this question as a central chapter. Early in 1995 both parts arrived to an Agreement on the Identity and Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (Acuerdo sobre identidad y derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas). The land question was included in a subsequent agreement on economic issues.
 - 51 For an updated insightful discussion of these issues, see Minor Sinclair (ed.), *The New Politics of Survival. Grassroots Movements in Central America*, New York 1995.
 - 52 See Michel Crozier, Samuel Huntington and Joji Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy*, New York 1975; for subsequent discussions see Xavier Arbús & Salvador Giner, *La gobernabilidad. Ciudadanía y democracia en la encrucijada mundial*, Madrid 1993.
 - 53 Offe argues in a similar vein with regard to social movements in Western societies: Claus Offe, "Reflections on the Institutional Self-transformation of Movement Politics: A Tentative Stage Model", in Russell J. Dalton and Manfred Kuechler (eds.), *Challenging the Political Order. New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies*, New York 1990:232-50.
 - 54 The Democratic Party is the joint product of Joaquín Villalobos' ERP and Eduardo Sancho's ("Fernán Cienfuegos") RN dissent plus most of the social democratic Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR). The full text of the Pact was published in *El Diario de Hoy* (San Salvador) 31 May 1995. It has to be said that the commitment of former leftists with this particular consensual politics has not been coupled by their right-wing partners: ARENA keeps on publicly honoring D'Abuissou's memory, while its "Principles, Goals and By-laws" remain committed "To defend our Western traditions from the ideological assault as well the permanent aggression from international communism" as the party's primary goal. The Democratic Party decision reminds Williamson's appeal to Left organizations to embrace the economic recipes summarized by the "Washington consensus": John Williamson, "Democracy and the «Washington Consensus»", *World Development* 21 (8) 1993:1329-36.
 - 55 FSLN, *Para una salida nacional a la crisis*, Managua, November 1994.
 - 56 See Gabriel Gaspar Tapia, *La Democracia Cristiana en Centroamérica*, México City, 1993.
 - 57 Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the market. Political and economic reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, Cambridge, 1991:13.
 - 58 Peter Flynn, "Collor, Corruption, and Crisis: Time for Reflection". *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25 (2) 1993:251-71; Aldo Panfichi, "Uderazgos autonómicos en el Perú". *Debates en Sociología* 18 (1993) 227-47. Carlos M. Vilas, "Entre la democracia y el neoliberalismo: Los caudillos electorales de la postmodernidad", in Silvia Dutrenit & Leonardo Valdez (eds.), *El fin de siglo y los partidos políticos en América Latina*, Mexico City, 1994:323-40; Atílio Borón et al., *Peronismo y menemismo*, Buenos Aires, 1995.
 - 59 Ricardo Córdova Macías, *El Salvador en transición: El proceso de paz, las elecciones de 1994 y los retos de la gobernabilidad democrática*, San Salvador, 1994; Jack Spence et al., *El Salvador: Elections of the Century*, Cambridge Ma., 1994.
 - 60 Actual abstentionism is even higher than reflected in figures if referred to the overall potential voters and not just to registered ones.
 - 61 IADB, *Economic and Social Progress in Latin America. 1994 Report*, Washington D.C. 1994.
 - 62 Gobierno de Costa Rica, *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 1994-1998. Diagnóstico y estrategia*, San José 1994, table 3; Gobierno de la República de Nicaragua, *Estudio sobre el gasto social, 1990-1994*, Managua, November 1994, table 6.

- 63 Which fits pretty well with World Bank's claim on the need to insulate economic policy-makers from civil society's short-sighted particularistic, selfish messing around: World Bank, *The East Asian Miracle. Economic Growth and Public Policy*. Oxford, 1993.
- 64 Take for instance the following case I witnessed in May 1995 during an evaluation of Central American health reforms. The health centre in E.J.L. (a rural municipality in north-western Nicaragua with some 10,000 inhabitants, 85-90% of them living in poverty) participates in a pilot experience of decentralization and health community management implemented by the Nicaraguan government on behalf World Bank's structural adjustment conditionalities. As a dimension of a particular inception of "self management", the community is supposed to pay for most of health services --which in any case are very basic. Nicaragua's Ministry of Health monthly contribution to the center's pharmaceuticals budget amounts to 12,000 córdobas, or 1.20 córdobas per person per month (less than u\$s 20 cents). As it may be expected, the entire presentation of the nurse running the center was devoted to cost/benefit analysis and management creativity to stretch those twenty cents out as much as she could. It was hard for evaluators to realize below or beyond her monetary efficientist discourse, the presence of a health worker. On November 1995 a deadly *leptospirosis* epidemics popped-up in that same region and rapidly spreaded over the border to Honduras; Nicaragua's Ministry of Health core recommendation to the population was to get cats, since the epidemic's vector are rats and the Ministry's exhausted budget prevented it to appeal to more than symbolic actions.
- 65 See World Bank, *The Challenge of Poverty Alleviation*. Washington D.C. 1993 (Report 12315-ES); IADB, *Socioeconomic Report: El Salvador* (Report GN-1800), Washington D.C., 1993.
- 66 Trevor Evans, "Ajuste estructural y sector público en Centroamérica y el Caribe", in T. Evans (ed.), *La transformación neoliberal del sector público*. Managua, 1995:1-47.
- 67 See Florentino Moreno Marín, *Infancia y guerra en Centroamérica*. San José, 1991; Anna Fernández Poncela, "Desempleo, angustia y violencia: Las mujeres de Nicaragua", *Estudios Ecueménicos* 35 (July-September 1993) 42-45. On the persistence of death squads in El Salvador, see *Informe del Grupo Conjunto para la investigación de grupos armados ilegales con motivación política*. San Salvador, July 1994.
- 68 See Deborah Levenson, "Las «maras»: Violencia juvenil de masas", *Polémica* 7 (January-April 1989) 2-12; Amnesty International, *Guatemala: Los niños de la calle*. Madrid, 1990.
- 69 Francisco Weffort, *Qual democracia?* Sao Paulo, 1992:31-2.
- 70 Rodolfo Stavenhagen & Diego Irujo (eds.), *Entre la ley y la costumbre. El derecho consuetudinario indígena en América Latina*. México City 1990; Carlos M. Vilas, *State, Class and Ethnicity in Nicaragua*. Boulder, 1989, chapter 5; Mario Rizo Zeledón, "Etnicidad, legalidad y demandas de las comunidades indígenas del norte, centro y del pacífico de Nicaragua", in German Romero (ed.), *Persistencia Indígena en Nicaragua*. Managua 1991:59-103.
- 71 According to UN sources in El Salvador, by mid 1994 the new "National Civil Police", a security body created after the Peace Accords, had turned into the main source of human rights violations: Vilas & Feuer, loc.cit.
- 72 James Painter, *Guatemala: False Hope, False Freedom*. London, 1987:47-51.
- 73 Luis Humberto Guzmán, *Políticos de uniforme*. Managua, 1992; Xavier Reyes Alba, "Un general sin laberinto", *El Día Latinoamericano* 116 (Mexico City) 28 August 1993:5.
- 74 US Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Drugs, Law Enforcement, and Foreign Policy. A Report of the Subcommittee on Narcotics, Terrorism, and International Operations*. Washington D.C., 1989; Asamblea Legislativa de la República de Costa Rica, *Informe de la Comisión sobre el Narcotráfico*. San José, 1989; *ibid.*, *Segundo Informe de la Comisión sobre el Narcotráfico*. San José, 1989; Holly Sklar, *Washing-*

- ton's *War on Nicaragua*, Boston 1989; Peter Dale Scott & Jonathan Marshall, *Cocaine Politics. Drugs, Armies and the CIA in Central America*. Berkeley, 1991.
- 75 Antonio Gramsci, *Il materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce*. Roma, 1977:47-48.
- 76 Eric R. Wolf, "Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies". En M. Banton (ed.), *The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies*. London 1966:1-22; see also Vilas, *Between Earthquakes and Volcanoes*, cit., chapter 1. Most discussion on "exporting democracy" tends to ignore this cultural dimension of politics -- thus reproducing at a literary level US foreign policy failures. Terry Karl, "Exporting Democracy..." cit offers a stimulating alternative approach. See also Gilbert M. Joseph & Daniel Nugent (eds.), *Everyday Forms of State Formation. Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico*. Durham, 1994.
- 77 Howard Wiarda's many books offer the crudest version of the argument; for more articulated elaborations see John A. Peeler, *Latin American Democracies: Colombia, Costa Rica and Venezuela*, Chapel Hill 1985; John A. Booth & Mitchell A. Seligson, "Paths to Democracy and the Political Culture of Costa Rica, Mexico, and Nicaragua", in Larry Diamond (ed.), *Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries*. Boulder 1994:99-130. Yet the most sophisticated versions of culturalist hypothesis have not gone beyond the paths opened up and explored by the classic works of Werner Sombart, Max Weber or R.H.Tawney: see for instance Ronald Inglehart, "The Renaissance of Political Culture", *American Political Science Review* 82 (November 1988) 1203-30.
- 78 Nevertheless this outdated culturalist reductionism may be approached from a broader perspective than that of its proponents: emphasis on the protestant, individualistic or rationalist components of liberal democracy is in some way pointing to the cultural peak of a broad range of socioeconomic as well as political preconditions resulting from a particular historical development which set the foundations of that particular political regime --such as state building, development of civil society, domestic regulation of core economic processes as well as appropriation of foreign trade surpluses, etc. See Carlos Franco, "Visión de la democracia y crisis del régimen". *Nueva Sociedad* 128 (November-December 1993) 50-61.
- 79 Karl Marx, *La ideología alemana*. Montevideo, 1968.
- 80 Pillories and other instruments for punishment were still common in Guatemalan estates as recently as the 1970s (personal communication from Guatemalan lawyer and political leader Catalina Soberanis, September 1995), while *jus primae noctuae* has not been entirely uprooted from landlords' culture there or in El Salvador.
- 81 Claus Offe, "«Ingobernabilidad». Sobre el renacimiento de teorías conservadoras de la crisis". In C. Offe, *Partidos políticos y nuevos movimientos sociales*. Madrid 1988:27-53; see also Marco Aurelio Nogueira, "Gobernabilidad democrática progresiva", *Análisis político* 25 (May-August 1995) 55-68.
- 82 Edelberto Torres-Rivas, "Centroamérica: La transición autoritaria hacia la democracia". *Polémica* 4 (January 1988) 2-13.
- 83 See Carlos M. Vilas, "Nicaragua: A Revolution that fell from the grace of the people". Ralph Miliband & Leo Panitch (eds.) *The Socialist Register 1991*. London 1991:300-19.
- 84 Przeworski discusses democracy as "a contingent outcome of social conflict", while Bleany and Kamal Pasha argue that under particular circumstances the activation of civil society may lead to rising authoritarianism. Adam Przeworski, "Democracy as a Contingent Outcome of Social Conflicts", in Jon Elster and Rune Slagstad (eds.), *Constitutionalism and Democracy*. Cambridge 1988:59-80; David L. Blaney & Mustapha Kamal Pasha, "Civil Society and Democracy in the Third World: Ambiguities and Historical Possibilities". *Studies in Comparative International Development* 28 (1) 1993:3-24.