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TRACK 04: PARTICIPATION AND NEW GOVERNANCE: ETHICS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMITMENTS

TOWARDS POST-LIBERAL FORMS OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE?

Author: Klaus Frey

Universidade Federal do ABC (UFABC), e-mail: klaus.frey@ufabc.edu.br

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Abstract

Participatory planning has become an ever more common practice in Brazil and many other Latin-American countries, at least in the case of more progressive local governments. Although significant progress has been made regarding the expansion of public participation in local policy making and planning processes, rising discontent can be observed in these countries with – especially young – people occupying streets and public squares, expressing their dissatisfaction with the shortcomings in service provision and infrastructure, as well as with increasing corruption, as recently happened in 2013/14, in the run-up to the Soccer World Cup in Brazil. In spite of an apparently consolidated democratic regime established in the country, deficits of democratic legitimacy are becoming evident in an increasing complex society demanding renewed interactive governance practices able to provide social justice and sustainable development. In this paper, we intend to analyze the potentials of post-liberal theories on democracy (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007), which share the assumption of the insufficiency of representative institutions of liberal democracy for tackling adequately with contemporary challenges, to contribute to the development of new territorial governance approaches able to develop "more inclusive and democratic urban and regional processes", referred to as a crucial governance challenge by the co-chairs of this track. Emphasis will be given to evaluate the capacity of those approaches to incorporate public interests and concerns with public goods in political decision making and planning. The Brazilian case will serve as reference to illustrate the theoretical considerations.

1. Introduction

Liberal democracies have suffered important transformations and faced significant challenges in the last decades. The recent financial, economic and social crisis, environmental and humanitarian disasters as i.e. recently the "refugee crisis" in the Mediterranean, as well as the decay of the urban conditions, primarily in the developing countries, reveal a limited state capacity to deal adequately with such complex multifaceted or wicked problems, whereas growing popular protests, from the so-called Arab Spring, the Occupy Movement, the Spanish "Indignados" to the Brazilian protest from June 2013, indicate deficits of democratic legitimacy in the developed as well as the developing world. "Something is going wrong" (Judt, 2010) according to Tony Judt, for whom we live in an age of progressive insecurity, which not only affects the state's capacity to act, but calls into question social peace itself: "We have entered an age of insecurity – economic insecurity, physical insecurity, political insecurity. ….. Insecurity breeds fear. And fear – fear of change, fear of decline, fear of strangers and an unfamiliar world is - corroding the trust and interdependence on which civil societies rest" (ibid., p.23).

The loss of political legitimacy by state agencies and by liberal-representative democracy, based on an

increasing public discontent with politics and the politicians, and with the fact that a growing part of the population seeks to satisfy its necessities primordially by means of the market (Crouch, 2004, p.9), has resulted in a situation that political reforms are back on the political agenda, in Brazil and other parts of the world.

Though, in the Brazilian case we assist currently a quite blurred, confusing and increasingly explosive situation with militant right-wing groups calling for the return of the military regime, economically threatened middle classes demanding impeachment of President Rousseff and calling for strict clampdown against corruption, at the same time as politically debilitated left-wing activists protest against welfare cuts and the decay of the urban infrastructure and basic public services; and, amongst these quite different social groups manifesting their political discontent, young violence-prone black bloc protesters destroying public equipments and infrastructure and challenging and attacking the state security forces. These kinds of manifestations are symptoms of a decrease of the state's steering capacity and of a decline of democratic legitimacy of prevailing governmental practices.

Besides the recurrent concerns about the possibilities to alleviate poverty and maintain or amplify de progress made in terms of social security, which in the case of Brazil is still very fragile and precarious, and the debates around the conditions for renewed type of developmentalism, in general considered as necessary and desirable to counter the negative effects of neoliberal reforms (Bresser-Pereira, 2015), we are also confronted with a situation of increased transnationalization of economic activities, a growing relevance of supranational structures and processes for national and local politics.

In addition, we are facing diverse menaces of our ecological systems that result from our incapacity to handle politically the challenge of the dilemma of the common goods. Our unsustainable production and consumption patterns generate grave impacts in the long run and produce uncertainties and risks of disasters, being climate change only the most emblematic of theses dilemmas, but having in common that these problems escape the logic of the current political systems of decision-making and of planning practices. Many political questions seem to become politically undecidable.

In such a context of increasing "complexity, dynamics and diversity of modern societies", according to Kooiman, "new forms of diverse, dynamic and complex governance [are needed], which are to be based more on interaction, than on the 'do it alone' attitude of traditional institutions" (Kooiman, 2002, p.78). Thus, neither a return to the models of centralized planning and authoritarian state action of the past, nor a revitalization of the neoliberal policies of fiscal austerity, deregulation, minimal state, privatizations and tax reductions, seem reasonable options in view of the challenges at stake, as all of them proved inadequate to promote sustained development, to reduce the growing gap between rich and poor in society, to preserve nature, and to guarantee good quality of life for all.

Particularly, the sustainability challenge, which requires a radical change in our consumption patterns and an active citizen engagement, makes it unavoidable to rethink more deeply the state-society relations and the organization of the state itself, ascribing a more decisive role to civil society and citizens and, consequently, to the local and regional levels of power in sustainability seeking political strategies.

The institutions of liberal democracy, based on the national territoriality as basic unit of public action, appear to present difficulties in facing such kinds of complex and multifaceted challenges, calling into question not only our development model, but also liberal democracy itself and its capacities to contribute to a development model in line with the principles of sustainability. Therefore, it's about calling into question the preparedness of our current democracy to incorporate the dimension "future" in current decision-making. As Otfried Höffe (2009, p.10) puts it: "people do not only cherish hopes

[that communities assume responsibilities for the future]; but they are right, because this is exactly for what communities are responsible: to ordinate the way humans are living together, and not only in the present, but also giving shape to it related to the future"

While we observe in Brazil the strengthening of a research agenda concerned with how to reconcile state capacities with political or democratic capacities within development strategies, placing emphasis, on the one hand, on the design of institutional arrangements able to produce desired political results (Gomide & Pires (eds.), 2014; Gomide & Pires, 2014), on the other, on the analysis of diverse innovative institutional arrangements that aim at handling with the challenge of sustainability (Abers & Keck, 2006; Jacobi, 2005 e 2006; Frey, 2001), the attempts trying to better understand the interrelations between the dimensions of democracy, development and sustainability are still quite rare, at least in Brazil. And particularly, we are lacking approaches able to incorporate the fact that we face today a strong tendency towards a post-liberal condition, where "the political-democratic capacity, concentrated on the level of the nation state", which from the aftermath of the Second World War until the heights of the social-democratic era still accomplished to control the power of the business interests, as far as these have still been strongly subordinated to the authorities of the nation state, is suffering significant decline due to the transnationalization of political and economic relations (Crouch, 2004, p.17).

In this paper we are proposing to contribute to the ineluctable revisiting of the democracy concept in view of the particular challenges posed by the aspired development *with* sustainability. We are starting with Calame's consideration of a "profound analogy existing between the current governance crisis and the crisis of our models of development" (Calame, 2009, p.22). On that basis, we suggest the necessity to reassess the roles and patterns of interaction between state and civil society, which happen basically in three different ways: by means of traditional mechanisms of political intermediations as political parties, civil society organizations and voting (including plebiscites and referendums); by means of new (in fact, not anymore that new) arenas of intermediation as policy councils, public policy conferences, public budgeting, public hearings etc.; and finally, through means of governance or policy networks, interwoven by structures and practices of participatory democracy. Here our proposal is to go beyond mere representative forms of liberal democracy, reflecting the process of redemocratization and of deepening of democratic practices in Brazil in the last three decades.

Based on the debate on the insufficiency of representative institutions of liberal democracy for tackling adequately with contemporary challenges and on experiences in participatory governance in Brazil, we intend to contribute to the development of new territorial governance approaches and their potentiality to come to "more inclusive and democratic urban and regional processes", and to evaluate the capacity of those approaches to incorporate public interests and concerns with public goods in political decision making and planning processes.

2. Theoretical approaches on democracy

The discussion on theoretical approaches on democracy will be done in two stages. First, we start from the assumptions evidenced in the introductory part about the limits of liberal democracy. On the basis of the work of Sørensen and Torfing (2007), we present and discuss different approaches of post-liberal democracy in order to develop a theoretical perspective in line with the requirements of sustainability. In a second step, we propose a realignment of these theories in three groups of strategic arrangements – modernizing, deliberative, and finally, militant or contesting – with the intention to evaluate their appropriateness for imagining possible transformative processes in post-liberal contexts, as well as their implications for thinking sustainable ways of development.

For Sørensen and Torfing (2007, p.234), liberal theories of democracy share the idea of democracy "as a political system in which the members of a territorially defined political community – i.e. a nation state – govern themselves either through direct citizen participation or through the election of representatives". According to them, two types of theories can be distinguished in the liberal tradition of democratic thinking: *aggregative theories*, characterized by principles of equal division of power between citizens and the guarantee of individual liberties; traditional institutions of representative democracies, in that sense, ensure political equality and individual liberty. By contrast, *integrative theories* place emphasis on the common good to be achieved by a rational deliberative process, in order to overcome traditional, merely power-guided forms of political struggle. Democratic institution's purpose lies in developing "a sense of communality and obligation to act in the interest of the common good among the citizens" (ibid, p.235).

Whereas the first group of theories places emphasis on the individual acting in defense of his own particular interests, the second group stresses the importance of community and therefore the role of civil society acting on behalf of the common good. In an analogous manner, we can distinguish models of liberal and republican citizenship, as discussed by Dobson (2009): whereas the former one places emphasis on the protection of individual political rights in view of the State, considered a potential threat to individual liberty; the latter advocates the idea of an active citizen, endowed with civic virtues and with commitment to his citizens obligations and, therefore, acting in favor of the collectivity and the common good as crucial parts of republican citizenship.

Both theories of liberal democracy share the idea of clear separation between the State and society, an assumption which, yet, seems less and less appropriate or viable to be maintained in the post-liberal context. Correspondingly, the recent statement of one of the main Brazilian philosophers Renato Janine Ribeiro (2014) that "good politics in our time […] requires the separation of the public from the private", given with the very understandable worries related to the historical legacy of Brazilian patrimonialism, marked by the appropriation of public resources by private interests, might be called into question due to a growing de-facto interlacement between the state and society and between the public and the private.

This general relational complexification has provoked the emergence of new governance practices and of policy networks which represent special challenges for liberal democracies: "Governance networks represent a threat to democracy because they undermine the borderline between state and society" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.234). At the same token, environmental risks, which require both changes of our consumption patterns as well as the mobilization of society and its citizens, turn ineluctable the politicization of aspects of social life that traditionally have been ascribed to the private sphere. From an environmental point of view it's becoming decisive society's capacity to expand the concepts of the public sphere and of citizenship itself, as proposed by the conception of ecological citizenship (Dobson, 2009).

In view of these supposing threats to the notion of a liberal democracy, characterized fundamentally by the strict separation between State and society, new theories of democracy has appeared, designated by Sørensen and Torfing as post-liberal democratic theories. Those not only accept the new opacity that characterizes the relation between State and society as given and recognize the limits of the nation state as primordial or exclusive arena of democracy and the exercise of citizenship, but they also seek new constructive theoretical paths to think the possibility of new, more daring, democratic practices of participation in public policies and planning, based precisely on governance networks, pinning hope on "governance-driven democratization (Warren, 2009). "Hence, post-liberal theories of democracy search for new perceptions of democracy, and new institutions of democracy that do not take the existence of a well-defined homogenous nation-state and a sharp demarcation between state and

society as their starting point" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.236).

This means that we are in a situation where it is essential to revisit democratic theory considering the inevitability of intensified interaction between the State and society, as well as of improved institutional and procedural articulation between different scales and levels, from the global to the local. This need of increased articulation refers most notably to the intermediate scales, which generally are badly served by representative institutions. This is the case on the regional scale, between the local level of the municipality and the state level, after all in metropolitan regions where competitive relations used to hinder effective cooperation; but also between the state and the national level, where we very often lack a reasonable interstate cooperation. This has became recently very evident in Brazil where we face intense interstate and intermunicipal conflicts around the use of the scarce water resources. Yet, similar problems of lack of horizontal cooperation we find on the international level where conflicts around resources in a context of increasing scarcity tend to sharpen conflictive relations; and finally, on the global scale where the weak institutionality hinders arriving at reasonable agreements about global environmental problems.

Sørensen and Torfing (2007) distinguish the following four theoretical approaches to post-liberal democracies:

2.1 Competitive democracy

This theoretical approach aims at reformulating the concept of competitive democracy, based on elite domination, in accordance with Max Weber, however, having as its main representative Joseph A. Schumpeter (1950). For him democracy can be understood, basically, as a method to select political leaders and therefore as a means to regulate the struggle for political power between interest maximizing individuals: "the democratic method is the institutional order to arrive at political decision where individuals acquire decision-making power by means of competitive struggle for popular vote" (Schumpeter, 1950, p.428).

However, authors like Eva Etzioni-Halevy[1] reject the idea that it's possible to bring forward these kinds of struggles within the representative institutions of liberal democracy. She instead places emphasis on the central role exercised by sub-elites or semi-publics in order to balance the power relations between elites. Social movements and other societal agents are acting in a gray zone between the public and the private sphere, endowed with capacity to exercise social control over dominant elites between elections. Though, according to Etzioni-Halevy, citizens can overtake an active role in public policies, without becoming themselves political elites. So within the overall Schumpeterian framework of a competitive or realistic form of democracy they envisage democratic gains in the post-liberal contexts due to the emergence of counter-elites and to extent that the traditional elites loose part of their previous predominant role in the political society.

Still embedded in an overall competitive framework, Paul Hirst (2000) highlights the role of voluntary, self-regulated associations, within a radically decentralized administration, which favors a "competition between providers and consumer choice – without making service access so dependent on the ability to pay" (Hirst, 2000, p.29). In accordance to Sørensen's and Torfing's interpretation of the Hirst proposal, it's the state, who tends to define "the overall political goals and financial frames (...), while the task of the associations will be to produce public services in competition with one another" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.238). Of fundamental importance are the mediating consociational institutions engaged in promoting a process of negotiated governance aiming to

[1] Etzioni-Halevy, Eva. The Elite Connection: Problems and Potential of Western Democracy. Polity, 1993.

establish consensuses, and balancing power relations between the different hierarchical levels, without eliminating competition, contestation and coordination, considered crucial elements of the model.

However, this approach, despite taken as given a competitive institutional environment, establishes an important distance and a clear distinction, by pinning hope on the "pressure for democratization in the wider society" and a "radical administrative decentralization, removing tasks from central, local, and quango governments" (Hirst, 2000, p.29). Notwithstanding, and particularly when we take into account the traditions of oligarchical power relations in many developing countries, new questions arise in this context about the possibilities of a real democratization of such "organizational society", which under such circumstances could easily invigorate already existing elitist patterns of exercise of power.

2.2 Outcome democracy

The "empowered participatory governance" approach of Fung/Wright (2001; 2003)[2] is inspired by Jürgen Habermas' deliberative model of democracy, at least in the sense that institutional arrangements should favor an effective exchange of arguments, even so the authors adopt a much more pragmatic attitude, by stressing that the quality of democracy depends much more "on its ability to produce desired outcomes through various forms of coordination" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.239), more than on the democratic legitimacy of political decision makers. The three guiding lines of the proposal comprise, first, the idea that institutions should be designed with the primordial objective to solve concrete problems, in order to handle quite practical aspects in situations that affect people's normal course of life; second, that participation should be constructed from the bottom upwards, considering particularly the "stakeholders" considered relevant for decision-making, upwards to the public authorities; and third, that there should occur effective power sharing in order to guarantee mutual respect between the participants and a deliberative way of problem-solving. Habermas' influence becomes evident in the expectation that deliberation and balanced negotiation are supposed to contribute to the achievement of consensus and to avoid the eruption of conflicts. Hence, whereas Habermas' model conceives deliberative democracy as something quite demanding in terms of the necessary communicative competences from part of the involved subjects, Fung e Wright (2001, p.7) pin their hope on the "energy and influence of ordinary people, often drawn from the lowest strata of society in the solution of problems that plague them". The democratic ideal they defend is output-oriented in the sense that its fundamental *raison d'être* consists in "ensuring that all citizens benefit from the nation's wealth" (ibid., p.5).

Similarly output-oriented is the democratic theory of Iris Marion Young (2000)[3]. She relates democratic quality to the characteristics of political processes, considering them appropriate only in so far as they are qualified to produce just solutions. For her, there does not exist anything like a "common good". Hence, the only way to identify if the results of democratic processes can be considered just consists in verifying if the procedural arrangement and structure favors the possibility of fair negotiational interaction. That's why it is essential to create democratic institutions and procedures able to produce just results for those citizens affected by the decisions. In order to ensure procedural justice, conditions of equality and non-domination as well as the stimulation of continuous interaction have been guaranteed in the deliberative processes; and they have to be guided by the general principle of reasonability. However, Young does not ignore the imminent empirical risks of exclusion of voices and of lack of transparency and procedural publicity, risks that have to be explicitly opposed and minimized.

[2] Fung, A.; Wright, E. O. (eds.) (2003). Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance. London: Verso.
[3] Iris Marion Young. Inclusion and Democracy, New York: Oxford UP, 2000.

In another work, Young (2001) criticizes the concept of deliberative democracy as defended by Michael Walzer and Jürgen Habermas, as far as they, as she puts it, presuppose unity as a condition for deliberation, that is, as something preexistent in society (Walzer), and therefore democratic practice can be interpreted as an ongoing process to "restore an interrupted consensus" (Young, 2001, p. 374). And even in the cases of authors that conceive "the unity not as starting point, but as the aim of political dialogue (ibid.:375), Young notices unity-guided democratic discussion, and in the common appeal for seeking the "common good", which these approaches usually share, the risk to entail mechanisms of exclusion. She proposed, on the contrary, a form of communicative democracy sensitive to the huge cultural differences and social segmentations that characterize contemporary societies. Difference should not be envisaged as something to overcome, but rather as an important resource, which has to be democratically valued. For her the necessary minimal unity of a communicative democracy consists rather in three basic conditions: significant interdependency, formally equal respect, and concerted procedures" (ibid., p.376-7). "Such a theory of democracy requires a broad and plural conception of communication, which includes the expression and extension of common understandings, where they exist, and the offering and recognition of meaning that is not shared" (ibid., p.386), paving the path to the agonistic theory of democracy which will be addressed further down in this article.

2.3 Community democracy

The model of a community democracy maintains relations with the integrative theories of liberal democracy, in so far as it places emphasis on the collective dimension proper to communities and in detriment to individual interest. Public discourse is seen as main mechanism of integration: "In a democratic society citizens are linked together by open dialogue and public debate taking departure from a shared sense of connectedness and collective identification" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.241). Community democracy derives from the criticism of competitive or economic democracy, which "ignores the centrality of a bourgeois-humanist tradition: that any form of free (non-despotic) government demands a strong identification from part of the citizens" (Taylor, 2002, p.15); apart from necessity of "a strong sense of belonging to the political community, shared by all" (ibid., p.31).

Thus, although, in accordance to Taylor (ibid, p.21), the first democratic condition is "*unity*", he even so sustains that the state is not anymore in conditions to play this unifying role of ensuring group identification, i.e. "(the) identification that defines the group of individuals that belong to a given polis" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.241). Therefore, it's up to the modern democratic society to define its collective identity, "a difficult and never to accomplish task" (Taylor, 2002, p.33). The demands for the members of a community are consequently quite high, as the citizens have to act in different contexts and scales, from the local level of the neighborhood to the global, where he is supposed to engage in discussing and solving planetary problems. According to Michael Sandel (1996[4], apud, Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.242), "such a politics requires citizens who can think and act as multi-situated selves. The civic virtue of our time is the capacity to negotiate our way among the sometimes overlapping, sometimes conflicting obligations that claim us, and to live with the tensions to which multiple loyalties give rise".

Thus, the main challenge consists in the construction of democratic institutions able to promote a process of constructing collective identities and orientations in a context of growing identity fragmentation and diversification. In accordance to Sandel and March/Olsen[5], it becomes crucial the

[4] Sandel, Michael J. Democracy's Discontent. America in Search of a Public Philosophy. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996.
[5] March, James G.; Olsen, Johan P. Democratic Governance, New York: Free Press, 1995.

dissemination of "reasoned debate (that) leads to the construction of shared stories of past, present and future that render meaningful collective behaviour possible" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.242). By means of such narratives democratic rules and norms are constructed, as well as "logics of appropriateness in and between political communities" (ibid.). Thus, it's up to democratic institutions to contribute to the establishment of bridges between political identities, narratives and communities, creating conditions of political and democratic citizen empowerment. The risks related to such kind of approach is related to the possible exclusion of identities and minority groups from such dialogues, that some become empowered, whereas others end up disempowered, withdrawing from the public sphere and from collective dialogue; that is, there are risks of a relapse to traditional community practices, more hierarchized, insensible or ignorant towards diversity and towards social and cultural minorities. Difference, thus, should not be envisaged as something menacing community, but rather as a "welcome addition" (Taylor, 2002, p.42), which enriches the community itself: "We are intended to understand each other, and this mutual understanding is growth and fulfillment" (ibid., p.44).

2.4 Agonistic democracy

Agonistic democracy turns against consensus-oriented approaches, which often ignore, from this perspective, the existence and centrality that political conflicts play in the advancement of democracy. It combines a democratic perspective of conflicts with a cultural understanding of the nature of human action. Instead of transforming enemies in comrades (consociational model), advocates of an agonistic model of democracy as Chantal Mouffe[6] and William E. Connolly[7]), defend the pursuit of institutional arrangements and political practices which provide legitimate forms of expression for such conflicts, and that allow for an emotional confrontation, open to diverse groups with different identities, ideas and interests. For Mouffe (2006, p.173), antagonism has an ineradicable character, whereas liberal democracy had neglected the decisive role of political discourse in politics. This discursive power shapes the identity of actors, their worldview and the scope of legitimate action and, thus, has to be regulated democratically. The approach likewise turns against competitive democracy insofar as it contests the idea that political agents are basically moved by rational cost-benefit calculations, and instead stresses that "politics consists of battles between competing discursive images of society, its borders, and the identity of those inhabiting it" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.244). The main task of democratic institutions therefore consists in "transforming antagonistic friend-enemy relations into agonistic relations, whereby people disagree on substantial and procedural issues but respect one another's right to voice dissimilar opinions" (ibid.).

Albeit recognizing the centrality of political conflicts, agonistic theory places emphasis in negotiation, as this compels hostile actors to communicate, and by that way, getting a more nuanced comprehension of the other, bearing therefore resemblance to Young's communicative democracy. Connolly, in a recent book, highlights "heightened patterns of sensitivity", "the creative element in social movements and democracy", associated to a "politics of democratic activism situated on several sites" (Connolly, 2013, pos. 416 e 484), as essential aspects to counter "neoliberal fantasies". Emphasis is given to the emotional confrontation of adversaries – groups with different identities, ideas and interests – what determines the possibility to reach "conflictive consensuses" (Mouffe 2007, p.69).

Notwithstanding the similarities to Young's proposal regarding the expectations related to deliberative and communicative processes, the main difference of the "agonistic perspective" consists in the expectation regarding the possibility of "a profound change of existing power relations and the

[6] Mouffe, Chantal. The Return of the Political. London – New York: Verso, 1993;
_____. The Democratic Paradox. London – New York: Verso, 2000; ver também: Mouffe (2007).
[7] Connolly, William E. The Ethos of Pluralization. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

creation of a new hegemony" (ibid, p.70). In conditions of high conflict potential, the best protection against totalitarism would be the recognition of the political and contingent character of the common good. Hence, agonistic democracy advocates the repoliticization of democratic decision-making processes. The limitations of this approach might be more related to the maintenance of such agonistic situations – always bound to given conflict situations – whereas an unduly conflict aggravation could imply in the return of antagonistic "friend-enemy" relations, bringing about further destabilization and augmented societal violence, as for instance recently witnessed in Brazil. By contrast, there could also occur a transformation of such agonistic disputes "into rational technocratic problem-solving discourses that evaporate any chances of democratic contestation from competing discourses" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p.245).

2.5 Comparing the theoretical approaches

This very brief revision of some of the approaches of post-liberal democratic theories, based to a large extent on the proposal of Sørensen and Torfing (2007), represent a first attempt to systematize theoretically these different approaches in order to guide our reflections about the democratic conditions of development processes aligned with the principles of sustainability. Albeit a quite significant range of differences and divergences identified in these theoretical concepts of democracy, there are likewise several overlaps and possible approximations which allow to establish a dialogue between these theories, making the interfaces between them possibly the most interesting aspect of such a conceptual confrontation.

Despite a clear emphasis on the calculist dimension of both the competitive and the outcome or substantive democracy – the latter maybe to a minor degree – cultural aspects cannot be totally neglected as there is evidence that the ideological discourses influence the structure of interests of the involved agents, the sub-elites (Etzioni-Halevy) or the collective organizations of society (Hirst). The competitive democracy, on the other hand, is also related to "*outcome democracy*", once the main argument Schumpeters in favor of competition within the political realm – therefore its characterization as economic theory of democracy – was precisely its alleged superior efficiency in generating results, that is, in promoting governability (Lenk, 1972, p.40).

With regard to *outcome democracy*, it is also obvious that the capacity to create desired results (Fung & Wright) by means of cooperation depends in turn upon cultural conditions, the dominant discourses in society, and upon the values disseminated by those discourses. By the same token, the negotiation about how to understand justice in the realm of communicative democracy and the development of a sensitive capacity concerning differences and the other (Young), depend on an intercultural approximation which requires more than rationalization, but rather involves capacity of empathy and thus cultural transformation.

Correspondingly, more culturalist theories do not reject completely the question of interests, rather they understand them as being part of the cultural dimension. It seems quite reasonable to assume that in societies of a more individualist culture – we can take as example the Anglo-Saxon cultures – calculist rationality has a major weight in politics; and certainly it's not mere coincidence that the theories of rational choice gained more followers and dissemination in this cultural context, whereas in more collectivist cultures, the cultural particularities of each nation or community should have a greater explanatory force to understand the dynamics and characteristics of political processes. Hence, agonistic democracy does not ignore the importance of negotiation and, consequently, the possibilities of reason in politics. The maintenance of continuous discursive contestation and the struggle for an alternative hegemony might inclusively derive from rational and conscious considerations, above all in heterogeneous societies, from part of minority sectors or from those sectors at the lowest level of the

social pyramid, insofar as such an emotional confrontation might be considered the most effective and maybe the only way to achieve their instrumental goals.

At the same token, the adherents of community democracy might recognize the need to resort to arguments of an instrumental and interest-oriented rationality, inasmuch as the set of values that assumingly unites the community turns out too fragile and civic virtues not sufficiently developed in order to achieve the desired consensuses. The *individual interest properly understood*, in the terms of Tocqueville, seems to provide an adequate basis for reconciling individual interests with collective interests or goods.

3. Strategic approaches of democratic sustainable governance

In view of such complex interrelations we want to suggest a distinct typology which considers specifically the challenges of sustainable development and which therefore starts from three different strategic approaches of democratic governance aiming at sustainability, that is, three possible paths to sustainability under democratic conditions, all of them attempting to avoid the authoritarian path for sustainability as conceived by authors like Ophuls (1977) with his conceptions on ecological authoritarianism.

The first proposal, more aligned to the *status quo*, and certainly the hegemonic model in contemporary democracies, we could denominate as of democratic-ecological modernization. This approach originates from liberal democracy and from the principle of instrumental rationality, but assumes elements of competitive post-liberal democracy, by valuing the involvement of new sub-elites (Etzioni-Halevy), whether they are representatives of universities or generally from civil society, or representatives from the productive sector. The knowledge and resources such actors potentially contribute with, as well as the influence they exert are seen as crucial to attain democratic-ecological modernization in view of the challenges of sustainable development. The approach incorporates also elements of deliberative democracy, the negotiation of consensuses, at least inasmuch as they do not contest the structural fundaments of capitalism and representative democracy. These are considered the pillars of progress and development. In the field of sustainability, this position corresponds to what Lee (2006) dominated as classical environmentalism, put into practice with relative success in the developed countries. The emphasis is placed on the advancement of "technological solutions and mitigations that permit the economic activities to be continued, while avoiding or limiting the damage to humans and ecosystems" (Lee, 2006, p.15). Thus, the mitigation of such local environmental problems is directly related to the enhancement of wealth in those countries (Lee, 2007, p.13) and does not call into question the foundations and the basic guiding principles of contemporary capitalism. Concerning global ecological problems, it is yet a limited strategy as it does not allow thinking in solutions for the transformation of our current predatory and unsustainable lifestyle.

In accordance to Jänicke (2001): "the concept [of ecological modernization] describes, in its original version, the huge segment of possible environmental improvements which could be achieved by technological progress going beyond end-of-pipe approaches, but without involving more far-reaching structural solutions". In contrast, the two other approaches aim at structural changes of the existing system, considering the current political and economic systems limited for facing the challenges of sustainable development, thus adopting a more radical perspective of "strong sustainability"[8]. Such a

[8] From an ecological perspective, "strong sustainability" is usually understood as the need of "keeping natural capital stocks intact over time", whereas "weak sustainability would require keeping intact the environmental functions of the natural capital, both human and natural. With weak sustainability, future generations would just need to inherit the same productive functions of a particular exhaustible resource, but not the resource itself" (Vojnovic, 2014, p.534). Compare hereto also Rydin (2008, p.583), who calls attention that within the notion of weak sustainability prevails the idea of "unlimited possibilities for compensating for environmental costs or losses through economic growth. Investment in other forms of physical and indeed human capital can be

more radical approach is considered inevitable for guiding the restructuration of the economic system and bringing it in line with the requirements of a sustainable future.

A crucial difference between the two transformational approaches is that the first one, that we might call dialogic-consensualist, places emphasis on the possibility of qualitative enhancement of political negotiation and decision-making processes by means of participatory and inclusive institutional arrangements. It aims at creating new procedures, which are open, transparent and facilitative, in order to establish an effective democratic process where different visions encounter space of expression, and to provide consensuses and agreements, and thereby respecting the differences and diverse perceptions of their co-citizens and of future generations. Thus, it is understood as transformation pushed forward by the social forces themselves, a process that comes into being internally, that counts on humanity's rational capacity of negotiation, but that doesn't exclude emotion as a rational and fundamental resource in seeking the common good. The approach differs from the approach of democratic-ecological modernization, by considering in its perspective the possible and necessary transformation of the socio-economic systems in view of the recognition of the limits of both capitalism and contemporary democracy. As the presence of nature and of future generations is impossible at the table of negotiations, the institutional arrangements have to ensure de effective presence of their legitimate demands by means of "negative coordination" (Scharpf, 1992, p.2), for instance, by intermediation of environmental movements supposed to assume ecological demands in deliberative processes.

Hence, emphasis is given to the overcoming of conflicts, nourished by the approaches of substantive and community democracy, but above all is part of the movement of the "deliberative turn", which from the 1990s onwards gained strength within democratic theory as a concept that aims "processes of judgment and preference formation and transformation within informed, respectful, and competent dialogue" (Dryzek, 2010, p.3). According to Young, it foresees the incorporation of the dimension of justice or, applied to ecological sustainability, of ecological justice, being thus in line with Dobson's concept of ecological citizenship (Dobson, 2007). The notion of ecological citizenship articulates the dimensions of interests and values. This extended concept of citizenship can be considered a promising mechanism to guide negotiation processes able to supplant habitual processes moved only by particular interests by the institution of new practices for the incorporation of common goods and of the interests of future generations or, within a less homocentric perspective, of the rights of nature itself. In this sense, the deliberative approach nourishes hopes related to the possibilities of our political systems to achieve, by means of dialogical discourse and supported by the principle of reasonability, overcoming our traditional anthropocentric view and substituting our predominant ethic of the presence through an ethic of the future, as conceived by Hans Jonas (1984) in his "principle of responsibility".

The third approach, that I denominated a strategy of conflictive-contesting or disputatious transformation turns out to be quite skeptical concerning the dialogic-consensualist perspective with its beliefs in rational consensuses, dialogically agreed, which at the same time should be able to transform substantially restrictive structural hierarchies. Within this disputatious perspective, the overcoming of socio-ecological conflicts requires necessarily an emotional and competitive confrontation, the building of counter-powers able to promote alternative hegemonic proposals. Though this substitution of the hegemonic model by a counter-hegemonic model must not occur by revolutionary means, but it's perceived as the result of processes of conflictive negotiation, of

used to trade off environmental degradation. Thus, development in a rare ecological habitat can be compensated through creating other habitats or nature conservation features elsewhere". Here I adopt these concepts less focusing on its strict ecological meaning, but rather in a strategic perspective distinguishing strategies that aim basically to remediate and mitigate development-conditioned environmental problems (weak sustainability), from those strategies that intend to face and combat the structural contradictions of the political and democratic system, as well as the economic system of contemporary hyper-capitalism (strong sustainability), aiming thus to overcome the current predatory and unsustainable development path.

emotionally conducted confrontation, even though it involves processes of convincing, seeking favorable political conditions for the implantation of a counter-hegemony.

This proposal is definitely more aligned with the agonistic perspective, but finds likewise support in competitive democracy, in the idea of the importance of sub-elites, or counter-elites, or of civil society organizations, whose role should be considered crucial for the advancement of counter-models or of a different hegemony of development, in the same way as the principles of environmental justice and the empowerment of minority groups (outcome democracy) and the valuing of multiple identities and values (community democracy), have major relevance in seeking new democratic hegemonies.

In terms of citizenship, contesting concepts seem to arrive at restrictive dilemmas insofar as citizenship "in its primordial and basic sense, [...] implies in living in a nation state and having a commitment with it, with the rights and obligations considered appropriate in this particular system". It's expected a significant degree of identification and engagement of the citizen in his community: "it's expected that the citizen is taking part in the culture, which generally is supposed to be proper of the community" (Heater, 2007, p.262).

Proposals as Holston's "insurgent citizenship" (Holston, 2009 e 2013) are incompatible with the conception of liberal republican citizenship as it places emphasis in the daily struggle of survival and for a decent life in the peripheries of our huge metropolises. The exercise of such an insurgent citizenship appear in "circumstances of degradation and peripheries" (Holston, 2009, p.247), that is, it's related to a struggle seeking the right for the city, focusing on the locality, but evidencing limits in view of the necessity to think the multiple scales, which have to be considered by contemporary concepts of citizenship (Dobson, 2007; Heater, 2007).

A contesting form of citizenship that comprises the fundaments of ecological citizenship, has to recognize the historical condition of citizenship, which "in its origin, and, without any doubt, during the main part of its history, was basically the hallmark of an elite" (H, 2007, p.260), and therefore should value the growing extra-institutional struggles of local movements as well as the new patterns of mobilization from the part of the social and popular movements, more and more interconnected by new technologies. These act frequently at the margin of traditional civic spaces, or at the interface between the state and society, in different scales, from the local to the global, oscillating, as Scherer-Warren (2006) puts it, between collaboration with state agencies in formulating and implementing public policies, and the exercise of autonomous pressure on state structures.

"Building networks of movement networks and of plural identities, thus, radicalizing democracy from the local levels to the regional, the national, until the transnational in direction of planetary citizenship" (Scherer-Warren, 2006, p.119), seams the most promising strategy for the exercise of a collective and contesting form of citizenship seeking counter-hegemonies of development, or, in accordance to Michael Löwy (2005, p.53), "a new mode of alternative life, a new, eco-socialist civilization, beyond the dominance of money, of the consumption habits artificially induced by publicity, and the infinite production of goods harmful to the environment".

4. Final Considerations

Our capacity to adapt to the new political and democratic challenges that are proper to contemporary society, especially those associated to the conditions of risk society and to the requirements of sustainable development, is related, first and foremost, to our capacity to conceive new normative theories – and therefore new practices – about democracy able to provide new guidance for the inevitable institutional and procedural reforms which should allow us to bring forward and to

incorporate the worries about the common good and the survival of future generations, of humanity itself, in our daily practices of political decision-making and territorial planning; and that in all levels and scales, from the global to the local.

The success of such a paradigmatic change depends on the capacity of our societies to mobilize the main agents, the multiple knowledge resources, and diverse reflective and executive competences in order to enhance our capacity to imagine and conceive new sustainable modes of development and to implement them by means of new collaborative practices and against resistance associated to the destructive capitalism which prevails among us.

In this paper we discussed several democratic concepts that share convictions around the limits of the traditional institutions of representative-liberal democracy in attending the demands of a new form of development associated with the basic principles of sustainability, and the perception of the necessity of an ineluctable addition of post-liberal democratic practices of governance to the traditional institutions of representative democracy.

In spite of their different emphasis, these theories denote similarities and convergences and, at the same time, represent different ideological convictions and different expectations concerning the most adequate democratic strategies and the degree of radicalism to be necessary in order to handle efficiently the future challenges related to sustainability. It seems appropriate to assume that the specific empirical context where the different theories have been developed influenced the interpretation that each theory makes regarding (1) the need to go beyond democratic and ecological modernization – which turned out to be a relatively successful strategy at least in the more developed countries –, (2) the expectations to achieve more substantial changes by means of deliberative negotiation processes, or (3) the convictions that such advancement is only possible by adopting strategies of conflictive confrontation.

More contesting or agonistic approaches, where civil society actors become a decisive driving force of change processes, seem particularly essential in developing countries where consensus-oriented planning and governance practices tend to generate manipulative forms of unilateral imposition of consensuses by the main dominant political and economic elites over marginalized and weakly organized and articulated social sectors or civil society groups. The promising Brazilian experiences of participatory budgeting, public policy councils and city forums implemented by several left-wing parties, committed with the concerns of the marginalized social sectors, reveal on the other hand the continuing importance of government action and political planning in order to assimilate popular protest, to create political institutional arenas able to mediate conflicts, to introduce and bring them forward and implement them within traditional formal institutions. Here the role of sub-elites and civil society organizations became more and more essential for exerting political control and, in a Habermasian perspective, to exert pressure on and propel the central political system to incorporate demands and discourses occurring in a civil society driven public sphere. The importance of these intermediating actors – individual and collective – became evident when, due to the passing over of these agents to state agencies, assuming political positions within these left-wing governments, a process of demobilization of civil society took place, presumably responsible for the weakening of these transformative left-wing projects in Brazilian democracy. In addition, contributed to this loss of strength of these political projects, above all in the 2000s, the restricted financial and administrative capacity of local governments to implement effectively the proposals and plans elaborated with citizen participation, that is, its limited capacity to produce corresponding outcomes.

Thus, the Brazilian experience with participatory planning and management reveals the influence and explanatory relevance of the different post-liberal democratic theories and the necessity to adopt an

analytical perspective that takes into account these different theoretical approaches, exploring them concerning their specific contributions to understand concrete empirical planning and governance practices.

Hence, instead of seeking to identify a major theory able to interpret the entirety of the possible empirical fields, the different post-liberal theories form a general framework of reference that allows us to better understand and analyze the complex reality of democratic processes, involving interest, cultural values, conflicts, deliberation and negotiation. The three groups of theoretical concepts regarding democratic-environmental strategies – democratic-ecological modernization, dialogic-consensualist transformation, and conflictive-contesting transformation – could give support to a process of systematization of empirical experiences and permit verifying progress and limits of empirical processes related to their capacity to incorporate concerns related to the common good and the survival of future generations in our daily practices of political decision-making. Here, there is still much empirical research to be done. We hope that our theoretical framework may serve as heuristic reference for future research projects on democracy-environment interdependencies in local environmental governance and planning studies.

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