

Ensayo de Reseña/Review Essay

Debating Democracy in Latin America: The Focus on Citizenship

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- *Ciudadanía e identidad*, edited by Simón Pachano. Quito: FLACSO, 2003.
- *Struggles for Social Rights in Latin America*, edited by Susan Eva Eckstein and Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley. New York/London: Routledge, 2003.
- *What Justice? Whose justice? Fighting for Fairness in Latin America*, edited by Susan Eva Eckstein and Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2003.
- *Informal citizens – Poverty, Informality and Social Exclusion in Latin America*, by Dirk Kruijt, Carlos Sojo, and Rebeca Grynspan. Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers, 2002.
- *El derecho a la palabra – Los pobres frente a la política y la ciudadanía*, edited by Natasha Loayza and Hugo José Suárez. La Paz: PNUD/Plural editores, 2002.

In the wake of the wave of democratization in Latin America in the 1980s, the characteristics and the quality of both the regained and the uninterrupted democracies, and the issues of citizenship and rights have become the central themes of both academic debate and attempted political reform. The episode of dictatorships made the continent acutely aware of the crucial importance of human, and civil, political and social rights. It also triggered renewed reflection within the Latin American Left on their often somewhat uncaring position in the past towards democracy and guarantees of citizens' rights. The withering of ideological 'grand narratives' also had its share in the rise of democracy, bringing about a focus on 'citizenship, rights, and the right to have rights'. The struggle for democracy has now turned into a struggle for a broadening and deepening of democracy, and a crusade against traditional societal authoritarianism, inequality and inequity. The importance of this issue was recently confirmed by the UNDP's April 2004 report on the state of the art concerning democracy on the continent. The report, *Democracy in Latin America: Towards a Citizens' Democracy*, diagnosed a serious lack of legitimacy of and belief in the continent's attainment of democracy.

In the debate on the intersection of democracy and citizenship, various approaches can be detected. Some scholars concentrate on the traditional socioeconomic divisions of Latin American societies and/or on the ways these inequalities were exacerbated by the measures of economic restructuring triggered by neoliberal creeds that conquered the continent simultaneously with the democratic transitions – a reason why some speak of a 'double transition' in the continent. In this tradition, the ways in which the socio-economically underprivileged sections are at a disadvantage to exert their rights and participate in democracy are studied. Additionally, scholars often concentrate on the ways in which tacit re-significations of

‘democracy’ through neoliberally inspired modernizations and efficiency-focused reforms of state institutions and decision procedures affect opportunities to be part of local, regional and national politics.

Another group of researchers focus on the cultural embeddedness of trust in and awareness of rights. These perceptions, according to these scholars, are part of broader images on peoples’ identities, on justice, and on one’s role and entitlements in public space and politics. Here the concept of ‘political culture’ often takes central stage.

Yet another focus is the one dealing with the traditional and re-invented ‘corporativization’ of citizenship. The point is that the concept of citizenship, rather than being rooted in a code of universal political values, was traditionally attached to occupational status. Citizenship was either limited or more generously available to those sectors with ‘official’ occupations, excluding the huge informal sectors, the self-employed, and the majority of women. Currently, corporativism is assuming new shapes, as better educated workers in the vital and dynamic, emerging non-traditional export sectors count on other attitudes from employers and state institutions than workers who are employed in the informal sectors, in subcontracting, or who simply live in worse-off neighbourhoods

Increasingly assertive indigenous minorities also question citizenship as a single universal standard. Traditionally, nation building in the region was bound up with ethnic markers and specific forms of inclusion and exclusion. Over the past decades, issues of indigenous peoples’ rights and minority rights and their relation to citizenship have been discussed in new ways and have gained increasing prominence. These interventions make visible a complex of problems related to the universalist assumptions that underpin current views on human and citizenship rights, and on democratic systems and procedures.

A final aspect of current reflection is the question of globalization and its incidence in the processes of reconfiguration of citizenship. It is claimed that deterritorialization processes have a decisive impact on the accustomed notions of citizenship and national belonging. Albeit in unequal degrees, all the sectors in Latin American societies increasingly have access to distant likeminded groups, cross-border information, and transnational identification models, and such access is likely to alter a citizenship that has traditionally been imagined as anchored in the nation-state. Thus, local democracies are taking shape under new circumstances. The publications under review here do not cover all these different sub-fields of current work on citizenship and democracy, but together they present the central concerns of the socioeconomic inequality, the cultural roots and the new selection mechanisms for distributing rights and privileges.

Ciudadanía e identidad is indicative of the vast interest that the issue of citizenship is generating. The volume is an anthology of articles published earlier in the last ten years by FLACSO-Quito, and now re-compiled by Simón Pachano. Although the earlier appearance of these articles was probably not recognized as constituting a body of analysis revolving around a single thematic field, the decision of FLACSO to assemble a series of anthologies – of which *Ciudadanía e identidad* is only one – illustrates that the current reflection in Latin America on citizenship has had a history in the institution’s scholarly production. Pachano was inspired to write a new introductory chapter that takes this history of analysis into account. He traces the central developments, progress and limitations of the debate thus far, yet in his endeavour, he has focussed more on his personal assessments of the debate’s short-

comings than on introducing and placing in perspective the subsequent contributions.

He begins with sketching a very worthwhile overview of causes behind shifts in Ecuadorian and Latin American politics and academics, leading to the current interest in democracy and citizenship, and in identity as a *political* issue. These causes range from the farewell of ‘grand analyses’ of industrialization, urbanization, agrarian transformation and the like to the eruption of the indigenous movement and the crisis of Marxism. Immediately following that he begins to critically address the characteristics of the current debate. This critical approach brings both advantages and disadvantages. A clear disadvantage is that the logic and alleged common denominator behind this specific selection of articles remains enigmatic, and that the very reason to combine citizenship and identity remains unexplained. A plausible answer to the latter question is that the complaint about unfulfilled citizenship in Ecuador was, from the outset, very much inspired and voiced by the national indigenous movements and by scholars working on themes of the nation’s ‘pluri-ethnicity’ and ‘multiculturalness’. However, the problematization of citizenship as voiced by the ‘pluri-ethnicists’ in Pachano’s view suffers from serious shortcomings, which he subsequently turns into main topics in his introduction. Another disadvantage of Pachano’s choice is that his ‘ouverture’ is unbalanced and one-sided. This one-sidedness is of course, at the same time, the advantage of a polemical instead of ‘neutral’ introduction. He encourages us to reflect upon the viewpoints voiced, and urges us to re-evaluate our own reading of the debate as it has been evolving in Ecuador and the continent as a whole,

Pachano’s main objection to the discussion in the 1990s is that ‘democracy’ has been overcharged. It was supposed to resolve participation, decision-making and inequality all in one. Correspondingly, citizenship has been treated, according to Pachano, as an undifferentiated whole and, moreover, as a vehicle of accusation towards incumbent democratic practices and institutions. Social and economic inequality – widespread in Ecuador as in most other countries in the region – was brought forward as the decisive barrier to real democracy. But such a focus, asserts Pachano in a critical evaluation of four steps, misrepresents the quintessence of citizenship. In the first step, he makes three points: first of all, it would lead to the conclusion that democracy – and full citizenship – is impossible as long as inequality persists. Secondly, it tends to conflate citizenship, ‘political action and participation’. Thirdly, it neglects the institutional realm, and even opens the way for condoning authoritarian messianism as long as this would further equality (pp. 47-50). In the second step, Pachano attacks the often ignored difference between the ‘state of law’ (to warrant the civil rights) and democracy (to warrant political and social rights) and the frequent neglect of the first (p. 51). In the third step, he criticizes the rigidity with which citizenship and political activism have been equalized. Citizenship, insists Pachano emphatically, is the *right*, not an obligation to participate, and active participation is no prerequisite for citizenship (pp. 52-3). In the last step, he denounces the tendency to overstate participation, and to simultaneously render insignificant all formal, representational arrangements (p. 54).

In my view, Pachano is both right and wrong. He is right in insisting upon the crucial difference between emancipatory projects involving political changes and participationist ideals on the one hand, and institutional, normative arrangements with regard to rights, on the other. He is also probably right in pointing at the recurrent neglect of the politico-institutional dimension of citizenship. And in spite of his insistence on these institutional dimensions, he also points to the fact that

democracy cannot remain confined to the 'thin', formal and procedural layers of decision-making, and that 'social and societal democracy' matter; he is right again on this point. However, he is wrong in failing to address the core of the problem, that is, the social, economic and cultural *conditions* for democracy and citizenship. Instead he criticizes this concern of the authors: that cultural, ethnic, social and financial *differences*, invisible in institutional constructions and regulations, and barely tangible or amendable in legislation, are nevertheless obstructing democracy and blocking the enjoyment of rights. It might be accurate that some attempts to deal with the problem of the unequal conditions to actively engage in democracy end up in societal, cultural or even ideological vocabularies that are unable to address the legislative dimension and are unable to conceptually distinguish between the formal civil rights and the factual speechlessness of the poor. Still, it remains a crucial point to deal with the impediments to democracy and citizenship that inequality presents. Pachano largely avoids this discussion.

In the subsequent contributions, various aspects of identity and citizenship in Ecuador are addressed. Populism, clientelism and class identities are dealt with by José Almeida, Guillermo Bustos, Carlos de la Torre Espinosa, Rafael Guererro y Amparo Menéndez. Family patterns, and their consequences for gender relations, are central in the contribution by Gloria Ardaya. The indigenous presence in Ecuador and its impact on matters of identity and citizenship are explicitly dealt with by José Almeida, Hernán Ibarra, Blanca Muratorio and Freddy Rivera Vélez. Citizenship is most explicitly dealt with in the pieces by Eduardo Kingman *et al.*, and by Amparo Menéndez Carrión. Some of the contributions might at first site seem somewhat dated. But even those are worthwhile reading in this new configuration in which they appear, because it allows for an overview of the ongoing debate in all its richness and polyphony that the scattered *loci* of their first appearance did not permit.

Susan Eva Eckstein and Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley are productive and important authors and editors in the field of the current debate on citizenship, rights and democracy. Their work (they edited two volumes together in one year!) primarily focuses on the socioeconomic inequality as a barrier to fair possibilities to exert citizenship and enjoy rights. They would be probably candidates for Pachano's criticism because they choose to discuss societal obstructions for citizenship above legal and judicial meticulousness.

In the volume *Struggles for Social Rights in Latin America*, they explain in the introductory chapter why the focus on 'social' rights serves the purpose of conveying the historically, culturally and socially changing perceptions of rights. Social rights are also claimed to be the most contested ones in Latin America, after the restoration of civil and political rights with the end of authoritarian rule. Additionally, the editors present here their theoretical considerations and their perceptions of Latin America's record with regard to 'rights'. To begin with, they argue against a view focusing on a given canon of rights and their subsequent failing, incomplete or full implementation, and make a plea for focusing on the 'social construction' of rights. Secondly, they make a case for an institutional vantage point, claiming that these institutions are 'likely to influence socially perceived rights, violations thereof, and responses thereto' (p. 3). Subsequently, they elaborate on various theoretical approaches, and, among other things, criticize post-colonialist variants for their tendency to fail to take class and globalizing economic forces seriously and for essentializing the experiences of the 'subaltern' in the very act of refusing

to characterize them (pp. 6-7). In the remainder of the text, they elaborate on the course the disputes on rights took in Latin America, providing brief historical overviews of the past and more recent struggles in various domains pertaining to respectively, subsistence, labour, gender, sexuality and social, and racial and ethnic rights.

The book has four parts, each containing three or four chapters, dedicated to, respectively, subsistence, labour, gender, sexuality and social, racial and ethnic rights. In the part on subsistence rights, Chollet (Chapter 2) writes on the emergence of a social movement in Puruarán, Michoacán, Mexico, in response to the closing of a sugar mill in the community, and situates her analysis in the wider context of neoliberal policies and in particular with NAFTA, concluding that Puruarán is an example of popular rejection of 'the neoliberal model that threatened community integrity' (p. 76). Nora Haenn, in Chapter 3 addresses the theme of a biosphere reserve in Mexico, and the particular cultural and political legacies informing the local people's ambivalent reactions to it. Martin Medina in Chapter 4 writes about the cardboard collectors in the twin cities of Laredo and Nuevo Laredo on both sides of the Mexican-USA border.

In the second part on labour rights, Chapter 5 by Ros and Lustig is dedicated to a thorough analysis of the very mixed results of Mexico's insertion into international free-market arrangements; and Chapter 6, by Anner, deals with the complicated efforts to fight the poor working conditions in garment manufacturing plants in Central America at the transnational level, and in particular focuses upon the difficulties to achieve matched and complementary actions. Portes and Fernández-Kelly in Chapter 7 write about transnational communities and their possible contribution to countering 'growing international inequalities of wealth and power (and to) internal disparities in countries of origin' (p. 185).

In part 3, Susan Berger sketches (Chapter 8) the development of the women's movement in Guatemala before and after the signing of the peace accords. Wood (Chapter 9) discusses the profoundly gender-biased policies of the World Bank, explaining these by the exclusion of unpaid domestic labour in the Bank's analyses. Schneider (Chapter 10) contributes an analysis based on the literature reading of the 'Mistress-Maid' relations 'across class and ethnic boundaries?' Mario Pecheny (Chapter 11) writes about the gay movement and AIDS in Argentina, and elaborates, among other themes, on the paradox that 'legal rights are difficult to exercise if such acts entail revealing a socially stigmatized trait of one's identity' (p. 254).

In part four, racial and ethnic rights are dealt with. In Chapter 12, Pallares analyses the way in which century-long unquestioned racial hierarchies gave way to a crisis in this hierarchical order and the birth of a self-conscious indigenous movement in Cacha, Ecuador. In Chapter 13, Dueñas analyses an eighteenth century text by a Franciscan fray questioning the exploitation of the indigenous, and reads it as an predecessor of current quests for socio-racial justice. Finally, in Chapter 14, Catherine Héau delves into the eighteenth century *corridos* to find in them the expression 'of socio-political demands of peasants confronting landholders and President Porfirio Díaz' (p. 314).

The book as a whole, however, does not live up to the expectations triggered by the introduction. Too many chapters do not address the theme of *rights* explicitly enough. Instead, they deal with contextual, economic, and policy matters, on both local, national and transnational scales – matters obviously relevant to the *conditions* for the exercise of (social) rights, but they do not explicitly link with the thematic focal point the title suggests. This shortcoming is exacerbated by the combi-

nation of historical and contemporary chapters. Thus the book does not concentrate on the most pertinent issues with regard to the rights of our times, such as the neo-liberal alteration of the status and contents of citizenship, the dispute on the right to *differ*, the tension between ethnic/collective and individual rights, the issue of democracy within institutions and the polity, and the new conditions under which social movements take shape. The book largely fails to intervene in current debates on these subjects because it does not systematically connect to them. The introduction, in its attempt to do precisely this, stands isolated. What follows makes for worthwhile reading, but it has missed the opportunity to 'synergize' the contributions.

In the volume *What Justice? Whose justice? Fighting for Fairness in Latin America*, the same editors in their introduction touch once again upon issues they had addressed in their other volume. They stress here the 'social construction' of 'conceptions of the just and the unjust' (p. 1). They make another case for a focus on institutional arrangements because these provide 'a window through which to unravel the relationships between structure and agency, as well as between structure and culture' (p. 3). Finally, they criticize postmodernists once more for lacking 'an analytic frame that accounts for and explains how broader macroeconomic forces and class dynamics become locally consequential' (p. 28).

In this volume however, the coherence between the book's 'mission' and the contributions is far better accomplished. Most authors do address, implicitly and more often explicitly, the notion of 'justice'. They analyze how grass roots' interpretations of 'what is just' influence reactive and proactive stands and actions of people in a broad range of countries, contexts and events. The four parts of the book cover, respectively, the institutional and legal groundwork of perceived, 'just' democracy and the ways these have been modified through historical and recent controversies; the incongruity between the formal and 'implicit social contract' contents of justice and the ways authorities have violated them; the efforts to deepen democracy and participation, both by authorities and from the bottom up; and, finally, how indigenous minorities on the continent have challenged the ways that unitary concepts of justice (and their unjust applications) have traditionally been imposed. Thus, in the first part, Philip Oxhorn argues that social inequality and exclusion continue to impede the equality promised in the democratic transition, and that this very process threatens to undermine the legitimacy and relevance of political democracy. This claim is central to the book as a whole, and is underwritten in Karl's analysis (Chapter 5) where she asserts that 'the poor report feeling disempowered and humiliated by their governing institutions; they distrust their effectiveness and relevance and believe they are excluded from participation' (p. 149). Due to this historical state of affairs, which was not mitigated and often even exacerbated by the recent 'new set of neoliberal development policies that has had a significantly negative impact on the social rights of citizenship' (Oxhorn's contribution, p. 50), people develop and maintain images of justice and injustice that often do not coincide with formal and publicly voiced contents. Palmer, for instance, in Chapter 9 illustrates how, in a situation of political parties in disarray with economic crisis and generalized political violence in the Ayacucho region in Peru in the 1980s and early 1990s, local level social and political organizations not only provided for survival mechanisms but managed as well to construct mechanisms to fulfil notions of justice and 'decency' that politics had been unable to provide. Peeler, in Chapter 10, revises the ways in which indigenous movements in Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala, Ecuador and the Chiapas region of Mexico managed to

frame ways to wrest certain degrees of autonomy and self-esteem, and formulate their demands; ways that on the one hand reflected external conditions and dominant discourses (e.g. either tolerating or repressing classist and/or ethnic strategies respectively), but on the other hand expressed their specific perceptions of the ways in which their interests and quests for justice would be supported.

The other contributions, in parts I and II, deal with the myth of the probity and impartiality of the Chilean justice system (Lisa Hilbink, Chapter 3), with the 1990s presidential crises in the continent and how they connect to specific traits of the state institutions and democracy (Aníbal Pérez-Liñán, Chapter 4), with the role of perpetrators' confessions in the process towards truth and reconciliation in Argentina (Leigh A. Payne, Chapter 6), and with the disheartening story of how political decisions to opt for amnesties in initiatives to reach peace agreements in Colombia have tended to end up in even more violence (Marc W. Chernick, Chapter 7). In parts III and IV, the now famous practice of the Participatory Budget Program in Porto Alegre is analyzed as an example of 'Progressive Pragmatism' (Sybil Dettaine Rhodes, Chapter 8). Other topics are the role of women in the events in Chiapas (June Nash, Chapter 11), and the 'battle for memory' between the village inhabitants and the military over a massacre that had occurred in Guatemala in February 1982 (Beatriz Manz, Chapter 12). This is a very rich, well-conceived book, stimulating reflection on the often fierce struggles to attain justice.

Pachano would probably react negatively to *Informal citizens – Poverty, Informality and Social Exclusion in Latin America* by Dirk Kruijt, Carlos Sojo and Rebeca Grynspan as well, claiming that it one-sidedly focuses upon the poverty dimension and neglects the political and institutional dimension. The book, however, has much to tell about citizenship: based on a broad set of data on developments with regard to poverty in Central America, and to a lesser degree in Latin America as a whole, it aims at understanding the 'hidden layer' under formal, legal and equal access to rights, provisions and justice. In this endeavour, it differentiates between the statistical operations detecting poverty and the *in situ* observations of poverty (p. 40). The importance of this distinction is that in the countries in this region, policies designed to combat poverty have shifted more from welfare-focused and redistributive approaches to 'focalized' strategies, directing resources (at any rate decreased due to the state's fiscal constraints) to only those who 'qualify' as poor. The new forms of social policy tend to be assistentialist and aim at strengthening self-help and competitive capabilities of 'target populations'. Thus the analysis, well documented with socioeconomic data from various countries, confirms once again what has already often been asserted: that the economic restructuring of the continent has in fact resulted in deteriorated conditions for the poor to win minimally secure livelihoods, has negatively affected their income prospects, and has led to diminished possibilities to gain state support in the shape of redistributive measures enhancing their opportunities to break out of poverty. The authors suggest that to grasp the new situation we need the concept of a 'vulnerability continuum'. We no longer need to take into account only the poor and excluded; we are dealing with a broader group of vulnerable people. Translating this to the realm of citizenship, they conclude that whereas the formal level of citizenship might be guaranteed, the 'substantive' level is the one in jeopardy. This substantive level being 'the degree of development and fulfilment of civil, political and social duties and rights' (p. 37), indicates that, contrary to a dualistic situation in which one either has or lacks rights, most countries show continuums and proc-

esses in which ‘informal citizenship’ increases. This informal citizenship refers to ‘the attainment of certain degrees of social integration of the basis of the “massification” of political and civil rights and liberties in an environment in which the precarious nature of the satisfaction of the rights of social citizenship is becoming more acute’ (p. 38). This process is due to the fact that ‘economic reform measures in the Central American countries [have lead] not so much to a rise in poverty levels [but to] a stagnation of the capacities of citizens and the state to overcome them’ (p. 67).

The book has some flaws. Various authors were responsible for different parts of the argument. As a result, the coherence between the different sections of the argument is weakened. More concretely, towards the end of the book, the claim about negatively affected possibilities to enjoy citizenship is completely set aside and an analysis of poverty and poverty-alleviating strategies is brought to the fore. A more thorough conceptual connection between the notion of citizenship and the notions of vulnerability and poverty thus remains wanting. Nevertheless, the book convincingly illustrates the need to include analyses of poverty and other privations of education and health benefits, as well as analyses of subjective value judgments on poverty and the resources to overcome it, which, in our reading, is what citizenship should encompass for the poor and vulnerable peoples of the region.

This theme is confirmed by the publication under the auspices of UNDP of *El derecho a la palabra – Los pobres frente a la política y la ciudadanía*, a book on Bolivia by Natasha Loayza and Hugo José Suárez. It has no theoretical pretension, but wishes to be a testimony of the voices ‘of those who live poverty’ (*Presentación*). It aims to give, to begin with, the *right of the word* to the ones so often talked about but scarcely heard in deliberations on poverty and the policies to counter it. A first result of the book is that the diversity of stories, perceptions and demands counter the homogeneous tendencies to ‘talk about poverty’. A second accomplishment is that we become aware of insights about politics, the societal fabric and economic matters the poor have, instead of presupposing their complete lack of awareness, as still all too often occurs. Finally, it underscores the desire for ‘dignity’ and acknowledgment; it shows that specific demands for citizenship are as much a part of the demands of the poor as their dreams about satisfying their material needs. And at the same time, it tells us about the deception people feel towards ‘politics’. Politicians have never, in their view, lived up to their expectations. This has resulted in a virtual ‘farewell’ to regular politics by many of the Bolivian poor, and, as a dramatic proof of what this means, in the ousting of their president in October 2003. Bolivia, apart from its economic and poverty worries, desperately needs to restore minimum levels of trust between its citizens and its polity. If not, citizenship and democracy will remain extremely precarious. It is exactly this what the series of testimonies reveal:

En otros países los gobiernos mantienen bien a su gente, cada uno tiene su mensual. Por eso a mí no me interesa ahorita el político, ¿pa’ qué?, yo no vivo de eso, ni siquiera me regala por lo menos un machete, o aunque sea una bicicleta para ir a acarrear un pedacito de leña. Para mí, ahorita al político es un enemigo.

The democratic deficiency has evolved into an utterly poisonous relation between the perceptions, worries, and interests of large sectors in society and the polity. Parties and authorities are unable to express society’s reading of political measures

and their social effects, or to canalize uncertainties and demands towards authorities. State institutions have, in the eyes of the overwhelming majority, been unable and/or reluctant to intervene in a way that would ‘make a difference’, and have ceased to be accountable to their citizens.

This is a serious threat to democracy and citizenship. Democratic consolidation is a double process: institutional strengthening and consolidation must go hand in hand with a growing trust in these institutions’ capacity to resolve matters in a peaceful, even-handed way. In present-day Latin America this is not happening, and to explain this, socio-economic factors are crucial. Real and active democracy, in the perception of many, is not only restricted to peripheral issues, excluding a real choice for a development and economic model, but is also operated by a polity which is, to a large extent, ‘impotent and deadlocked’, as well as corrupt – in different degrees in different countries. This blocks the growth of legitimacy and deepens distrust in the political system. Not only the direction of incumbent policies, but also the very issue of insulating fundamental politico-economic options from public debate is at stake.

Severe poverty and inequality in the long run will affect the support for the incumbent system and civil society’s capability to play its role in consolidating democracy. In the realm of civil society the crucial preconditions for consolidation need to be wrested: its independence (but not alienation) from the State, its controlling function in relation to the State, and a vibrant associativism that fosters the skills of democratic citizens, as well as tolerance, moderation, willingness to compromise, and respect for opposing viewpoints. To obtain all this, the State should deliver trustworthiness, efficiency, and a redistribution of resources if the poor are to be included in these processes. The citizens’ adherence to democracy and rule of law cannot go forward without the poor, and is therefore dependent on the performance of state institutions in, among many others things, the efficacy of the policies to diminish poverty. Only then can consolidation, taken as ‘the process by which democracy becomes so broadly and profoundly legitimate ... that it is very unlikely to break down’ and based on an institutional ability to ‘ensure that government will be able to make and implement policies of some kind, rather than simply flailing about, impotent or deadlocked’, as Diamond asserts, be obtained. Latin America still has a long, long way to go.

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