

# ABSTRACTS



Francisco Goya, *Lo mismo*



## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

## THE BOUCHARD-TAYLOR COMMISSION

José María Sauca Cano  
María Isabel Wences Simon

**ABSTRACT.** In February 2007, Québec Premier set up a Commission which was given the task of asking citizens about reasonable accommodation practices related to cultural differences. These practices have deeply marked the political and social life of Quebecers the last few years. This article analyzes the Bouchard-Taylor Commission's work, especially the wide public consultation which was developed in a public debate, giving rise to an intensive participative and deliberative practice without precedent in that nation's history.

**KEY WORDS:** Participative democracy, public consultation, reasonable accommodations, intercultural harmonization, Québec.

## THE REASONS FOR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES

Julieta Marcone

**ABSTRACT.** The aim of this paper is to show that, faced with a widening lack of trust in political parties, in popular leaders and in public servants, civil disobedience becomes a crucial arm in the symbolic arsenal that of democratic states of law. Public disobedience triggers two legitimating principles in a democratic order: the people's sovereignty and recognition among all of the right to have rights. It helps, for this very reason, to keep safe and expand rights, on the one hand, and to broaden the democratic horizon, on the other.

**KEY WORDS:** Civil disobedience, democracy, civil rights, Habermas, Dworkin.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AS A SOCIETY-STATE RELATION  
DELIMITED BY THE CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY AND  
CITIZENSHIP

Mario Espinosa

ABSTRACT. This text states that citizen's participation constitutes a society-state kind of relation which, before making reference to a bunch of institutional structures or to the logics of social organization, can be conceived as an interaction space, as well as for communication and differentiation between the state system and the social system. The text also sets out that the relation between the state and the society is a characteristic relation in contemporary societies; it is delimited (in its senses and orientations) by the regulation notions derived from the meaning of democracy and the concept of citizenship itself. The relation performs the function of regulating permanently the conflict assumed in the definition of public affairs and the political and social agendas.

KEY WORDS: Citizen's participation, civil society, state, democracy, citizenship.

BETWEEN THE NEW ROADS AND THE OLD ROADS: THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CITIZENS AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

Luisa Fernanda Rodríguez Cortés

ABSTRACT. In today's democracies there is a reconfiguration in the public sphere relations that involves a change in the places of the old political actors while opening up a set of new ones. Therefore political parties have begun to share the citizenship's representation and the demands channeling with a series of new actors that have grown up in the political field. However, there is no answer about the current role of the political parties as well as the new political actors in democracy. For these reasons, this paper analyses the relation between citizens and political system in the new democratic context by making a theoretical approach that is supported with two public opinion surveys.

KEY WORDS: Political participation, democracy, political parties, new political actors, Mexico.

PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY  
(WHY DO LOVES THAT KILL NEVER DIE?)

Víctor Hugo Martínez González

ABSTRACT: This essay analyses the difficult relation between parties and democracies through four academic discussions: first divorce, celebration, decline/reemergence and democratic disillusionment. This last moment, drive it by the quality of democratic theory and the postdebate to the crisis of parties, implies a “new” research agenda which is also explore it here.

KEY WORDS: Parties, democracy, quality of democracy’ theory, representation.

ARGUMENTATIVE DIMENSIONS OF  
EPISTEMOLOGICAL RELATIVISM:  
BETWEEN THE PROGRAM AND SCEPTICAL DOUBT

Nicolás Olivos Santoyo

ABSTRACT. The aim of this paper is to open the debate on the implications that epistemic relativism has as a form to understand the scientific activity. One looks for to analyze the strategies to argue which this one faces the universalist and rationalist positions in epistemology; and to see how from these it bases a program or agenda of work for which they try to give account of how science is constructed.

In this essay we argue that a characteristic of the relativists arguments has made difficult to its critic or the attempts to avoid it, is that it leaves from a set of skeptical arguments with which fights the universalist and rationalist pretensions of other traditions in the philosophy of science.

KEY WORDS: Relativism, pluralism, scepticism, rationalism, universalism.

HISTORY AND LANDSCAPE: EXPLORING A MONIST  
GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPT

Pedro S. Urquijo Torres y Narciso Barrera Bassols

ABSTRACT. This article offers insights concerning the historical display and the historiography of landscape as a geographical concept. The paper emphasizes the theoretical and practical robustness of this notion in environmental studies. To this end, the paper presents an homeostatic analysis of the biophysical and socio-cultural components of landscape. Taking this into account, we assess the strength and usefulness of a monist epistemic approach –which looks at the landscape as a totality that can not be fragmented by separating its various and complex components–. This in contrast to the dualistic epistemic view that is substantiated by the nature-culture dichotomy. The last approach became a common discourse within the dominant scientific thought, but it is increasingly problematic for a comprehensive understanding of our emergent (environmental) socio-ecological reality.

KEYWORDS: Landscape, nature, culture, society, history, monism, dualism.

THE INSTITUTIONAL WEAKNESS OF STATE LEGISLATURES:  
LIMITS OF MEXICAN DEMOCRATIZATION AND OF THE  
TRANSFORMATION OF THE EXECUTIVE-LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS

Moisés Pérez Vega

ABSTRACT. Democratization has led to fairer Mexican elections and increasingly shared power among political parties, which have created legislatures that are more active and independent of the executive. However, it has not been entirely clear to what extent this process of political change has produced an increased capacity of legislatures to exercise its role as a counterweight to the executive branch. In this sense, this paper examines various issues of the electoral system and party system—especially the ban on consecutive legislative re-election—

that have shaped a weak institutional framework of legislative bodies. In this perspective, it is argued that it should go beyond the approaches that set up the increase of the party competition and the legislative pluralism have strengthened the oversight function of the Congresses.

KEY WORDS: Institutional weakness, local congresses, democratization, Executive-Legislative relations, Mexico.

#### BETWEEN IDENTITY AND POLITICS: THE CTD-ANÍBAL VERÓN

Fernanda Torres

ABSTRACT. The present article exposes the results of four years of research on one of the social movements of unemployed people who arose in the last decade in Argentina: the CTD-Aníbal Verón. Analyzes the particular coexistence in the interior of the CTD of clientelist mechanisms of social and political interaction, with new characteristics of identity and firmly structured around a social and political configuration that gives origin to this bound of identity, combining it with the territorial dimension in which the *life* of the organization occurs. For this, it approaches the analysis of the type of configuration and political roll that incarnates these expressions, their contradictory combinations between old and discredited political practices with novel forms to articulate the politician and the social thing in projects with objectives towards emancipation.

KEY WORDS: Social movements, unemployed people, identity, policy.

#### RECONSIDERING THE PARADOX OF DEMOCRACY

Ariana Reano

ABSTRACT. Understanding democracy has raised a number of controversial issues and debates in political theory. Roughly, we can point out that

democracy studies followed two different paths, i.e. understand democracy as a logic of social action or as a governmental mechanism to establish a governmental regime. From a post-structuralist theoretical perspective – under the aegis of the work of Chantal Mouffe and Jacques Rancière – this study try to develop across of the thesis about democracy with a critical approach to the rational –universal argument that built the relevance of liberal democracy. This type of analysis has the potential to resave the democratic paradox as a logic of social contingency.

KEY WORDS: Democracy, paradox, order, conflict, contingency.

WHAT CRISIS AFFLICTS THE WELFARE STATE?  
THE GENERAL SITUATION AND SPECIFIC LESSONS  
OF THE GERMAN CASE

Homero Galán Benítez

ABSTRACT. This article aims to get a general approximation to the so called *welfare state crisis*, and looks for identifying the institutional and structural components that sets this process. It will be analyzed also the German welfare state case, given that doing so could be very helpful in order to throw light and to visualize the specifics of the general debate. The main approach used in this article emphasizes the *contractarian* importance that historically has had the welfare state, which means, its contribution to both the social stability —in terms of democratic pluralism—, and the capitalist economic reproduction. In this sense, it is stated that the biggest challenges to the welfare state, current and prospective, relates to the link *equality-full employment*, the demographic transformation and the effects globalization.

KEY WORDS: Welfare state, globalization, economic change, contractarianism, *continental* welfare state.