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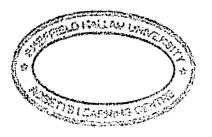
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Participation, Power and Democracy: A Comparative Study of Community Engagement Processes

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Participatory arenas have been a growing feature of governance and public policy in the 'North' and 'South' as attempts are made to involve local communities in decision-making processes. These developments have been accompanied by a proliferation of research examining these community engagement processes from a variety of different perspectives. Despite the similar themes addressed in the development studies literature and urban regeneration literature in the U.K., there are few studies that compare participatory spaces in the global 'North' with those in the global 'South'. The main debate highlighted in both bodies of literature pivots around the tyranny-transformation dichotomy. Participatory processes are portrayed as either spaces facilitating the increased regulation of the population, or enabling transformation in favour of a social justice which benefits the poorer sections of society.

This thesis considers the tyranny-transformation dichotomy in two empirical case studies at the neighbourhood level: a New Deal for Communities Regeneration Programme, in the North of England; and the Participatory Budgeting Process, in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The research conducted fell within a grounded theory research framework, utilising a qualitative research strategy. This enabled a focus on the experiences of key players and community representatives within these spaces.

The research findings highlight the necessity of taking into consideration the following three elements when evaluating the transformative potential of participatory processes. Firstly, the twin-track construction of the participatory process, in terms of perceptions, conceptions and interpretations whilst also taking into consideration the institutional mechanisms of the participatory process. Secondly, the governance and democratic nature of participatory spaces, as regards how different democratic models are imbued in these spheres. Thirdly, power relations and the practice of participation in terms of how power can operate as a 'constraining' yet also at the same time an 'enabling' force. These findings enabled the development of a framework that was able to transcend the tyranny- transformation dichotomy as elements of 'tyranny' and 'transformation' were in fact present in both case studies.

Contents

1. Introduction

Participation, power and democracy can be seen as concepts currently bandied about by all sides of the political spectrum in order to accomplish a wide range of different objectives. Increased community participation in various different arenas, from community development projects, urban regeneration programmes, to environmental and risk management seems to be a fashionable concept that few are able to dispute as regards the 'democratising' benefits. These developments are not only taking place in various different types of decision-making arenas but, are also crucially occurring in various different parts of the globe, from the 'North' to the 'South' and are intimately tied to the narratives of democratic 'renewal' and democratic 'consolidation'. In this thesis I attempt to explore two concrete processes of community participation at the neighbourhood level, one based in an Urban Regeneration Programme, operating in the North of England, the other taking place at the local government level in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The following introduction can to some degree be seen as some sort of road-map, highlighting the main outline of this thesis. It is a brief attempt to raise the key questions that arose throughout the research process in terms of crucial debates within the literature, and those that evolved throughout the empirical research. These research questions could be seen therefore as fundamentally defining the subsequent research project.

The second chapter in this thesis is the *Conceptual Framework*. It is entitled conceptual framework as opposed to literature review due to the fact that it was crucially constructed throughout the research process. Therefore, the issues highlighted in this chapter are those that have some sort of relevance as regards the three empirical chapters. It provides a conceptual 'map' that highlights the issues that will be explored throughout the thesis. The main function of the conceptual framework is to introduce the relevant disciplines, debates, and bodies of literature that consider issues to do with participation. In the conceptual framework I attempt to locate participation within wider debates that are currently occurring within the social sciences. This is identified as a useful approach as regards providing some sort of overarching framework to enable an interdisciplinary approach to the study of participatory spaces. This was recognised as important due to the benefits of integrating the urban regeneration literature, (which seemed to have a more empirical basis) with elements of the development studies literature, (that seemed to be more theoretically developed).

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The main debate as regards participatory spaces that seems to transcend disciplines is identified as whether commentators see participatory spaces as, a) forums where excluded groups are able to exert increased influence (as regards the distribution of resources) or, b) tools of co-option by the governing powers that be. This recognition led to the formation of the central research question, "To What Extent do Participatory Processes within Institutionalised Governance Spaces create Political Opportunity Structures to enable Change/ Transformation in Favour of Social Justice?". Community involvement in the UK is contextualised within the literature looking at the U.K. urban policy context and New Labour's third way framework. Community involvement in the Porto Alegre case study is contextualised as regards policy literature, best-practice and the vast array of literature considering this participatory process as regards its democratic content.

The third chapter in this thesis is the *Methodological Framework*. Throughout this chapter I attempt to highlight the methodological strategy that was undertaken during the research process. An interdisciplinary approach to the literature from both development studies and urban regeneration in the U.K identified the need to explore participatory processes from a cross-national comparative methodology, spanning 'North' and 'South'. A grounded theory method is highlighted as the chosen empirical research strategy to enable an iterative approach to theory development. I then discuss the benefits of a predominantly inductive strategy to the research and stress the advantages of taking a more constructionist approach to grounded theory. The advantages of choosing a qualitative research paradigm are then considered as regards understanding community involvement. The epistemological approach taken is also examined in terms of 'weak social constructionism' and 'thin critical realism'. I discuss how this strategy enabled a thorough examination of these spaces in terms of the key research questions, 'how are participatory spaces conceived and perceived?' and 'how are they organised and occupied?'. I then discuss the choice of case studies, in terms of a) the specific participatory processes, (The Participatory Budgeting Process, in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and The New Deal for Communities Regeneration Programme, U.K) and b) the specific neighbourhoods (Cruzeiro do Sul and Preston Road, Hull). The last section of this chapter discusses the actual fieldwork conducted, and the research process in terms of phases and stages. The method of the semi-structured interview as

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the predominant tool for data collection is justified whilst issues of access, the interview process, and the problems of language, translating, interpreting and transcribing are examined. This chapter provides the methodological justification for the following three chapters which are based on the empirical findings of the research.

The fourth chapter, *The Shaping of Participatory Processes: Participatory Spaces and Community Actors* is the first chapter presenting the empirical findings of the research conducted in both case studies. The first half of this chapter looks at the production of these participatory spaces, and therefore is taken from the interview transcripts of key players in these arenas, i.e. managers, practitioners and local government officials (those practitioners, managers and government officials charged with creating the 'political opportunity structure') in both case studies. The following research questions were identified as key in examining the construction of these spaces: *How is policy interpreted, enacted and implemented by strategic actors in local organisations? How is the rationale for participatory spaces interpreted by key actors? What meanings are attributed to participatory spaces and common concepts within these spaces? How is the public conceived? What are the perceived benefits of this process? How has the rationale for participation been interpreted and enacted through to implementation?* How these spaces are organised and occupied, i.e. the institutional mechanisms of these spaces was also identified as crucial and therefore the following research questions also became paramount, *What initiatives have been undertaken to engage residents within the process? How are different mechanisms perceived in terms of 'success' and 'failure'?, What are the perceived factors that have enabled/ hindered the development of the participatory process? How have participatory spaces evolved over time?* The second section of this chapter is concerned with community representatives' participation within these spheres. The following research questions formed the basis of this section, *On what basis are participants involved? How do individuals rationalise and explain the reasons for their involvement? What motivates people to get involved? How do individuals hear about the process? What resources do community representatives bring to these arenas?*

The fifth chapter, *The Governance and Democratic Nature of Participatory Spaces* is the second empirical chapter of this thesis. It links the analysis of the four data sets (i.e. interview transcripts with key players and community representatives in both case studies) to different ideas embedded within democratic theory. This chapter was

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constructed as a result of the analysis in terms of the centrality of how different models of democracy were referred to in the distinct case studies. Thus the central research question *How are different democratic models evoked by key players and community representatives in these participatory spaces?* formed the crux of this chapter. How different conceptions of democratic models shape these participatory spaces became a key thread in the analysis. *What are the developmental elements of these participatory spheres?* This question refers principally to a more participatory democratic model and was seen as a key element in the investigation of these participatory spaces. Questions linked to a liberal representative democratic model, also formed a key part of the analysis, for example, *how is representation conceived and perceived? Who do participants feel they represent? How are minority groups represented?* and *what are the institutional mechanisms of representation?* These were all seen as important questions to investigate throughout the participatory spaces in both contexts. *What are the institutional mechanisms of accountability? What are the trade offs between leadership and accountability? Are representatives of civil society 'democratic?' What gives legitimacy to these participatory spaces?* became important research strands throughout the empirical research. Perhaps the greatest question as regards participatory spaces in terms of democracy, however, is whether participatory spaces can be interpreted as fundamentally enhancing local democracy or essentially undermining it. This question can be seen as intimately linked to different models of democracy and notions of power. It is this issue to which we now turn.

The sixth chapter of this thesis *Spaces for Transformation? Power Relations and the Practice of Participation* is fundamentally concerned with the social and power relations that constitute the practice of these participatory spaces. This chapter is structured around two main themes. The first section revolves around the following question, *how are existing structures and meanings reproduced within these spheres?* This was explained by looking at the following questions: *What is the relationship between knowledge, power and information within these spheres? What issues are addressed in the participatory arena and which issues are addressed elsewhere? How are techniques of governance operating within the participatory sphere?* These questions are however, complimented with a focus on the strategies and acts of resistance that are functioning within these spheres. The second half of this chapter therefore revolves around the following research questions, *What strategies of resistance (both explicit and implicit) are operating within these participatory*

processes? What acts of resistance do individual participants within these spaces employ? Are acts of resistance collective acts or individual acts of resistance? The concluding question in this chapter however revolves around the key question, *to what extent has the participatory process changed existing ways of working?*

The last chapter of this thesis, *Participatory Processes: Vehicles for Change or Tools of Cooption?* is an attempt to answer some of the key questions identified in this introduction by explaining some of the social processes at work in these two case studies. The development of the theoretical framework as regards explaining the political opportunity in participatory spaces in presented in table format. This is an attempt to summarise the thematic findings of the empirical research identified in the previous three empirical chapters. The development of this framework led to the case studies presented within this chapter, as related to two *distinct* democratic models of participation. The PRNDC New Deal for Communities is linked to a more liberal representative democratic model, whilst the Participatory Budgeting Process is linked to a more developmental democratic model. Both case studies however, could be framed as regards *similar* social processes explaining the dynamics of the political opportunity structure within the participatory processes. This is discussed as regards the main findings of the research and leads to an analysis that is able to transcend the tyranny-transformation dichotomy. This section is primarily targeted at academics and researchers however the following section is an attempt to summarise the conclusions at the level of practice. Policy recommendations are developed for policy-makers, key players and practitioners, whilst thoughts for reflection for community representatives are also included. The last section of this chapter however, is entitled reflections on the research process and considers, how my conception of the research changed throughout the research process, whilst also identifying further avenues for research.

2. The Policy and Politics of Participation: A Conceptual Framework

The current emphasis on the 'participation' of the citizen in decision- making arenas within a variety of different public bodies, (from governance structures to social policy and programmes, development projects and community development projects) has been unsurprisingly accompanied by a meteoric rise in the literature. The different types of literature that comprise the evidence base are extremely varied, emanate from a variety of different disciplines within the academy (and outside the academy), are pitched at varying theoretical/ practical levels, and serve a vast array of different purposes. Surprisingly enough however, one can detect common discourses, concepts and issues running through the debates about participation that are happening in diverse geographical locations and disciplinary fields. Perhaps the key debate as regards the majority of the literature revolves around the question of whether these participatory spaces can improve the position of socially excluded groups, by enabling them to exert more influence over the distribution of resources via participating in some sort of participatory structure. This key question seems to be at the heart of discussions of participation, from a variety of different disciplines.

This literature review does not attempt to chart all the developments in the large bodies of literatures that consider participation. I will however, attempt to track and trace the relevant key developments whilst recognising the variety of different perspectives that these different bodies of knowledges represent. Conceptual framework therefore, is perhaps a more accurate description of this chapter, as I attempt to highlight the relevant debates, issues and themes that a) informed the trajectory of the research (in terms of research proposal, choice of cases, key research questions) and b) in terms of the analysis presented in the three empirical research chapters. The first section of this chapter will therefore chart the growth in participation and public involvement in governance arenas and decision making as a global phenomenon. The second section of this chapter will highlight the similarities in debates and themes that are present throughout various disciplines, specifically concentrating on the place of community involvement in the U.K. policy context and in relation to the PB process in Porto Alegre. The third section of this chapter will underline the necessity of combining a political and social analysis whilst considering change, specifically focusing on

combining a governance and social movement perspective. The penultimate section of this chapter will consider the democratic nature of these participatory spaces, specifically highlighting democratic theory in relation to both representative and participatory democratic models. The last section of this chapter examines theories of power in terms of a zero-sum analysis and a positive (re)-conceptualisation of power.

2a: Participation and Public Involvement in Governance and Decision-Making as a Global Phenomenon

The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, 2002 confirmed the importance of local participatory initiatives both as local planning vehicles and as sources for international learning (Thin 2003). Participation is currently being championed by a wide range of institutional entities, in varying different forms, (governance bodies and structures, social and urban policy, development projects) in diverse geographical contexts, (the global North and global South), at different policy levels (from the World Bank to National Level governments, to city wide institutional arrangements to community based projects). Obviously particular historical conjunctures have given rise to the specific forms, arenas and institutional mechanisms of participation, nevertheless, common processes and discourses can be detected in the emergence of these diverse spheres. This growth of popularity of participatory practices therefore, must be contextualised within wider developments concerning 'important shifts in state structures, functions and associated discourses of governance' (Jones, 2003:584). These 'participatory' developments have often been presented in terms of a) enabling a more efficient and sustainable approach to the design and implementation of a variety of social programmes, policy, and   development projects and b) as a key component of the democratic 'renewal' discourse, i.e. the enhancement of the democratic content and legitimacy of processes of decision-making within diverse governance structures (Cornwall, 2002:iii). It is these two key elements of the rationale for participation to which I will now turn.

Participatory initiatives in U.K. urban policy and further a field are often presented as some sort of recognition of past failures of a range of anti-poverty strategies, development initiatives, regeneration programmes and urban policy in their ability to tackle deprivation and poverty. This 'past' failure is often attributed to a technocratic

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disregard for 'local knowledge' and the resultant inability of successfully embedding long-term sustainable development policies/ programmes in deprived localities and communities. Thus, participation of local people throughout decision-making in a wide range of policies, programmes and governance structures is presented as a shift from the imposition of inappropriate 'top-down' strategies, towards a more democratic, spatially aware and contextualised approach which will induce 'relevance', 'efficiency', 'sustainability' and 'accountability' at the local scale (SEU, 1999).

The recent emphasis on citizen participation is also however, presented as an attempt to overcome the perceived 'democratic deficit' that is seen to be pervasive in both North (i.e. emphasis on 'democratic renewal') and South (i.e. emphasis on 'democratic consolidation'). Representative democracy is seen to be desperately in need of institutional reform as political 'disengagement' and 'apathy' form part of the discourse that increased emphasis on citizen participation is supposed to combat. This institutional reform is presented in terms of both a) the reform of institutional mechanisms of representational democracy, i.e. in terms of greater accountability in decision-making processes and b) the development of institutional mechanisms pertaining to a more participatory democratic approach. These institutional reforms are presented as a strategy to 'reconnect' citizens to governance processes, which can be seen to stem from some sort of discourse that highlights the inadequacies of the state in its ability to steer social development, alone. Gaventa (2004) notes how numerous recent empirical studies have "pointed to the gap that exists within both 'North' and 'South' between ordinary people, especially the poor, and institutions which affect their lives, especially government". He weaves together an analysis of this phenomenon in both the global 'South' and the 'North' by considering the 'democratic deficit' in both contexts.

The lack of trust in public institutions is a theme that Taylor (2003:10) also highlights, citing Nayaran's (2000:117) World Bank study, 'Voices of the Poor', which states "State institutions- whether delivering services, providing police protection or justice, or as political decision-makers- are either not accountable to anyone or are accountable only to the rich and powerful". Gaventa, is however keen to recognise that this perceived 'democratic deficit' is not merely confined to the 'South', as the relationship

between the state and the citizen is seen 'in crisis' and is empirically charted in long established representative democracies in the 'North'. He cites the U.K. and the U.S.A as two prime examples, whereby "traditional forms of political participation such as voting have gone down". There have been numerous studies conducted, looking at the increasing distrust that many citizens have of a wide range of state institutions in the 'North'. The IPPR has highlighted in the U.K. that, although in general, people are in fact interested in political issues, their lack of faith in the political process has plummeted and a feeling has grown that Britain is becoming less democratic (Clarke, 2002). Whilst similar concerns have been acknowledged in the United States, the work of Robert Putman (2000) is perhaps the most influential as regards this theme. He is keen to point out the decline in civic participation and the widening gap between citizens and state institutions that is seen to be present in the United States.

2b: Similarities in Debates and themes Throughout Various Disciplines

These participatory processes and approaches have been well documented by a variety of different observers in numerous fields and disciplines. It has been acknowledged that there are considerable conceptual and practical parallels whilst considering issues to do with community participation in 'North' and 'South' by various academics, policy makers and researchers (for example, see Taylor, 2003; Taylor, 2007; Gaventa, 2004; Bennett, 2003; Jones, 2003). Although there has been an increasing recognition of the similarities of debates in these fields, it seems as though disciplinary boundaries (i.e. development studies or urban regeneration) and geographical divisions (North and South) have hindered a thorough consideration of the path for shared learning. One of the most comprehensive bodies of literature addressing these issues emanates from studies assessing participation in development projects in the South. Jones (2003:582) in a research project looking at participation in a major urban regeneration project in Merseyside advocates the utilisation of this 'rich' experience of participatory techniques which have been common to 'Third World' development programmes for almost two decades. He maintains that although the extremely different contexts in which participation is construed, and that different meanings are attributed it, the principles that traverse North and South, are in fact surprisingly similar. This approach it is claimed will enable a fuller understanding of these approaches in relation to urban change more generally.

The shift towards a 'technocratic' approach to the study of participatory spaces can indeed be detected, and has meant that some of the rich theoretical debates that consider a range of key issues, that are currently being highlighted in the study of participatory spaces are not being utilised. For example, democratic theory has long considered 'participation' as a central tenet and many political and democratic theorists have looked at and considered a wide range of issues to do with participatory spaces. These insights, and key debates however, remain for the most part outside of reference in the empirical studies of participatory spaces which are seen to have minimal relevance in the discussion of concrete participatory spaces today.[1] As part of this broadening theoretical development, it also becomes necessary to link the study of participation which is usually considered by practice based disciplines (i.e. urban regeneration, housing, community development and development) to more general developments and issues that are currently being considered in the social sciences. The works of social theorists such as Lefebvre and Foucault have a lot to offer any study of participatory spaces (Cornwall, 2002). Whilst the latter has informed a lot of the critical examinations of participation in Urban Regeneration in the U.K. and Development Studies (see Atkinson, 1999 and Cooke and Kothari, 2001) the former has been less widely tapped into.[2]

Participatory Spaces: Genuine Empowerment or Tools of Co-option?[3]

The key debate as regards 'participation' revolves around whether commentators see these 'participatory spaces' as forums where excluded groups are able to exert some sort of increased influence as regards the distribution of resources, or whether these spaces are seen as tools of co-option by the governing powers that be. 'Optimists', (Taylor, 2003), or 'sceptical believers', (Goodlad et al, 2004) look at community involvement in participatory policies and governance structures in terms of feeding into some sort of

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[1] There are exceptions, for example, Goodlad, (2004), Gaventa, (2004), Taylor, (2003) refer to these participatory spaces with reference to different democratic models.
[2] See Cornwall's 2002 working paper 'Making Spaces, Changing Places, Situating Participation in Development' for a discussion of the relevance of Lefebvre's work whilst looking at spaces for participation. This Working Paper has had a fundamental impact on the development of this thesis.
[3] Of course it is very difficult to talk about 'participatory spaces' as a generic term, the contextual, historical, and specific elements of these participatory spaces must be taken into consideration.

'progressive project'. This is premised on the notion of providing piecemeal reform to combat social exclusion, by for example, the resourcing of disadvantaged groups, to enable them to take part in defining strategies, decision-making and more generally having an input into policy. This strategy it is hoped will penetrate the institutions of society and will lead to a more socially just outcome.

This reformist approach is however, rejected by the 'pessimists' as termed by Taylor (2003) or 'incredulous opponents (Goodlad et al, 2004), who are adamant that the structural constraints are too great to be changed in this way. Community involvement is therefore deemed as no more than a strategy of incorporation by the powers that be. This analysis is taken one step further by those pertaining to a more post-structuralist school of thought, who see participation as a tool or technology of government, whereby state sponsored regulation is enacted through these participatory spaces. This central debate seems to transcend a variety of different disciplines, and can be seen to be the crux issue in academic circles concerning a wide variety of different participatory spaces. The roots of this debate can be traced back to a) the longstanding debate in political theory concerning attitudes to reform and revolution (Goodlad et al, 2004:4) and b) whether or not a foundational approach to the social sciences is taken. There seem to be three main critiques of 'participation' in governance structures,

1. critiques *within* the 'participatory orthodoxy' whereby commentators could be said to possess a general faith in the ability of participatory processes in advancing the lot of socially excluded groups
2. critiques stemming from more structural analysis that deny the capacity of participatory processes in terms of their ability to facilitate fundamental change in favour of 'socially excluded' groups
3. critiques stemming from an anti-foundational, post-structural foucauldian analysis that see these spaces as a technique of government in the regulation of the poorest segments of society

The first group of critics can be categorised as operating broadly within the 'participatory orthodoxy'. These 'constructive' critics are generally comprised of two types of distinct commentators, those who have some sort of link to the establishment, (by way of policy funding), and those stemming from a 'New Left' premise, who see

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participatory spaces in terms of their ability to radically democratise the state, which is presumed to be materially beneficial to socially excluded groups. [4]

The first group of commentators can be characterised by the literature that looks at 'what works and why?'. In terms of a mere quantitative perspective this category of research is certainly the most plentiful, with numerous research reports operating within this terrain, discussing different methodologies and techniques of participation [see Chambers (1997) in development studies, Chanan (2003), Goodlad et al (2004) and numerous reports by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, in Urban Regeneration in the U.K including Duncan and Thomas (2000), Anastacio et al (2000), Brownill and Darke,(1998)]. This body of literature is certainly most linked to the policy and practice of participation and is generally allied to those governance bodies practising different forms of participation, i.e. through the funding and commissioning of research to look how these participatory spaces operate and can be 'improved'. Policy guidance comprises a huge component of this category of literature and its lack of theoretical depth can be explained by its essentially 'practical' orientation. Criticisms stemming from this school of thought remain circumscribed to operating *within* the participatory orthodoxy and essentially servicing the needs of a variety of different 'governance' bodies, be it The New Labour Government in the U.K or The World Bank at a transnational level. As Duncan and Thomas (2000) explicitly recognise, "we have framed our deliberations *within* the context of the government's emerging national strategy for neighbourhood renewal, 'Bringing Britain Together' (SEU, 1998). We were keen to establish what works and what does not..".

Within the camp of 'optimists', there are also those academics and commentators of the 'New Left' who see the potential of these participatory spaces as enabling some sort of progressive reformism, that could result in the transformation of the institutional arrangements of the state.[5] This perspective is characterised by a belief in the capacity of rational augmentation within these spaces to advance the lot of socially excluded groups (see for example, Pateman, 1970) and their ability to subsequently transform the institutions of the state. The basis of this group of commentators can be seen as a result of a criticism of 'actually existing democracy' and 'actually existing socialism' and

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[4] I call this group 'constructive' critics because they are essentially functioning within the participatory orthodoxy. Although they do critique elements of these spaces the focus of these criticisms are generally confined to improving certain methodologies and processes of participation. The aim of these commentators can be seen to improve the functioning of these spaces.

[5] The New Left Theorists emerged in the 1960s.

culminated in a revival of the participatory thinking of distinct commentators such as Rousseau, Mill, Marx and Gramsci. The New Left Theorists saw the road to socialism as via the democratisation of the state through increased participation. They were keen to stress the importance of a synthesis that emphasised both social equality and the protection of individual political liberties.

The literature that looks at participatory spaces from this perspective can be characterised by a belief in some degree of rationalism that sees these participatory spaces as providing some sort of platform to enable inroads to be made in favour of social justice. Fung and Wright's (2001) account of "Empowered Deliberative Democracy" (EDD) can be seen in this vein. The institutions that comprise this family are seen "to aspire to deepen the ways in which ordinary people can effectively participate in and influence policies that directly affect their lives... They have the potential to be radically democratic in their reliance on the participation and capabilities of ordinary people, deliberative because they institute reason based decision-making and empowered since they attempt to tie action to discussion". Within their family of EDD institutions is the PB process in Porto Alegre. A great deal of the literature that considers the PB process is operating from this premise, (see for example Avritzer, 2002; Abers, 1997; Fung and Wright, 2001). Ideas of deliberative democracy, therefore often comprise the basis of the theoretical construction that informs these works. From this perspective, participatory spaces are essentially seen as a means of democratising state institutions which it is presumed will give a voice to socially excluded groups who will then be able to influence the distribution of resources in their favour.

The second critique of participatory spaces is based on a more economic structural analysis and can be linked to the spatial scale of intervention. These localised spaces (i.e. neighbourhoods in terms of Area Based Initiatives) of participation are presented as essentially unable to fundamentally challenge the distinct wider (structural) socio-economic causes of social exclusion (see for example CDP, 1977; Imrie and Raco, 2003; Mayo and Craig 1995). An example of this approach is exemplified by Taylor (2003:12) who classifies this group of analysts as the 'pesimists'. 'Pessimists' see the structural constraints as overwriting any piecemeal attempt at encouraging greater inclusion through participation. Reformism, as exemplified by the previously discussed

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schools of thought will not create the sufficient inroads that are needed to challenge the current economic system in favour of socially excluded groups. Critiques stemming from this perspective have been numerous and in the U.K context have a long significant history. 'Gilding the Ghetto' (1977) the infamous Community Development Project's damning report of the then government's community development strategy, was one of the first to highlight the great ironies and contradictions of blaming deprived localities and individuals within these localities, for their own 'deprivation'. This approach emphasised the futility of attempting to heal 'communities' with a 'sticky plaster' as a response to poverty and deprivation. The causes of poverty and deprivation were acknowledged to run far deeper and wider than the locality and were seen to be intrinsic to the capitalistic system itself. More recent critics however, (Imrie and Raco, 2003; Jessop, 2002) are also keen to highlight how 'participation' is indeed symptomatic of how the welfare state is increasingly shedding its responsibility of challenging poverty and, forms part of the neo-liberal agenda, transferring this responsibility onto poor citizens to help themselves.

Perhaps the most damning critique of participation however, stems from the post-structuralist/ Foucauldian school of thought which is present throughout a variety of disciplines. It "sees community involvement promoted with rhetorical and strategic purpose as a 'technology' that has the effect of increasing state sponsored regulation, especially of the poorest people, (Cruikshank, 1994; Marinetto, 2003)...where the political narrative of community and individual responsibility is one that deliberately deflects from the causes of poverty (Imrie and Raco, 2003:30)." (Goodlad et al, 2004a:3). This perspective can be seen as being able to provide an approach which recognises the strategic value of discourse in this field. Atkinson's (1999) emphasis on the 'official discourse' of regeneration is an insightful analysis of how official discourses in this sphere can structure the functioning of these spaces. In reaction to the perceived hegemony of 'participatory development' throughout development studies and practices, Cooke and Koothari (2001) posed the question, 'Participation: The New Tyranny?'. They chart how participatory development 'systematically', 'facilitates', 'the illegitimate and /or unjust exercise of power' by developing an analysis predominantly emanating from a Foucauldian perspective (Cooke and Koothari, 2001: 4). Unlike the previous school of thought, however power from a post-structuralist perspective is not conceived in zero-sum terms. Power can be seen as a 'productive'

'enabling' force and therefore it becomes possible to see participatory spaces in terms of providing non-intended 'openings' for socially excluded groups in these spheres. Goodlad et al (2004) therefore identify an 'ambivalence' in this camp by acknowledging, that some 'pessimists' recognise that it may be possible for those 'incorporated' into these top-down initiatives to create spaces where 'new forms of resistance and ways of thinking' can flourish (Raco, 2003, 249, cited in Goodlad et al, 2004a:4).

A review of the literature concerning participatory spaces led to the development of the central research question at the heart of the study:

To What Extent do Participatory Processes within Institutionalised Governance Spaces create Political Opportunity Structures to enable Change/ Transformation in Favour of Social Justice?

Whilst seemingly pertaining to a 'realist' approach to the social sciences I will maintain that a thorough, in depth, exploration of the above question calls out for an approach that combines elements of a critical realist analysis with a more constructivist approach. This central research question recognises that participatory spaces are often presented as attempting to combat social exclusion, i.e. that these arenas are imbued with the idea of some sort of redistribution [(of power or resources) based on some sort of zero-sum analysis of power] or at least some sort of physical incorporation of socially excluded groups, that can be objectively measured. A research strategy that is able to assess the ability of these spaces to enable change/transformation in favour of social justice would therefore, at first glance be based on a 'foundational' approach to the social sciences. 'Social justice' would be used as the ethical/ moral foundation/ yardstick by which to assess these spaces. However, one must also recognise how discourses and actors conceptions and perceptions of issues to do with participation in these spheres do indeed from an important part of the social construction of that 'reality'. It therefore became necessary to utilise a twin-track strategy that recognised the importance of a wide range of key actors conceptions, and perceptions of the changes in the political opportunity structure. The realisation of the different knowledges, perspectives, conceptions that were present in these spheres led to a post-structuralist analysis of the data.[6]

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[6] Power relations in this thesis were conceptualised as 'rooted in the system of social networks' (Nash1999:24)

Community Involvement in U.K./ New Labour Urban Policy

There are various different narratives that chart community engagement and the place of participation in U.K. government regeneration initiatives (Diamond, 2000:177). Those that come from an urban regeneration/ policy background locate the role of participation in urban regeneration policy, and chart its development through City Challenge, SRB, and more recent New Labour polices, for example, the New Deal for Communities regeneration programme (See Duncan and Thomas, 2000; Carley et al, 2000; Chanan, 2003; Taylor 2000; Robinson et al 2005; Martin and Foley 2000). A second group of theorists however, are keen to unpick New Labour's third way political philosophy, and locate participation within this body of thought (See Driver and Martell, 1997; Powell, 1999; LeGrand, 1998). Some of these commentators highlight the incompatible nature of a variety of the different concepts that are seen to be central to the Third Way project (See Fitzpatrick et al, 2005 for a discussion of the tensions in an emphasis that priorities social cohesion whilst also proclaiming to pursue a strategy of social justice). Other commentators, however, are keen to contextualise how 'participation' and notions of 'active citizenship' form a key part of New Labour's, Third Way strategy of governance. These commentators, emphasise the new or novel way that community involvement is currently being 'constructed' and utilised as part of a wider discourse or technique of governance (see for example, Newman et al 2004, Schofield, 2002, Atkinson, 1999). In this section I do not intend to look at these large bodies of literature separately, however, I will identify how key elements pertaining to these specific bodies of literature influenced the subsequent research trajectory.

The first group of commentators, whose work comprises the policy literature looking specifically at community involvement in regeneration in the U.K. context, highlight various themes and issues to do with participation. The ambiguity of the place of community involvement in policy and the subsequent gap between the 'rhetoric' of participation and implementation is perhaps the biggest theme in the literature from this perspective. As Carley et al (2000:13) are keen to state, 'interpretation and implementation can often leave much to be desired'. Chanan's (2003) review of the U.K. government's guidance on community involvement in the context of Urban Renaissance and urban policy, 'Searching for Solid Foundations', highlights,

"Community involvement has been a growing aspect of urban policy for at least ten years.... However, it occupies an ambiguous position, mostly lacking specific aims and targets. There is a tendency for community involvement objectives to get swallowed up into the design objectives of other fields or to dissipate as programmes unfold." (Chanan, 2003:5). [7]

The gap between the 'rhetoric' and the 'reality' of participation is a constant theme in the literature which highlights how, despite the important place the narrative of participation occupies in this policy context, the implementation mechanisms such as concrete targets remain fundamentally absent. Community participation, in this context from *within the participatory orthodoxy* perspective, is seen as needing greater conceptual/ definitional clarity, and concrete targets. This theme, in terms of the disjuncture between the prominent narrative of participation, and lack of a systematic process leading to implementation, certainly influenced the initial research strategy in terms of the choice of the PB case study.

Foley and Martin (2000) note that the theoretical underpinnings of New Labour's commitment to community involvement are ambiguous. They give the example that many of the government's favourite policy advisors stress the necessity of marrying the notions of individual rights and personal responsibility with concepts of social justice, the local community and social cohesion. Le Grand (1998) has brought attention to what he regards as the correlations between 'community' and notions of responsibility, equality of opportunity and accountability. Whilst Powell (1999:221) documents the influence of communitarian thinking emanating from writers such as Etzioni (1995) on New Labour. The appeal of this form of communitarianism is said to stem from the connections it seeks to establish between individual choice and collective responsibility. Driver and Martell (1997:33) suggest that communitarianism "offers Labour modernisers a political vocabulary which eschews market individualism, but not capitalism; and embraces collective action, but not class or the state." This body of literature (ie. one that scrutinises the political philosophical project of New Labour) could be seen to be largely irrelevant to a study of a social programme 'on the ground' i.e. the research was not primarily concerned with how policy advisors, makers, politicians and think tanks conceptualised participation and other key concepts within New Labour discourse. However this approach indeed sensitised the research in terms

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[7] This report was commissioned on behalf of the Urban Policy Unit of the ODPM.

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of recognising the contested nature of the meanings of key concepts and their place within the wider third way discourse. As Goodlad (2004:iv) states, "Research into community involvement in ABI's might be expected to explore the extent to which key actors at area level share those views of the purpose of community involvement. But most studies take involvement as given, neither defining its meaning nor investigating what informants say it is for..". An approach therefore that scrutinised how these certain concepts were conceptualised by key actors in these arenas was deemed necessary for looking at the functioning of these spaces.

The third body of literature within this context stresses how the New Labour government has embraced the concept of participation with exceptional enthusiasm and made it a key part of its strategy of governance. From this perspective, participation, and the surrounding discourse, i.e. community, are viewed, not in terms of the associated political philosophy 'not so much [as] a descriptive concept [but] as a key construct' (Schofield, 2002:664/5). As Schofield (2002) explains in relation to his research strategy, "rather than treating community in terms of some familiar dichotomies, or by reference to politico-philosophical debates, I examine in detail how managers are actively constructing and mobilizing the discourses of community and making those conducive to the political aims of government". This approach influenced the subsequent research strategy in terms of examining exactly how key actors in these participatory spheres not only interpreted key concepts but how they more importantly utilised these concepts in strategies and techniques of governance.

Community Involvement in Porto Alegre Context

The literature looking at the PB process in Porto Alegre, tends to be more homogenous than that in the U.K. policy environment.[8] The literature looking at the PB process however essentially falls into two main camps. The first can be seen as comprising of a policy perspective which looks at how certain lessons can be learnt, and how best-practice can be transferred to other contexts and institutions of governance (see Urbal-9 reports, UN, Community Pride).[9] The second body of literature however, stems from a more political theory perspective and can be seen to be essentially concerned with

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[8]One could argue that this is due to the fact that community involvement in U.K. regeneration policy is indeed a far bigger topic than the specific PB Process in Porto Alegre.

[9] Within this body of literature I have included the numerous policy documents that circulate from the local government itself.

notions pertaining to 'democracy' and 'redistribution'. This literature often charts the historical evolution and institutional mechanisms of the process (see Abers, 1997; Avritzer, 2002; Menegat 2002; Novy et al, 2005). Both bodies of literature however, do seem united in their general admiration for the process and critical perspectives are noticeably absent.

The PB process (in contrast to the place participation occupies in U.K. urban policy) is indeed highlighted in the literature as providing a 'systematic' process of participation from decision-making to implementation. As Utzig, (1999) explains, "it seems to be a concrete process of participatory democracy, which effectively involves many citizens in public discussion and decision-making".[10] It was a recognition of this element of the PB process that provided the impetus for this comparative study. The process is often presented as a 'model' of participation in a variety of different arenas, from the UN's 2003 annual report, which emphasises the PB as a "model of public policy", to Salford's Community Pride's development of a PB model based on this experience. Or as Novy and Leubolt (2005) highlight, "lessons for social innovation in Europe can be drawn from this concrete state initiative which links civil society to the local state that is seeking to become more open." The initial rationale for this comparative study fell within the boundaries of what U.K. policy and regeneration could learn from this 'successful' model of participation which provided a complete process, from decision-making to implementation and which consequently encouraged a greater number of people to participate.

The second body of literature is often informed by an approach which takes into consideration different elements of democratic theory, from more liberal conceptions (see Utzig, 1999 for a discussion of the PB process in relation to democratic legitimacy) to civic republican ideas (see Abers 1997) to approaches which stress the deliberative democratic nature of the process (see Avritzer 2002; Fung and Wright 2001). Perhaps the dominant themes addressed by this literature could be categorised in terms of a) the familiar means/ end distinction long debated in democratic theory and b) discussions of different democratic 'models'. The PB process is often discussed with reference to civic republican ideals that stress the 'developmental' benefits of the process in terms of positive effects on individuals and on the process itself. Instrumentally, the PB has also

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[10] For a full discussion of the systematic process/ annual cycle of participation see Navarro (1996), Genro and Souza (1997), Fedozzi (1997) and Santos (1999).

become well known as a form of redistributive distributive justice in the process of allocation of public resources (Santos 1998).

These key elements within democratic theory could be seen to have influenced the research strategy in terms of providing some sort of conceptual framework that was able to explain these key elements of participation that were identified in the empirical research in both case studies. A conceptual framework that was able to explain elements of both case studies was necessary to provide the basis for some sort of comparative study. It is to the elaboration of this framework to which we now turn in terms of a) combining a social and political analysis, b) democratic theory and c) ideas of power.

2c: Structure, Agency, Change and Transformation: Combining a Social and Political Analysis

An integrated social and political analysis seemed to be the only approach which provided the necessary conceptual tools that would enable an adequate assessment of the dynamic relationship and interaction between the state/ governance entity and civil society (i.e. the conceptual heart of the study) in both case studies. Whislt some studies have utilised this framework (to some degree) to assess participation in regeneration projects and social policy (see Newman, 2004, Taylor, 2003). These studies unfortunately remain isolated and the majority of studies tend to operate *within* disciplinary boundaries. Newman et al (2004:217) in an article on 'Public Participation and Collaborative Governance' in the U.K. regeneration context, stress the necessity of an approach encompassing both the political and the sociological by combining governance analysis with a social movement perspective.

A Governance Approach

Governance theory implicitly influenced the research strategy in numerous ways. The academic shift from the study of government to governance via partnership, not only forms part of the 'new' physical context in which these participatory spaces are operating, but, can be seen to theoretically frame the debate in terms of

transformations in the modern state. Governance can be seen as a portmanteau concept encapsulating various different stories and narratives about recent transformations of the modern state and its ability/ inability to govern. The vast amount of literature concerned with issues of governance is extremely diverse, from the 'hollowing out' of the nation state, (Rhodes, 1997) to the emergence of multi-level governance (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Traditional approaches to hierarchical government (i.e. direct control) are presented as outdated in a context where extremely complex social problems (i.e. social exclusion) demand more 'joined up' ways of working. Horizontal networks incorporate a wide range of different actors, including the voluntary and community sector, local authority, and business in a vast range of partnerships. The aim is collaborative governance in an attempt to solve a vast array of issues be they low educational achievement or social exclusion throughout various different levels of decision making.

This approach is therefore useful in enabling a thorough analysis of the relationship between state actors and civil society relations in these new polity/governance configurations that demand citizen input (i.e. the PB process and the NDC regeneration programme). It therefore provided the overarching framework for both empirical case studies in terms of institutional analysis.[11] Officials, practitioners and managers within these case studies were therefore credited with the power to interpret and influence substantially the participatory processes at the neighbourhood level. In the case of PRNDC this meant that the interpretation of national government policy by managers, officials and practitioners had to be scrutinised, whilst conceptions and perceptions of the participatory process by these key players had to be acknowledged as having a substantial effect on the institutional mechanisms of participation. In the PB case study, the conception of the process and implementation was developed at the local level, i.e. those who had been involved in the conception of the process were also involved in the construction of the process. The key actors that I interviewed in this case study therefore also had a substantial influence / impact on the development of the participatory process albeit in a different way.

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[11] 'Institution' following Mouleart et al (2005:1976) "is used here in its most general meaning – i.e. as a set of laws, regulations, organisations, habitus – that is formal and informal socialisation mechanisms and processes that have attained a certain stability and/or regulatory over time in the form of habits, laws, rules of behaviour and sanctioning, as well as organisations as insitutionalised multimember agents."

The governance perspective has however, been criticised for underestimating the capacity of the state as an actor and not recognising the authority/ power that the state (as a homogenous entity) still wields, albeit in a different guise (see Jessop, 2000). This has important implications especially for the PRNDC case study as New Labour is increasingly accused of exerting more centralist tendencies in terms of enforcing managerialist techniques of governance embodied by targets, audits and inspections. New Labour's hegemony has been highlighted by several commentators as the political project of the Third Way is implemented throughout social policy (See Davies, 2004 etc.). A governance perspective therefore characterised by an emphasis on a 'differentiated polity' which credits local level actors with significant power to interpret and implement national level policies therefore began to look circumspect.[12]

An analysis of the empirical data, however, also called out for a method enriched by a post-structuralist perspective on governmentality. This proved necessary as it was recognised that "an analysis of power relations within a society cannot be reduced to the study of a series of institutions not even to a study of all those institutions that would merit the name "political", power relations are rooted in the system of social networks"(Foucault, 2000:24). A deeper analysis that encompassed an analysis of social relations, in terms of power and knowledge was therefore required. This approach recognised the subtleties at play, acknowledged the deeply entrenched frames of reference, yet provided an analysis that was capable of recognising the different strategies of resistance present in these spheres.

Social Movement Theory: Political Opportunity Structure

Newman (2004:209) is keen to recognise that "in order to understand the dynamics of change we need to inflect and enrich governance theory with concepts drawn from other perspectives". This approach in terms of participatory spaces has meant that analysis of these arenas must essentially take into consideration not only the institutionalisation of these spaces but essentially a more reflexive actor orientated perspective that can recognise the dynamic of change. The concept of 'Political Opportunity Structure' as developed in Social Movement Theory is extremely helpful when analysing the

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[12] Due to the fact that the PB is a local initiative, the idea of National level governance constraining local policy development was not such a central issue, although, one cannot deny the symbiosis of these two levels.

'interaction between social and political agency and existing institutions' and the fundamental dynamic of change (Newman et al, 2004:209). Although developed essentially in relation to Latin American social movements the concept has begun to be utilised in looking at participation in different governance structures in the U.K. (see for example Newman, 2004; Purdue, 2001; Taylor, 2003). Tarrow (1994) developed the concept to analyse the degree of openness or closure of political access to social movements and political protests. Newman et al (2004) builds on the work of Della Porta and Diani (1999) in examining the potential and problems associated with the concept of Political Opportunity Structure. Originally the concept was developed from a 'realist', 'objectivist' point of view that would assess the creation of new opportunities for community participation by state agencies, this approach however fails to recognise the importance of examining 'the social construction of that reality'. It therefore becomes necessary to look at how changes in the political opportunity structure are perceived and conceived by the whole range of actors that are present in these arenas, i.e. community representatives, managers, and practitioners. Following an approach emanating from a more cultural studies perspective it therefore becomes extremely important to look at "how the meanings that actors ascribe to participation influence both the processes and outcomes of citizen engagement" (ibid). As Newman (2004:209) highlights,

> "The cultural codes and representations suggested for example, in the analysis of official constructions of the participating public...create a symbolic dimension to the political opportunity structure, a dimension that may create- or limit- the capacity of deliberative forums to engage with questions of difference and engage with politics of presence. At the same time this symbolic dimension is also creating a shift in the sources of legitimacy on which public bodies draw."

Taylor (2003:175) is keen to emphasise how more generally "there is much to learn from social movement theory in developing strategies for change from below". Whilst Purdue (2001:2214) in his article looking at community involvement in the U.K. context is keen to point out that, "Community activism tends to resemble an 'urban social movement' (Castells, 1983), relying on a network structure and lacking the clearly defined institutions of power and legitimacy of a political party". New Social Movements have been at the forefront in the theorising of 'change/transformation' in Latin America and one can see how for some commentators, New Social Movements have become some sort of vehicle to an undefined utopia. This needs to be explicitly recognised, as it begins to explain increased usage theoretically in the U.K. regeneration

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literature. In general, this body of theory in my study could be seen to be much more readily applicable to the Porto Alegre case study. As Newman (2004:220) recognises in her study, "empirically its relevance appears to be limited since only a minority of the forums we studied has direct links to such movements". Although its relevance in the PRNDC case study could be questioned at a conceptual level Social Movement Theory does seem to provide some extremely important insights as regards a variety of elements whilst considering these spaces. Social Movement theory is essentially concerned with the various different elements of cycles of political protest, and therefore its applicability to state initiated forms of participation has been queried. The sensibility inherent, however, in this large body of thought examining the contentious dynamic of independence versus incorporation (a major empirical theme in both case studies) was seen to be useful at the level of explanation of the social processes at play in these contexts.

Theories of Change

In a comparative study of this type it becomes extremely necessary to recognise at the outset the two different conceptions of 'change' that are inherently embedded in the two different case studies: in terms of a) a government social programme developed at the national level, however implemented at the local level and b) a governance structure that was developed as a 'radical' alternative (yet compatible with) representative democracy, developed and implemented at the local level.[13] The first is based on a 'social engineering' – reformist conception of change, i.e. change based on incorporating those 'socially excluded' into the dominant prevailing cultural context, however the latter, conceptualises change in terms of transforming the prevailing contextual conditions by a redistribution of material resources. As Pawson and Tilly (1997:76) are keen to point out,

> "We acknowledge a self-imposed limitation on the nature of change envisaged in most social programmes and a corresponding limitation in the explanatory ambitions of realist evaluation. Social programmes are about 'social engineering', 'piecemeal social engineering'..main exploratory implication, which is that in most social programmes, there is no significant expectation that the prevailing contextual conditions will be transformed. A social programme, unlike a social movement,

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[13] If these differences are not recognised at the outset the central research question could be interpreted as invalid.

> does not premise or promise change on the overthrow of the existing cultural order and social organisation."

Although I am not 'evaluating' the effectiveness of the social programme in terms of its ability to 'regenerate' the area (this is what the National Evaluation is doing) I am looking at the processes, discourses and institutional mechanisms of community engagement and participation throughout the social programme and its relationship to the notion of 'change'/ 'transformation'. What are the aims of community participation in the programme, and how can these be linked to change/ transformation in favour of social justice? One can see that often those more radical critiques of community participation/ engagement in the U.K context are frequently premised on a notion of change that is beyond the conception of change inherent in the regeneration programme. For example, some interpretations of community engagement/ participation go beyond the scope of change that is circumscribed by a 'reformist' social programme that has no intention of changing the prevailing socio-cultural conditions. One can begin to see how the ambiguity of the definition of community engagement/ participation feeds into this tension and lack of specification inevitably means that either 1) hopes are dashed by unrealistic expectations of social change/transformation or 2) people become involved and participate in existing structures/ co-option and prevailing social conditions/ contexts remain unchanged.

In the PB context however, the initial notion of change on which the process was constructed encapsulated a much more radical conception of change. This can be seen to have resulted from the production of the participatory sphere in terms of a fusion between the P.T. (The Workers Party) government and the demands of elements of civil society to be included into budgetary decision-making. As Novy and Leubolt (2005:2026) comment in relation to one notion of change that was embodied in elements of the P.T. in the late 1970s,

> "...the socialist left insisted on the importance of overcoming capitalism as a prerequisite for sustainable and radical change. A power strategy was pursued that saw the democratisation of the state as a gradual transformation from, and annihilation of the capitalist state."

This conception of change could not be attributed to all elements of the P.T. as some factions saw the existence of participatory democracy as compatible with representative

democracy as well as with the capitalist state. The predominant conception of change however, encompassed the idea that the 'contextual conditions' would be changed via material redistribution. Different ideas of change (in the two case studies) could certainly be linked to different 'democratic models' and the place of participation within these democratic theories is therefore discussed in the following section.

2d: The Democratic Nature of Participatory Spaces

This section will crucially deal with issues associated with the democratic nature of these spaces. The context, in terms of the shift to governance, will be explained with reference to whether or not this transition and the subsequent development of these participatory spaces can be seen to enhance or indeed undermine notions usually associated with democracy. These developments will be essentially discussed within a political democratic theoretical framework, which considers how different commentators' interpretations of democracy influence their subsequent assessment. Those authors pertaining to a more liberal, democratic, representative democratic framework look at these spaces in terms of concepts usually associated with this model of democracy, i.e. representation, accountability and legitimacy, and often come to the conclusion that these spaces essentially undermine ideals traditionally associated with this 'democratic model'. However, those pertaining to a more participatory democratic framework, influenced by civic republicanism see these participatory spaces as enhancing and 'deepening' the democratic content, by looking at the positive 'developmental' effects that participation often induces in terms of both the individual and on the process of participation. This line of thinking has greatly influenced commentators emanating from the New Left perspective and those that consider these spaces in terms of their deliberative democratic content.

Participation in new arenas of governance, social policies etc. have been portrayed as crucially enhancing 'local democracy' and as critically undermining it (Shaw and Martin 2000). A vast body of literature in the social sciences is quick to recognise a democratic deficit in the context of multi-level, multi-purpose governance partnerships. In the U.K. context, numerous commentators have highlighted the loss of mechanisms of democratic accountability, whether through the eroding of powers pertaining to local

authorities, the growth of unaccountable private governance networks, the increased reliance on non-elected bodies in the act of governance. As Rhodes (2000:77) highlights, 'accountability disappears in the intricacies of the webs of institutions which make up governance'. Or as Foley and Martin, (2000:487) point out, "the emphasis on direct public participation also seems to be at odds with traditional notions of representative local democracy". Some commentators however, are keen to see how the shift to governance can indeed broaden and deepen democracy beyond shallow concepts of representative democracy. As Magnette (2003:144) points out,

> "contrary to the classic form of 'government', contemporary governance is not imprisoned in closed institutions and is not the province of professional politicians. Though rarely defined with precision, it refers to patterns of decision-making taking place in a larger set of institutions with a broader range of actors and processes. One of the ambitions of those who defend this new concept is indeed to enlarge the accepted notion of civic participation beyond the well-established and constantly declining procedures of representative democracy."

Participation in Democratic Political Theory

The appropriate role of the public as regards their participation in the democratic system has been conceptualised by democratic theorists in a variety of different ways; from merely electing political representatives every few years, to extensive day to day citizen participation in decision-making in government structures. Representative (or liberal) democracy and participatory (or direct) democracy tend to conceptually juxtapose the role of public participation. This dichotomy is often referred to in the literature as representing the fundamental axis of democratic theory as regards participation (Woodcock, 1971; Barber, 1984; Dryzek, 1990). Participation in democratic theory can to some degree be seen to have occupied extremely distinct places, from constituting the fundamental element of democracy, (as in ancient Greek notions) to more recent modern elitist conceptualisations that see mass public participation as a potential threat to the democratic system. An understanding of the very different places participation occupies in different democratic theories, provides an essential backdrop for a discussion of how these participatory spaces were differently conceived, perceived and interpreted by key players and community representatives in the empirical research. How different theories and elements of democratic models are invoked, implicitly and explicitly by key actors and community representatives within these spheres was seen to have subsequent effects on the functioning of thee spaces. I will not attempt to provide

an exhaustive account of this debate within political democratic theory, but will trace and track the key theoretical developments that can be seen to be relevant to the subsequent empirical research findings.

Liberal Democratic Elitist Interpretation

Pateman (1970:1) highlights how in current 'orthodox' elite democratic theory popular 'participation' is presented as a threat to democracy. This is explained in terms of the preoccupation of elitist democratic theorists to revise the 'so-called classical theorists' in terms of the important place that 'participation' occupies within democratic theory. As Barber (1984) describes,

> "Liberal democracy, was to be sure, an attempt to adapt pure democracy to the realities of governing in a large scale nation-state. Pure democracy suggested a form of government in which all of the people governed themselves in all public matters all of the time; such a form could hardly be expected to function effectively in a nation of continental proportions with millions of citizens. Representative democracy therefore substituted for the pure principle a definition of democracy as a form of government in which some of the people, chosen by all, govern in all public matters some of the time." (Barber, 1984:xiv).

One of the earliest modern political theorists to elaborate on and advocate a specifically representative form of democracy was Joseph Schumpeter (1943). His model was developed as a reaction against what he termed 'classical' democratic theory, which he accused of being imbued with normative democratic ideals that were seen to hinder any kind of 'realistic' 'empirical' assessment of democracy. This shift towards a more 'scientific', 'objective', 'empirical' approach to the study of politics was presented as a shift away from the 'value laden' approaches of earlier democratic theorists, and therefore sought to redraw and reframe the crucial 'means'/ 'end' debate that had long been at the heart of democratic theory. He denied that democracy could be associated with any 'ideals' or 'ends' and stressed the definition of democracy in terms of method; "Democracy is a particular *method*, that is to say, a certain type of institutional arrangement for arriving at political – legislative and administrative decisions" (Schumpeter, 1943:242).

As Pateman (1970: 4) recognises, Schumpeter's principal criticism of the 'classical' democratic theorists was that "the central participatory and decision-making role of the

people rested on empirically unrealistic foundations". He therefore proposed a revised central axis of democratic theory which placed emphasis on the 'competition [of] potential decision-makers, for the people's vote'. Democracy therefore became re-defined as, "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote" (Schumpeter, 1943:269). Citizen participation therefore became relegated and circumscribed to electing representatives every couple of years, whilst the main focus of democratic theory shifts towards preoccupation with elite decision-makers. This redefinition at the heart of democratic theory has had a substantial impact on subsequent democratic theorists including Berelson, et al, (1954); Dahl, (1956); Satori, (1962) and Eckstein (1966) who built on his work in the following decades. While each of these theorists has their own unique outlook and emphasis, their common thread was the focus on voting as the only appropriate method for citizens to assert power or influence in a democracy (Pateman, 1970:7).

Emanating from within an elitist, liberal conception of democratic theory, regime theory (See Elkin, 1987; Stone, 1989) is perhaps the most common frame of reference in assessments of regeneration partnerships in the U.K. As Davies (2002:302) explains, "regime theory purports to explain how and why local authorities and business elites collaborate in informal networks and generate growth." It is therefore best utilised to explain the properties inherent in local authority/ business elite relations. Some scholars have adapted the main tenets of regime theory to try to explain the involvement of residents and the 'community' [i.e. not the local authority and not local business] in these partnerships (see for example Smith and Beazley, 2000, 'Progressive Regimes, Partnerships and the Involvement of Local Communities: A Framework for Evaluation'). I will argue that this approach is not adequate to consider the participation of the ordinary citizen in governance for two principal reasons. Firstly, elite democratic theory is keen to deny the rich classical democratic theoretical tapestry that has long considered the participation of the citizen in various decision-making forums. Secondly, an approach emanating from a pluralist, 'interest' based perspective places too much emphasis on the 'ends' of participation, in terms of the outputs and the outcomes. This approach therefore, assesses these spaces in term of the physical outcomes that socially excluded groups could gain from their involvement in the participatory arena. This however tends to ignore the crucial 'developmental' aspects of these arenas in terms of process, which is indeed recognised by earlier democratic theorists and is deemed a

crucial element of participation by those emanating from a community development perspective.

Concepts associated with representative democracy, however i.e. representation, accountability and legitimacy have been highlighted in the literature looking at participation in both case studies. For example, in the regeneration literature in the U.K, different issues of representation are often highlighted as problematic. As Foley and Martin, (2000:486) highlight, "community representatives are often atypical precisely because unlike most people, they are willing to become involved". The literature in the U.K. case study is keen to recognise how 'communities' are essentially diverse and are not homogenous and how participation in regeneration partnerships often fails to reflect this diverse reality. Exclusion of certain groups is a common theme in the literature. Fitzpatrick et al (1998) look specifically at the difficulties faced by young people in terms of ability to influence regeneration partnerships. Edwards, (2001) looks at the representation of disabled people within the regeneration agenda, highlighting their general absence. Brownill and Darke (1998) however, looked at gender and ethnic diversity in local regeneration strategies and conclude that although women and minority ethnic groups are often over represented in the areas targeted by regeneration policies, race and gender do not form part of policy strategy at any significant level. The barriers to participation experienced by women and members of minority ethnic groups are also charted. Barriers such as lack of confidence, economic discrimination and domestic responsibilities are highlighted as hindering the participation of women whilst stereotyping and instances of language and cultural differences are seen to discourage ethnic minorities from participating (Goodlad et al, 2004:24). Who is involved in the PB process has also been discussed in the literature looking at representation throughout the process. Cidade's biannual surveys 'Who is the Public of the Participatory Budgeting?' highlights how despite women being the majority group among the participants in the Plenary meetings, "the percentage of surveyed women elected councillors at some moment of the PB's history calls attention, since women effectively have never been the majority in the PB council"(2003:187). The Cidade survey also highlights representation in terms of race, and concludes, "one can say that the black ethnic group more than preserves its representation in the PB, including among D.A (Residents Associations) managers, delegates and councillors', although it is recognised that there is 'a slight trend of drop among the latter" (2003:18).

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Issues associated with accountability and legitimacy are also highlighted in both bodies of literature, for example, Fitzpatrick et al (1998) highlight how lack of democratic structures of accountability to the wider constituency of young people proved problematic in the U.K. This theme is echoed throughout the literature and wider accountability is seen to be in tension with the current policy emphasis on leadership in this context (Taylor, 2003:132). In the PB case study the institutional link of accountability from the plenaries, to the delegates, to the councillors and back to the resident's association is highlighted as being the organisational backbone of the process. Utzig (1999:18) explains, how "the wide process of consultation and popular negotiation that precedes the formal definition and execution of the projects assure much more legitimacy to the decisions and institutions that made them...participatory budgeting makes a bridge that reduces a gap between the society and the state institutions..". Legitimacy is also identified in the U.K literature as to some degree being linked to instrumental outcomes, as Goodlad et al (2004:40) describe, "most authors acknowledge that community activists might be motivated by the desire for instrumental gains from their involvement". She later goes on to highlight how through the process of participation, "the outcomes of democratic political processes – decisions- are accorded legitimacy since they reflect the interests of those who participated in the process of decision-making and in a democracy of equal citizens that should mean all have their interests represented." (ibid:42). This theme is highlighted in the PB literature; Utzig (1999:3) looks at 'to what extent PB effectively represents an advance in terms of the principles of democratic legitimacy" and echoes Goodlad et al (2004) in stating that "this principle expresses the idea of self-government of a given community. I mean the more an association is governed by the public deliberation of its members (Cohen, 1997) the more it receives the principle of democratic legitimacy". These issues related to the more 'liberal' representative democratic issues pertained to both case studies, as did the more participatory democratic interpretation. It is to this democratic model to which I now turn.

Participatory Democratic Interpretation

Pateman (1970) formed part of the New Left theorists, who in the 1960s and 1970s sought to make a decisive shift from the elitist democratic theorists and reinstate the central role of participation in democratic theory. Although participatory democracy was not a new concept - its roots dated back to the 18th century in the writings of

philosophers such as Jean Jacques Rousseau (1762), William Godwin (1793) and John Stewart Mill (1860) - the New Left theorists saw that the participatory traditions of democracy had to be remodelled to be applied to modern (and post-modern) government institutions. The idea of a 'developmental democracy' which highlighted the role of democratic institutions in terms of providing 'a formation of an active and involved citizenry', has received both a radical (in the works of Rousseau) with a new perspective on rights and duties of citizens, and a liberal interpretation (in the works of John Stuart Mill) (Held, 1987:72/3). Mill, Rousseau and Gramsci all wrote about the developmental benefits that would be gained by both the individuals who participate within the participatory arenas, and the impact on the processes of participation itself. The impact of these spaces from this perspective is therefore, less concerned with the instrumental benefits i.e. the impact on substantive decisions that are taken in these spheres. Gains are however seen in terms of personal development, trust in institutions of government, social cohesion and the acceptance of collective decisions (Goodlad et al, 2004a:6). Barber (1984:151) terms participatory democracy, 'strong democracy' and defines it in the following way,

> "Strong democracy...is self-government by citizens rather than representative government in the name of citizens. Active citizens govern themselves directly here, not necessarily at every level and in every instance, but frequently enough and in particular when basic policies are being decided and when significant power is being deployed. Self government is carried out through institutions designed to facilitate on-going civic participation in agenda setting, deliberation, legislation and policy implementation."

In a range of guises, various different elements of the republican conception of democracy can be seen as either influencing or at least being present within a range of issues that are relevant whilst looking at contemporary participatory spaces. Commentators emanating from this perspective have analysed the PB process in Porto Alegre (Avritzer, 2002, see his notion of 'Participatory Publics') whilst 'Habermasean ideals are recognised to pervade much of the space making that has taken place to enhance participation in development' (Cornwall 2000:5). One can also see how ideals imbued in the current discourse of participation and community engagement in the U.K. regeneration context, echo/ reflect traces and elements of issues and ideas discussed within this body of theory. For example, notions associated with community development, community capacity building, active citizenship, and a whole host of other concepts and associated policies seem to invoke ideas that have long been

discussed by the civic republican tradition. For example, as Abers (1997) recognises, Rousseau's ideas can be seen to have fundamentally influenced modern day reflections on participatory democracy, especially those emanating from the communitarian school. It therefore becomes necessary to look at these ideas in depth, in order to assess how current discourses of participation indeed evoke and utilise ideas related to these conceptions of democracy.

The modern (post-classical) theory of participatory democracy started with Jean Jacques Rousseau who could be seen as perhaps the 'theorist par excellence of participation' (Pateman, 1970:22). For Rousseau, citizen participation was essential to ensure equitable decision-making and good government, however perhaps the most important aspect of participation in decision making, was the education of the citizen. It is this focus on the 'developmental' relationship between 'the working of institutions and the psychological qualities and attitudes of individuals interacting within them' that crucially distinguishes theories of participatory or 'developmental' democracy from other democratic theories. According to Pateman (1970:24) "Rousseau's ideal system is designed to develop responsible, individual social and political action through the effect of the participatory process". Citizens would indeed participate in all decisions of general concern whilst conclusions would be reached via consensus. One of the central ideas of the Social Contract is that 'the ruled should be the rulers' (Held, 1987: 75). As Pateman (1970:22) explains, "laws, not men, should rule, but an even better formulation of the role of participation is that men are to be ruled by the logic of the operation of the political situation that they themselves had created". As Held (1987:75) points out,

> "In Rousseau's account, the idea of self-rule is posited as an end in itself; a political order offering opportunities for participation in the arrangement of public affairs should not just be a state, but rather the formation of the type of society: a society in which the affairs of the state are integrated into the affairs of ordinary citizens. (see The Social Contract, 82 and 114, and for a general account, Book 3, chs, 1-5)."

Thus Rousseau's conception of the relationship between state and civil society is completely opposed to the post-Machiavellian and post-Hobbesian neat separation or distinction of these realms. Instead through the educative process citizens will see that there is very little conflict between the demands of the public and private realms. The Social Contract that Rousseau describes in his ideal polity, cannot therefore, be something inherited from the past, but must be renewed and revisited continuously by

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all citizens (Abers, 1997).[14] This idea can be seen to be embodied in the PB process, as an inbuilt part of the process consists of self-assessment by community representatives. Rousseau considered his participatory system to be "self-sustaining" in that once it is established, the system helps to further develop the skills that are necessary to maintain and constantly improve the system. Rousseau suggested that the experience of the participation process would result in the citizen being more likely to accept whatever decisions, laws or policies are created through the process (Pateman, 1970:27).

Mill is also accredited with developing the theory of participatory democracy in terms of its developmental effects, although one can see how his theory can be seen in a quite a different light to the 'radical developmental democracy' that was developed by Rousseau. He certainly reinforces Rousseau's thoughts on the 'educative function' of participation whilst also developing a crucial element of participatory democracy in terms of adapting it to a modern day industrial society, by highlighting the importance of participation at the local level. He does however emphasise, how representative democracy is desirable at the large territorial level. He stresses how participation at the local level is crucial where "the real educative effect of participation occurs", and where "the issues dealt with affect the individual and his everyday life" (Pateman, 1970:31). It is only through this participation at the local level that individuals can develop the necessary skills, knowledge, understanding and morals required to fulfil the potential participation of universal suffrage government at the national level. He did however, fundamentally reject Rousseau's emphasis on consensus, and with it the view of an essentially homogenous society. Instead he stressed the positive driving force of diversity, individuality and conflicting points of view. The "tyranny of the majority" in a democratic system was seen as something to be fearful of, and therefore he stressed the necessity to protect the interests and ideas of minority groups. Mill's thoughts about participatory democracy must however, be seen in light of his wider political philosophy which along with James Mill and Bentham, emphasised the 'natural' state of society. The education of the masses was seen as essential to instil the kind of 'responsible' participation of the masses. He saw no contradiction between government

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[14] Rousseau has been widely criticised for developing a model that can be seen to have 'tyrannical' implications (e.g. see Berlin, 1969:162/4). At the root of this critique lies the charge that the interest of the majority will always prevail and this could be seen to the detriment of the individual, 'the sovereignty of the people' could be seen to have negative implications for 'the sovereignty of the individual' (Berlin, 1969:163).

by an educated elite and his emphasis on the role of education through participation in decision-making at the local level. In fact it seems as though Mill saw participation as a means to "individual moral development", the promotion of "public spiritedness" and it has even been suggested that Mill saw participation as way of 're-educating' the lower classes to adopt bourgeois values and instil a sense of responsibility in matters concerning the state (Blakely, 2001).

Abers (1997:46) recognises how since the 1960s the New Left Theorists developed a body of work that arose from a simultaneous critique of 'actually existing democracy' and 'actually existing socialism'. They utilised the work of Rousseau, Mill, Marx and Gramsci to look at issues of participation as the shortcomings of "existing socialism" and "actually existing liberal democracy" in involving ordinary citizens in day to day decision-making. Participation was seen as a vehicle to 'empower' ordinary people and they saw no dichotomy between combining representative and direct democratic systems. Social equality and political liberty were seen as compatible goals, as Abers (1997) explains,

> "They envision a society that preserves the liberal values of tolerance, diversity and civic autonomy, while making special efforts to help those disadvantaged by class, race or gender, to gain greater influence over public decision making."(ibid).

These theorists therefore see participation as principally serving two prime functions in terms of a) instrumental and b) developmental aims. Firstly, participatory spaces are conceived as providing an increased opportunity for excluded groups to increase their control over the state. Direct democratic forums open and provide 'new' arenas where excluded groups can have access to the state (which they would not otherwise have) and have input into decision-making linked to their interests that would usually be delegated to representatives. As Young (1990:92) highlights, "Instrumentally participatory processes are the best way for citizens to ensure that their own needs and interests will be voiced and will not be dominated by other interests."

The 'developmental' element of direct democracy is also however invoked by these theorists who state that participation helps excluded groups gain more control over the state and makes it more accountable to their interests by providing an important educative environment whereby people gain skills, knowledge and organising

capabilities. These ideas can be seen to have fundamentally influenced academics looking at current 'real' deliberative democratic experiments, from Fung and Wright's 'Empowered Deliberative Democracy", to Avrtizer's 'Participatory Publics'. Developmental democracy is often therefore portrayed as 'empowering' participants within these spheres. To consider these elements, however a closer look at how power is conceptualised is therefore necessary.

2e: Spaces for Transformation? Power Relations and the Practice of Participation

The conceptual crux concerning the majority of research looking at community participation -be it in governance structures, regeneration partnerships, development projects or a whole host of other initiatives - can essentially be related to the issue of power. 'Empowerment' can be seen as a concept that has been imbued with strategic purpose and forms a large component of the general discourse of 'participation'. How power is conceived seems to be one of the most fundamental determinants in the literature that impacts on assessments of the influence that community representatives are able to wield in these spheres. The various research strategies that are employed to examine power relations within these participatory spheres focus on different elements, components and social relations within these spheres as regards to how power is conceived. For, example, whether power is seen in zero-sum terms or as a more fluid contingent force that can be enabling and productive is a fundamental defining element in an examination of whether these spaces are considered to enable socially excluded groups to enable change/ transformation in favour of social justice.

Lukes (1974) Three Dimensions of Power

The literature looking at participation in regeneration structures and development often uses Lukes' (1974) three views of power as a starting point in the discussion. His seminal work, 'Power: A Radical View' charts three different conceptions of power, (liberal, reformist and radical) and their subsequent different strategies for researching these issues. Taylor (2003:88) neatly summarises these three dimensions,

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1. In the first dimension, the overt resolution of conflict between two or more conflicting positions, A has power over B (the power to command).

2. In the second dimension, A dictates the agenda and excludes B's issues from consideration (power holders act as gatekeepers and filters).

3. In the third dimension, B internalises A's conception of power; power holders mould the way the rest of us think about what is and what is not possible. Structures of power are accepted and internalised without question or even recognition.

The first conception of power, 'the one-dimensional view', which is often conflated with the 'pluralist' view of power, can be seen to 'involve a focus on behaviour' (1974:15) and decision making and essentially stems from a liberal conception of interests. As Polsby (1963), in an examination of the community power literature writes, "In the pluralist approach...an attempt is made to study specific outcomes in order to determine who actually prevails in community decision-making." The link between preferences and behaviour is assumed to be concurrent and therefore one can study preferences by examining actions (Lukes, 1974:14). This can be observed in an arena where "there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation" (1974:15). The focus of research from this perspective, must be concerned with behaviour, decision-making, (key) issues, observable (overt) conflict and (subjective) interests, as seen as policy preferences revealed by political participation (1974:25).

The 'behavioural focus' of this first view of power was however, critiqued by Bachrach and Baratz (1962) in their article, 'The Two Faces of Power'. They claim that power has essentially two faces, the first correctly identified by the pluralists, however they are keen to recognise a second dimension of power which can be linked to the issue of agenda setting,

> "Of course power is exercised when A participates in the making of decisions that affect B. Power is also exercised when A devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only these issues which are comparatively innocuous to A. To the extent that A succeeds in doing this, B is

prevented, for all practical purposes, from bringing to the fore any issues that might in their resolution be seriously detrimental to A's set of preferences." (1962:7).

They highlight attention to the fact that some potential issues never actually make it into the decision-making arena, i.e. "some issues are organised into politics while others are organised out".   This critique of the first conception of power therefore, encompasses questions "of control of the agenda of politics and the ways in which potential issues are kept out of the policy process" (Lukes, 1974:21).   Bachrach and Baratz (1962) bring the idea of 'the mobilization of bias' into the analysis of power, and explain it as,

> "a set of predominant values, beliefs, rituals, and institutional procedures ('rules of the game') that operate systematically and consistently to the benefit of certain persons and groups at the expense of others. Those who benefit are placed in a preferred position to defend and promote their vested interests. More often than not, the 'status quo defenders' are a minority or elite group within the population in question. Elitism, however, is neither foreordained nor omnipresent.." (1962:43-4).

Therefore, Bachrach and Baratz (1962) essentially widen the concept of interests from the pluralist analysis which circumscribes 'interests' to policy preferences displayed by 'the behaviour of all citizens who are assumed to be *within* the political system' (Lukes, 1974:20) to an analysis that encompasses consideration of the 'preferences exhibited by the behaviour of those who are partly or wholly *excluded* from the political system' (ibid, my emphasis).   They were keen to recognise how in participatory spaces, "decisions are prevented from being taken on potential issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests, seen as embodied in express policy preferences and sub-political grievances"(Lukes, 1974:20).   This conception of power however, is still founded on the belief that 'grievances' are observable, i.e. that those involved are essentially conscious of a) their 'interests' and b) that their interests are being marginalised or excluded from the decision-making/ participatory arena.

Lukes (1974) however, is keen to stress the limited nature of this second dimension of power, and terms it a 'qualified' critique.   'Interests' are presumed to be both 'consciously articulated' and 'observable' whilst "it is assumed that non-decision-making is a form of decision-making".   Therefore this 'qualified' critique of a behavioural focus of power, focuses on decision-making and non-decision making, (key) issues, observable (overt or covert) conflict, (subjective) interests, seen as policy preferences or grievances (Lukes, 1974:25) and is informed by a reformist conception

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of interests. Lukes however, takes this line of argument one step further in his three dimensional view of power, as he sees the first two views as "too individualistic". As he explains his third 'radical' dimensional view of power allows for the consideration,

> "of the many ways in which potential issues are kept out of politics, whether through the operation of social forces, and institutional practices, or through individual decisions. This moreover can occur in the absence of observable conflict, which may have been successfully averted- though there remains here an implicit reference to potential conflict. This potential however, may never in fact be actualised. What one may have here, is *latent conflict*, which consists of a contradiction between the interests of those exercising power and the *real interests* of those they exclude." (Lukes, 1974:25).

As Lukes, (1974:24) explains a thorough consideration of power must recognise how,

> "..is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they see it as natural and unchangeable, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial?"

Taylor (2003:89) quotes Healey (1997) as a current example of how power, seen from this perspective, is insidious, in her study of Community Planning, as "relations of power have the potential to oppress and dominate not merely through the distribution of material resources, but through the fine-grain of taken-for-granted assumptions and practices". This critique of the behavioural focus of participation, i.e. the third dimensional view of power, focuses on decision-making and control of the political agenda (not necessarily through decisions), issues and potential issues, observable (overt or covert) and latent conflict, subjective and real interests (ibid). This more 'radical' conception whereby power is conceptualised in zero-sum terms can be seen to form the basis of a variety of different theories including those advocated by Marxist theorists, structural feminists, and those which focus on elite domination. Power from these perspectives is seen as both zero-sum and inherent within certain groups and forces in society and has been subsequently criticised for not allowing any scope for agency or change into the analysis.

Foucault's re-conceptualisation of Power

Foucault's conceptualisation of power provides a good insight into how "power permeates and courses through spaces, sparking a multiplicity of points of resistance as well as producing and embedding particular institutional forms, patterns and practices" (Cornwall, 2002:8). Power can be tracked by examining how it flows through rules, systems, or social relations. Foucault, poses the questions, 'how is it exercised; by what means?' and secondly, 'what are the effects of the exercise of power?' Power is conceived as a strategy; the effects of domination associated with power arise not from appropriation and deployment by a subject, but from 'manoeuvres, tactics, techniques, functionings'. His approach to the relations of power cannot be reduced to an institutional analysis of the state, as power relations are conceived to be rooted in the system of social networks. The relationship between power and knowledge must be explored as power legitimates certain types of knowledge and frames certain debates, privileging certain ways of discussing and organising, and certain ways of knowing (Taylor, 2003:89). Discourses and narratives construct the debate and terms of reference. As Cornwall (2002:9) points out, "for Foucault discourses have material as well as symbolic dimensions; they shape not only what is said and done but what is say-able and do-able in any given social space, constituting what counts as knowledge as whose knowledge counts (see Foucault, 1975: 9). As such they define the very boundaries of action: "the conduct of conduct".

Strategies of Resistance

Foucault's conceptualisation of power, however is non-totalising in the sense that 'where there is power, there is resistance'. Power can be seen to be dialectically related to a 'multiplicity of points of resistance', however,

> "There is not, on the one side, a discourse of power and opposite it, another discourse that runs counter to it. Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating the field of force relations: there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy" (1979:101-2).

Foucault saw resistance as being inevitably present as the corollary of power. Power is exercised through a network of power relations, which is paralleled by a complex network of diverse forms of resistance. Indeed one of Foucault's innovative contributions to the empirical analysis of power relations is to take "the different forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point" (Foucault, 1982 in Nash 2000:11). By this he means, for example, that to analyse what society means by sanity, it becomes necessary to investigate what is happening in the field of insanity (ibid). This analysis of power, shifts away from a class analysis or focus on the state, as the objective of these struggles is not contrary to an institution or a group of specific people, however is more opposed to a 'technique' or form of power. As Foucault goes on to explain,

> "This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life, which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him, in which he must recognise and others have to recognise in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word subject: subject to someone else by control and dependence and ties to his own identity by a conscious or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to." (ibid:12).

Foucault, however, is adamant that power cannot be exercised without resistance. He conceptualises the exercise of power as,

> "a total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; in the extreme it constrains or forbids absolutely; it is nevertheless always a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action." (ibid: 220).

This conception of the exercise of power as a set of actions crucially means that resistance or indeed opposition to the exercise of power, becomes seen predominantly in terms of freedom. Power therefore, can only be exercised over 'free subjects (individual or collective)' which essentially means that subjects must be seen to be operating in terms of actions and conduct, within a certain range of options (ibid). Therefore, where resistance is absent, and the possibility of challenging the exercise of power is not present, one cannot claim that power relations are being exercised. Confrontation therefore, forms an inherent element of the power relationship which can certainly displace or indeed undermine this relationship. Consequently, a relationship of confrontation therefore expires with the establishment of a power relation, which is

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characterised by stable mechanisms "of action upon the action of others replace the free play of forces and reactions" (Smart, 1985:134). This conceptualisation can be further clarified if one takes into consideration the important difference between the relationships of power and confrontation in terms of premeditated action or as a knee jerk reaction to events. The former (relationship of power) is essentially characterised by pro-active, 'advance calculation and contemplated manipulation', whereas the latter (confrontation) is defined by a 'post hoc reaction' to a set of events (ibid).

To summarise, resistance is therefore, conceived of as various struggles to a complex array of different techniques of power, which ultimately can be defined by their pervasive nature in terms of their ability to permeate everyday life, as regards how individuals are categorised, their individuality becomes defined and how identity becomes constructed. These elements are seen to form individuals as 'subjects' which is conceived to be operating on two fundamental different levels, externally and internally, i.e. 'subjects' become "Subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to...(their) own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge" (Smart, 1988:136).

Conclusion

This conceptual framework has attempted to highlight the main themes and debates in the literature in the study of participation that were in some way relevant to empirical research. The central research question that drove the research was developed as a result of a review of the literature combined with a grounded theory iterative approach. The development of the central research question tried to encompass the main debate that was identified in different bodies of literature considering participation. The main debate revolved around the issue of whether participatory spaces can improve the position of socially excluded groups, by enabling them to exert more influence over the distribution of resources via participating in some sort of participatory structure. This led to the following central research question, "To What Extent do Participatory Processes within Institutionalised Governance Spaces create Political Opportunity Structures to enable Change/ Transformation in Favour of Social Justice?". I identified the specific body of literature considering community involvement, pertaining to the U.K. Urban Policy context, in an attempt to situate the case study of the NDC. The case study of PB in the Porto Alegre context was also situated within the literature in terms of both a policy perspective and those studies emanating from a democratic

theory perspective. The necessity of using a governance and social movement theory for the study of participatory spaces was stressed in relation to their production, whilst democratic theory, from both a liberal perspective and a participatory democratic perspective was stressed in assessments of these spaces. Crucially the defining concept in relation to the various perspectives represented in the literature was identified as revolving around different notions of power.

3. Methodological Framework

Although 'community involvement' has moved to the forefront in debates surrounding regeneration, social policy formation and implementation and governance structures, there is a scarcity of methodological and reflexive literature that explores how participatory spaces and actors within these arenas are actually studied. A comparative cross-national case study research strategy was chosen on the basis of the literature in this field to enable shared learning between the development studies literature and urban regeneration literature. A grounded theory methodological framework characterised the empirical research strategy which encompassed an iterative approach to theory development, based on the method of semi-structured interviews. Substantive and formal theory was developed, the former can be seen in the three empirical chapters whilst the latter, can be seen in the theoretical conclusion chapter. I identify three key components that need to be considered in evaluating participatory spaces as regards their ability to enable change/ transformation in favour of social justice.

3a: The Comparative Method: Cross National Methods

It has been acknowledged that there are considerable conceptual and practical parallels whilst considering issues to do with community participation in the 'North' and 'South' by various academics, policy makers and researchers (for example see Taylor, 2003; Gaventa, 2004; Bennett, 2003; Jones, 2003). Although there has been an increasing recognition of the similarities of debates in these fields, it seems as though disciplinary boundaries (i.e. development studies or urban regeneration) and geographical divisions ('North' and 'South') have hindered a thorough consideration of the potential avenues for shared learning between these distinct fields and geographical areas. The rationale for deciding to undertake a cross-national comparative study of community participation in a NDC Regeneration Programme in the U.K. and the PB pocess in Brazil was an explicit recognition of the opportunities for shared learning that would transcend both disciplinary and geographical boundaries.

Cross-National Comparative Methodology

Hantrias and Mangen (1996:91) identify that the majority of the literature on the cross-national comparative research process is focused upon the conceptual content and the

findings of the research as oppose to the theory, methodology or practice of cross-national comparative research. They note that the "growing interest in cross-national comparisons within the social sciences since the 1970s has not therefore, been matched by commensurate advances at the theoretical and practical level". Kennet (2001:3) however, recognises that the terms 'cross-national' and 'comparative' are often used 'interchangeably', within the methodological literature and defines the approach as one which "refer[s] to the explicit systematic and contextual analysis of one or more phenomenon in more than one country". Hantrais (2004:2) gives a more robust definition that encompasses research instruments, and stresses that a study is regarded as cross-national and comparative when

> "individuals or teams set out to examine particular issues or phenomena in two or more countries with the express intention of comparing their manifestations in different socio-cultural settings (institutions, customs, traditions, value systems, lifestyles, language, thought patterns), using the same research instruments either to carry out secondary analysis of national data or to conduct new empirical work. The aim may be to seek explanations for similarities and differences, to generalise from them or to gain a greater awareness and a deeper understanding of social reality in different national contexts."

Hantrais (2004:2) maintains that the methods adopted in cross-national comparative research are "no different from those within-nation comparisons or for other areas of sociological research' although stresses that researchers who undertake cross-national comparative research will concede that 'by its very nature, [it] demands greater compromises in methods than a single country focus" (Hantrais, 2004:4). The validity of the research therefore becomes dependent on the recognition of the added difficulties that are inherent in any cross-national comparative study. In my study these range from the increased logistical problems of conducting fieldwork in a strange/ foreign environment through to the stage of analysis where issues of language and conceptual equivalence can be seen as problematic. Oyen (1990: 1) stresses that cross-national research tends to add another layer of complexity to the "eternal and unsolved problems inherent in sociological research" and acknowledges that "the problems are more likely to be exacerbated when another analytical level, filled with unknown variables, is added to our investigations". It thus becomes imperative to clarify concepts and explore meanings within cross-national analysis.

Kennet (2001:3), is keen to point out that the very act of the *definition* of social phenomena is fundamental to the art of understanding and exploring that social phenomena within the construction of an integrated social policy framework. This becomes highlighted when undertaking cross-national comparative research as not only does one have to confront the construction of concepts in different national contexts, but also one is forced to utilise 'robust and appropriate concepts' that are comparable in different contexts. It therefore becomes necessary as Kennet (2001:3) points out to take a broader conceptualisation of notions that will enable sufficient comparisons. In the tradition of Ball et al (1989) and Esping-Anderson (1990) she highlights the need to adopt the "'broader view' in comparative analysis and ...caution[s] the researcher on analysing concepts in isolation and failing to recognise their interconnectedness and mutual determination"(ibid). Although her primary concern is *within* the social policy field, this argument can be extended to its logical application of making conceptual links between disciplinary fields.[15]

Broadening conceptual devices was a project that Blumer's (1954) distinction between 'definitive' and 'sensitizing' concepts aimed to achieve. He was adamant in his refutation of the idea of a 'definitive' concept. An example of a 'definitive' concept is one that has been developed, and thus becomes defined and fixed in terms of the indicators that are attributed to that concept. This way of thinking about concepts is often imbued in quantitative research whereby concepts are measured by a set of indicators that are deemed to have relevance for the concept concerned. The resultant impact for social research can be seen to be the imposition of a straitjacket on the social world, whereby the indicators come to define the concept. Thus, leaving little room for exploring the 'fine nuances' in the form that the concept might take or even different ways of thinking about that concept. Blumer (1954) therefore advocated the use of 'sensitizing' concepts in social research which he defined as being useful in the sense of providing "a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances" (1954:7). Concepts therefore are best seen by social researchers as guiding threads in the sense of orientating the researcher and providing a general sense of a) what to look for and b) act as a means for exploring the variety of forms that the

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[15] For instance within social policy research, she stresses that the complex web of welfare must be scrutinised, i.e not focusing solely on government provision, which is often the case in social policy research whose main focus remains the handful of OECD countries.

phenomena can assume (Bryman, 2001:270). It was in this vein that my fieldwork and analysis developed. By using broad 'sensitising' concepts to explore phenomena, it became possible to explore comparable phenomena in extremely different contexts. It was this approach which I believe enabled greater insights to occur in each specific context. Concepts were explored not only in relation to the specific form they took in one given case study, but were explored in relation to their manifestation in an entirely different context. Thus, the constant questioning, comparing, probing and problematising of concepts and phenomena led to a more thorough analysis of the given phenomena.

Cross- National Comparison between the 'North' and the 'South'

Comparative cross-national analysis between the 'North' and the 'South' is unusual (Kennet 2001:92). Development studies (concerned with the global South) has evolved as a distinct subject with its own terms of reference, debates, literature, theory and methods (ibid). This is in part to do with conceptual distinctions that have historically been made within the social sciences to classify different types of countries into a host of variant categories; 'First/ Third World', 'Developed/ Developing', 'North/ South'. Walker and Wong (1996) note how this classificatory system has resulted in an artificial 'segregation' of countries for comparative analysis. It is therefore not surprising that the majority of cross-national comparative studies tend to focus on geographical areas that share similar levels of economic development. Macpherson and Midgley (1987:ix) note how "the bulk of comparative investigation in social policy has focused on Western Europe and North America, and particularly Britain and the United States, making the only occasional excursions into more distant territories". They critique the conventional methodology of comparative policy research that regards cross-national comparative research as merely concerned with the examination of 'welfare institutions in a handful of industrial countries'. As Hantrias and Mangen (1999:91) recognise "often, effort has been handicapped by methodology which restricts samples to very narrow 'most similar' countries, and poses too brief a time scale to disentangle the social, cultural and economic and political variables". Within development studies itself it is also fair to say that comparativists are generally 'area' based, for instance, the countries of Latin America have been the subject of a great deal of comparative research looking at trends of democratisation, whilst the countries of South-East Asia have

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proved fertile ground for cross national research looking at Newly Industrialising Countries (NIC's) economic development.

Community participation however, can be seen as a fruitful area for cross-national research that transcends the boundaries of 'North' and 'South'. As Jones (2003) points out,

> "Although the very different contexts of 'participation' can suggest that different meanings are attached to it across the 'first' and the 'third' Worlds, the principles are remarkably similar. Participatory techniques have been common to 'Third World' development programmes for almost two decades. Thus, these experiences represent a rich vein of critique and innovative practice which 'Western'- orientated researchers and practitioners would do well to engage with in order to produce a fuller and less restricted account of urban change more generally (Jones, 2000; Robinson, 2002)"

The similarities between debates within the academic literature in development studies (in an international context) and urban regeneration (in the U.K. context) looking at community participation in development/ regeneration programmes and projects is striking. These similarities run from a very practice based level (i.e. exploring issues to do with the timings of meetings acting as a barrier for some participants) to a conceptually abstract level, (i.e. using ideas such as Habermas's notion of Deliberative Democracy to explore the dynamics of participatory spaces).

Within 'North' and 'South' 'participation' has been advocated by a variety of different academics, policy makers and scholars as a means to attempt to overcome social exclusion in some way. In the 'North' specifically in the U.K. this has become manifest in a variety of different forms with the emphasis on 'community participation' in regeneration programmes as one of the current primary methods for tackling social exclusion in deprived areas (e.g. The New Deal for Communities Regeneration Programme). In the 'South' participation is usually advocated by Non Government Organisations (NGO's) (homegrown and international) as a means of tackling social exclusion. In the case of Porto Alegre, Brazil, the local municipal government advocated the 'participation' of those perceived to be 'socially excluded' and attempted to tackle this exclusion by creating a 'participatory system' that resulted in redistribution.

It is not only a recognition of similar processes of participation occurring in the 'North' and 'South' that calls for comparative cross-national study of 'community participation'

but it is also a recognition of similarities and differences in social processes which transcend these geographical territories. For example Bennett (2003:167) in a recent article looking at 'Who gains and who loses from globalisation?: New Challenges for anti-poverty action North and South ' discusses Oxfam's decision to develop a UK poverty programme:

> "The rationale for creating the programme therefore relied in part on the perception on increasing divisions between the haves and the have-nots within, as well as between, countries in both 'North' and 'South'. While not wishing to give the impression of arguing that poverty North and South is the same in either depth or extent, Oxfam's analysis suggests that the causes of increasing divisions, and the consequences of poverty and inequality for individuals and communities, were similar in many respects."

It was a similar rationale that prompted me to look at two-case studies of community participation in two entirely different parts of the globe, one 'North' one 'South'.

3b: A Grounded Theory Method: An Iterative Approach to Theory Development

Inductive Grounded Theory Framework: The Emergence of the Research Strategy

The research for this study was conducted within a predominantly inductive grounded theory framework in which, semi-structured interviews was the main method utilised. Strauss and Corbin (1998:12) explain their interpretation of grounded theory as theory that is 'derived from data' that has been 'systematically gathered and analyzed throughout the research process'. It is this interweaving of the 'data collection' process, data 'analysis' and 'theory' building that is at the heart of a grounded theory research strategy. A researcher does not set out to test a pre-conceived theory but has a chosen subject area/ topic to explore and allows the 'theory to emerge from the data' collected. Strauss and Corbin (1998:12) contend that this methodology is "more likely to resemble the "reality"' than an approach which relies more heavily on conceptual ordering based on either 'experience' or mere 'speculation'. It is because grounded theory offers a systematic method of drawing theory from data that its protagonists claim it is 'likely to offer insight, provide understanding and provide a meaningful guide to action"(ibid). Grounded theory methods do not detail data collecting strategies

but help to move each step of the analytic process towards the development, refinement and the interrelation of concepts. Flick (1998:2) is keen to point out that post-modern sensibilities have rendered 'traditional deductive methodologies' incapable of capturing the rapid social change and the resulting 'diversification of life-worlds'. Social researchers are confronted with (and recognise as such) such a diverse array of 'social contexts and perspectives', that inductive strategies seem to make more sense. 'Knowledge and practice become studied as local knowledge and practice' as opposed to the premise of starting from theories and testing these theories empirically (Denzin and Lincoln,1998:15). The fundamental elements of a grounded theory approach include the following, a) simultaneous collection and analysis of data, b) a two step coding process, c) comparative methods, d) memo writing aimed at the construction of conceptual analyses, e) sampling to refine the researcher's emerging theoretical ideas and f) integration of the theoretical framework (Charmaz, 2000:511).

There have however been various criticisms of grounded theory and developments within the academy have led to various different strands of grounded theory emerging. These include the positivist stance of Glaser (1968) to the more 'post-positivist' work of Strauss and Corbin (1990) to Charmaz's (2000) more recent conceptualisation of a constructivist approach to grounded theory. One of the most potent criticisms, however has been the impossibility of a 'truly inductive' approach to research. In agreement with Blumers' (1979) observation, it is extremely difficult or impossible for researchers to suspend their awareness of relevant theories or concepts until quite late in the analysis. Despite the predominantly inductive nature of the research strategy, existing knowledge and literature on the theme of participation, and my previous experience working in the field were all deemed vital resources to be utilised and taken into consideration. A review of the literature as regards participatory spaces highlighted that the main debate seemed to centre around whether commentators see these 'participatory spaces' as forums where excluded groups are able to exert some sort of increased influence as regards the distribution of resources, or whether these spaces are seen as tools of co-option by the governing powers that be.[16] This key debate led to the formation of the central research question, "To what extent do participatory spaces in institutionalised governance structures create political opportunity structures to enable change/ transformation in favour of social justice?". Mason's (2002) idea of a 'research puzzle' helped to conceptualise this key theme in the literature and

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[16] See Conceptual Framework

operationalise it, methodologically in terms of creating research questions and applying it to the empirical world. Research questions were developed iteratively throughout the research process (see introduction) and were operationalised in the development of the interview guides. This process was concurrent with analysis as fieldwork, analysis and theory development were seen to be part of an interactive process. The ability to conduct a 'purist' grounded theory was however, in fact compromised due to the 'realities' of a) time constraints within each case study and b) the logic of fieldwork in the data collection phase (i.e. how due to snowball sampling one gets caught up in the momentum of the fieldwork)[17]. This had the effect that part of the analysis was conducted crucially after the fieldwork had finished. Although some would question whether it could therefore be called a 'grounded theory' approach, I invoke this claim in terms of best describing the overall research strategy employed in this study, whilst recognising that 'grounded theory purists' would dispute this assertion.

Constructivist Grounded Theory

Grounded theorists it has been argued can utilise the above methods however, from a more interpretative/ constructionist premise. Grounded theory has traditionally been associated with a positivist or indeed a post-positivist perspective where data is seen to have an 'objective status'. However, an important element of this research strategy was the recognition that the data must be seen as 'narrative constructions'. The data was seen as reconstructions of the experience and I was careful not to conflate this representation with the experience itself. Charmaz's (2000:510) reconceptualisation of grounded theory, from a constructivist premise "assumes the relativism of multiple social realities, recognises the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and aims towards interpretative understandings of subjects' meanings (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Schwandt, 1994)". The data I utilised comprised of interview transcripts with 56 theoretically sampled research participants (both key players and community representatives, in two case studies) and was conceptualised as representations and explanations of their experiences within the participatory arenas.

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[17] As Bryman (2001:395) notes, "there are practical difficulties with grounded theory. The time taken to transcribe tape recordings of interviews, for example can make it difficult for researchers, especially when they have tight deadlines, to carry out genuine grounded theory analysis with its constant interplay of data collection and conceptualisation."

Coding Data

Coding can be seen as perhaps the key process in a grounded theory approach to research and entails the breaking down of data into component parts which are thematically grouped together. This process begins at the early data collection stages and the interaction between the researchers' interpretations of that data therefore shape the emergent codes in grounded theory. As Charmaz (1983:186) is keen to point out "Codes...serve as shorthand devices to label separate, compile and organise data" however the process of coding in qualitative research is certainly much more creative than its counterpart in quantitative data analysis. I developed a variety of codes in the early stages of the research process. For example, codes were developed in the PRNDC case study relating to how different key players conceptualised participation, the codes of 'social inclusion', 'social capital' and 'service delivery' were formulated. Another example of codes developed in the PB case study encompassed how key players conceptualised participation. In this case study the codes of 'citizenship' and 'redistribution' were developed. Coding from a grounded theory perspective is a fluid, creative process as data is treated as a potential indicator of concepts whilst these indicators are constantly compared to see which concepts they fit best with (Bryman, 2001: 392) Strauss and Corbin (1998:102) define and explain the coding process in grounded theory by providing explanation of the key concepts involved in the process. These elements could be seen as almost the 'products' of grounded theory (Bryman, 2001:391).

- **Phenomena**: Central ideas in the data represented as concepts
- **Concepts**: The building blocks of theory
- **Categories**: Concepts that stand for phenomena
- **Properties**: Characteristics of a category, the delineation of which defines and gives it meaning
- **Dimensions**: The range along which general properties of a category vary, giving specification to a category and variation of that theory
- **Subcategories**: Concepts that pertain to a category, giving it fuller clarification and specification.

Strauss and Corbin (1990:61) also differentiate between the following coding processes: **open coding**, "the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorising data", i.e. the production of concepts; **axial coding**, "a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways after open coding, by making connections between categories" (1990:116); and **selective coding** "the procedure of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating these other relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development". These three different types of coding represent different stages in the analytical process. The process is guided by constant comparison of data, for example in this research, the interview transcripts were compared in terms of different research participants views, situations, actions, accounts however primarily experiences. Data was also compared *within* each interview transcript to verify a certain issue, incident, or point of view whilst incidents were also compared *between* different research participants explanations of these occurrences. The categories developed were also compared with each other for example, in chapter 5, the category of 'Developmental Nature of the Participatory Process' was compared with the category 'Representation and Accountability' in relation to the two different case studies. Perhaps, however comparing the four sub-sets of data (i.e key players and community representatives in the two different case studies) was the most obvious comparative axis in the data.

Strauss and Corbin (1998) detail the process of 'dimensionalising' whereby complexity can be explored beyond one property or phenomena, by dividing properties into dimensions that lie along a continuum. This 'tool' helped me to conceptualise and compare elements of the developed categories. Perhaps the clearest example of this can be seen at the end of empirical chapter one, where community representatives explanations of their involvement in the participatory processes, were conceptualised in the following way; from individual/ micro reasons for involvement, i.e. explanations of their involvement in terms of having spare time, to more structural/ macro reasons, for example recognising the need for change in the neighbourhood.

The process of axial coding is where "the analyst begins to fit the pieces of the data puzzle together" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:229). This includes the process of reassembling the data in new ways by linking the different sub-categories into the main category. As Charmaz, (2000:516) explains, "these include conditions that give rise to the category, its context, the social interactions through which it is handled, and its

consequences". In chapter 4 for example, key players' explanations for the success of the process, was a category developed to explain the historical production of the participatory space and therefore formed part of the substantive theory.

Theory Development

The objective of the process of coding is certainly theory development. As Strauss and Corbin, (1998) explain the term 'theory' from their perspective is, "a set of well-developed categories...that are systematically related through statements of relationship to form a theoretical framework that explains some relevant social ...or other phenomenon'. Glaser and Strauss (1967) differentiate between two types of grounded theory: substantive and formal. Substantive theory is developed from the empirical base and is applicable only to the group and context in which it is studied. Substantive theory emerged during data analysis and data collection. In my analysis this substantive theory can be seen in the three empirical chapters whereby a representation of the different 'concepts' is developed throughout the representation of this data and explicitly linked to the context in which it is produced. These empirical findings were then explicitly compared and contrasted with the literature identified in the conceptual framework. This enabled the development of the formal theory, which is more widely applicable as it operates at a higher level of abstraction. This is represented in the section entitled 'Explaining the Political Opportunity Structure: Beyond the Tyranny/ Transformation Dichotomy', where the three main explanatory concepts are discussed in relation to their impact on the political opportunity structure. As Strauss and Corbin, (1998:23) explain "more formal theories are less specific to a group and place and as such, apply to a wider range of disciplinary concerns and problems. Formal theories usually are derived from studying phenomenon under a variety of conditions...". These stages of theory development within grounded theory are however, in contrast to the stages of analysis usually identified in the comparative case study methodology literature.[18]

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[18] As Miles and Huberman (1994:243) state in relation to the development of matrices in cross-case analysis "In looking at case-ordered matrices, make a first sweep through the data for each case, one at a time,...before you try to understand cross-case patterns". This would suggest presenting the two case studies first in context and then comparing. A grounded theory approach however, in terms of comparative conceptual analysis enhanced an approach where concepts could be thematically discussed across cases. I then present the two case studies holistically in the concluding chapter in relation to the different democratic models they evoke.

3c: Why is a Qualitative Research Paradigm useful for Understanding Community Involvement?

The research for this project was conducted within a qualitative research methodological paradigm. As Duncan and Thomas, (2000:1) discuss in relation to assessing the impact of resourcing community capacity building in the U.K. regeneration context, "although we have become reasonably adept at evaluating the hard outputs from regeneration programmes, we remain much less confident when dealing with the softer outcomes". Quantitative evaluations of regeneration programmes generally focus on capturing and measuring inputs, outputs, indicators and targets of performance. These are very tangible entities that can be quantified. For example how many people completed a certain educational or vocational course, by how much did house prices rise in a certain geographical area, or how many jobs were created as a result of a certain regeneration programme. Although this information is invaluable to the evaluation of such programmes, this information fails to tell us in detail about the subtle social processes that are involved in any of these developments, crucially from the *point of view* of the different social actors involved.

Qualitative methods can be used to delve into parts of these processes which quantitative methods cannot reach, as Mangen (2004:307) explains in the context of comparative social policy, "qualitative methods offer the possibilities of bottom-up, open-ended, flexible and exploratory formulae for understanding phenomena in different environments". They have the potential to explore innovation, originality, complexity, interactions, conflicts and contradictions. Moreover, such approaches can focus on broad questions rather than narrow ones. A study of the process of community involvement/ participation within regeneration programmes, governance structures or budgeting processes, begs for a qualitative approach; to enable a thorough understanding of the issues involved. The focus of the research remained very much within a qualitative research paradigm to enable me to adequately explore contested concepts, processes and meanings in depth. A qualitative research approach in this instance was chosen to allow subjects or research participants to express and develop their own interpretations of the various situations under scrutiny. As Bryman (1986:46) is keen to acknowledge, qualitative methods are based on an "approach to the social world which seeks to analyse the culture and behaviour of humans and their groups

from the point of view of them being studied". As Critcher et al (1999:72) point out it becomes the task of the social scientist to "obtain these points of view with as much fidelity as possible and then to find ways of analysing them".

Epistemological Implications of the Research Approach

The epistemological premise of the research should be characterised as a fusion of a 'weak social constructionism' and a 'thin critical realist' approach (see Lawson, 2002, for a discussion of this approach in the housing context). This ensured that a focus on the construction of these spaces in terms of conceptions, perceptions, and interpretations of actors (both key players and community representatives) could be combined with an examination of the institutional mechanisms of participation (see Fung and Wright, 2001, for a rationale of an institutional approach to the study of participatory spaces). Both of these elements were deemed as fundamental components that needed to be explored in the context of participatory spaces, in relation to the central research question, "To what extent do participatory spaces in institutionalised governance structures create political opportunity structures to enable transformation/ change in favour of social justice?".   This reasoning was heavily influenced by Cornwall's (2002) working paper, 'Making Spaces, Changing Places: Situating Participation in Development', as she elucidates,

> "Spaces for participation can be thought, then in abstract terms as the ways in which
> opportunities for engagement might be conceived or perceived, and more concretely
> in terms of the actual sites that are entered and animated by citizens" (cf Lefebvre,
> 1991: Cornwall, 2002:2).

Fung and Wright's (2001) institutional reform model of EDD is an interesting place to start with the analysis of how "real alternative political and administrative designs [can]... deepen[...] democracy"(2001:7).   They claim that "the exploration of empowered deliberation as a progressive institutional reform strategy advances the conceptual and empirical understanding of democratic practice"(ibid).   They identify five 'real-world' experiments "in the redesign of democratic institutions, innovations that elicit the energy and influence of ordinary people, often drawn from the lowest strata of society in the solution of problems that plague them."(ibid). They analyse different elements of the institutional design, procedure and mechanisms   of the

participatory process. This institutional analysis certainly formed a key pillar of the research approach. Fischer (2006) however is keen to point out the

> "need to supplement the structural and the procedural design principles with an examination of the underlying social and cultural realities in the political contexts to which they are applied. In addition to the institutional rules, regulations and policies within a given territory or space we need to understand the sociocultural practices that give meaning to these spaces for the social actors in them" (2006:24).

He builds on Cornwall's work to emphasise the necessity of looking at participatory spaces in terms of the "microcultural politics of social space" which he describes as "an intersubjective politics of meaning driven in part by the politics of identity"(ibid). The cultural shift embodied by some of the post-modern literature sees political space not merely as a vacuum occupied by different competing interests, however it is recognised that political space is 'created, opened and shaped by social understandings'(ibid). Thus more traditional methods of political analysis concentrating on how state institutions, structures and mechanisms operate in the distribution power need to be complemented by an approach which focuses on the 'discursive construction of meanings and identities of actors, institutions and practices inherent to it' (Jordon and Weedon, 1995)(ibid). This emphasis from a cultural politics perspective enables an approach which recognises the complexity of how 'identities, social relations and rules are contested, subverted, and possibly transformed' (ibid). Whilst these themes perhaps are less immediately apparent to the naked eye their pervasiveness is nevertheless very apparent and certainly manifest within phenomena that are perhaps more visible.

Choice of Case Studies

Theoretical sampling informed the choice of case studies in terms of the selection of the general participatory processes, i.e. the New Deal for Community (NDC) regeneration programme in the U.K. and the Participatory Budgeting (PB) process in Brazil. The nature of the comparative study, i.e. the choice of case studies at the neighbourhood level was however *not* meant to be representative of the regions in which the processes were embedded (i.e. in terms of 'North'/'South', in terms of U.K./ Brazil, or even in terms of Hull/ Porto Alegre). The choice of case studies in terms of participatory

processes was in fact made in order to explore the relationship between different democratic models and the participatory process - the PRNDC case study in terms of operating within a liberal representative democratic framework and the PB case study evoking a more participatory democratic model. The choice of case studies at the neighbourhood level was meant to expose numerous different factors at a variety of different levels. These included elements of the governance structure and how different democratic models were alluded to at a variety of different levels within these governance structures. The choice of case studies and the nature of comparison does therefore have to be explicated on various different levels, from the choice of specific participatory processes (NDC and PB) to the local governance context within which these processes were operating (Hull, Porto Alegre) to the specific institutional mechanisms of the participatory governance structures (PRNDC, PB Porto Alegre) to the very specific characteristics of the neighbourhood in which they were functioning (Preston Road, and Cruzeiro do Sul). Only a thorough consideration of all these interlinking contingent factors enables one to understand how the participatory processes embedded in both case studies are able to create a political opportunity structure to enable change/ transformation in favour of social justice.

New Deal for Communities (NDC) Regeneration Programme, U.K

There are numerous reasons why the NDC Regeneration programme provides an exciting case study to explore community participation in the U.K. regeneration context. The NDC regeneration programme is a high profile initiative that was launched in 1998 by the New Labour Government aiming to tackle 'social exclusion' and bring about 'neighbourhood renewal' in 39 of Britain's most deprived neighbourhoods. As a programme that involves local people in resource allocation at the neighbourhood scale it also embodies many facets of New Labour's 'Third Way' thinking. Participation is "part of a much bigger project which lies at the heart of the 'Third Way', in an attempt to reinvigorate civil engagement" (Barnet 2002:310). It puts 'communities' at the heart of neighbourhood renewal in an unprecedented manner - no other regeneration programme has given such a commitment to community involvement (in resource allocation and programme design). Despite operating within the U.K. which is often portrayed as a classic example of liberal representative democracy, the policy discourse surrounding the NDC could be seen in terms of alluding to 'participatory democracy',

in terms of evoking 'active citizenship', 'participation' and 'decision making' at the local level. This element therefore provided an interesting tension to explore in this case study.

In terms of the policy design elements of the programme, Foley and Martin (2000:483/4) note the following elements of the programme that encourage community participation in the programme,

- *longer lead in times to develop bids and the provision of funding to support the development of proposals*
- *competitive element has been eliminated*
- *unlike previous policies, outputs can be specified at different stages over a maximum of ten years rather than having to be defined at the outset*
- *partnerships have to be able to demonstrate that communities have been involved in both the selection of target areas and the development of programmes, and ministers have referred back several bids that were seen as lacking sufficient local input*
- *there is an insistence that "many of the pathfinders will be run by bodies that have not traditionally led regeneration programmes" (SEU, 1998:S4)*
- *phase two of the NDC has involved unprecedented levels of consultation through outreach workers, public meetings, and household surveys*
- *some delivery plans include proposals for community based research and much greater formative evaluation than in the past*

The Local Governance Context: Hull

The choice of case study, i.e. Preston Road Neighbourhood Development Company (PRNDC) was made for various different reasons pertaining largely to the context in which the programme was operating. Hull was the context in which my initial interest in urban regeneration and community development had developed, (for example I had worked on a couple of regeneration projects within the city). I was therefore, familiar with regeneration structures and contexts (meetings and conferences) within the city and policy context of community involvement. I also knew practitioners working at the NDC through previous work which would facilitate access. Despite the fact that Hull is in receipt of large amounts of regeneration monies, (a combined public/ private sector spend of over £1 billion is planned over the next ten years) there was no academic literature looking at this trend. This can be seen in contrast to other cities within Yorkshire in receipt of regeneration monies, for example Sheffield, where there is a large body of literature examining these processes (see Lawless, 1994, 1996, 1999).

Hull can be seen as an example of a 'peripheral' northern city experiencing difficult processes of deindustrialisation. The population of the city is just under 250,000 and declining. Deprivation levels are high, with unemployment running at more than twice the national average at just under 7% (Audit Commission, 2003:9). Overall the City is ranked as the 14th most deprived council area according to the indices of deprivation and half of the City's wards are amongst the 10 % most deprived in England (ibid). The local authorities' Economic and Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan (2003:19) highlights the range of economic issues the City faces;

- *Higher than national unemployment rates.*
- *Lower economic activity rates in comparison with national figures.*
- *Low levels of business stocks.*
- *Unsustainable employment structure.*
- *A low skills base.*
- *Low wages compared with national rates.*
- *Low levels of employment in the growth area of business services and higher value added manufacturing.*
- *Limited employment opportunities for local graduates.*
- *Falling levels of GDP in relation to the national position.*

This economic profile of the city cannot be divorced from the local governance context within which it is embedded. The Audit Commission's Corporate Governance Inspection of Hull City Council (2002) highlighted the failings of the City Council. Two key findings were the Council's failure to engage beyond its institutional boundaries and define its position on economic regeneration. The Audit Commission's Corporate Governance Inspection states, "decision-making is weak and not consistently founded in a proper consideration of alternative options" (2003:6). The report also stated that "the Council has a political culture which is immature and confrontational.... Councillors lack trust in each other and staff" (ibid). The Council's recovery plan covers the Councils need to engage- more openly and honestly- with those people and organisations with a stake in the City and a desire to improve its wellbeing. This alludes to the paternalism that has characterised a governance context in which the Labour Party has largely dominated the Council since 1996. The paternalistic governance culture cannot be divorced from a lack of independent sustainable community groups and initiatives in the City. This can be highlighted by anecdotal evidence. In 2007, Kevin Curley, Chief Executive of the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (Navca), returned to Hull to visit six community centres he helped found while working at the City's Council for Voluntary Service in

the 1980s. Only one was still open: the others had been closed, turned into cafes or were waiting to be opened as SureStart and Connexion services. (The Guardian, June 6th, 2007). This is indicative of many community initiatives in the City and needs to be contextualised within the broader economic, social and political processes happening within and beyond the City.

The Neighbourhood: Preston Road[19]

Preston Road can be seen as one of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the City although it could be seen as fairly representative of the City's many excluded areas,

> "The evidence of exclusion is particularly apparent in a number of the City's communities, where economic disadvantage is exacerbated by a high crime rate, unacceptable levels of social disorder, poor and unpopular housing and facilities and marked differences in health and life expectancy." (Hull Community Strategy, 2002:2).

Preston Road NDC is approximately three miles east of Hull City Centre. The majority of the estate is pre-war (84.5%) council owned and was comprised of 2,897 properties, in 2002 (Hawtin, 2002:3). The area is divided by four by a dual carriageway and a waterway. Hawtin (2002:3) identifies that "prior to the start of the NDC there was only one shop, 2 food take-aways and very few other facilities in the area". The population in 2002 was estimated to be 6,500, the majority of whom are white with only 0.8% of any BME group in 1991. The majority of the housing is council owned (ibid). The neighbourhood has been deemed 'economically poor' due to the fact 19.3% of the population were registered as unemployed, 31% of households earn £5,000 or less, and 62.6% earn £10, 000 less per annum (ibid). Hawtin (2002) recognises that Preston Road NDC has a deprivation score of approximately 40.16, which is equivalent to the most deprived 20% of wards in England. The lack of community activity in the area in terms of community groups was seen as a contextual factor to have great significance on the research findings, for example, prior to the NDC the only community groups were the allotment society, a family community association and the consortium recently formed by residents and voluntary organisations. As Hawtin (2002:6) recognises, "On the estate there has been a culture of not organising groups or developing other

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[19] The following information is taken from the 2002 report, 'Report on the Preston Road New Deal for Communities Partnership' by Murray Hawtin which forms part of the New Deal for Communities National Evaluation.

community activity. The MORI survey showed that less than a third of residents felt to a great or fair level that they were part of a local community and only 11% were involved in voluntary work over the last 3 years. There is still a dearth of strong independent local groups on the estate and this may be to the detriment of the NDC". This can be attributed to a variety of different reasons however, one must recognise how this interacts with a general scepticism of the NDC's 'grand promises' on the part of residents (ibid).

Preston Road Neighbourhood Development Corporation (PRNDC)

The original shadow Preston Road NDC Partnership Board was set up in 1998 and was comprised of 14 members of whom 4 were residents. In April 2000 the decision was taken to become a Company Limited by Guarantee to employ the NDC team. The institutional governance structure of PRNDC as described in 2002 is as follows. The total number of Board members was 27, 13 of whom were residents, of whom one was a local resident representing young people. The rest were comprised from the following agencies, 2 local Councillors, 1 Preston Road Family Community Association, 1 Health Trust, 1 Employment Services, 1 City Vision, 1 Preston Road Consortium of Voluntary Agencies, 1 Hull College, 1 Police (non-voting), 1 Hull Employment Initiative, 2 Private Sector, 1 Faith Community, 1 Humberside TEC. The accountable body for the NDC is Hull City Council (Hawtin, 2002:4). The board is structured by thematic sub-groups whilst sub-committees involving residents and other board members concentrate on appraising and evaluating projects. PRNDC is managed by a core management team which leads strategy development. The characteristic which distinguishes PRNDC from the majority of other NDCs has been its decision to directly employ all staff, in 2002 it was estimated that PRNDC employed 215 people with a strategy of employing local people wherever possible.

Participatory Budgeting Process (PB), Porto Alegre, Brazil[20]

The PB process of Porto Alegre has indeed become recognised as a both an international and national model of participation. In 2003 the UNDP report emphasised the PB process as a 'model' of public policy. Within the field of development studies,

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[20] For a comprehensive description of institutional mechanisms see Fedozzi (1997) 'Orçamento Participativo: Reflexões sobre a Experiência de Porto Alegre'.

the PB process is one of the most cited successful examples of community involvement in resource allocation. The process has attracted a great deal of academic interest and it is well known within policy circles in the U.K.[21] It has developed specific institutional mechanisms for community participation, whilst the process attempts to reconcile concepts such as participatory democracy and representative democracy. The process centres on an annual cycle which begins with local community meetings to decide the priorities for each area and works through interaction between community organisations, community representatives and government agencies leading to the development of an investment plan which details all the works that will be carried out the following year.

The institutional mechanisms of the PB process are described as follows. It must, however, be stressed that due to the evolutionary nature of the process, the following description is a snapshot and describes how the PB functioned in 2004. The basic institutional functioning of the PB process consists of three types of institutions.[22] The first type of is that of the administrative units of the local authority whose role it is to manage the budgetary debate with citizens. These include *Gabinete de Planejamento* (Planning Office, GAPLAN), The *Gabinete de Relações com a Comunidade*, (Office of Community Relations, GRC formerly CRC), *Coordenadores Regionais do Orçamento Participativo*, (Regional Co-ordinators of the PB, CROPS), and *Coordenadores Temáticos* (Thematic Coordinators, CT). Of these set of institutions GRC and GAPLAN are the most important (de Souza Santos, 1998: 468).Throughout these organs the executive plays a decisive role throughout the PB process.

The second type of institution consists of community organisations who maintain autonomy vis-à-vis the local authority these are predominantly regionally based organisations, i.e. neighbourhood associations. The community organisations have a role in organising and mediating between citizen participation and choice of priorities for city regions. As these associations emerge from the grassroots these organisations are not necessarily present in every region of the PB. As a result of their grassroots development they boast a variety of different forms, different levels of organisation, participation and history of mobilisation. They are often called *Conselhos Populares*

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[21] I attended a conference held by the Countryside Agency and Department for International Development (DFID) which looked at examples of community participation from around the globe where PB was explicitly identified as a 'model' of participation.
[22] See Glossary for a brief description of the institutional mechanisms.

(Popular Councils), *Uniões de Vilas* (Township Union), *Associaçãos dos Moradores* (Residents Associations) and *Articulações Regionais* (Regional Forums).

The third type of institution has been designed to ensure an enduring mechanism of negotiation and interaction between the first two. These institutions act as mediatory organisms and are the regularly functioning mechanisms of community participation, *Conselho do Orçamento Participativo* (PB Council, COP), *Assembléias Plenárias Regionais* (Regional Plenary Assemblies), *Fórum Regional do Orçamento* (Budgeting Regional Forum, FROP), *Assembléias Plenárias Themáticas* (Thematic Plenary Assemblies), and Forum *Temático do Orçamento* (Budgeting Thematic Forums). The COP is the decision-making body and is made up of councillors as follows,

- *Two members and two deputies from each of the sixteen districts*
- *Two members and two deputies from each of the six sectoral forums*
- *One member and one deputy from the Porto Alegre municipal workers union*
- *One member and one deputy from the union of Porto Alegre Resident's association*
- *Two representatives from the municipal government, but without the right to vote*

The role of the delegates (district and sectoral) is to function as intermediaries between the COP and the citizens, this can be on an individual basis or as participants in community/ regional or thematic organisations. Their role also includes supervising the implementation of the budget. They number more than the PB council members and have an important role in the second round of the assemblies and meet monthly. Their functions include

- *Providing support for PB councillors*
- *Consulting, controlling and mobilizing functions (de Souza Santos 1998:472)*
- *Recording and circulating the issues discussed and the outcomes reached*
- *Co-ordinating the interim meetings*
- *Overseeing the execution of public interventions through the Commission for Public Works*
- *Assisting in the consolidation of the district popular councils (Menegeat, 2002:190)*

The process has in fact resulted in a redistribution of investment resources from the richer parts of the city to the poorer parts whilst there has been a general increase in those participating. The process began 16 years ago in Porto Alegre and it is estimated that it is now being applied in approximately 250 cities around the world (Urb-Al 9 Network, 2004:9). The predominant number of these cities are in Brazil, however other Latin American countries such as Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia are host to PB processes. There are in fact several experiences being carried out in Europe including Cordoba, Spain, whilst the Community Pride initiative in Manchester are currently being funded by the ODPM to implement four PB pilot projects in the U.K.[23]

The Local Governance Context: Porto Alegre

Porto Alegre is the capital city of the state of Rio Grande do Sul in the South of Brazil. The population of the City was 1.360.590 inhabitants according to the demographic census in 2000. Its population is growing however each year more slowly, with an average increase of only 0.92% each year between 1991 and 2000.[24] Porto Alegre is the central urban agglomeration of Rio Grande do Sul whilst it is also the principal industrial axis of the state. Porto Alegre is one of the most important cultural, political and economic centres of Southern Brazil. It is geographically situated at a strategic point within Mercosur, Porto Alegre is the geographical centre of major routes of the Southern Cone, and is located mid-way between Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Porto Alegre is also an important business centre and a gateway to major tourist attractions in the region. According to the IBGE/2004, the PIB (GNP) of Porto Alegre was R$ 15,944,201,000 and its PIB per capita is R$ 11,257. According to the consultancy firm Jones Lang LaSalle (2004), Porto Alegre is placed second in rural output and industrialization among all Brazilian cities. Due to its geographical location, the city is considered the capital of the South American Common Market. In 1998 it was elected by the UNDP as the City with the best quality of life in Brazil. Porto Alegre was recognised as having the best human development index (based on an analysis of longevity, and education and income) the best standard of living in Brazil (based on an

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[23] One of the pilot projects is actually an NDC in the North of England
[24] Secrataria da coordenação e planejamento do governo do estado do Rio Grande do Sul, Profile of the Metroplolitan Region, 2002, 3.

analysis of longevity, education, income, infancy and housing).[25] In 2003 it was also recognised as one of ten local administrations in Latin America to have combated poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean whilst it was also recognised in 2002 by the UN to have promoted administrative transparency. This is highly significant in a context often characterised as corrupt with power concentrated in the hands of a few.

The Neighbourhood of Cruzeiro do Sul

The PB process leant itself to the study at a neighbourhood level, despite being a citywide process as it is based on the division of the city into a) 16 regions and b) 78 neighbourhoods. The choice of neighbourhood was determined through a combination of theoretical sampling and pragmatic access.[26]   For example, the case study neighbourhood of Cruzeiro do Sul was theoretically chosen on the basis of its long history of community mobilisation (in contrast to the PRNDC case study). Cruzeiro do Sul forms part of the 'official neighbourhood' Santa Teresa, population in 2000, 47.175. Cruzeiro do Sul is a vila in a very central geographical location close to the city centre of Porto Alegre.[27] It was estimated that there was approximately 1000 dwellings in Cruzeiro do Sul, (officially 12.976 in Santa Teresa in 2000). There are no official statistics for the area 'Cruzerio do Sul' and therefore the official statistics from DEMHAB will be utilised to explain the characteristics of the broader area, i.e. Santa Teresa.   The area of Santa Teresa comprises 454 hectares with a density of 104 habitants per hectare. The average monthly income per household was in 2000 estimated at 5,78 minimum salaries accounting for two incomes, whilst the average monthly income in 1991 was 4,27 minimum salaries, taking into consideration the main wage earner.

Cruziero do Sul evolved as did many favelas, vilas or unregulated areas during the 1960s when there was a great demand in Porto Alegre in the construction industry which attracted migration from the surrounding areas. This can be seen as part of the larger socio-economic and political transformations that Brazil experienced between the 1950s and 1980s. In this period Brazil was transformed from being an agrarian export

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[25] Prefietura de Porto Alegre, (2003:2)
[26] Cruzeiro do Sul is relatively close to the city centre where I was staying and therefore it was a pragmatic choice of neighbourhood.
[27] 'Vila' is a term used in Porto Alegre and is equivalent to the term 'Favela' utilised in Rio de Janeiro and other parts of Brazil to describe an unregulated housing area.

economy to a predominantly industrial urban economy responsible for a eighth of global GNP. During this period the cities grew by more than 60 million people, 29 million, merely during the 80s, and can be seen as part of the largest migratory processes of the contemporary world (Fedozzi, 2000:17). These migratory processes led to a disordered growth of unregularised housing construction in various vilas in Porto Alegre, including Cruzerio do Sul. Prior to the PB process these unregulated areas did not have any basic services, in terms of health or education. The community movement in Grande Cruzeiro has been recognised historically as fundamental to the creation of the PB process and arose in the 1970s as a reaction to the local administration's attempt to demolish Vila Tronco (one of the neighbourhoods within Grande Cruzeiro) (Fedozzi, 2000:35/41). The *União das Vilas da Grande Cruzeiro* was founded in 1979 to organise diverse local community movements to demand regularization, health, pavement and education amongst others (Fedozzi, 2000:42). This history of a strong community movement has meant that the neighbourhood has in fact gained lots of public works and investment through the PB process and therefore it was chosen on the basis of being able to provide rich data.

Institutional Mechanisms at the Neighbourhood Level

Although this case study neighbourhood was chosen it was inevitable that an examination of the PB process would have an element of 'leakage' into the wider geographical region of Cruzeiro. This is due to how the PB process is administratively and institutionally structured, i.e. at the community/ neighbourhood level the institutional structure and bulwark of the process is the residents association. This therefore becomes the organisation focal point of any study looking at the process of the PB from a neighbourhood level. The very nature however, of representation throughout the process does mean that those institutions and forums of participation inevitably have a greater geographical coverage than one specific neighbourhood. The interaction therefore of Cruzeiro do Sul, more specifically the institutional representation of the neighbourhood, the residents association and the delegates of the neighbourhood within the PB process and the wider representative forums (both the government and the community) i.e. the FROP, the União das Vilas and the COP inevitably meant that the study could not be 'bound' to Cruzeiro do Sul.

Retaining the integrity of each separate case study was a paramount consideration throughout the research process. Although comparing cases certainly provided explanatory mileage I needed to be mindful of a) making erroneous comparisons, b) the necessity of following through the grounded nature of each individual case. The grounded nature of the research approach in the two distinct case studies inevitably meant that different issues, and research categories were developed throughout the process of the research, some elements of the research findings in both case studies were comparable, others not. The result of this approach has meant that not every section of the thesis deals with both case studies in equal weight. Looking at the comparative study in this way has meant that it is a) more reflective of each individual case, and b) provides a very useful sociological explanatory tool.[28] By comparing two very different case studies I needed to utilise more abstraction with the consequence that phenomena not only become relative but gaps/ holes/ absences/ become visible and the logic of comparison began to exert explanatory power. As Yin (2003:147) explains "multiple case studies often contain both the individual case studies and some cross-case chapters". In my research due to the grounded theory analysis I decided to present the cases comparably, i.e. through cross-case chapters, organised conceptually. However, each separate case presented in the conclusion is linked to how each case study evidences a different democratic model.

3d: Fieldwork: The Research Process, Phases and Stages

The inductive nature of the research strategy meant that the most appropriate research methods evolved during the course of the fieldwork. The fieldwork was carried out in three predominant phases:

1. Stage 1: (4 months)
   1st July, 2003 – 8th November, 2003
   Preston Road, New Deal for Communities, Hull, U.K.

2. Stage 2: (7 months)
   9th November, 2003 -3rd June, 2004:

[28] A characteristic of cross-national comparative research, can be an approach whereby, the gaps, the unarticulated, the negative, the unthinkable, can be brought into the analysis to help to explain a certain phenomena.

3. Stage 3: (3 months)
   18th August 2004-2nd December 2004
   Preston Road, New Deal for Communities, Hull, U.K

Within both case studies I employed the same research methods mainly utilising semi-structured interviews with elements of ethnography and observation. The first stage of the fieldwork lasted approximately 4 months in the Preston Road, NDC context. This stage of the research was exploratory and could be characterised as essentially ethnographic. The second stage of the fieldwork took place in Porto Alegre and was comprised of two distinct phases, both phases involving elements of ethnography and semi-structured interviews. The first phase was characterised by interviewing key players within the process at a citywide level. The second phase of the research focused on community representatives from one specific neighbourhood, or more specifically the relationship between members of one specific neighbourhood and the citywide participatory process. In the third stage of the research I returned back to PRNDC to carry out semi-structured interviews with both key players and community representatives. It is the data of the semi-structured interviews that this thesis is based on. All interviews were taped and transcribed, those conducted in the Porto Alegre case study were additionally translated.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were utilised as the primary data collection tool. This was due to the fact that this study is fundamentally concerned with actors perspectives and experiences in relation to the 'participatory spaces' and processes.

> "To understand other persons' constructions of reality we would do well to ask them (rather than assume we can know merely by observing their overt behaviour) and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us in their terms (rather than those imposed rigidly and a priori by ourselves) and in a depth which addresses the rich context that is the substance of their meanings (rather than through isolated fragments squeezed onto a few lines of paper) (Jones, 1985a:46)" cited in (Critcher et al, 1997:73).

Miller and Glassner (1997:99) state that "information about social worlds is achievable through in-depth interviewing". This is backed up by Silverman's (1993:91) insights in

the interactionist tradition as "interview subjects construct not just narratives but social worlds". The key from this perspective 'is to generate data which gives an authentic insight into people's experiences' (ibid).

Access

I had a twin strategy for accessing potential interviewees within both contexts. The ethnographic elements of the research project provided a good basis from which to build relationships with the research participants. This proved to be a crucial strategy that was necessary for a qualitative research project of this nature. Firstly, I began attending the monthly PRNDC board meetings/ the PB Council meetings. These were easily accessible due to the fact they are public meetings. This was to familiarise myself with potential interviewees/ research participants and also begin to introduce myself as a researcher from Sheffield Hallam University. Within PRNDC I also knew two of the managers of two of the most significant projects that were being funded under the community development stream of the NDC from my previous employment. I contacted them and they agreed to being interviewed as 'pilot' interviews. Snowball sampling became incorporated into the research strategy and therefore the research process wove between ethnographic elements and semi-structured interviews. In the PB process I began interviewing key players who were relatively easy to contact due to their public positions. Access to community representatives (both past and present) was facilitated by attendance at the open plenaries of the PB process. Within both contexts the element of snowball sampling was particularly helpful to access people who had, but no longer participated in the processes.

Who is interviewed? Theoretical and Snowball Sampling

I used the strategy of theoretical sampling which developed as the research proceeded. Strauss and Corbin, (1998:201) define theoretical sampling as:

> "Data gathering driven by concepts derived from the evolving theory and based on the concept of "making comparisons", whose purpose is to go to places, people or events that will maximise opportunities to discover variations among concepts and to densify categories in terms of their properties and dimensions"..

The interviewees/ research participants were selected predominantly because they were in some way deemed to be theoretically significant to the study. This process of

theoretical sampling evolved during the research process. As concepts emerged from the research analysis and they appeared to have relevance to the emerging theory. Theoretical sampling thus involved maximising the opportunities to compare "events, incidents or happenings to determine how a category varies in terms of its properties and dimensions"(Stauss and Corbin, 1998:202). This became significant in determining who I spoke to during the research. As events became significant it became important to talk to those who were present whilst certain people and their role in the process became theoretically significant, for example community development workers.

In both the chosen case studies there were two groups of people with whom it was fundamental to speak. The first group consisted of key players. These were people who either had been or were currently instrumental in a) the process of participation, i.e. involving local residents in the decision making structures in the programme or process. They were defined as non-residents (interestingly enough although residents/community representatives must be regarded as 'key players' there was not one resident in either case study who occupied a senior *paid* role) that were theoretically significant to the study. I interviewed ten key players in Porto Alegre and eleven key players in Hull.

The second group comprised the residents who were involved/ participated in either the NDC programme or the PB process as key decision makers and community representatives. I interviewed 9 community representatives in Hull and 19 in Porto Alegre, Brazil. These were community representatives who were either currently participating in the programme/ process, or had previously been involved and had for what ever reason stopped participating. This element of the research strategy was crucial as it became apparent that the reasons why people stopped participating in these processes would form a critical plank of the research project. In Porto Alegre I interviewed significantly more (19 as oppose to 9) community representatives. This was due to numerous reasons.

- the way the PB process is structured, i.e. it is a citywide process and the community representatives representing Cruzeiro do Sul were often from neighbouring neighbourhoods, (therefore more people are involved representing one neighbourhood, from the neighbourhood level to the citywide level)

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- it is a citywide process (of 1.6 million people check) and therefore more people are (and have been) inevitably involved
- it has been functioning for 16 years and therefore more people have been involved over the years
- there are 32 community representatives on the COP at any one time. The equivalent in PRNDC is 12 but during the time I was interviewing it was eight and I was advised not to speak to two members of the board due to illness.

However, the ratio of community representatives who no longer participate in the process to those who currently participate was similar in both case studies, approximately half (9/ 19) in the case of the PB and (4/ 9) in the case of PRNDC.

Table of interviewees

	Porto Alegre P.B		Hull PRNDC	
In total	30		26	
Key Players/ Workers (i.e. not residents or community reps.)	10	1 x past 2x researchers and key players 2x senior managers (CRC and Cidade) 2X Regional Managers (CAR) and (CROP)	11 (two gave two interviews)	3x senior management 2x project managers 1x NRU 3x Board Member outside agency 2x local councillors
Past and Present Community Reps.	19	Present x10 Past x 9 (including 1 ex local councillor)	9	Present x5 Past x 4
Residents of Preston Road/ Cruzeiro do Sul	10		13	
Resident workers	N.A.		4	

Place of where the interviews were conducted

There were predominantly two types of places where the interviews were conducted. In the case of the key players in almost every instance I went to their office/ workplace. This was very useful/ helpful in the sense of helping me to contextualise their role within the process. Interviewing key players at their workplace made sense for numerous reasons, it was practical in the sense that it was less time consuming for busy people, they usually (not all) had access to an office where a confidential interview could take place and be recorded. However, the drawbacks included the following.

Within the official environment they may have remained more candid during the research process. In one instance I met up with a 'key player' inside a coffee bar and she was certainly very open and explicit in her criticisms of the participatory process. I had previously spoken to her within the office environment and these criticisms had not been forthcoming. Also, within their working environment it was not uncommon to be interrupted during the interview by the telephone or another work colleagues, these disruptions however were often minimised as other office staff were made aware that the interviewee was 'being interviewed'.

The community representatives however, were more often than not interviewed in their own home. This was usually the preference of the interviewee as the option of meeting in a mutually agreeable place, e.g. a café was always given. Being invited into someone's home was always a very interesting and humbling experience. On one occasion in Porto Alegre I was invited into someone's home and after the interview had finished she cooked me lunch and cracked open a bottle of red wine! I did however interview those community representatives who did have access to an office within the office environment.

The Interview Process

The interview process must be seen essentially as an interaction between researcher and participant, therefore the interview process was essentially different in each interview conducted. Despite this, Kvale (1996) has proposed a very useful list of ten criteria in the role of a successful interviewer.

- *Knowledgeable: is thoroughly familiar with the focus of the interview; pilot interviews of the kind used in survey interviewing can be useful here.*
- *Structuring: gives purpose for interview; rounds it off; asks whether interviewee has questions.*
- *Clear: Asks simple, easy, short questions; no jargon.*
- *Gentle: Lets people finish; gives them time to think; tolerates pauses.*
- *Sensitive: Listens attentively to what is said and how it is said; is empathetic in dealing with the interviewee.*
- *Open: responds to what is important to interviewee and is flexible.*
- *Steering: knows what he/she wants to find out.*
- *Critical: is prepared to challenge what is said, for example dealing with inconsistencies in interviewees' replies.*
- *Remembering: remembering what has previously been said.*
- *Interpreting: Clarifies and extends meanings of interviewees statements, but without imposing meaning on them.*

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These thoughts of the role of the interviewer provided useful guidelines, of the skills required throughout the interview process and were kept in mind throughout the process. It was however difficult to balance the tension between a) being assertive, i.e. steering the interview and making sure that the issues of interest to the research were covered in the interview, and b) allowing for the emergence of topics, issues and concepts that were important to the interviewee. Perhaps this tension was the most difficult to overcome throughout the various interviews conducted, however, this became easier as the research progressed. This was due to the fact that the grounded research process, acted as a funnel so the research area became more defined, in an inductive manner, from the basis of the interview transcripts. This meant that during the latter interviews as theoretical saturation was close to being reached, I felt that despite being more assertive throughout the interviews, I was also more in sync with respondents.

Problems of Language, Interpreting and Translating

As Mangen (2004:312) identifies, "a central problem in comparative research is the treatment of language' and in particular issues about translation and the use of interpreters". In the first stage of fieldwork in the Porto Alegre case study I utilised an interpreter during the interviews with key players. In accordance with Jentsch (1998) I found that this had the effect of creating distance between the researched and the researcher. The interpreter was in fact an English native speaker, however had lived in Brazil for some time, had undertaken academic research in the Brazilian context and was thus aware of various methodological issues involved in cross-national research.[29] There is in fact very little literature looking at the implications for qualitative research of language difference and the use of third parties in communication across languages (Temple et al, 2002). In the second stage of the fieldwork in this context however, I decided to not use an interpreter. This decision was made in recognition of the necessity for proximity to research participants, i.e. community representatives, past and present. Despite the fact one could question the validity of this second stage of interviews, the taping of the interviews and subsequent transcription process meant that any queries could be verified. The transcription involved both interpretation and translation:

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[29] Temple et al (2002) state that interpreters can stake on the status of a 'key informant' and therefore the researcher has to take on board the 'framing' of the interpreter.

listening to the taped interview and then producing a written version in English. Much of the translation literature indicates that the impossibility of a literal movement from one language to another (see Hantrais and Mangen, 1999) and therefore this approach can be seen to compliment a social constructionist approach to the social world (Temple, et al, 2002).

As Temple et al (2002:4) go on to explain, "if there is no one meaning to be gleaned from experiences of the social world, then there can be no one translation and it may be necessary to convey meaning using words that were not spoken by research participants". Despite this claim, I attempted to be as 'faithful' to the research participants in the final translation of the interview transcripts, any ambiguities in the interview transcripts were left out of the data analysis. Simon (1999) shows how the translator is involved in discussing concepts rather than just words, and how context is the key in deciding equivalence or difference in meaning. This perspective in terms of the importance of the relationship between 'concept' and 'context' fitted well within the grounded theory approach to cross-national comparative research. Of course the limitations of language, my command of Portuguese meant that language 'equivalence', i.e. the potential optimum, for a study of this kind was no-where near achieved. Despite the fact that this must be taken into consideration in a reading of the analysis, I believe the insights gained in the cross-national research approach outway the complications posed by the language element of the study.

Conclusion

I this chapter I have attempted to provide a reflexive account of the methodological framework and methods undertaken in this research project which have resulted in this thesis. I located the research with reference to the cross-national comparative methodology and justified this approach in relation to the study of participation in both 'North' and 'South' at the neighbourhood level. A grounded theory research methodological framework with an iterative approach to theory development was chosen due to a variety of reasons. One of the main reasons however, encompassed the idea that this approach would enable the subsequent research to more accurately reflect the different 'realities' of the research participants. A qualitative research paradigm was chosen to enable the exploration of the subtle social processes at play within the

participatory spaces. A qualitative approach to the research also enabled a through exploration of how key players and community representatives invoked the different concepts, and had different interpretations, conceptions, perceptions and meanings of these concepts within the participatory sphere. This approach also enabled an exploration of these participatory spaces in terms of the organisation and occupation of these spaces, i.e. the institutional mechanisms of these spaces.

The NDC regeneration programme was chosen as an exciting example of community participation in the U.K. context, for a variety of reasons amongst others, the weight that participation was given to this regeneration programme. The PB process was chosen, as a classic example of participation in terms of linking decision-making to implementation in an institutionalised process that had functioned for sixteen years, in the context of Brazil. The predominant method utilised was semi-structured interviews, fifty-six of which where carried out in the two case studies, 30 in Porto Alegre Brazil, 26 in Hull, of which 21 were key players (10 in Porto Alegre, 11 in Hull)[30] and 28 community representatives, both past and present (9 in Hull and 19 in Porto Alegre), four resident workers in the Preston Road case study were also interviewed. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as a method to a) allow the flexibility of the emergence of research themes and categories from the research participants yet were b) structured sufficiently to cover the topic that was of interest to the research. The problems of translating, interpreting and transcribing were also addressed in this chapter and this could be seen as one of the key limitations of the research, as linguistic equivalence, was no where near achieved. I did however attempt to minimise the negative effects of this by a) using an interpreter with knowledge of the research issues involved, whilst also acknowledging the effects that this undoubtedly had on the subsequent research. [31] The benefits of a North – South cross-national research approach to the study of community participation, I believe however outweighed these limitations.

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[30] Two key players gave two interviews.
[31] An interpreter was only used for interviews with key players.

4. The Shaping of Participatory Processes: Participatory Spaces and Community Actors

This first empirical chapter is predominantly concerned with a) key actors/ practitioners' construction/ production of these participatory spaces and b) community representatives' explanations of their involvement within these spaces. This chapter will therefore be divided into two main sections. The first section is the analysis developed predominantly from the interviews with practitioners, managers and those key players who have a good general overview of the participatory processes and will look at the production and institutionalisation of the process. This part will subsequently cover two main themes, i) an examination of key players' conceptions and perceptions of community participation (focusing predominantly on the PRNDC case study) and ii) the physical historical production of these participatory spaces, and the subsequent institutional mechanisms, that have enabled the development of the participatory space (focusing predominantly on the PB case study). The relationship between these two elements will be explored in both case studies. The second section will be taken from community representatives own experiences within these participatory structures and will examine the reasons why community participants in my case studies became involved in these processes. Community representatives' articulations of the reasons for their involvement spanned a similarity of themes identified in both case studies. For this reason, both case studies are integrated into the subsequent analysis.

4a. The Production of Participatory Spaces: Key Players

The first section of this chapter will be predominantly concerned with the production of these participatory spaces. How is the participatory policy interpreted, enacted and implemented by strategic actors in local organisations? This central question forms the backdrop of this entire section. It is recognised that local strategic actors with responsibility for the development of these participatory arenas (within the specific case studies) have theoretical import due to a) the positions they occupy and b) their subsequent influence on the development of these participatory arenas. These actors include local managers and key players who are responsible for interpreting, enacting, shaping and implementing government policy (be it local or national) at a local level. As

Newman et al (2004) identify, these actors are therefore crucial in 'creating the 'political opportunity structure'', which may or may not enable public/ citizen participation/ engagement. Analysing the policy discourses of participation as well as the institutional mechanisms that define and shape these participatory processes therefore becomes a twin track strategy in analysing the production of these participatory spaces. This leads to the following central research questions, how are these participatory spaces conceived and perceived? How are participatory spaces organised and occupied? Fundamentally, the relationship between these two elements will also be explored.

The need to recognise the difference in the temporal and geographical 'space' that the PB and the NDC participatory processes occupy filters through to the analysis in this section. As does the need to recognise the specific form of the participatory arena, i.e. in terms of the production of the specific participatory space. Perhaps the fundamental difference between these case studies lies in their production. For example, the NDC is a *national government* regeneration programme, conceived at the national level, implemented at the local level (neighbourhood level).[32] Strategic actors in the local organisation are therefore charged with interpreting, enacting and implementing national government policy.[33] The contested meanings of community participation in UK policy, reflected in key players' discussions of community participation, mean that, local strategic players' *interpretations* of *national* government policy occupy an important place in the analysis in the PRNDC case study. This can be seen as important in a context where the literature on community involvement highlights the immense gap between the theory/ ideas of community participation in policy documents developed at the national level and implementation at the local level. This lack of clarity about the rationale for community engagement could also be seen to elevate the importance of the interpretations of key actors in their construction of these participatory spaces in this context. How are participatory spaces conceived and perceived?, therefore, became a pertinent question to ask in the NDC context. The implications of these contested conceptualisations of participation are then

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[32] It is very important to recognise that empirically I am looking at the local level therefore in this case study the rationale, i.e. the 'production' of this participatory space stems from the national policy context.

[33] Davies, (2004:574) using an Institutionalist analysis of local regeneration partnerships in the U.K. looks at 'path dependency' and 'path shaping and institutional change' and concludes that partnerships "are an arena in which values and governing styles compete". Thus, indicating the necessity of researching how the rationale for participation has been interpreted and enacted through to implementation, in terms of recognising the power of interpretation that is imbued within individuals in terms of the roles that key players occupy.

fully explored as regards their impact or at least in concurrence with the (lack of clear) institutional mechanisms/ processes of participation.

In contrast the PB process is a *local government* initiative that arose from not only political will at the local government level, but a demand to be heard by civil society, or as Novy and Leubolt (2005:2023) maintain, "PB is a social innovation that emerged from an entwined process involving the state and civil society". [34] The impetus for the production of this space came from the locality, this is significant in terms of those who conceived of this mode of governance also helped physically construct and embed the mechanisms of the PB. Consequently, a much more homogenous notion of community participation is articulated by key players, as one would expect in a process that has been institutionalised for 16 years. In looking at the production of this participatory space, it therefore becomes much more significant to chart the *historical development* in terms of key players' perceptions of the key factors that led to the development of the process and the *institutional mechanisms* that have embedded the process of participation. This can be seen as imperative in a context where the literature highlights the success of the PB process in Porto Alegre, in terms of an example of a concrete systematic participatory process, from decision-making through to implementation. How are participatory spaces organised and occupied?; therefore, became a more pertinent question in this context.[35] Obviously, both questions apply to both contexts, although equal weight is not ascribed to the two cases for the above reasons.

Conceptions and Perceptions of Participation and their link to Institutional Mechanisms

Examining how the rationale for these participatory spaces is interpreted by key players is vital for understanding the   construction of these participatory spaces. We can begin to investigate how key actors rationalise and articulate their involvement in these

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[34] As the production of this space was an essentially a local phenomenon I will chart the historical development of this process in Porto Alegre. The wider contextual issues i.e. the issues pertaining to the formation of the PT (in terms of its emergence as a reaction to the undemocratic national context and criticisms of Stalinist socialism) need to be taken into consideration.

[35] In the interviews with key players that I conducted in this context, when explaining their conceptions and perceptions of participation and their roles in the process, their explanations were always located in terms of a) the historical development of the process, or in terms of b) the institutional mechanisms.

participatory arenas by looking at how professionals/ practitioners see their role. How do they articulate the rationale for community involvement? What meanings are attributed to both participatory spaces and common concepts within these spaces? How is the public constituted and how do practitioners see/ conceive the role of community representatives? How do key actors articulate the perceived benefits of this participatory process? (on the ground as oppose to policy rationalisations- is there a disjuncture?) and finally how has the rationale for participation been interpreted and enacted through to implementation?

As Atkinson (1999) notes in his paper 'Discourses of Partnership and Empowerment in Contemporary British Urban Regeneration', 'relatively little attention has been given to the meaning of these two terms and the implications for regeneration'. The same could be said of concepts like, 'participation', 'community engagement', 'community involvement', and 'community development'. These terms are often utilised in policy documents unproblematically, as if the meanings of these terms are self-evident. Although lately there has been a recognition of this omission (i.e. there have been attempts to define these terms, e.g. see Chanan's (2003) 'Searching for Solid Foundations' review of government guidance on community involvement), general recognition in the academic literature of the problematic use of these terms does not seem to have filtered through to empirical research. This gap has meant that key players' interpretations of 'community participation' on the ground have gone largely unscrutinised and have not been analysed or studied empirically to any great depth. It is however, a contention of this thesis that recognising the heterogeneity of different conceptions of key government terms by key players is absolutely essential in understanding and explaining the subsequent development of these participatory spaces. In this case study the link between a confused and heterogeneous conception of the role of community participation can be linked to a lack of clear process and concrete institutional mechanisms of community participation.

The empirical findings in the U.K. context pointed to an ambiguity of *meaning and interpretation* of community involvement. As one senior manager explained, when asked about the NDC approach to regeneration,

> "...em, the NDC approach, it's the philosophies are, em, around being
> community led em, and the theory is that residents are involved and residents

steer the regeneration but there are some philosophical differences internally about the level of involvement, community involvement and what it actually means to be community led and is this having half a dozen residents on the board does this mean community led or does it mean involving residents at every stage of the decision making? ....Em, and there is that constant struggle to define what is community involvement. So I think on paper the approach is right, but on practice, em, there are a lot of issues around implementation."

Competing conceptions of community engagement and a lack of a clearly understood rationale for community engagement/ participation, were articulated by a variety of key players in terms of references to the social inclusion, social cohesion, social capital, service delivery and governance agendas (amongst others). This lack of clarity about the rationale for community engagement to some extent could be seen as reflecting elements of the NRU's rationale for participation and the ambiguous place that community participation occupies in UK government policy.[36] The implications of the above, in terms of implementation, meant that in practice the institutional mechanisms and processes of participation were at best unclear, ad hoc, and, perhaps could be described as arbitrary. My research highlighted the importance of explaining the links between these ambiguities of interpretations of community engagement by key actors and the implications of these different interpretations on subsequent institutional structures and processes.

This lack of clarification of terms however, was not an issue in the Brazilian case study. A much more homogenous rationale of community engagement was presented relating centrally to ideas of redistribution and citizenship. This interpretation of community engagement could be seen to be linked to both a clarity of *process* and a *concrete institutional system* of community engagement. This was highlighted during the empirical research when one of the general managers of the GRC (The Office for Community Relations) was asked about their *approach* to community engagement, (i.e. what was their interpretation of community involvement). He explained, "now, the community [engages] itself, through the existing mechanisms, [and] tries to involve as many people as possible". His response highlighted to me, that perhaps this line of enquiry was not *as* relevant in this context, i.e. he shrugs off the importance of their *approach and hence interpretation* of community engagement, by referring to the institutionalised process as self-sustaining. Hence, the struggle over the definition and interpretation of meanings

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[36] See Conceptual Framework: The Policy and Politics of Participation

had not only already shaped the institutional mechanisms for participation, but he was also, to some extent rendering obsolete this line of thought, as a tool/ device to explore community engagement in this context.[37] As Claudio Mendez highlights whilst explaining the role of Cidade in the process,

"at the beginning, our idea was to strengthen people to participate, we wanted the community leaders, to have the ability to discuss policy with the government, but and then by the middle of the 1990's this was already happening, the process, was complete in that sense because people, the leaders have been able to participate and to face the government, and they learnt a lot about the policies and how to organise their demands, their problems, to be successful and how to implement a demand… "

Here he highlights the concurrence of the *ideas* of participation with the *practice* of participation, whereby the process is cemented by 'having a demand implemented'. He recognises that this has evolved through time, 'by the middle of the 1990s… the process, was complete', thus rendering discussion of interpretation of community participation, 'outdated' in this context. Here, the rationale/ conception of community engagement/ participation is not contested. The process has been designed and implemented to deliver concrete results that have become institutionalised and self-regulating, (and therefore more independent of key players' interpretations of the rationale for community engagement/participation). Therefore a much more homogenous conception of community participation, based on the very concrete example of the PB process is prevalent among the key actors I spoke to. The loci of the rationale for participation in this context certainly could be detected as centring round the ideas of citizenship and material redistribution.

This concurrence of a homogenous conception of the role of community participation with a well defined institutional process of participation, meant that in this context, an examination of the historical production of the process was necessary in order to see how this participatory space had been shaped. An analysis of key players' perceptions of the key factors that have enabled the participatory process to be successful in this context therefore became necessary. *How are participatory spaces organised and occupied?* therefore, became a more pertinent question to ask in this case study.

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[37] See methodology chapter: The Problems and Advantages of Comparing two very Different Case Studies.

PRNDC Case Study : Key Players' Conceptions and Perceptions of Community Participation

Key players' conceptions and interpretations of the rationale for community participation in the NDC case study varied dramatically and encompassed numerous different elements, emanating from a wide range of government agendas. This conceptual ambiguity can be seen and dimensionalised in terms of the four way NRU rationalisation of community involvement encompassing; the social inclusion and social cohesion, social capital, service delivery, and governance agendas.[38] The ideas held by key players about the role of the participation in this context were so diverse, that the term community participation could be seen to have lost any sort of meaning. It was defined in relation to increasing individuals' human capital, employment, as a more effective means to service delivery, ideas of behaviour change, and notions pertaining to governance (which could be seen to encompass elements from a social control perspective to an empowerment approach). Conceptions of the rationale for participation however, certainly could be seen to fall within a framework that defined the rationale for community engagement in terms of benefits (i.e. an increased skills base) for those individuals willing to participate. The analysis indicated that a wide range of different conceptions of the rationale for community participation was articulated by key players. This narrative was developed from the dimensions of community participation, that bore some relation to the NRU's definition:

1. **Social Inclusion and Social Cohesion**: *Community participation aims to develop empowered communities- communities which are then able to tackle complex problems, including negative attitudes and values. Are capable of developing a common vision, a sense of belonging, a positive identity where diversity is valued and celebrated and have positive external networks as well as internal cohesion.*

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[38] This NRU rationale for community participation- (see 'Review of Community Participation: Report for Public Consultation', Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, 2003) is actually based upon the work of Gabriel Chanan (2003) 'Searching for Solid Foundations', where he categorises the government rationale for community participation into three categories, governance, service delivery and social capital, the NRU add a fourth category, social inclusion and social cohesion. The rationale for community involvement is explicitly defined and stated in this policy document which is very rare in policy documentation due to community engagement's ambiguous place throughout policy.

2. **Social Capital**: *Community participation aims to increase the confidence and capacity of individuals of small groups to get involved in activities that improve quality of life and building mutually supportive relationships that enhance neighbourliness and hold communities together*

3. **Service Delivery:** *Community Participation aims to ensure that local communities are in a position to influence service delivery and the use of resources, by helping define problems, set priorities, develop and deliver solutions, to strengthen their ability to take responsibility for their neighbourhood and build professional and institutional capacity to plan and deliver community based/ led solutions where appropriate.*

4. **Governance:** *Community Participation is based on the right of people to participate in decisions that affect the well-being of their communities. Community development aims to support the development of a 'community voice' at many different levels; to build community networks, to enable the community to participate as equal partners and to increase accountability between local communities, service providers and other decision-makers.*

Social Inclusion

Community involvement was interpreted by some senior managers of PRNDC as largely equating with an employment creating strategy as a means to combat social exclusion. When asked about community participation one key player answered, 'we're lucky in that we employ... our total staff is nearly two hundred and a lot of them are residents, so they are employed directly in the delivery of services'. Another senior manager when explaining the involvement of the community in the regeneration programme, began to give a heterogeneous explanation, 'I think there are several strands to it actually' yet subsequently explained it solely in terms of the organisations' push for employment,

> "I think there are several strands to it actually,... as you probably know we are
> a very odd NDC, because we employ em, at a hindsight, 250 people, the
> average NDC employs between 10 and 40, and the majority of about 20, but
> we've gone down the road we've gone because I felt it was right for this estate,
> but what that has enabled us to do is employ more people.....a significant

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proportion who've never worked before, who've never been on a training course..."

The emphasis was seen to be about incorporating and 'including' the socially 'excluded' into the dominant prevailing order, via work experience, training and skills building.

Social/ Human Capital

Employment was seen as a practical way to up-skill individuals and help them 'crawl out' of social exclusion. A lack of skills among individuals within the neighbourhood was a consistent theme throughout the analysis of the perceived rationale for community engagement and could be linked most clearly to key players' conception of the public they wished to engage. Although this skills deficit formed a key rationale for community engagement in the minds of key players, participation was by no means articulated in terms of increasing social capital (i.e. seen in a relational/ network sense of the term). Conceptualisations of the rationale for participation, remained firmly confined to discussions of increasing *individuals human capital*, i.e. through skills, training, work experience and confidence building. The residents of Preston Road were perceived to lack a variety of attributes including skills and resources, experiences, visions and to some degree acceptable behaviour, whilst the lack of social capital in terms of networks of independent organisations was seen to hinder the functioning of the programme. A senior manager illustrated the difficulties of trying to work with residents who were seen to have an 'extremely low' skills base, 'lower than (he'd) ever met elsewhere':

> "when I first came here people shouted at me, because that's how they dealt with authority, ...which was, it was often very difficult to have debates, because people weren't able to take part in a debate, the skill base was extremely low, lower than I've ever met elsewhere, including lower than in Huddersfield, for example, as a counterpoint really, a lot of people were in the NUM, or engaged in social club activities, and were therefore, there were a fair number of people who used to be secretary or chair, or just part of a committee, I came here and their were only two people who'd done anything like that, out of a board which included twelve residents,.."

Here the lack of skills base and the lack of people with experience of taking part in entities such as social club activities is seen as providing a very difficult context from which a programme like the NDC can feasibly operate. The lack of experience in

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'networks' or 'mutually supportive relationships' i.e. the lack of an independent organised civil society, is seen as hampering the functioning of the participatory sphere.

Service Delivery

The push for community participation has been widely linked to an improved service delivery rationale. Indeed, of all the NRU's programmes and governance structures concerned with community engagement, the NDC regeneration programme, can be seen as occupying central stage in the push for better service delivery at the neighbourhood level. The predominant conception held by key players of the deficit the programme was trying to counteract however, was articulated predominantly in terms of an 'individual resident deficit'. This indeed meant that residents 'input' in terms of 'helping define problems, set priorites and deliver solutions' seemed to be overlooked. Key players and residents themselves framed community representatives as being on the receiving end of information, as oppose to crucially being the providers of it.[39] When, however participation was acknowledged in terms of a means to more effective service delivery, it was stressed that residents could and should expect to 'exert influence' over service delivery, as oppose to exercising some sort of 'control'. This idea of *influencing* as oppose to exercising *control* over service delivery was a significant theme in the discussions of the meaning of community involvement. As one senior manager explained,

> "Community involvement means to me, means that the community is aware of how they can influence, everything and anything, how much influence they can put into that, what they can realistically achieve, and what they cannot achieve realistically,... I think the word is influence,...you can't always make a difference."

The idea of 'influencing' is contrasted with 'making a difference'. This could be interpreted as contrasting the ability to exert some sort of pressure to the ability of exercising some sort of outright decision-making powers. He seems to be saying that the former option of 'influence' is more realistic and feasible than the utopian desire of 'mak[ing] a difference'. This injection of 'realism' into the debate about community participation and involvement was seen as vital in a context where notions of 'empowerment' are often unproblematically linked to ideas of 'participation'. The public

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[39] See Chapter 6.

were predominantly conceived by some key players as being concerned with good service delivery, however as having no desire whatsoever to want to shape that service provision. A senior manager explained to me why he thought there was a general lack of desire to take up the opportunity of participation in terms of service delivery,

> "em, em,..I think there is/ are two or three reasons really,..... I think most people are only interested if things are going wrong, em... and what most people want, they want a good reliable service that delivers....so I think that if people get the service that they are entitled to, eh, then they have nothing they feel they want to complain about, and most people are not interested in shaping services because they've got their own lives to lead."

Here community engagement is not seen in terms of actually improving service delivery, as explicated by the NRU definition of the link between community participation and improved service delivery.[40] He can also be seen to be challenging the rhetoric or the predominant discourse of participation. Instead this senior manager implies a negative correlation between satisfaction of services and the will to become involved. This tends to have the effect of casting those who want to become involved in a negative light, and seeing the potential participatory public as essentially passive, or at least only becoming involved as knee jerk reaction to unsatisfactory services. [41] This idea of participation sits neatly within a liberal democratic framework of participation whereby individuals are seen to have the 'choice' of whether or not they become involved and to some degree injects a healthy dose of 'realism' in the discussion for the lack of involvement in this case study.

Governance

In the U.K. context, the NDC regeneration programme forms part of the governance element of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.[42] The partnership structure of the NDC (i.e. the recommendation that there be a majority of residents on the board) stems from this agenda, and forms the organisational backbone of the entire programme. The majority of key players in the U.K. context, however, did not locate community

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[40] Although as one would expect, this rationalisation of community engagement does form a large part of the analysis.

[41] This explanation for the lack of resident participation also chimed with the explanations of the general lack of resident participation by a few of the community representatives who were involved. They attributed a general lack of interest within the neighbourhood to get engaged or participate to a general satisfaction with what they were doing as board members.

[42] More explicitly linked to the governance agenda are the Local Strategic Partnerships.

involvement within the governance agenda. This absence is significant if we think about the organisational structure of PRNDC, and the decision-making power that the residents on the board wield. Key players did not tend to frame their roles in terms of either facilitating residents to become actively involved in the decision-making of the programme, or in terms of a community development role to support a 'community voice' at the different levels of the programme, to 'enable the community to participate as equal partners'. We can dimensionalise the governance agenda in participation in terms of looking at the spectrum of approaches articulated by key players, from one characterised by a paternalistic approach to one that emphasises resident 'empowerment'. Only one key player from the Women's Centre articulated her role, which could be classified in terms of falling within the boundaries of an 'empowerment' position,

> " ..a key role is about women managing their own environment, and managing their own community and enabling women to do that,...to have the confidence and skills to do that...The ethos is about self-determination, it's about women having control of their own lives and that's on an individual level, on an organisational level, within the Women's Centre, and em, on a community level as well,.."

She sees her role in terms of 'enabling' women to manage their own environment, by encouraging them to 'see how important their contribution' is in that process. She recognises both elements of the government rationale in terms of a) the community development aspects in the sense of supporting and enabling women to have the 'confidence' and 'skills', and b) decision making, 'managing their own environment'. The terminology of 'self-determination', of 'control' evokes a very powerful image as far as the governance agenda is concerned. The importance of this autonomy is articulated on a variety of different levels, for example, on 'an individual level', 'organisational level', and on a 'community level'. At the other end of the spectrum a more paternalistic approach to the residents was articulated by senior key players. This is epitomised by one Senior Manager's conception of the public they wished to engage,

> "I think, I mean this might sound a bit tripe really, but I think communities need to be loved, ...I think that it is important that the community are looked after..."

Ideas that the 'community are looked after', 'that the community often like a bit of a steer', or as one key player explained, 'community development [is] about holding hands,

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and actually taking people to places and actually showing them, and I think it's a lot of hand holding', meant that paternalism formed a dominant theme throughout the analysis. It seemed that relations between key players of the regeneration programme and the potential participatory public were in fact mirroring the paternalistic relations of the local authority.

The Institutional Mechanisms of Participation in terms of Lack of Process in the PRNDC case study

The lack of a concrete process of community engagement/ participation in this case study seemed to coincide with the muddled conception of the rationale for community engagement within the regeneration programme. As one key player explains "there isn't a consistent message from the whole organisation as to what level of community involvement is appropriate". This was seen to have a subsequent adverse effect on the institutional mechanisms and processes of participation through to implementation. This lack of clarity of process manifested itself in a manner of different forms. From a lack of clear processes of representation (both community representatives and other members of the board) through to the intricacies of the workings of the programme in terms of resource allocation, to the absence of clear mechanisms of accountability to residents not involved. This lack of coherent institutional mechanisms of participation could be seen to encompass a wide range of effects as identified by some key players including, the discouragement of individuals to become involved. This was due to a general disillusionment with the process, as no clear mechanisms were in place to ensure the implementation of decisions taken by residents.[43]

As one manager for a project within PRNDC explains, when he turned up to a board meeting and found that there were a number of vacancies on the board,

> "John mentioned that there were a number of places on the board, so I asked a question that if a resident from this project wanted to be resident board members what's the process? And the response was well, we haven't got one,

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[43] As this section is taken only from interviews with key players, this section of the analysis is limited to key players conceptions of a lack of clear process of community engagement. Although this theme was also identified by numerous community representatives this analysis is not referred to in this section, but is encompassed in chapters 5 and 6 and forms a great part of the analysis in relation to the effect of the lack of a systematic process of participation on a) the democratic nature of this space and b) power relations within this participatory space.

and em, we tried to have an election last year but only the existing board members apparently stood, and I said well, ok I understand that but if we did have a resident who was interested what process would they go through, who would they need to talk to, well we are restructuring, em we haven't got a process, I said well I understand that but there must be something in the mem and ars that is a process, we haven't got one, we're restructuring, and we'll let you know."

Or as another key player from an external agency explains,

"A manager spoke to me about there being a number of vacancies on the board, and he suggested that maybe I'd like to, so I went to one board, and em, it wasn't very clear to me, em, whether, it was just a letter from the Chief Exec. that confirmed that I was board member, or whether he went through a process, em, I only raise that because I've been a member of another board and been to boards, myself where you actually know the process you're going through i.e. you turn up and you maybe say your bit and maybe following that they invite you back, and really there wasn't a lot of that, any of it.."

The effects of ad hoc participation were seen to have a negative effect on residents' willingness to become involved in the first place. For example, the disjuncture between decision- making and implementation was seen as a key obstacle that discouraged residents from participating. The lack of clarity in the implementation of decisions taken by the board was seen as violating very basic community development principles resulting in the demotivation of residents,

" a lack of clarity in the decision making bodies, so feeling like if they [the residents] go along and participate, that it isn't actually going to have an effect, because those decisions, either are irrelevant or marginalised, or not implemented and I think the inconsistencies are something that demotivates residents.... I would say.., you know it's a basic community development principle that you know if you set off on one path that's been agreed on you continue along that path and you're honest with people, about eh, problems that come up, or any issues that come up that effect that chosen activity".

Another key player described the experience as 'shifting sands, em goal posts were eternally moved' which seemed to have the effect of rendering participation, 'I hate to say pointless, but um, something approaching pointless, in having your say because it could be changed tomorrow anyway'. It was also recognised that the lack of 'dialogue', and 'honesty' 'throughout the process' seemed to alienate participants from the process.

The conception and process of community participation in the PB context seems much more homogenous than that in the PRNDC case study.[44] In this case study a very homogenous, clear conception of the rationale for participation was expressed by key players in terms of a) developmental democratic terms, i.e. providing a 'school of citizenship', i.e. providing *the means* to enable excluded groups to gain some element of control/ influence over the sate, and b) in terms of an *outcome* of redistribution of investment in services, pertaining to instrumental ideas of the rationale for participation. The PB formed part of an explicitly local political project which had as its aim, the opening up of the state apparatus to traditionally excluded groups. This objective, key to its historical development, does perhaps go some way to explaining the tightly held conception of the rationale for participation, that is expressed by a variety of key players. This rationale of participation and the explanations for the development of the PB therefore, seemed to be concurrent. Key actors' conceptions of the rationale for participation fell into two main categories, a) ideas of citizenship (the benefits to governance of opening up the state to traditionally excluded groups) and b) and the wider material redistributional effects.

Citizenship

A conception widely held by key players, pertained to the importance of the participatory process as a means to 'rescue citizenship'. This element was emphasised in variety of different ways, including explaining the perceived elements that had rendered the process a 'successful model' of participation, the benefits of participation, the rationale for participation, and key players' explanations of their own roles. In describing the most satisfying parts of his role, Sergio de Silva speaks of seeing the changes in community participants in terms of their 'growth as citizens',

> "I would say that it is the changing perception that people have, over time, with the human personal growth of the citizen who participates, from these regions.

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[44] This is not to deny that earlier on in the life of the process different conceptions of participation were undoubtedly present and that the conception of participation that was subsequently implemented unquestionably marginalised other conceptions of community participation that may well have led to different organisational structures. See chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of this, i.e. the idea that the popular councils could have taken the institutional place of FROP.

In the PB, the great majority of people here who participate are very poor with many problems, so you notice at the beginning of the process, people arrive without the capability of listening to others, of accepting, they aren't able to understand things clearly, they are afraid to speak, have very low self-esteem, and over time you see people are completely different, participating, acting, talking, making demands, more conscious of their role as citizens ; so for me this is the most important thing...."

Although, the public in this case study are seen to be lacking in skills at the beginning of the process, the *developmental* benefits of becoming involved in the process are stressed and recognised as comprising one of the most fundamental elements of the process. The 'skills deficit' was not seen to 'hinder' the participatory arena however, this developmental process was viewed as one of the fundamental components of the process. The importance of individuals realising their 'citizenship' by participating in the process and 'demanding' investment in services was recognised to be vital in a context traditionally characterised by the political and social exclusion of these groups. Although the idea of individuals benefiting from participating in this arena in terms of increased human capital was a theme stressed by key players in this context, the benefits of participation were not confined to *individual* participants within these arenas. Participation was also importantly seen to actually have a positive *collective* effect on the governance of the city in terms of a) creating a democratic culture and b) providing a more transparent method of public administration.

Redistribution

The majority of academic articles written about the PB process stress its benefits largely in terms of its redistributive effects, i.e. directing investment in services to the poorer areas of the city. The key players that I interviewed seemed to hold this conception of participation, as a means for redistribution, as the key benefit of the participatory process. The 'key characteristic' of the process was defined by one key player in terms of 'the resources, which have started to be distributed with more justice'. Redistribution was stressed in terms of being 'the most visible benefit' of the process in terms of providing 'an effective redistributative process', 'inverting the cities investment priorities', 'principally towards the most needy areas'. One key player explained to me the graphic geographical effect of this redistributive process,

"if you put on a map the municipality's investments during the 70s and the beginning of the 80s, you would see that the works and investments of the municipality were very concentrated in the central area of the city. You have the

big avenues, tunnels, bridges and things like that, the periphery of the city was basically abandoned. And with the PB you have a tool, where the participation of the people, brought the investments to the periphery,... there is effectively a decentralisation of investments."[45]

Key players in this context interestingly described the roles they occupied within the process, and their conceptions and perceptions of community participation predominantly in terms of referring to the *historical development of the process* and the *institutional mechanisms/ structures* of the process. In this context therefore, the importance of examining both the historical development and the institutional mechanisms (in terms of which institutional elements were seen as fundamental to the embedding of the process) was therefore elevated not only on their own terms, but also in terms of the conceptions and perceptions of participation. The question therefore, of the historical production of these spaces and the organisation and occupation became paramount in this context.

Historical Development of Process and Institutional Mechanisms

The transformation of the PB process in Porto Alegre, into an international 'model' of participation meant that it became extremely important to explore the perceptions of key actors, in relation to the various factors that allowed the production of this participatory space. There was certainly a recognition by a variety of key players in this context of the effects that this new found status had had on the representation of the production of this sphere. It was recognised that a variety of multilateral organisations tended to decontextualise the process into some sort of model that could be easily transferred. This was recognised as important by a variety of key players who tended to stress the importance of the specific contextual conditions in the historical development of the process. As one key player explained,

"...Some people look at the PB process like a model, as if you could put the process anywhere, no, no, you could not you need to look at the preconditions including ...the social movements, the popular organisations, you have the seeds of..... this is important"

Key players stressed different fundamental elements of the local context and elements of the institutionalisation of the participatory process itself that they felt were conducive to

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[45] In this context historically and traditionally the wealthier segments of society have lived centrally. Investments in services and public works have traditionally been concentrated in these areas. The PB process has in fact increased the investment in public services and works in the more geographically peripheral areas which tend to also be characterised by high levels of socio-economic exclusion/ marginalisation.

the development and the consolidation of the participatory process. For, example, in terms of the local context, an organised civil society, the political will of the local government to open up the state, the need for the popular front to gain popular support, and the timing of the fiscal reform, i.e. the healthy financial situation of the municipality were all cited as important conditional factors in the development of the process. Internal factors, pertaining to the institutionalisation and organisational structure of the participatory process were also cited as key elements in the historical development of the participatory process. These included the creation of GAPLAN in the Mayor's Office, the self regulation of the process, and the notion that the process has been developed as a mechanism to support a systematic procedure from the decision-making through to implementation to ensure the delivery of concrete results.

Political Party Willing to Listen

The 'political approach' of the government was seen to be of utmost importance in the development of the participatory process to the key players in this case study. Although it may seem an extremely obvious point taking into account that the PB has been presented academically and more generally by the political left as a direct result of the PTs political project, key players nevertheless, were keen to stress this element. This was seen as a crucial counterpoint to the multilateral organisations who were seen to 'generally put on a second level the political issues', and whom try to paint a picture of the participatory process as decidedly 'apolitical'. Key players however, varied in their explanations of the development of the participatory process in terms of the extent to which the process developed from the government's ideological position, or from the pragmatic necessities of the need to gain widespread support to enable them to pass reforms. One key player outside the government administration explains the historical development of the process in terms of the circumscribed position the government found itself in after they were elected,

> "the government desperately needed some kind of popular support... they didn't
> have the majority in the local parliament... so they desperately needed to create a
> base in order to push the local parliament to pass some laws that could reverse the
> budget situation..."[46]

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[46] Due to the fact the P.T. did not have the majority in the local parliament which previously had control of the budget, they created GAPLAN, the technical office, as part of the Mayors office to enable the budget to bypass local Parliament, with recourse to popular participation (see further on in this chapter) under 'Institutional Mechanisms'.

Another factor stressed by key players in the development of the participatory process was the increase in local revenues that occurred due to the 1988 constitution and the subsequent decision taken by the majority of state capitals to reform their finances.[47] Souza (2001:163) is keen to point out that many municipalities in Brazil were able to improve their financial situation due to this increased transfer of resources from the national to the sub-national level. This was recognised as providing a key factor in the development of the process. One key player explains this, in terms of it providing the finance to ensure that the decision-making could be turned into a material concrete reality,

> "We were, very lucky because in the first year that we were in the municipality, we had a constitution that changed all the institutional framework...and changed the division of the taxes between the Federal, the state and the municipal level. In the municipality in the first year we spent 98% of the budget only to pay the salaries. But, from the first year to the second year there was this constitutional change and the participation of the cities in the division of revenues changed to, I think, 8% to 15%..this was another reason of the success. We had money to spend so people participated and saw things being done... "

Strong Civil Society

One of the fundamental preconditions, external to the local government cited often by key players and academics for the PB was the capacity of organised civil society in Porto Alegre and their demands to be integrated into the budgetary decisions of the local authority. As one key player explains the importance of a very organised civil society composed of 'neighbourhood associations and grassroots organisations' as it is recognised that this was a fundamental element of the historical development of the process. Although academics and key players with whom I spoke placed varying emphasis on a) the political will of the government and b) organised civil society, that these two elements were crucial to the development of the process is undeniable and was presented as inextricably linked. As one key player, a P.T. official involved in the development of the process in its inception explains,

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[47] See Souza,(2001:163) for a full explanation of the effect of the increase in local revenues on the PB process.

"If you interview some people from the municipality and some people from the workers party they will tell you that, 'we created PB, we did it, this is our...' but if you look at our programme when we won the elections, the PB was not part of our programme. It's very interesting that, because the experience comes from bottom to top, of course with the social movements, ...we won the elections ...we wanted a lot of things but the PB was not part of our programme. But this pressure from the bottom and the fact that we had this very huge economic crisis in the municipality when we won made us realise that if we have little money the best thing we could do was to discuss with the people how to spend this money. So the PB in my opinion was a melting of the trends that come from the bottom, from the... and the political approach of a party, who's political approach is to hear the people..."

Institutional Mechanisms

The institutional mechanisms of the PB process have been descriptively explored in the methodology chapter.[48] I attempt to define and explain the organisational structure of the process in terms of its institutional mechanisms. This material is taken predominantly from academic accounts of the process and the Local Authority's own official publications of the functioning of this process.[49] What I am attempting to do however in this empirically focused chapter is to analyse how key players in these spaces identify factors in terms of the specific institutional mechanisms (and their historical development) that have enabled the participatory process to be successful in this context. A great part of the analysis is concerned with examining the correlation between a clear/ precise conception of participation and a subsequent institutional mechanism/ systematic/ process of participation. This will be further explored in relation to a) notions pertaining to democracy in chapter 5 and b) power relations in chapter 6.

The institutional mechanisms of the process that were identified by key players in terms of being essential for the subsequent historical development of the process, were explained with reference to: the creation of GAPLAN; the fact that the process encompasses decision-making *and* implementation; that 100 % of the resources for investment are distributed in this manner; and the autonomous self-regulation of the process. In relation to the creation of GAPLAN, one key actor explains the consequences of the decision made by the government to create a 'new planning cabinet' to bypass the

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[48] See section entitled, 'Participatory Budgeting Process (PB), Porto Alegre, Brazil' p62-645.
[49] The PB is very well explained in the Prefietura's own documentation see, www2.portoalegre.rs.gov.br/op/.

'traditional bureaucratic planning department'. This had previously been characterised by 'two organs, one.. finance'; 'so it only deal(t) with money issues with a bureaucratic approach' and the other encompasse(d) 'a secretary of planning; who only deal(t) with urban planning'. Therefore, the creation of GAPLAN as a planning office within the Mayors office enabled 'the structure to make the participatory budget possible' by acting as a 'midfield between the finance' and the participatory process in terms of planning. As a key player based at GAPLAN explains,

> "The fact that the budget was elaborated by a planning secretary which was not directly involved in the process of discussions with the community, (which we were already setting-up in the beginning of the participatory budget), - started to generate some problems. We had to ensure that the ...discussions with the community – were effectively guaranteed in the budget proposal".

This action of the first administration in 1991 in terms of withdrawing the responsibility for the budget from the planning secretary and giving it to a coordinator in the mayor's office, meant that not only would 'the mayors office... take control in relation to the discussions of participatory budgeting...in day to day relations with the population', but would 'also guarantee.. that what the population decide(d) would be in the budgeting proposal'. Thus, the institutional mechanisms to guarantee the implementation of the decision-making process with the community had been constructed. In effect this meant that the action agreed in the budget proposal did not depend on 'internal government negotiation' and could be guaranteed in terms of 'concrete' action. The importance of the process encompassing decision-making and implementation were constantly stressed as enabling the successful development of the process in this context by providing very visible concrete results. This was seen to give legitimacy to the process, thereby encouraging the participation of more people within the process. As one key player based at the GRC explains,

> "Another important thing to state at the beginning is, it wasn't always like this. People were sceptical and asked, "What's all this?". One thing that helped its success, which was fundamental, was that the initial demands were carried out as public works. If this hadn't happened people wouldn't have believed in the process. This is the practical effect..."

Another factor that was cited by the vast majority of key players that was seen as an essential element of the success of the process was the inbuilt 'period of renewal' that

forms part of the annual cycle. This part of the cycle can be seen as a way of incorporating into the process itself a mechanism to aid the evolution and flexibility of its development, whereby 'amendments to the rules and changes are made and people can question the process itself'.[50] The fact that 100% of the investment in public services is decided in this manner was also seen as lending some sort of legitimacy to the process. Other examples of PB processes in other areas of Brazil (whereby only a small percentage of investments are decided in this way) were alluded to with some contempt in comparison with this case study. The construction of these participatory spaces however, must be examined not only as regards key players' explanations of the meanings, institutional mechanisms and historical development of community engagement but, crucially in terms of how participants explain their involvement within these spheres. It is to this issue we now turn.

4b. Community Actors

The first part of this section is predominantly concerned with the reasons *why* community actors become involved in these participatory structures and how community actors articulate these reasons for their involvement. This crucial subcategory of participation is therefore defined by community representatives' explanations of the circumstances that have motivated/ encouraged/ enabled actors to participate within these arenas. The majority of research that is concerned with this question tends to operate from more 'quantitative' premises, i.e. whereby biographical information, i.e. age, gender, marital status, dependants, income etc. are surveyed and trends are correlated to try to determine which sectors of society are more likely to participate within these arenas.[51]

However, the approach I decided to take was to look at how community representatives themselves explain the reasons for their own involvement in these arenas. This approach I felt was extremely necessary if we were to begin to understand what elements were important in individuals' decisions to become involved in participatory arenas, and how these constituent elements consequently combine together. This complexity could only be grasped utilising a qualitative research methodology that recognised the importance of

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[50]See Chapter 5, Legitimacy.
[51] see for example the Cidade Survey for this information in the PB case study, and see the NDC National Evaluation for equivalent data on information concerning who participates in the New Deal for Communities regeneration programme. There are also numerous qualitative studies that emulate this approach, i.e. matching biographical information (i.e. structural explanations) to individuals explanations for their participation

listening to community representatives own explanations for their involvement. It is however, important to remember in a study of this nature, that it is the 'norm' for individuals to *not* participate.[52] This fact was recognised and indeed emphasised by the elitist democratic theorists as, a) a criticism of earlier more classic democratic theories with their emphasis on mass participation and b) as a justification for their own decidedly anti-participatory theories of democracy.[53] However, as participation is the main subject matter of this thesis perhaps one of the most fundamental questions that must be explored is why do individuals participate within these institutionalised governance arenas?

Throughout my research the main strand of thought involved the range of conducive circumstances that were articulated by community actors as 'reasons' for their involvement. These explanations were multi-layered rationalisations of why someone becomes involved which interconnected at various different points. These can be charted from the individual (micro) level to the more structural (macro) level, i.e. in terms of individual values (i.e. wanting to help) and behavioural tendencies (i.e. the necessity of being active) to perceived structural conditions, for example, physical decay (in the case of Preston Road)/ infrastructural necessities (in the case of Cruzeiro do Sul). In my analysis the loci of explanation for involvement in the two case studies varied dramatically with individuals in the PRNDC case study predominantly identifying individual/ micro reasons for their involvement whilst participants in the PB case study explained their involvement in terms of more structural reasons. Unexpected events or actions (intervening conditions) were also cited by participants in both case studies as spurs to involvement. These were generally, however, crucially time specific, for example, receiving information about the process when the potential participant had a certain amount of free time. These could also be explained in terms of the degree of control that the governing organisation could wield over them. For example, the governing organisation wields control over the distribution of information about the process, however cannot exercise direct control over a friend (already involved) introducing a potential participant to the process.

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[52] My research study did not include a 'control' group of people who lived in each neighbourhood however, were not participating for a variety of reasons including, 1) lack of time and resources, 2) rejection of the positivistic premise that a study of this nature would need to preclude.

[53] Satori in his (1962) 'Democratic Theory', poses the question, 'How can we account for the inactivity of the average citizen?' His answer is that we do not have to account for it.....Sartori concludes that the apathy of the majority is 'nobody's fault in particular, and it is time we stopped seeking scapegoats' (pp87-90)."(Pateman, 1970: 11) and hence focusing on participation.

Individual/ Micro Explanations for Involvement

A variety of research participants (predominantly from the PRNDC case study) explained their involvement in terms of their own individual characteristics and current circumstances. This type of rationale for involvement can be essentially grouped into two different sub-categories, as a) providing a specific function for certain individuals, (be it exercising values and beliefs, or more conducive to specific behavioural tendencies) and b) as a consequence of being able to employ the available resources that individual actors were in possession of, i.e. having spare time or a needed skill. Community representatives from the PRNDC case study seemed to explain their involvement in terms of it providing a specific function for those 'who want to do something' however, for whatever reason are unable to work in a full-time job, i.e. having a small child, being retired, or being a single parent. The notion of wanting to 'help out' and be 'useful' were constantly stressed as predominant reasons for involvement. As one community representative, David Williams from the PRNDC case study explains,

> "...I saw they were asking for somebody, advertising for somebody to join the board you know, I thought well, I want to try and do something, do what I can to help out you know, I applied we held an election and you know, and hey presto here I am, but I just wanted to do something, something useful."

The ideas of 'helping out' and 'being useful' seem to pertain to some extent to implicit values/ beliefs of some sort of 'common good', whilst individuals' propensity to being 'active' were also alluded to. As one community representative Sara Jones explained her involvement in terms of, some sort of notion of being able to contribute to a shared 'good' or at least in terms of the desire to help less fortunate individuals; 'there are other people who want your help, so if you can do that little bit to help'. Being active as opposed to passive was often stressed as a reason for involvement, as the shift from passivity (or fear of passivity) was often contrasted with being actively involved in PRNDC. As one community representative Jim Crossley an unemployed, single parent explains, "(I had) spare time, nothing to do, it was better than just sitting at home vegetating" whilst another community representative, Alan Greendale who had retired explains, "if I wasn't doing it, I would find it difficult to fill my time." He goes on to explain how his involvement in PRNDC has provided a useful function in terms of filling his time which he had previously spent on the allotment,

"...I'm unable to do the allotment, which took up my time before, so it's sort of filled that void and without it, without that, I don't know what I'd do to be honest, and I don't,.. I'd just sit and watch day time television, which is waiting for God I think, which is terrible, so it's given me something to aim for and something to do, and I love doing it..."

The characteristics of those who participate in regeneration programmes in the U.K. has been well charted with a recognition that those with time to participate are often either retired people or unemployed. My study seemed to confirm this as everyone I interviewed in this case study was either retired, unemployed, or worked part-time. Consequently, those who had retired explained their involvement in terms of being unable to do things that they had previously done due to ill health, and therefore having more time on their hands, "I used to read a lot at one time, you know I'm nearly blind now, so I don't read so much.." Also with a propensity to being active, "I'm not a person who can just sit down and do nothing.... I can't just sit down, I can't sit and watch telly, you know, I've always got to be doing something, and that is just my make-up". Those who were involved, and had retired, did not only stress the necessity of being active as a much needed benefit of their involvement in the regeneration programme, but were also keen to stress the advantages of bringing to the table the resources that they possessed due to their experience of work. These were often presented as benefits that could positively influence the regeneration programme. As one community representative, Alice Falmer explained to me, when asked why she became involved,

> "Oh because I really like to work, I mean I've always been a professional woman, and just to retire and just do nothing, I thought my brain was being wasted, so that's why I got involved, especially as the secretary of the scrutiny committee... but I've done that all my life when I was at work you see......they gave me that job because I'm an expert at that...."

She is recognising the positive experience she can bring to the programme in terms of the resources that she has to offer. The various resources that community representatives could employ and draw upon were often cited as either reasons for involvement, or as a circumstance that encouraged or enabled involvement in the participatory arena. Another community representative, a former architect explains his involvement in the housing theme due to his former work experience. As Donna Buttfield explains, "so because of my admin. skills, and because I only worked part-time, at that time, I started helping..".

Having time enabled her to be involved, whilst being able to offer a skill that was needed cemented her to the process. Having spare time was perhaps the most often cited resource that enabled involvement, as Jim Crossley explains, "I had a lot of spare time, because I had to pack my job in, because I, they changed my hours and I couldn't do it being a single parent, so I was sat at home bored". It seems as though having spare time as a result of either retirement, an inability to continue doing the things that one has always done, in terms of the consequences of aging, or having to leave ones job, provided the conducive circumstances for involvement. Another major resource that was referred to in both case studies that was identified as being favourable to involvement in these participatory arenas was previous experience and involvement in some domain of sport. As Alan Greendale is keen to point out as regards previous involvement with various different sports entities,

> "I've been lucky in so much that em, I'm 72, when I was eleven I got elected on to be the secretary of the then East Hull AC baseball club, so from there I moved onto City, moved onto County, moved onto Sports Council in London, moved onto the Olympic committee, so all my life, what I'm explaining is, since the age of eleven, committees, procedures, how to run a committee, what to do in committee, has always come, you know if you dropped water on a stone, eventually it goes through, and I've got that experience and I think that has held me in good esteem."

This experience of involvement with some sort of sporting entity was echoed in the PB case study, as one participant, Raul de Silva explains how his involvement with the local football team led to him being invited to participate in the Vila Figueira, residents association (which led to his participation in the PB), "..I was president of the football league of Grande Cruzeiro, I was President for eight years, we organised championships, we organised tournaments, and the President of Vila Figueira also had a football team and he invited me to participate in the Vila Figueira Association". More predictably, prior involvement in a voluntary or a community organisation, i.e the residents association (or umbrella residents association configurations) seemed to provide a trampoline or stepping stone into involvement in the institutionalised participatory arenas.[54] As one community representative, Jaoa, Cezar explains, "I entered because I was in UAMPA, I went substituting in the council, in the União das Vilas'. In the Brazilian case study, prior

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[54] This is unsurprising as the resident associations in both case studies were prerequisites of the participatory arenas. In the PRNDC case study the existence of a resident's association was a condition of the funding whereas in the PB process, the strength and organisation of the residents associations and subsequent popular councils can be seen as an elemental building block of the process (see earlier in this chapter). Subsequently community representatives in both case studies tended to oscillate between participating in both arenas, i.e. the residents association and the institutionalised governance structure.

involvement in either in the union movement or activities of a more political nature seem to provide an important stepping stone to involvement in these community organisations. For example as one former community representative explained when describing his initial involvement in the community organisation,

> "...I participated in the union movement when I worked and I participated in the '86 in the union, all the struggles, all the strikes, I participated in the popular movement, I had knowledge and experience so I began to participate in the fight for urbanisation..."

The lack of a democratic context in which people were unable to freely organise in political associations meant that the neighbourhood and the organisation of the community movement became a politicised arena. The impetus for organisation was decidedly political as Jaoa Cezar explains,

> "...we wanted to make politics in the centres of the neighbourhood, the unions were shut and the parties... So the community struggle was the only way we could.. militants from the left could make politics in a calmer way, so the residents association organised the residents.. but this is why the União das Vilas was born..."

Involvement in the PRNDC case study seemed to essentially provide some sort of function for some individuals that wanted to be involved and active in something but for whatever reason were prevented from being in full time employment, be it due to family circumstances, i.e. being a single parent, or having a small child, age, or had retired. As Donna Buttfield describes,

> ".. at that time I had a young baby, and she is six now, but at that time she was only a few months old, it was something I could do, be involved in and still have her as well, and still fit in with my part-time job."

Perhaps one of the most predominant themes developed from the category of why people become involved in these participatory arenas, and can certainly be interpreted as a benefit of involvement, was the idea of the NDC regeneration programme providing some sort of space in society where elderly people can have some sort of input where they feel that their experience counts and above all feel useful.

As well as community representatives explaining their involvement in terms of it providing a specific function (for themselves) and the resources that they could offer, community representatives in both case studies tended to also explain their involvement with reference to responding to an unexpected event or action that resulted in their involvement. These intervening conditions, ranged from arbitrary or random events, such as a friend being involved and taking a potential participant to a meeting, to more strategically orientated events/ action that the governing organisation can influence, for example, providing information about the participatory process or ensuring concrete results. Arbitrary or random events were often cited as an important element in the factors that led individuals to participate in these arenas. As Jim Crossley explains the events leading up to his involvement,

> "...so I was just sat at home bored and, it was a friend of mine,...she was on the residents' association, and she took me along one night to support her getting on to the residents' association and on that night unbeknown to me, she stood up and nominated me, (laughs) so within a matter of two weeks, I became a residents' association member, and at the first meeting she nominated me onto the board, and I got accepted onto the board..."

A friends' involvement and word of mouth seemed to be significant intervening events in both case studies that seemed to act as a powerful propellant to involvement in terms of a) informing potential participants about the process, and b) legitimating the process. As Antonio Alvarez, explains from the PB case study, "we heard from friends in another neighbourhood about the benefits of participating in the process and so we started to participate." It seems as though trust in fellow residents' opinions about the process in both case studies was a vital element that could either legitimise the process, or undermine it. Residents are far more keen and willing to trust fellow residents' opinions regarding these structures than either follow the 'official' channels of participation or listen to the 'official' benefits. As Sara Jones a former community representative and now employed as a community involvement worker, explains, "I think that a lot of the volunteers [get involved through] word of mouth actually, say you've got someone who's gone to a committee and they found it interesting, they'll go home and say to you, oh you know we went to this committee and we found it real good, you come along, I think it's more word of mouth than people thinking, oh I'll get involved...". The recognition of

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the importance of word of mouth and informal social networks as key elements of participants explanations of why they became initially involved in these structures, indicates the importance of the trust that develops between the institution and the participatory public it wishes to engage. It appears that fellow residents involvement and suggestion of involvement in these participatory arenas, a) not only makes people aware that the participatory process exists and b) legitimises involvement in the process, but it also crucially c) demonstrates that participating within this process is a feasible worthwhile option.

A key element of this trust stems from the potential participatory public being able to see concrete visible results (of participation) which consequently legitimates the process. This is a key element (that can be inferred from residents' explanations as to why they decided to become involved). The governing organisation does of course however, exercise a great deal of control over this aspect in terms of managing the process of participation to eventual execution of the public work/ project. This crucial aspect seemed to be a factor linked to the participation of individuals in both case studies, although unsurprisingly it was far more present in the PB case study. As Raul de Silva explains, "when I saw you could get something for the neighbourhood... I entered to win, and this was how it happened, so I entered the community movement to win, and today, thank God, I think I've won a lot". This view seems to be echoed by a variety of community representatives. When explaining how he became involved in the process, Martin Souza explains how it took him and others in his neighbourhood some time to comprehend the benefits of becoming involved,

> "..we in our region were delayed in understanding this proposal because, we were coming out of a period where the local councillors (vereadores) demanded the public works and we were delayed in understanding the Popular Front's proposal, but we got to the point where we could comprehend when we started to see that things were happening in other neighbourhoods, the other communities, so we began to understand the mechanism of the participatory budget, and from when we started to see concrete examples...from this moment the community began to participate"

He explains that it was only when the residents from his neighbourhood began to understand the process that they started to participate. Again the reasons as to why he began to comprehend the process and therefore participate are articulated in terms of 'starting to see that things were happening in other neighbourhoods'. Seeing the 'concrete results' of the process was a fundamental factor as to why himself and his

community became involved in the process. Another community representative Jaoa Cezar, comments why he 'started to debate' in the process and explains it in terms of, 'because the council listened to us'. One community representative from the PRNDC case study actually cites how after seeing 'little things happen' on the estate the information that he received from PRNDC prompted him to stand for the board, "..we started hearing about it because, I suppose, I was like most other people I didn't know what it was or anything, em, like you know, and then you got to know, you started seeing little things happening and then so I saw it in Preston Road News once, I saw they were asking for somebody, advertising for somebody to join the board you know..". Although it does seem that for most people who are involved, the official published information that they have received, has not been the most significant factor propelling the involvement of individuals, it does seem as though it has had some sort of role to play in a couple of residents' decisions to become involved. The timing of when residents receive this information seems to be critical as to how this interconnects with other factors, i.e seeing concrete results, and life circumstances, i.e. how much free time they have on receipt of this information becomes significant. This is very interesting as providing official information is one of the few direct intervening conditions /elements that the governing body does in fact have direct control over.

Wanting information about what was happening in the neighbourhood also seemed to be a cited reason for involvement in terms of a significant pull factor, as Donna Buttfield explains, "and as I say I'd never done anything like that and I thought I'd find out right at the centre of it, and find out what's going on, and as I say I went and that is how I got involved." This need for information, in terms of 'getting the truth', 'quashing rumours', and 'hearing it from the horses mouth', was cited numerous times in the PRNDC case study as an explanation of their rationale for involvement. Interestingly, involvement in this case study by community actors was not explained in terms of a desire to 'provide information' or even to have an input into planning service delivery or projects. The parameters seemed to indicate a conception of themselves as recipients of information (see chapter 6 for a full discussion of this theme). The scale that the programme covered also seemed to be significant here as various community representatives explained their 'interest' in the programme because of its very local nature, 'I think because it was so local, it was interesting'. This was also identified as a crucial factor in the PB case study as Pricilla Oliviera explains,

> "In the beginning it was good. The dynamic of the discussions were interesting, because we discussed with all the regions...all the regions each region had a characteristic of participation, and how to demand...the community meetings were rooted to the place, to the street, to our form of residents association in the neighbourhood."

Structural/ Macro Explanations for Involvement

Significantly, it seemed as though more macro /structural reasons for ones involvement were cited more often in the Brazilian case study, than those reasons that coalesced around individual/ more micro reasons for involvement that were so prevalent in the U.K. case study. Although structural/ macro explanations also held considerable sway in the U.K. case study, these were often explained in terms of how these factors interlinked with individual factors, i.e. behavioural tendencies, beliefs, previous work and voluntary experience. This did not seem to be the case in the Brazilian case study. People tended to explain their involvement and the historical explanations for the organised community movement and the subsequent PB system in terms of a) a fundamental necessity of basic services in the neighbourhood and b) as resistance to eviction. Perhaps the fundamental link in both case studies with the identification of the more structural/ macro factors for involvement in the participatory arena was the recognition of the need for change.

In the PRNDC case study the motivation to become involved in the residents' association (as a precursor to involvement in PRNDC) is explained by two participants in terms of the perceived deterioration of the estate, and a recognition of the need to reverse that dynamic,

> "I joined that [the residents' association] in '92, '93, when I moved back into East Hull...and I was walking to the shops and I thought this bloody estate is going down the knick, so em, I thought I'd do something about it, so I thought I'd join the resident's association..."

> "...I could see that if we divide it into the bad lads and the good lads, the bad lads had took the estate over, and the good people were saying , well this is how it is, and it hasn't got to be like this.."

In this last comment Alan Greensdale attributes the deterioration of the estate to the 'bad lads' who 'had took the estate over'. He contrasts them to the 'good people' who are

almost depicted as some sort of passive 'defenders of the neighbourhood'. He implies the acceptance, by the 'good people', 'well this is how it is', of this dynamic, i.e. 'the bad lads' taking over, whilst he goes on to challenge this acceptance by articulating the notion of change 'it hasn't got to be like this'. This idea of change resonated strongly in both case studies where participants articulated the reasons for their involvement in terms of a more structural/ macro narrative. The first comment however, made by John McFarnon not only implies the recognition of a necessity for change but also locates himself, as a conscious reflexive actor at the heart of the process of change, who consciously decided to become involved, 'I thought I'd do something about it'.

In the PB case study in Cruzeiro do Sul, the need for basic services was cited as the biggest impetus for a) community organisation and b) involvement in the PB structure. The need for basic services in the vilas of Porto Alegre has been identified by many academics as one of the main impetuses for organisation and community mobilisation in Porto Alegre. My empirical research confirmed this with various interviewees (who had taken part in various mobilisations) explaining to me the conditions of Cruzeiro do Sul in terms of a lack of basic infrastructure as the main impetus for participation. As Pricilla Oliveira explains,

> "we didn't have anything, we didn't have water, we didn't have light, we didn't have draining, nor rubbish collection, it was just us, dogs and rubbish mixed together, and I was there in '77 and '78.. we didn't do anything else, but we got organised to get better living conditions.."

Another community representative Bette Hidalgo describes how the need for basic services was one of the most basic conditions that mobilised the community, "the priority was water and drainage, particularly in the neighbourhoods, I don't know if you've heard of the 'chickens'... as we call them, those little hose pipes. People would buy a hose, we bought a hose for drinking water.. but it was contaminated so it was the first necessity, through PB and we went to discuss, and we wanted this to change, and we went in front of the Local Government".

It seemed as though in this case study, the necessity to organise and to participate to demand services to either meet basic needs or protect infrastructure to guarantee basic needs i.e. housing, was the greatest single factor for a) organisation and b) participation. In this case study therefore the degree to whether organisation and hence participation

was a choice consciously taken was refuted by various community representatives. An ex-community representative Pricilla Oliviera is adamant that it was certainly not a choice to become involved,

> "Because I always say in truth, because we were poor and in truth the poor don't have an option, you are in a situation completely marginalised, and the only option was to organise... I think that poor people on the periphery, you don't choose...because you don't have options, because you live in an inhumane condition, no? And, here, you have to ask to have the minimum dignity, water, light, drainage, the basic things, and you have to organise to get them, if not you won't get them, the people don't have an option....in the beginning the movement came about, from a necessity of survival..."

Here it is made clear that 'the only option was to organise', i.e. that the necessity of survival demanded organisation. The need for basic services is presented as the one major factor that instigated various community actors to act, organise and participate in the PB process. Another community representative describes how the biggest impetus that propelled the mobilisation and organisation of the community was the decision made by the residents to resist the local authorities attempt at evicting the residents of Cruzeiro do Sul and moving them to Restinga (on the outskirts of the city centre). The basic necessity of fighting to keep one's home, seemed to be one of the most powerful structural reasons cited for community mobilising, organising, and subsequent involvement in the governance structure, "one day we coordinated in the vila (where they wanted to demolish the houses) and the people decided to resist, so we started to organise and build the residents' association". The recognition of this pending eviction is also articulated as a contextual condition providing the impetus to consolidate resources in the neighbourhood, for example, 'we started to organise, build the residents association, and look for more resources, so we discovered that when we had more resources in the community, there was less chance of them moving us to Restinga, so we started to build a community crèche..'.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the production of the participatory spaces was seen to be a fusion of a) key players construction of these participatory spaces and b) the interaction of community representatives involvement within these spaces. This dynamic was explored in relation to a) the conceptions and perceptions of key players and b) how these spaces were organised and occupied, i.e. the institutional mechanisms of these spaces. The lack of a

clear conception of the role and rationale for community participation in the PRNDC case study was highlighted by the different meanings that key players seemed to ascribe to it. This lack of a clear conception of community participation could also be linked to a lack of a clear process and implementation of community participation in terms of institutional mechanisms. In contrast the key players in the PB process in Porto Alegre seemed to have very clear ideas about the rationale for this process and tied it to notions of redistribution and citizenship. This was echoed in the institutional mechanisms of participation, as the process tied decision-making to implementation. Key players in this case study explained the success of the process as regards its historical development and institutional mechanisms.

Community actors within both case studies could be seen to surprisingly articulate similar reasons for involvement within these spaces. These could be dimensionalised from individual/ micro reasons for involvement to more structural/ macro reasons for involvement. Community representatives in the PRNDC case study tended to explain their involvement as regards the more micro-individual reasons for involvement whereas in the PB case study community representatives explained their involvement in terms of more macro/ structural reasons. Despite this fact, both subsets of data from community representatives (from both case studies) were integrated into the analysis in this section, as conceptually a comparative approach was seen to prove fruitful. This approach of integrating the four sub-sets of data was seen as particularly useful in the discussion of the democratic nature of the participatory spaces. This is the subject matter to which we now turn.

5. The Governance and Democratic Nature of Participatory Spaces

The production of the participatory space was seen to be fundamentally linked to the democratic nature, or more specifically the democratic models that were evoked by key players and community representatives. This chapter therefore explores how key players and community representatives explain their experience within participatory spaces with reference to ideas associated with different democratic models. Participation has become a fashionable buzzword in the realms of a variety of governance structures, from the local or community level to transnational governance arrangements. This development has been portrayed as both enhancing local democracy and as crucially undermining it. Citizen participation has formed one of the central planks of democratic theory for centuries. However, more recent democratic theories of a liberal variant have been keen to deny the importance of participation. Participation is therefore presented as a destabilising element, which has the potential to impede democracy. Concepts associated with 'participation' in more 'developmental' democratic theory, have formed part of the New Labour's push for 'democratic renewal'. 'Active citizenship' defines the aspirational relationship between state and subject, 'community' has become the designated site for action, whilst 'partnership' with civil society is the preferred vehicle for governance and implementation of social policy. This discourse of 'democratic renewal' can to some degree be seen as a recognition of the shortcomings of liberal democratic institutions and does in fact evoke references to other democratic models.

A major finding in the empirical research, encompassed the extent to which different models of democracy were alluded to in both case studies by key players and community representatives. This chapter therefore includes ideas pertaining to different models of democracy, from more republican notions that stress 'developmental democratic' elements of these participatory spheres, to notions pertaining more to a representative democratic model, (i.e. ideas emanating from a liberal democratic theoretical framework). Recognising how key players and community representatives, in both case studies emphasise different a) elements of the same models of democracy, and b) a variety of democratic models, does begin to explain some of the 'real' concrete tensions that exist on the ground in these participatory spaces.

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Participatory spaces have long been judged, researched and examined by a variety of different yardsticks, some pertaining to ideas associated with representative democracy, others to ideas more associated with direct or participatory democracy. Some commentators look at these participatory spaces in terms of their inability to conform to ideals that are more usually associated with representative democracy, i.e. representation, accountability and legitimacy. Blakely (2000) charts how these new spaces of governance, operating within the terrain of representative democracy, are fundamentally undermining key elements of local democracy. Other commentators however, recognise the futility of trying to assess these 'new' spaces in terms of 'yardsticks' more usually associated with traditional representative democracy. My research, however, showed the importance of recognising how these concepts, often associated with representative democracy, were at the forefront of both key players and community representatives' explanations of these spaces, and the subsequent tensions that exist within these spheres. This did not rule out the necessity of recognising how other conceptions of democracy, occupy an important place, in the ideas of key players and community representatives, and the subsequent development of institutional mechanisms in both contexts. This is an interesting research finding in itself, one which helps to highlight the increasingly complex terrain of governance that these spaces occupy.

In both case studies different elements of 'normative democratic theory', from 'classical democratic theory' to more 'modern' democratic theorists were alluded to implicitly and explicitly throughout the research. People who participated within these spaces often referred to the normative, i.e. in terms of what these spaces, *should* represent/ provide etc. This was significant in the analysis in terms of recognising how different key actors/ community representatives valued different aspects of these spaces, and also examining how different key players and community actors hold different aspirations for these spaces. Recognising the different aspirations that were held by both key players and community representatives for these participatory spaces was crucially indicative of the large gap between the 'rhetoric' of participation and the 'reality' on the ground. It also indicated that these spaces had become imbued with values that community representatives and key players recognised were not being met.

As chapter 4 identified, the principal difference between the two case-studies was that actors in the PB process in Porto Alegre presented a clear, well-thought out, systematic process of participation, that seemed to reflect its institutional mechanisms. This appears to be in stark contrast to that presented by actors in the PRNDC case study, in terms of both the clarity of the conception of participation, and its subsequent institutional mechanisms and procedures. This meant that in this case study, different community representatives/ key players alluded to very different ideas/ democratic 'models' when articulating their experiences within these spaces. This, however was to some degree paralleled in the PB case study, for different reasons. Different models of democracy were alluded to by different actors within the sphere of the PB however, this could be attributed to the fact that the PB process does encompass different elements of various democratic models.[55] Despite the different models/ conceptions of democracy, that were alluded to by key players and community representatives interviewees nevertheless portrayed a much more homogenous picture of this space with reference to ideas related to democracy. In this chapter, I will therefore explore the implications of these findings, in terms of how different elements of the democratic nature of these spaces, are emphasised by diverse actors. This approach will be taken in tandem with charting how these different concepts and elements are utilised within these spaces as 'discursive strategies' in the technique of governance.

The 'developmental' elements of participation, usually associated with the civic republican democratic tradition were articulated as extremely important key benefits of the participatory space in both case studies, albeit to varying degrees. Key players and community representatives articulated the benefits of these spaces in relation to ideas that community representatives are able to 'gain knowledge' about the functioning of the state, whilst 'developing skills', and 'organising capabilities' by participating within these arenas. These ideas can be seen to fit in with current New Labour, 'developmental' type policies including emphasis on 'capacity building', 'social capital' and 'community development'. These policies can be seen to be premised on the diagnosis of social exclusion in terms of 'individual' or 'community' deficit, and as part of the push to 'enable' 'active citizens' to crawl out of 'social exclusion' and

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[55] Although the process of participation is 'systematic' and institutionalised, and has been developed with a homogenous conception of 'participation', it does in fact encompass different elements from various normative models etc. Therefore, although there seem to be concrete tensions that have been worked out physically, which one can look at though the institutional structures, (i.e. how this participatory space is organised, occupied and has evolved) various elements of different democratic models are given varying elements of importance by different key players.

'political exclusion'. Although one can detect the above elements as pertaining to a civic republican tradition in democratic theory, key players and community representatives in both case studies also explained these spaces in terms of notions relating to a liberal/representative democratic framework. Concepts such as representation, accountability and legitimacy were at the forefront of the analysis of all four data sub-sets. How these concepts were evoked, interpreted, explained and utilised differently by actors was deemed significant, not only on the level of conceptions and perceptions of these spheres, but were also seen to have an effect on the organisation and occupation of these spaces. This empirical chapter is therefore divided into three main sections. The first section, looks at 'developmental' notions of democracy and is related to ideas of community development and the role of education. The second main section of this chapter looks at how conceptions and perceptions of representation and accountability were evoked by key players and community representatives in both case studies. The third and final section of this chapter deals with the institutional mechanisms of accountability and legitimacy.

5a: Developmental Democracy, Community Development and the Role of Education

The 'developmental' elements of participation have a long history within democratic theory and are mostly associated with republican notions of democracy.[56] These 'developmental' aspects of participating in these spheres, are seen as part of a crucial strategy to enable community representatives to 'develop the skills' and 'understanding' to facilitate their ability to 'control' the state more effectively in favour of their interests. This perspective is also emphasised in terms of facilitating the development of 'self-help' initiatives, and thus encouraging greater autonomy from the state (Abers, 1997:14). The developmental aims of 'community development' policies and programmes are also currently being stressed as a means to combat social exclusion, by a variety of governing bodies. Although, seemingly occupying very distinct terrains, democratic theory and community development practice share numerous premises, critiques and aims that were present in both participatory spheres. Perhaps the defining quality of a 'developmental' perspective in terms of both developmental democracy and

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[56] See Conceptual Framework

community development is indeed the important role that education occupies in these spheres.

In my empirical analysis, the 'developmental' elements of how the benefits of these participatory spaces were articulated, varied dramatically in and between the four data sub-sets. Increased confidence was articulated as an individual personal benefit of involvement in the process by community representatives, whilst key players tended to stress the importance of involvement facilitating confidence and trust in the process of resource allocation. In the PRNDC case study, despite the 'resident/community' deficit rationale for the programme, the 'community development' aspect of the programme was identified to have come across various different problems. Interviewees in this case study created a narrative of institutional deficit, as regards the community development aspect of the programme. However, in the PB case study, the importance of learning the functioning of the state was articulated time and time again, by both community representatives and key players as both a major benefit, and crucially as a reason for its success. The accrued individual developmental benefits of participating in this sphere were significantly linked to the ability of participants to influence decision-making.

PRNDC and the Developmental Nature of the Participatory Process

Although the rationale for participation was often articulated by key players in terms of 'resident deficit' in the PRNDC case study, 'developmental' ideas, in terms of skills development, confidence building, learning how the state works etc.. were not primarily articulated by either key players or community representatives as a principal benefit of the participatory process.[57] When however, these aspects were implicitly referred to, these were not seen to be specifically linked to a recognition of increased influence in the participatory arena. Although, the 'deficit' analysis perspective was certainly present throughout the interviews with the key players, this did not seem to translate into either projects, or a discourse that emphasised the importance of the 'developmental' nature of the participatory space. The institutional mechanisms linked

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[57] In this case study, it seemed as though the benefits of community participation seemed to be described and explained by both community representatives and key players in terms of more physical/ tangible outcomes, i.e. new buildings etc. (see this chapter under legitimacy), a way of ensuring more effective service delivery, and also a way of legitimating the programme in the eyes of residents who weren't directly involved in the programme.

to community development were time and time again portrayed to have been unsuccessful in this context.[58]

One senior manager, who was formerly in charge of the community development part of the programme explains what community development meant to him,

> "it's about developing their s...and I've seen it work wonderfully, when it works, it works wonderfully, it's about developing people's skills, it's about raising their expectations in many respects as well as building their confidence, but it's certainly about raising their expectations..."

Here, community development is articulated in terms of its 'developmental' components in terms of 'skills', 'raising expectations' and 'building confidence'. This seems to fit in well with the predominant individual or community 'deficit' analysis of social exclusion. In this case study, however, these 'developmental' benefits of community development were not linked to the functioning of the participatory sphere by interviewees. The Women's Centre was perhaps the only project where this link was made, as one key player, explains the evolution of the Women's Centre project, "Yeah, yeah, and all the while this was going on, women were going on courses learning about how decision making happens, how committees work, all those sorts of things." This was the only recognition of the link between education and learning in terms of learning about decision-making and the actual functioning of the participatory space in order to facilitate a greater influence. As already noted in Chapter 4, increasing employment seemed to be the preferred strategy articulated by key players to combat social exclusion and therefore the importance of skills development and training tended to be geared towards this aim.

Closer scrutiny of the various community development projects highlighted the difficulties and problems that these projects had faced in terms of realising their aims. One senior manager explains "we've had, we had some troughs and peaks with the community development". Analysis of the interview transcripts however, quickly reveals the 'troughs' yet the 'peaks' seem to be extremely elusive. One key player elucidates how, she perceived community development within PRNDC, "it's a top-

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[58]The institutional mechanisms of community development can be seen as the physical embodiment of this 'developmental' aim in this context.

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down approach with a lot of rhetoric about involving the community and resident led and lots of buzz words but that value system just isn't apparent in the company what so ever". Other interviewees, however, were more charitable in their assessment of the community development element of the programme. One cannot escape, however, coming to the bleak conclusion that key players and community representatives various different attempts at community development for one reason or another had not come to fruition. For example, in reference to a shadowing scheme, whereby community representatives were going to shadow management, one key player explains, "I don't think that ever came off", whilst another key player is unsure of the community representative that has his portfolio area, "Yeah, there is, but I can't remember who it is at this point in time,.... I can't remember who it is..".[59]

The community development aspect of the programme was constantly stressed as being in tension with the demands by the Treasury to spend... "certainly, well it's calmed down now, but at the outside it was racing ahead, spend, spend, spend, and that was the government edict really, so we were trying to bring the residents on at the same speed. And that's been hard, very hard". Or as another key player explains,

> "I think the problem was the processes have never really been clarified. Em, the NDC has been constantly playing catch up to itself because it erupted into being, there was pressure from the Treasury to spend money very quickly and that was what drove the senior management decision making rather than well, hang on a minute, we need to find out actually what people want, and implement that in a reasonable time scale, rather than oh, my god we've got to spend £3000, before March on anything, you know which in effect was what happened..."

It was recognised that this intense pressure exercised by the Treasury to spend certainly militated against community development. The latter obviously needs a great deal of time, which the former cannot afford to allow. It was acknowledged that the 'ideal' situation would be "be doing the one first, before you've even got the money, but to be honest, it's not been quite like that so it's been difficult."

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[59] It was decided that each community representative on the board would have a specific portfolio, that would correspond to a theme within the programme.

In the PB process, however, the 'developmental' element was seen as a crucially important component of the process. This was emphasised by both key players and community representatives and was articulated in terms of enabling residents to gain experience and understanding to enable them to gain more 'control' over the state and hence access resources. One community representative, Jaõa Cacheoira explains the personal benefits of his involvement with the process, "we got to know this dynamic of the state, and we got to know for example, how the state functions and the tax system". This was echoed by numerous community representatives that I spoke to in this case study. The links between being able to effectively exercise ones' citizenship, learning how the state functions, via participation in the participatory process, and the outcomes this entails, were explicitly articulated as a principal benefit of the process. As Martin Souza, another community representative in this space, explains,

> "one of the biggest benefits for me was personal growth, no? I learnt a lot, like I said, a lot of positive things, you exchange experiences, you learn a practice, the language used in the meetings with the Local Government ,... what is the Plan of Investments? and what are their roles?... Today you can influence, so you can use this to get more resources for your community, you can swap experiences of how to mount work cooperatives, how to organise a needy community, how you can do community work within a school...."

The educational benefits of being involved in the PB space are articulated in terms of gaining a very concrete practical knowledge of the functioning of the state. This is expressed in terms of learning the type of 'language used', learning the significance of key documents, i.e. the 'plan of investments' and in providing the arena to enable the sharing of 'experiences' about various community projects. The PB was described by community representatives as a 'school', as a 'university', as Raul de Silva explains,

> "...there exists the university to be a doctor, a lawyer, to be a dentist...so for me , the community movement was a university, if you pass time there you will improve your training, why? ... I started to participate in the PB, in the university of the community..and started to participate and you can see the changes that happened in my life, I was councillor of the PB, I was co-ordinator of the association, I co-ordinated 29 associations in the region,...I have got to know the mayor of Porto Alegre, met the Governor of Rio Grande do Sul, I have eaten with people that I could have never imagined in my life......,"

Not only is it seen in terms of 'educating' community representatives about the functioning of the state, but it is crucially described as providing a platform whereby

community representatives come into contact with key important figures not only in the city, but also at the state level. This bridging social capital element of the participatory forum was indeed cited by numerous community representatives and key players as being a huge benefit of the process. As Raul de Silva eloquently explains, "because you negotiate with the secretaries, if you haven't got the knowledge and take things to the wrong people, you get nothing, but inside the partnership with the Local Government, with the secretaries you get things, if you know where the secretaries are, you can get something, if you haven't got access, you arrive at the door and it is shut, no?". In this case study not only getting access to important figures in the locality in terms of politicians or state functionaries was articulated as a benefit, but also as regards providing an arena where participants could get to know other community leaders. As Jaoa Getz, explains, "but it's very important for our formation, because if you are in the COP you are next to the most important figures in the city for the community movement, for me it was a school, very important... this possibility to be a councillor in Cruzeiro and meet the other leaders in the regions." In this case study, the links between the 'developmental' aspect of individual participation within these arenas and the subsequent effects on their participation within these spheres, is explicitly articulated, learning is crucially linked to 'influence' in these spheres.

5b: Representation and Accountability: Conceptions and Perceptions

Gaventa, (2004:6) points out that, "one of the assumptions of participatory forms of governance and development is that greater participation will allow more inclusive inputs into decision making processes, which in turn will lead to better decisions. At the heart of this assumption is a link between participation and representation, such that greater participation will lead to better, more informed forms of representation". This assumption seems to be at the heart of the push towards creating more participatory spaces at the governance level in both contexts. Although seemingly straightforward in logic, this presumption has proved extremely problematic in terms of what happens on the ground within these participatory spaces. Increased participation has been proved time and time again to *not* correspond with increased representation of a wide variety of social groups within these spaces.

The question of representation within these participatory spaces is of primary importance on numerous different levels.[60] My empirical research in both contexts showed the importance that the concept of 'representation' wielded to both key players and community representatives in these spaces. However this concept was interpreted, explained, enacted and implemented in extremely different ways. The notion of representation was explained with implicit reference to a variety of different democratic 'models', including more traditional ideas commonly associated with representative democracy, to ideas that could be interpreted as pertaining to a more 'direct democratic' form.[61] 'Representation' in both case studies varied dramatically, in terms of confused conceptions of representation in the PRNDC case study, and a lack of a clear institutional process of representation, to a very clear conception and institutional process of representation in the PB case study. My research highlighted the importance of recognising how, the concept of 'representation' was utilised by key players in both case studies as a discursive strategy. This seemed to enable them to either legitimise the outcomes of the participatory processes or to crucially dismiss the input of community representatives within these arenas, as essentially 'unrepresentative'. At the same time however, key players also portrayed the 'community' they wished to engage as a homogenous entity in the PRNDC case study. This seemed to complement ideas of consensus that were seen to mitigate against the representation of minority groups in the participatory space.[62] Whilst the institutional links of representation to wider accountability where highlighted in both case studies as being extremely important elements (either that the process lacked or an integral element) by both community representatives and key players.

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[60] Ideas of representation within participatory spaces are usually linked to the very basic research question, 'Who participates within these participatory spaces?'. This is usually researched by utilising a survey method which charts the biographical characteristics of who is involved, i.e. what social group do participants belong? What is the income band of participants? What is their gender? How old are participants? Although these questions are extremely important when looking at the concept of representation, what I am more concerned with is how the concept of 'representation' is interpreted and utilised differently by key players and community representatives within these participatory spaces.

[61] For example, 'representation' from a liberal democratic theory has been associated with the idea that once a representative has been elected, the power of decision-making by the masses has been surrendered to the elected representative. This is in stark contrast to 'representation' in direct democratic terms, whereby the 'representative' should merely act as a delegate (not putting forward their own viewpoint), by transmitting the ideas and decisions taken at lower levels of the polity, to a higher level.

[62] This was true of the PRNDC case study, but was not articulated as a problem in the PB case study.

Community Representatives ideas of Representation in the PRNDC Case Study

In the PRNDC case study the idea of representation was given great importance by community representatives, however, a lack of clarity about how representation was actually exercised in practice seemed to underlie the majority of interpretations. One community representative Alice Farmer, recognised the importance of the concept, in terms of the procedural necessity to 'represent someone' on the variety of boards she belongs to. However, she seemed to lack a consistent view of whom she felt she was representing within the participatory space, or why indeed it was necessary to represent someone. It was almost as if representing different bodies within these participatory spaces had become some sort of vacuous formal ritual, that had to be adhered to, to enable individual participation;

> "the neighbourhood support fund...so I represent them, for the resident's association, and I represent the resident's association at the consortium, so this is what you have to do, represent somebody, so I, but I could represent the bowls club at the consortium."

Individual community representatives possessed extremely different ideas of what representation meant and this was seen to be indicative of the lack of a concrete institutional process of representation. Community representatives had arrived to the board through a variety of different ways, which could be seen to crucially undermine any concrete notion of representation within this sphere. As Jim Crossley explains,

> "Everybody represented somebody different.... ...em, I always felt superior to some of the board members because I'd actually gone out on a night at the resident's association and been elected by the residents, where as some of them wasn't, some of them were just there because no-body could be bothered to vote, or had been there, and voted themselves on......"

This not only highlights the problematic nature of the lack of a clear institutional mechanism/ process of choosing representatives, but it also demonstrates how this lack of process can have a detrimental effect on the perceptions of how community representatives view their contemporaries within these spheres. It would seem that this could potentially have a destabilising effect in terms of legitimising some community representatives at the expense of others. Representation was also explained to me by community representatives in this case study from a variety of different perspectives.

These explanations encompassed an assortment of elements of implicit references to a wide range of diverse democratic models. For example, one community representative articulated his role in terms of how, ideally it would involve merely transmitting the ideas of the residents to the decision making forum. Here, he seems to be pertaining to a more direct democratic model, "I mean as an elected members you're not supposed to put your view across, you're supposed to put the views of the residents". This can be seen in stark contrast to another community representative, Alan Greendale, who links ideas of representation to ideas of 'resident led'. Resident led is not explained in terms of *'resident'* led as oppose to *'professional'* led, which is the usual interpretation of the term but resident *'led'*. This conception is congruent with the U.K. government emphasis within participation in regeneration on community 'leaders'. Thus, he is echoing ideas about resident and community 'leadership', which can be seen to be at the opposite end of the spectrum to ideas of accountability of community representatives to the wider community. He explains that after a long process of resident consultation, one resident complained that there had been enough consultation, and they wanted to see results,

> "...I remember a resident, "come to my door, and tell me you've done that", you know and from that I took it that, well, the residents who are on the board, the resident directors all have portfolios, and they follow whoever's portfolio they have....so **it was very important to maintain that resident led, to stop consulting at some time...**"

Community Representatives ideas of Representation in the PB Case Study

These confused conceptions of representation articulated by community representatives were in stark contrast to the coherent view of representation that was presented in the PB case study by community representatives. In this case study community representatives explained their role as 'representatives' within these spheres in a manner that could be seen as echoing or at least reflecting the concrete institutional mechanisms of participation. The rationale for this specific process of participation is intricately linked with how community representatives articulated and explained their role as representatives within this sphere. For example, one community representative, Raul de Silva, precisely explains whom he represents in the different forums and why,

"the councillor, has the role of organising the meetings for the FROP, the councillor has the obligation to take part in the meetings of the COP, and to also attend the demands of the region...I as a councillor, although I live in Vila Figueira...the person who has to demand for Vila Figueira is the president, and that's why I can't be president of the association...the president of the Vila will have a conflict of interests...I represent the region...so there doesn't exist a tension,... you can't be a councillor of Vila Figueira, you are a councillor of the region."

He is extremely clear of whom he represents within the COP. He is a representative of the region, not merely his neighbourhood. He explains this clarity in institutional terms, i.e. it is not possible within the process, to both be president of the residents' association and a regional representative within the COP. He explains the reasons behind this institutional development in terms of it being developed to avoid a 'conflict of interests'. This is echoed by another community representative who explains his role in relation to representation in very similar terms,

"..the role of the councillor the role, the delegate, when you go to FROP it's to represent your community, the councillor through the COP is to represent your region, I wasn't in the COP there, representing the interests of Cruzeiro do Sul, I was representing the interests of the almost 40 associations, organised in Grande Cruzeiro, so the responsibility is much greater. The role of the councillor is to deliberate.. the plan of investments, ... how much the Local Government will spend in public works. So we go there and decide where the resources go, how much, how much goes to each region"

This clarity of 'representation' can to some degree be attributed to the size of the participatory process and its systematic nature. The process is citywide, based on an annual cycle, with very concrete institutional mechanisms and therefore it is a lot easier for community representatives to locate themselves and explain their role as a representative within this broader picture. Community representatives clearly articulated the position they occupied, their role and who they were representing in this case study.

Key Players Views of Representation in terms of 'Activists' vs the 'True Community' in PRNDC and the PB process

Interestingly in both case studies, key players seemed to oscillate between seeing community representatives as an unrepresentative elite and utilising the ideas of

'community representativeness' to legitimate the decision making/ outcomes of the participatory processes. That only a small percentage of the 'potential' community wanted to be involved was identified in both case studies by key players as a real challenge to the evolution of the participatory process in terms of representation and wider accountability. However, as one senior key player in the PRNDC case study explains, demonstrating his pragmatism/ acceptance of this phenomenon,

> "Where I've got to personally in accepting, that there will always be a group of activists who'll be, want to represent the community, and one of the dangers there is that they can be extreme activists as other NDC's have discovered."

This idea that those who are involved are seen as community 'activists', and really 'unrepresentative' of the wider 'true' community who are not involved, was a recurrent theme in both case studies. This was attributed to a) the 'wider' community having no real interest in becoming involved and also b) the tendency of community representatives to act as gatekeepers within these participatory spheres.[63] As one senior key player in the PB case study explains,

> "..the local community leaders dominate the process, information is a source of power, excluding other participants.... They have started to have authoritarian conduct because once the councillor is in the council, he/she has access to decisions and important questions. There is a tendency to no longer make decisions in consultation with the community, or share information..."

The implications of key players' perceptions of community representatives as some sort of unrepresentative elite are crucial when considering the extent to which key players take community representatives within these spheres, seriously. If they are perceived as some sort of self-selected 'activist' elite, it almost becomes legitimate, to disregard the views of 'community representatives' on the grounds of representation. Another narrative predominant within these participatory spheres expressed by key players was their concern to reach out to the 'wider community' beyond 'community activists' identified in both case studies. As one senior manager explained,

> "..the challenge is to actually involve the wider community...you always get a key group of people, who will put themselves up for everything, who'll champion whatever, ...it doesn't necessarily mean that you've got the views and the wider remit of all the community.."

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[63] See section in this chapter entitled 'Gatekeeping'.

Key players in the PRNDC case study, however, also utilised a discourse of 'community' that implied some sort of homogenous entity. This concept is crucial in terms of representation if we look at how ideas of homogeneity can negate the need for the representation of different groups within these spheres. In the PRNDC context, the homogeneity of 'the community' seemed to be stressed when convenient, by key players whom placed emphasis on ideas of consensus. An assumption about the homogeneity of the community meant that working with only a few community representatives, could be legitimately exercised, with consensus much more easily reached. As one senior manager claims when asked about the relationship between senior management and community representatives,

> "..the relationship between residents and professionals has been excellent, so we've had very few disputes, if any, em and there has been a very strong synergy between us all really, and from my viewpoint it means that if I'm ever challenged by someone on the estate who says, eh, I don't believe you, or, which happened in the early years, it was very easy for me to say, well, you ought to speak to, for example, Alan Greendale, who lives on the estate or, Alice Farmer, who lives on the estate, well, I'm employed by them, and that changed perceptions dramatically."

Here, the involvement of two community representatives and their legal position in terms of employing senior management is seen as an important legitimating strategy of the programme to the wider community. One can see how ideas of a 'homogenous' community can be extremely convenient for key players who are trying to balance the community involvement demands of the programme with the necessity to deliver outcomes. Interestingly, he cites the relationship between 'residents' [in general, thus indicating numerous] and 'professionals' 'has been excellent', however later goes on to highlight two specific community representatives and explains how their involvement can be utilised by the regeneration programme to legitimate its actions to the wider community.

Consensus, Conflict and The Representation of Minority Groups

In the PRNDC case study the idea of a perceived homogeneity of residents and the subsequent emphasis on consensus was seen to be problematic from the point of view of

projects whose remit was to represent the voices of minority groups.[64] For example, the Women's Centre was seen to be grappling with these issues, not only in terms of inside the decision making forum, but also in reference to "putting a strong feminist project, in a very traditional community". A key player from this project continues, "there have been all sort of obstacles and barriers because of that, and it's been a constant challenge to restate the case, and well, you know, women shouldn't be at home looking after the kids, unless they choose to do, you know, they are not forced to be there, and if they want to get some education, and if they want to go out to work, then it's their choice, those very simple messages are very threatening to a paternalistic culture." This issue of ideas of a predominantly homogenous community feeding into a dominant paternalistic 'consensus' was seen to have practical implications for the representation of voice for those groups representing minority groups, (in this case the Women's Centre) in the decision-making forum. As one key player explains,

> "we wrote it into to our service level agreement, that we wanted one representative on the board...who'd attend meetings, feedback and share information, ... so I went along because I was nominated from here, and em, on the first meeting, that I attended, happened to be one where [resignation] letters were read out....so I asked a question that if women from the Women's Centre want to be a resident board member what's the process? And the response was well, we haven't got one.... Two or three weeks later I got a letter saying that when I come to the board meetings, I wasn't allowed to sit at the table, and Alan will decide whether or not I can speak, (laughs) so obviously we challenged that (laughs) so we wrote back saying well, that won't do, and could we have a namecard please, .. and then the whole debate came up, saying whether the Women's Centre should actually have a place on the board, despite the fact they'd already agreed to it... so it's up in the air, I mean we go along to board meetings but we aren't allowed to speak, and em, they are deciding whether or not we should have a voice".

The idea of the feasibility of reaching some sort of consensus was challenged in the PB case study whereby community representatives explained the essentially conflictual nature of the process. One community representative explains, the role of the delegate in the following terms, "you fight, you have to fight as a delegate, so this is important, we fight and fight, to take each public work that they need, so this is the role of the delegate... the delegate participates in the FROP, this is where the delegates fight against the other delegates, the other associations, to negotiate...if you have an intense participation, you forget other communities..". This institutionalised mechanism of

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[64] Although women comprise roughly 50% of the population, historically in democratic theory they have been classified under the term 'minority groups' as a recognition of their 'lack of voice'/ 'influence' in a patriarchal society.

managing conflict in the battle over scarce resources was viewed in a variety of different ways, and was interestingly only articulated by the community representatives in this case study. Key players did not draw attention to this element of the process. Those community representatives who were currently present in the participatory sphere, and were relative 'newcomers' to the process cited this element unproblematically as a 'mere' fact of the process. However, ex-community representatives in this case study, who had been previously involved, were keen to emphasise how these developments, i.e. the institutionalisation of conflict, were detrimental to the long term interests of community representatives. [65]

> "So you lose, the links, each delegate or councillor, and they fight with one another, and instead of the people fighting for more money, you fight together for a small amount of money, so you pit one community against another, and everyone thinks that you battle to discuss a health post, or a school, there is nothing unfairer than this, no? So, imagine, the people themselves, have to choose what is more important, a school, or a health post? And no-one questions the theme that we must ask for more money so we can have both things. We have the right for the school and for the post. But this, is not discussed. The theme of this much money, and with this we have to do everything and this is divided and divided and divided..."

The idea of a 'harmonious, consensual' participatory process was not only challenged by a discussion of 'conflict' within the process, but the 'undemocratic' conduct of representatives within these spheres was also highlighted. It is to this theme we know turn.

Gatekeeping, Wider Representation or Depth of Knowledge

Gatekeeping and the authoritarian conduct of community representatives was interestingly enough, one of the few themes articulated as an issue by interviewees within all four data sub sets. Both key players and community representatives in both case studies saw it as a major problem in terms of a) the development of the participatory sphere and b) preventing wider accountability and involvement in these spheres. Recognition of 'gatekeeping' and the 'undemocratic' conduct of participants within these spheres, has been a major issue in terms of the literature which focuses on

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[65] The autonomous independent popular councils, i.e. the União de Vilas was almost rendered obsolete by the creation of a parallel body, the FROP, the local government's forum of delegates. This development was cited by various community representatives in this case study as the loss of solidarity in the process. This will be discussed in Chapter 7, under Social Innovation vs Social Institutionalisation

the 'undemocratic' nature of these participatory spheres. However, some community representatives were keen to explain this phenomenon in terms of it a) being a perfectly understandable reaction to the amount of demands placed on community representatives and b) providing a useful pretext for the authorities to insist on a system of representation based on rotation. This was seen to have the effect of diluting power from the community representatives as a whole. This process was also be seen as being fuelled by key players emphasis on community 'leadership' whereby those community representatives involved in these spheres became increasingly divorced from their bases. This section will therefore be based on all four data sub-sets, and will try to highlight the various similarities and differences in both the conceptions and perceptions of this phenomenon.

In the PB case study, community representatives who had become involved in the process more recently highlighted the various problems that they'd faced in trying to enter the process. Those newer to the process identified that some participants previously involved for a substantial amount of time were more reluctant to widening the spaces of participation. Raul de Silva explains that "the older ones built the community movement, in Vila Cruzeiro, built the movement for Porto Alegre, ..so of course you've got to respect them, no?, but there is also a tendency to want to keep hold of the control and not let newcomers in". Thus Martin Souza, a community representative in this case study explains his 'traumatic' entrance into the participatory sphere, as a result of participants' desires of retaining the space for themselves,

> "...It was...very traumatic. It was because...there are people who have a history inside the community movement, and sometimes, they have a tendency of not opening up space for the new ones. There is a corporatism between the older ones, who came from the outside,, and they are disposed to blocking participation.. and I ended up suffering these kind of pre-conceptions.. some were taking the benefits to three or four communities, and others were losing out,... "

A similar phenomenon was identified in the PRNDC case study by various community representatives. One community representative discusses the reasons behind the decision to bypass the residents association as the primary body to select candidates for the board, "I think it might have been a conscious decision of some of the board members... because they were frightened they'd lose...the fear of being taken off, of being kicked off". When talking about the current board, a former board member

explained the implications of this phenomena in relation to decision-making, "but they do tend to just make decisions just to keep themselves in power, the top two or three, want to be there all their lives". One community representative currently on the board is keen to point out how, decision-making and 'power' seems to be identified with a certain individual, i.e. a community representative on the board, "the resident board members love to think they've got the power, but they haven't, they haven't got the power, there is one person on that board, according to that board, and that is *****, and that has got to stop." In this case study, an analysis of interview transcripts does indicate that there did seem to be a general consensus of both community representatives and key players, as to which community representatives in this sphere wielded the most influence.   In the case of key players, mere reference to these individuals was constant, they were often referred to in a variety of different ways, more often than not, hailed as positive examples of community involvement.   Other community representatives, however, seemed to be more scathing of the influence that such a small number of individuals were able to have within this sphere.

Although this issue was identified by both community representatives and key players as a problematic element of these participatory spaces, it was seen as understandable by a variety of interviewees in terms of how these elements have evolved in terms of the very functioning of these participatory spaces. One community representative explains the 'undemocratic' behaviour as regards the great amount of demands placed on a community representative.   Meanwhile, accusations of 'gatekeeping' and the 'undemocratic' discourse that surrounds these spaces was also seen as a useful pretext utilised by the governing authority to undermine the potential collective accumulative knowledge of the community movement. It is also easy to see how, from the point of view of key players, working with a small number of known, competent, knowledgeable community representatives is an attractive, feasible option in terms of delivering results. The response by one community representative in the Porto Alegre context, to charges of the undemocratic nature and authoritarian conduct of certain community leaders, was that it is almost necessary to be authoritarian in order to function effectively in this environment.   She challenges the notion that community representatives have to live up to some sort of 'democratic ideal' which seems to be unattainable and contrasts this with a recognition of the day to day practice of community organisation,

"the authoritarian.. community leader, is the most common thing in the world, you have to co-ordinate the community, understand? Attending two or three demands a day, and for this you need to be very authoritarian, if you are not, you wouldn't be able to co-ordinate everything... and the people say, he shouldn't be authoritarian, the people who don't have to be authoritarian, are the mayor...the secretaries... they don't have a motive to be authoritarian, now the guy in the community, who has to organise a mountain of things, he has every reason to be authoritarian.."

Community representatives in both case studies identified a fundamental tension between wider representation, i.e. a rotational system of representation, and the necessity of the accumulation of knowledge to be able to function effectively in these spheres. A rotational system of representation is present in the institutional mechanisms of the PB process, developed to prevent 'gatekeeping' and domination of the process by any few individuals, i.e. one can't be a councillor for more than two terms. In the PRNDC case study, this issue has also been discussed and debated, and has had procedural institutional implications. The institutional mechanisms within PRNDC in terms of rotational representation seemed to be at a developmental stage within the organisation. For example, after the second elections on the estate (whereby twelve residents stood for twelve places and therefore the elections were cancelled) it was subsequently decided

"that every ,,, I can't remember now, every two years, or every year, you had to stand down and somebody else had to... that's what they originally decided and then they sat down and thought about it, well wait a minute if all twelve people stand down, it isn't going to work, you're going to suddenly have a board, and then you ain't going to have a board, and you're going to have twelve new members who didn't know what they where doing, and so then they decided well, maybe only four stand down.... Well that was what the NDC said they wanted , because they had like twelve board members who are trained, ..they didn't want it like the night of the long knives and lose all the trained board members in one go...."

Community representatives in the PB case study saw the development of institutional mechanisms to ensure rotational representation extremely cynically, i.e. as an attempt by the local authority to effectively undermine the capacity of the community movement and enable the local authority to retain the upper hand in this sphere. As one community representative explains, "they created a rule so that you can't be a councillor more than twice, so if it is someone who doesn't know how it works very well, they get manipulated... because they [the government] know how the machine works...". Another community representative was keen to point out the disparity between the

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accumulated knowledge, capacity and resources   of government workers and the knowledge and resources of community representatives;

> "Because the government doesn't change.. the guy who coordinates the budget is the same, he is always the same, he's been there and knows everything about the budget, because he's been there 2, 6, 8, 10 years, understand, and the community in the first year... a community leader who takes part in the PB, he is a worker, who has to take care of his family, who has to take into account attending to his community, and who has to take part in the PB, so it's very unequal, and after, when you challenge, and say something is wrong, they say it's the fault of the community representative, and this is the government guy who is always the same, ...that has a room at his disposition, a telephone at his disposition, a salary, there all the administration is done, the role of the community representative has to work, has his family, has to coordinate the community, has to manage the budget and he has to do everything right..."

The emphasis on community 'leaders' and leadership by key players, in both these spaces could also be said to have fuelled this phenomenon, creating a wider gap between those community representatives/' 'leaders' and the wider 'community' that they are supposedly representing. As one key player, who runs training programmes for community representatives, (independent of the local authority) in the PB case study eloquently explains,

> "more recently we are facing another kind of problem, the community leaders ...eh sometimes they became like professional citizens... we usually work at the base level, so we fortified a group of community leaders and what happened to that group, they started being invited by the government, by all the political parties to work for them, professionally, so the city hall has a lot of community leaders to work as community advisors...so the process was intended to fortify the direct participation, the common citizen participation, and instead of that we saw it was working as a selection of elites....we are now making an effort to work more at the base level because we want to fortify the process of participation..."

Despite a recognition of the various conceptions and perceptions of representation and accountability the institutional mechanisms of accountability and legitimacy were portrayed as distinct in both case studies.

5c: Institutional Mechanisms of Accountability and Legitimacy

Various different institutional mechanisms in both case studies were cited as having been developed in attempts at reaching out to the 'wider community' in terms of both

input and accountability. This can be seen as an institutional recognition of the general reluctance of the majority of the population to want to become involved. Key players and community representatives in the PRNDC case study cited the focus groups as examples of strategic action. Meanwhile, having community conferences to try to broaden the appeal of participating to a wider audience was also recognised as an important strategy in this context. Key players and community representatives did, however, seem to explain these developments more in terms of either diffusing information from the partnership to residents (community conference), or as input from the residents (focus groups) without citing any sort of institutional linking mechanism, that would enable implementation. In the PB case study, however, community representatives and key players did explain the process of participation with explicit reference to accountability mechanisms. The annual plenaries, the mechanisms that ensure that councillors are also delegates and take part in the FROP, were for example cited as elements built in to the process that try to guarantee wider accountability through to implementation. Although these institutional mechanisms of accountability were cited as an integral part of the process, the theme of the divorce between community representatives/leaders and the wider community was also a major theme in this case study.

PRNDC Institutional Mechanisms to ensure Wider Accountability

Community representatives and key players in this case study were keen to explain about the various different strategies that PRNDC has employed in trying to involve more residents and widen participation. In response to a question about the different methods that resident board members utilise to report back to other residents on the estate, a senior manager explains the variety of different strategies utilised to try and reach out to the 'wider community',

> "Yes, we've experimented with numerous ways of doing that…we did the standard stuff of putting newspapers around the estate, em, we've got notice boards… em, word of mouth is incredibly powerful and is probably the best way of getting things round the estate. And we've, with a board of about thirteen residents word gets out, very, very quickly, and word feeds back very, very quickly, em, we've also had meetings, annual general meetings…we've got things like a website..and we've had quite a number of open days, where, we've had project fairs,…we've also had a number of steering groups for different projects, ..we've also got a number of focus groups…but in general, I must say that we talk about very small numbers of people…"

After a very careful, detailed explanation of the wide ranging strategies that PRNDC are attempting to implement to encourage wider participation this becomes qualified by a very succinct recognition, that, "in general, I must say that we talk about very small numbers of people".   It was very common for both community representatives and key players to explain the institutional mechanisms and opportunities that existed within PRNDC for people to become involved, and ally this to a sense of exasperation of the lack of take up of these 'opportunities'. These strategies were, therefore, often couched in terms linked to futility or frustration.   As one community representative explains, "well, we've knocked on doors, asking people to join, I went round the carnival asking people, I've done that before, I've advertised, at the AGM's and things like that, and no they're not interested". The community conferences were cited by both community representatives and key players within this space as a key element in the attempt to widen participation throughout PRNDC. As another community representative explains,

> "I don't think that we could do any more to bring the community in, we used to have resident conferences but they were, so badly attended. I mean once, there was no-body there, I mean you can't get worse than that can you? We thought, well, you know, we've given them the opportunity...."

This feeling of frustration, of attempting to achieve the impossible was time and time again alluded to in this case study by both community representatives and key players. This was linked to the 'assumption...that people want to be involved'. As one key player explains, "so, community development, has to work.. it's working from this assumption that everybody wants to be involved, they don't necessarily".   This vocalisation highlights one of the fundamental tensions present, with relation to ideas pertaining to the functioning of community development embodying the rhetoric of a deliberative democratic sphere yet functioning within a liberal representative democratic framework.

The policy rationale for community development/ participation contains elements that pertain/ allude to ideas elaborated by the civic republican tradition, based on a premise that citizenship constitutes participation in public life. The lack of wider participation in this case study was however explained time and time again, by community representatives and key players, with reference to ideas pertaining to a much more liberal conception of democratic theory and citizenship, which showed a pragmatic

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acceptance that the majority of residents had no desire to become involved in the regeneration programme. One key player explains community involvement in terms of the necessities of the regeneration programme as a government edict, "because that is what we need, for the community to have an input", and explains the challenge in terms of behaviour change , "your job is a thousand times harder, cause you've got to want to make those people be involved". This comment highlights the practical tensions that are present in these participatory spaces in terms of the gap between the 'rhetoric' (which pertains to elements of civic republicanism) and the 'reality' (which was explained more in terms of the liberal democratic tradition) of participation and goes some way towards highlighting some of the concrete tensions that exist on the ground.

PB Institutional Mechanisms to ensure Wider Accountability

Key players and community representatives cited various elements of the PB process which encompassed various different institutional mechanisms of accountability. These included the open plenaries at the start of the process and the way councillors are also delegates and therefore attend the FROP. It was described as a bottom up process, which tries to retain these links of accountability to the wider community throughout the process. As one community representative explains,

> "the process of it, is more or less this... the communities, have meetings, to choose and define their own demands no? From this moment the community began to participate in the popular councils, and everyone in the vilas meet, and here we began to feel our presence in the FROP, start to participate in the popular councils, from the delegates that go from the community, a proportion of each ten people, begin to participate in the FROP, after the participation of the FROP, the Local Government organises a big meeting in the region, where all the community goes inside the gymnasium, there you go to choose your four big themes.. and we choose two named councillors, and two substitute councillors, to go to the COP debating the PB the demands, the investment plan...."

These fundamental links between those community representatives in the COP (who have decision-making powers) and the wider community was explained by both key players and community representatives as intrinsic to the process and crucially embodying a 'bottom-up' perspective. This was ensured by virtue that a councillor must also be a delegate and therefore participate in the FROP (a much more popular

wider forum than the COP). As one community representative explains in terms of his role as a councillor,

> "I am a delegate, because to be a councillor you have to be a delegate as well, because you have to be a delegate from an association, but you can't it's like, if you were to co-ordinate the PB you need to be.... a delegate, this is when you call a plenary inside the association, like we are going to start, and we participate 100 people from the association, and you choose the delegate from there, and from there the delegates participates in the FROP, and the councillor have to participate in the COP as well.."

This two-tier form of representation does to some degree, in theory ensure a form of wider accountability to the community. The institutional links and forums are in place to provide some sort of space that is able to channel information and decisions from the wider community, to the community representatives/ leaders and vice versa. However, there does seem to be a rather large gap between the rationality of the systematic institutional mechanisms (and their predisposition to accountability) and the reality of how these forums *actually* function. For example, as one community representative in the COP explains about the lack of wider involvement in the FROP, "people participate in the beginning, and after they don't come. And we had 10 delegates, last year, but we really only had the participation of two by the end of the year, me and my mum. ..". This lack of participation by the wider community, i.e. those people who participate in either the plenaries, or the FROP, as delegates, was recognised as having decreased by numerous community representatives and key players. As one community representative explains, "the people are not really participating ...so this year, it is practically empty.." This was attributed to a variety of different things. Perhaps, one of the reasons most often cited was lack of completion of public works and services in the region, "the works of the region have practically stopped", and thus consequent negative effect on the legitimacy of the process.[66] However, this decline in numbers of participants was, also explained in terms of the heavy demands placed on community representatives in having to fulfil the requirements of accountability. Participating within so many different forums, was cited as a concrete reason that deterred people from participating,

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[66] See section further down in this chapter, under legitimacy. The idea that the financial situation of the Municipality of Porto Alegre is part of the wider national context, i.e. the cuts on public investment at the National Level has meant that not all of the public works and projects agreed to by the PB process have been executed. Thus having very negative effects on levels of participation.

"it is very stressful, because as you are participating in the popular council...the residents association, the FORUM of delegates, you have to participate in the COP, and you have to participate in other commissions... we have..to diminish the cycle of the number of meetings because you end up debating the same questions, the same themes so, this ends up the people get fed up and don't feel productive".

This community representative is explaining how the institutional demand for greater accountability to the wider community can have the effect of deterring people from participating. He explains this in relation to the great demands that are placed on community representatives to attend all the different forums. He elucidates 'how you end up debating the same questions', and how, rather than being beacons of accountability (as the main link between community representatives/ leaders and the wider community), 'people get fed-up' and 'don't feel productive' within these forums. Interestingly, this huge gap between a few community representatives/ leaders and the wider community was a major theme in this case study, even though institutional mechanisms had been developed and evolved to try to ensure this linkage. Another community representative, however is keen to highlight his response to this widening gap in terms of strengthening the relationship between the institutional presence of the PB process in the regions, i.e. the CARs and the wider population.[67]

"because... the relationship between the representatives and the population is growing wider, so we have to have a mechanism, I think we have to improve the relationship between the CARS and the population, I think they haven't fulfilled their objectives...the people think they are nothing more than the office of the local administration... so they are the representatives of the local administration in the region...."

Legitimacy

Legitimacy was seen as an important element of the participatory space in relation to encouraging further involvement in these spheres and was explained by the four groups of interviewees in a variety of different ways. Explanations by key players and community representatives of what they perceived was vital for the legitimacy of the process encompassed thoughts about transparency, consistency, tangible outcomes, (in both case studies) and a self-regulating process (in terms of the PB case study).

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[67] See Glossary for a brief description of the CAR.

Transparency was articulated by key players in both case studies as a crucial component for the legitimacy of the process, as one key player in the PB case study explains,

> "Another aspect is the transparency of the process of the PB. We haven't got a black box, hidden, we have opened things up, so people can feel the potential of the city, of the government..."

This transparency of the process (in terms of institutional mechanisms) of decision-making about investment in public works and services was seen to reinforce the processes of participation. As the same key player goes on to explain, "this transparency helps to construct the PB, it helps it to grow. We feel this is a fundamental element of this process...". Another key player in this case study explains how, "the form of shared-management, the democratisation of management, has guaranteed..a great deal of administrative transparency", which is seen to encourage the participation of the citizen. These sentiments were echoed by key players in the PRNDC case study, albeit transparency in this context was framed more in terms of personal relations than embedded into an institutional process. As one key player explains, when asked about the factors that he thought were important to encourage community involvement,

> "Transparency, I think transparency, you need to be really transparent with the community, you need to, I think you need to be honest with them, and I think you need to, I think you never need to promise them anything that you can't deliver,"

Legitimacy was explained (by key players and community representatives in both case studies) in terms of the importance of residents being able to see the physical/ tangible outcomes of their participation. This element of legitimacy was stressed as incredibly important by all four groups of interviewees. In the PRNDC case study both key players and community representatives stressed the importance of seeing physical tangible results of the regeneration. As one community representative explains, in relation to his feelings of frustration at participating in meetings for two years, three or four times a week and not seeing any physical results,

> "you do get to a stage where you think, I'm giving all this time up for nothing, and we also didn't make any progress, so for the first two years we weren't making any progress.. you saw no buildings, now we've seen the village centre go up, and so it is obvious something is happening, then we did start seeing the fencing going up, and things going up, but in the first two years, nothing seemed

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to be happening, so we were paying these people who were running it, fantastic salaries,.., we thought there is nothing happening on the estate you know.."

Fencing and buildings were constantly stressed as very important elements by community representatives in this case study in terms of their faith in the regeneration programme and the legitimacy of the process of participation. Key players however, identified that the more human/ social elements of the regeneration seemed to be much more invisible to the residents and community representatives, "they tend to forget actually all the stuff you can't see, this is the truth, and that's people who've got jobs". He continues,

> "but even some of the ones who've got jobs and stuff, I don't think some of them realise that it is through this, that that's happened.. there are some things that happen, that some people don't associate with the regeneration, I know that happens because I was at one of the focus groups, one of the first focus groups on employment, and one of the first questions was do you realise blah, blah, blah, ..and people said, I didn't realise that.."

In the PB case study legitimacy was also explained in terms of the physical/ tangible outcomes of participation however, as well as in terms of self-government. In this case study, it was highlighted by community representatives that recent problems of implementation, in terms of delay, had had an extremely negative effect on the numbers of people participating within this arena. As one community representative explains, "the works of the region have practically stopped, the participatory budget stopped because the people are not really participating" this was attributed to delays in implementation of the decisions of the process and so "the people become frustrated, and something else, they lose interest and people think no, I'm not going to go...". Legitimacy in this case study was also explained with reference to ideas related to republican democratic thought, in terms of ideas of self-government. [68] This element of legitimacy, in the PB case study, was indicated as holding an important place, in the viewpoints of a variety of key players. This was explained with reference to the self-regulation of the process. As one key player explains, "another thing that has enabled its success, is that the process in Porto Alegre has a period of renewal every year when

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[68] Legitimacy in republican democratic thought is explained as "freedom of a political community rested on its accountability to no authority other than that of the community itself. Self government is the basis of liberty together with the right of citizens to participate within a constitutional framework which creates distinct roles for leading social forces in the government of common business." Held, (1995:7).

amendments to the rules and changes are made and people can question the process itself." This idea of men being governed by laws which they themselves are in charge of executing has been a dominant theme in republican democratic theory since Rousseau's Social Contract (see conceptual framework for more of a discussion on this point).

<u>Conclusion</u>

Key players and community representatives in both case studies implicitly and explicitly alluded to different elements of democratic 'models' in their explanation of these spaces. Republican notions of democracy, implying a more participatory democratic approach and more liberal notions of democracy were referred to in both case studies. The latter model encompassed issues to do with representation, accountability and legitimacy. How different elements of democratic models were alluded to occupied a large place in the analysis of the construction of these spaces in terms of the conceptions and perceptions and the institutional mechanism of these participatory spaces. It became apparent that the developmental element of the participatory process in the PRNDC context (the community development part of the programme) was seen as failing to fulfil its objectives. This was in contrast with the PB case study, where the linking of the developmental aims of the process were seen and conceptualised as tightly linked to the governance arena (i.e. the taking of decisions).

Representation was seen as problematic in the PRNDC case study as various different conceptualisations of representation were held, whilst clear systematic processes of representation were notably absent. In the PB case study this did not seem to be an issue as clear conceptions and institutional mechanisms of representation were apparent. In both case studies, however, interestingly enough key players seemed to utilise the ideas of 'representative' and 'unrepresentative' to legitimise the decisions that had been taken. The former, was invoked to legitimise decisions that had been taken to the wider community (even if there had been a small number of participants) whilst the latter was invoked as a justification for not listening to those 'unrepresentative' small number of 'activists' present. Gatekeeping was articulated as a problematic phenomenon in both case studies, however in the Brazilian case study institutional mechanisms were set in place to ensure community representatives could only serve two terms. These developments were viewed cynically by community representatives in this sphere, who

were aware of the time and knowledge it takes to function effectively in these spheres. Legitimacy in both case studies encompassed notions of transparency, consistency and tangible outcomes, to this a self-regulating process could be added in the PB case study. The democratic nature of the participatory spaces as articulated by key players and community representatives essentially however revolved fundamentally around notions of power. This will be explored in both case studies in the following chapter in relation to the practice of participation.

6. Spaces for Transformation? Power Relations and the Practice of Participation

The democratic nature and the different democratic models evoked by key players and community representatives in these spaces could be seen as revolving fundamentally around concepts of power. This chapter will explore the social processes and relations in terms of how power firstly reproduced existing structures and meanings and secondly how it was employed in terms of strategies of resistance in the two case studies. Foucault's conceptualisation of power provides a good insight into how "power permeates and courses through spaces, sparking a multiplicity of points of resistance as well as producing and embedding particular institutional forms, patterns and practices"(Cornwall (2002:8). This conceptualisation of power in terms of being essentially a contingent force, that is at the same time, both constraining and enabling, fundamentally influenced the structuring of this empirical chapter. For example, how power reproduces existing structures and meanings within these participatory spheres was seen to be a fundamental theme that emerged from the empirical analysis. Whilst, what could be thought of as its 'antithesis', i.e. how strategies of resistance that fundamentally challenge existing structures and meanings within these participatory spheres emerged as the juxtaposition of this principle theme. Foucault claims,

> "There is not, on the one side, a discourse of power and opposite it, another discourse that runs counter to it. Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating the field of force relations: there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy" (1979:101-2).

A neat 'rational' arbitrary conceptualisation of a) a 'discourse of power' and b) a counter 'discourse', i.e. resistance is indeed what Foucault's reconceptualisation of power is trying to escape. Power is seen to operate in far more subtle ways and means than this clumsy bi-polar definition is able to trace and recognise. However, for the purposes of my empirical research and analysis, these two contrasting elements of power, became the building blocks of the analysis for this third empirical chapter. Unlike chapter 4, where 'structures' (in a very broad sense of the term) were examined by utilising the empirical data sets of practitioners, managers and local officials (i.e. those charged with constructing the 'political opportunity structure'), whilst 'agency'

was largely conceived in terms of the community actors participation within these spheres, the two elements of power i.e. the reproduction and challenging of existing structures and meanings where seen to transcend all four data sets.[69]   This fundamentally meant that the subtleties of the dynamics, flows and circuits of power in terms of the reproduction and the challenging of existing structures and meanings within these spheres could be tracked and traced in an attempt to retain the subtleties of an analysis based from this perspective.

Interestingly in both case studies, (albeit the difference was more marked in the PB case study) there did seem to be a very clear split within the data-set of the community representatives. Those who were currently involved tended to be less critical of the participatory process, and seemed to accept the rules of the game in play. Those who had left the processes were much more radical and critical in their analysis of the participatory process. In the PB case study this was apparent as the process made its transition from being one of social innovation to social institutionalisation. Therefore, those community representatives involved at the beginning of the process were keen to emphasise their role as challenging, the then current ways of working, institutions and structures (which could be classified as collective 'strategies of resistance'), that had in fact resulted in the socially innovative process. These community representatives were critical of the current system and emphasised how the role of community representatives involved in the process had evolved through time, from challenging and resisting the 'disciplinary power' of the state to being co-opted and fundamentally acquiescing to the existing ways of working and reproducing dominant meanings and structures. My empirical analysis of the data sets certainly seemed to confirm these tendencies.

Foucault's conceptualisation of power as a 'disciplinary' technique, thereby reinforcing existing power relations whilst also sparking contingent different specific strategies of resistance could be traced throughout the empirical research in both contexts on numerous different levels and layers. This analysis in both case studies therefore, needed to encompass a multilayered research strategy that would be able to detect the subtleties of how discourse and meanings, institutional arrangements, rules and current ways of working, were either fundamentally accepted or indeed challenged. Analysis of

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[69] This analysis is in recognition of the conceptual development of the term power. Power, from a post-structuralist perspective is not seen to be inherent in any grouping of society.

the empirical data revealed the complexity of trying to disentangle how existing meanings and structures in these participatory spaces were reinforced and accepted, or how they were resisted, or indeed fundamentally challenged in these arenas. These ideas and conceptions of the exercise of power and resistance therefore became the main axis of this third empirical chapter.

6a: Power: Reproducing Existing Structures and Meanings

Power broadly conceived in terms of reproducing existing structures and meanings, as some sort of 'disciplinary power', could be seen in a variety of different guises in the analysis of the empirical research. How technical knowledge, as opposed to experiential knowledge was valued in these spheres could be seen as representing the reproduction of current institutional forms, patterns and practices. This idea also seemed to be linked very much to how information was conceived and perceived in these spheres. For example, that community representatives and practitioners seemed to see community representatives in terms of recipients of information, as oppose to providers of information, seemed to indicate, that information was predominantly conceived in terms of 'flowing one way'- from the governing body to the residents, and therefore circumscribing the possibility of change. Where, however, community representatives and professionals saw the position of community representatives in terms of providers of information, this was predominantly conceptualised as leading to more effective service planning. Part of the way that the 'disciplinary power' could be seen to manifest itself in both case studies included the way that community representatives perceived that the participatory arenas had been utilised to legitimise decisions that had already been taken at a higher administrative level. Perhaps the most powerful articulation of this 'technique of government', included, how the participatory arena had enabled greater 'regulation' of the population in the physically defined space of the neighbourhood. This discourse, however, also seemed to be accompanied by a recognition, that some of the functions of the state e.g. as an administrator of services, had been transferred to an 'autonomous' civil society entity (resident's association) via the participatory process.

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Power and Knowledge : Technocracy (Professional Knowledge) and Popular Participation (Experiential Knowledge)

The explicit 'official' rationale for increased local participation often encompasses a recognition of the negative effects of a top-down technocratic approach to local development.[70] This is currently presented, from within the participatory orthodoxy as resulting in a) an alienation of the local population and b) the failure of the stated aims of the programme. Local participation and knowledge incorporated into the planning and implementation of programmes and projects is therefore presented as an essential resource that will enable the programme/ project/ public work to be a) more effective and b) more sustainable. This assumption is based on ideas of the importance of incorporating resident's *experiential* knowledge about their neighbourhood into programme and project design, planning and implementation. Professionals and technocrats within these participatory arenas are seen to posses a different type of knowledge, related to the more *technical* aspects of project/ programme and public work planning and are recognised as bringing their expertise to these participatory arenas in their respective fields. My empirical analysis highlighted the importance of recognising a) the different types of knowledges, that were present within these areas, (essentially in terms of experiential and technical knowledge) and b) the different values that seemed to be ascribed to the types of knowledges that were circulating in these arenas. How the balance of technical and experiential knowledge was negotiated and mediated in the specific participatory arenas therefore became a key research theme throughout the empirical analysis.

PRNDC Case Study

Key players in the PRNDC case study did see the importance in recognising the different types of knowledge that were present in these spheres. For example, as one member of the senior management team highlighted,

> "I think that was the key really, it is recognising, I for example may have paper qualifications, but the people who live on this estate, em, know their way round and they could do things that I could never do, and I respect the fact that they have a lot of knowledge and a great deal of experience and their opinions, and

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[70] See Conceptual Framework for a full discussion of this rationale.

their ideas which are equally valid with mine are, with GP' s or with school teachers or with anybody else so I think that's the way to engage,...."

He not only recognises the different types of knowledge that are present in this sphere, but he is also keen to point out, how these two different types of knowledges, i.e. technical (represented by 'paper qualifications') and experiential ('have a great deal of experience') are in his view 'equally valid'. This seems to reflect a great deal of the 'official discourse' that stresses the necessity of incorporating residents' 'experiential knowledge' into the planning and implementation process. Interestingly, in my empirical research, it became apparent how these two different types of knowledge were predominantly conceived and perceived in fundamentally different ways. Subsequently, these different types of knowledge were ascribed extremely different values.

For example, in my empirical analysis in the PRNDC case study, a big theme that was highlighted was a narrative on the part of community representatives that crucially seemed to value the technical knowledge of the professionals, often over and above their own experiential knowledge. This was shown in a variety of different guises, from quite general discourses that emphasised how one must 'listen to how the professionals do it, to get it done properly', to specific examples where community representatives had explicitly conferred operational decision-making powers to professionals. These ideas were, however, not only voiced by the residents present in this sphere, yet, also seemed to be mirrored and echoed by professionals in this sphere. Community representatives were often presented as lacking specific resources in these spheres, whilst 'experiential knowledge' of the neighbourhood was not valued as a resource. The way the different knowledges were ascribed different values in this sphere could be seen to have substantial material consequences in terms of decision-making within the arena.

The more general discourses emanating from residents seemed to place a higher 'value' on the knowledge of professionals than their own. This is very interesting in relation to Lukes' (1974) third face of power[71], i.e. it seems as though the structures of power are accepted and internalised, as residents imbue trust in the professionals because they are seen to 'know best',

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[71] See Conceptual Framework for a full discussion of Luke's (1974) three faces of power.

"you've got to take on board we're not the professionals, you know,, even
though we can have an input in what goes on, we've still got to in effect listen
to how the professionals do it, to get it done properly.."

Residents' perceptions of the value of their own knowledge vis-à-vis that of the
professionals did seem to be mirrored and confirmed by professionals' views in this
sphere. A general discourse present in the participatory arena was voiced by
professionals who were keen to point out the 'deficit' in the 'community' and the
general lack of resources that community representatives brought to the participatory
arena.[72] This meant that the 'experiential' knowledge that residents possessed of their
neighbourhood was often overlooked as a significant resource that residents were able
to offer. This lack of recognition of this resource (among community representatives,
professionals and key players) did seem to result in a decision making process that
favoured technical knowledge represented by professionals in operational decisions.
For example, as one community representative commented, with respect to the choice of
which supermarket would be awarded the contract to operate on the estate,

"'we left the choice of who got the contracts to the professionals of course, the
residents knew it was going to be a supermarket, but we sort of left it to the
professionals because they know best".

Some of the residents commentated that this specific decision was taken despite a
general feeling from residents that the choice of tenant was unsustainable on this
particular estate. Residents' knowledge in terms of a recognition of their experience of
this supermarket trying unsuccessfully to establish itself on the estate did not seem to be
taken into account. This would seem to suggest that the 'value' ascribed to the
experiential knowledge of the residents about their neighbourhood, in the participatory
forum about this specific subject/ topic/ contract was in fact superseded by other
considerations.

The empirical research not only highlighted how residents' experiential knowledge
could be overlooked in this participatory arena but how, when residents possessed
technical knowledge about a specific subject, this also to some degree failed to be
recognised or at least valued to any substantial degree. One community representative

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[72] See Chapter 4 for a full discussion of the 'deficit perspective' in the PRNDC case study.

emphasised how he specialised in the housing theme due to spending his working life as an architect, and his subsequent expertise in this field. He explains his frustration, at not being listened to " ...they wouldn't listen, I tried to give them advice, and things, and half of this stuff, I mean I think it's been really badly managed.... The housing side of it". He goes on to explain how they (NDC-management) 'wouldn't listen' to his advice throughout the tendering process, in terms of selecting the contracting firms. He comments on how his knowledge was essentially not acted upon, as regards his technical expertise; "the one I wanted I'd worked with them, when I was an architect, I mean they were a really good firm they would have done it really well, but they wouldn't listen". He also invokes how his experiential knowledge as a resident was effectively dismissed; "we finished up with *** who had only just finished this contract, over here, and the neighbours were complaining like hell about what bad workmanship, and all the rest of it you know, and we said, but no...they were contracted".

PB Case Study

This tension between how experiential knowledge and technical knowledge is negotiated, managed and valued differently was also an issue in the PB case study although it tended to be manifest in a variety of different ways. Actors in the PB sphere, specifically professionals and government officials, spoke openly about the difficulties of trying to reconcile these two different types of knowledge throughout the process of negotiation as regards the budget proposal. Information was recognised as the key mediating element between these two types of knowledge (see the next section in this chapter for a full discussion of this element) by both professionals and community representatives. Key players in this case study seemed to be very conscious of the tensions inherent in trying to incorporate these two types of knowledges into the process. This could perhaps be attributed to the experience gained by professionals that has developed over time in managing the participatory process.

In contrast to the PRNDC case study, whereby residents and professionals alike seemed to place a higher premium on technical knowledge, initially in the PB case study both residents and professionals cited examples whereby public works had failed to be effective due to lack of integrating the necessary technical knowledge required for successful implementation. Community representatives and professionals cited examples whereby, at the beginning of the process, certain public works had been

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demanded through the participatory process, i.e. emanating from residential experiential knowledge of necessities of their own very localised neighbourhood. However, when these very specific demands have been consolidated through the process, technical knowledge/ information was not forthcoming in the planning process, with the effect that some of these very localised public works were unable to function. As one community representative explains,

> ".... the people were demanding a water supply. They installed taps, only the water could not get up there, because it was up the hill, you understand. The taps were empty, "air taps" as we used to say. The people began to criticise. In reality, the movement did not always have, how can I say? Well, a deep understanding of the mechanisms and how these things work. We had asked for taps and they installed taps and pipes. But you need a water-pump for it to go uphill. We hadn't asked for a water-pump."

In contrast to the PRNDC case study, this quote highlights the dangers of not considering the relevant technical knowledge needed for the effective planning and implementation of a public work. The experiential knowledge about the necessities of the neighbourhood were articulated and acted upon however, the lack of incorporating a certain degree of technical knowledge meant that the implemented public work failed to function. This, however seemed to be an exception, as other community representatives explained, how the technical knowledge in the participatory sphere was indeed often 'valued' over and above the experiential knowledge of the community representatives. As one community representative explains,

> "the difficulties were these, concretely if you vote for a work and arrive to execute that work, well, there is an engineer who won't agree, an engineer, an architect, whom was there for the government, he had at his disposition the people,, so the people want to construct a school,... this is what you've got to do, but the relation was contrary to this... it was technical.. He had more influence than the months and months of people discussing, so it was an inverted relationship",

The Democratization of Knowledge and Information : Community Representatives as 'Knowledge Providers' or 'Knowledge Recipients'

How different types of knowledges are present and negotiated in these participatory arenas can be seen to be inextricably linked to ideas of information. What information

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is made available and how this information is disseminated, shared and explained became of primary importance in terms of analysing the exercise of power within participatory arenas. The extent to which information was recognised as a key mediating element between a participatory approach and a technocratic approach by key players varied greatly between the two case studies. Whether actors within these spheres see themselves principally in terms of providers of information or recipients of information, seemed to be a key indicator as regards tracking the different influences exerting pressure throughout the process of defining the agenda within the participatory spaces.

Community representatives seem to see themselves, and are conceptualised by key players, predominantly as recipients of information. Information therefore, in both case studies seems to be significantly conceptualised as something that is possessed by the governing authority (be it the local government in the Porto Alegre case study and PRNDC as a local regeneration company) and needs to be disseminated downwards to community representatives that operate within this sphere, and (perhaps) then diffused outwards to the wider community. The role of information is seen as to either inform residents about the services etc. on offer (PRNDC) or about the technicalities/ rules of the local government i.e. technical criteria on planning (PB). The emphasis did not seem to be predominantly on collecting information from residents to feed into service planning and delivery or in terms of redefining the technical criteria/ or the process of participation[73]. This is certainly linked to how different knowledges are valued in these spheres and can be seen to some degree to preclude what could be seen as significantly shaping or influencing the agenda.

In the PB case study, key players seemed to recognise the important role that information plays as the key link between popular participation and the technical details of the budget. As one member of the GAPLAN team highlighted, when asked directly about the tension between the technical criteria of the budget and popular participation,

> "This is a challenge. Well, for a long time now, we have been looking to disseminate a lot of information. In the conference you should have noted that there was a lot spoken about the training of the population and the training of

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[73] Despite the fact that part of the annual cycle of the PB Process encompasses a review by community representatives as to how to improve the participatory process itself, on the whole information was not predominantly conceived of in this way.

technocrats, because in spite of some instruments that have been developed over the last fourteen years to spread technical information, there is still need regarding a methodology..."

Although here, she initially speaks about the need to train both the 'technocrats' and 'the population', the majority of her response focuses on the necessity of training 'the population'. This is explained in terms of the dissemination and explanation of technical information to community representatives,

"we spend a lot of time training the PB delegates. We begin trying to spread technical information, explaining technical concepts of revenue, tax revenue expenditure, the characteristics of the expenditure, the legislation relating to these expenses and expenditures, how services are contracted...we attempt to inform them as much as possible of the workings of the administrative structure...."

This focus, in terms of 'training' being orientated to community representatives was indeed the predominant conception of the way that knowledge, information and training needs to be diffused from the governing authority to community representatives in both case studies. [74] In her response she not only recognises the importance of giving and disseminating technical information, however, she also is adamant that there is a necessity to *explain* this information. Facilitating the understanding of the workings of the organisational structure is seen as an imperative part of the information giving process. This recognition and emphasis on the importance of the transference of technical knowledge seems to be in contrast to the PRNDC case study, whereby residents seemed to confer power to the professionals to make the right decisions (on the basis of a recognition of this 'technical' knowledge). In the PB case study, a recognition of the necessity to democratise and make accessible the technical information formed a great part of the strategy, as one community representative from this case study stated, "because it was one thing to ask for a work, and it is another thing to know how it works". A key player in GAPLAN when discussing 'information' in general, is keen to explain and emphasise *how* technical information is disseminated to the community,

[74]Capacity Building is usually examined from the perspective of enabling community representatives to exercise 'greater voice' in these spheres. When however, looking at the notion of challenging existing structures and meanings, it became necessary to move away from a community 'deficit' perspective. Although some critics would argue that any institutionalised governance structure looking at involving residents in decision-making processes will inevitably do so from a position which in based on 'incorporation' into existing structures and ways of working, my central research question, 'To What Extent do Institutionalised Governance Structures Create Political Opportunity Structures to Enable Change/ Transformation in Favour of Social Justice?' demands a thorough examination of this issue.

"there is a newspaper, which is the official daily newspaper of the administration, so in this newspaper the municipality is legally obliged to publish all the working financial questions from the point of view of carrying out, public works for example, to lay pavement in a street there are technical rules, norms about the size of the width, inclination of the street, this all became published in the internal rules of the PB. The technical criteria to attend to works and services started to be discussed in the PB process and published... for example, what is the width of a street to see if it can be paved, and the cars can pass, basic things, basic notions and questions...which criteria will be used to construct schools, to reform schools, this will be a subject of discussion and approval of the council. ".

Here, she elucidates how technical information is disseminated through 'the official daily newspaper' and goes on to expand how the necessary technical information is published to enable people to make feasible informed demands throughout the budgeting process. A member of the senior management team, in the PRNDC case study also highlights the main methods of communication through which information is transmitted, again his response can be seen to indicate a predominant conception of information in terms of flowing from the regeneration programme to the wider community.

"Well I'd say a lot of it's word of mouth so we employ, 180 people, of whom a third now, or maybe more of them are residents so they know what is going on, and so they go back and tell people what is going on, we put out Preston Road News, which gets widely read, we put an awful lot into the Hull Daily Mail, em, we're about to start another round of project fairs and so on, but oddly enough the best medium I think is people seeing change in the environment,."

Some community representatives in the PRNDC case study cited wanting more information about what was happening in PRNDC as a stimulus to becoming involved. This is revealing in terms of how residents seemed to conceive themselves and their relationship to information. Residents, crucially did not explain their involvement in the participatory arena in terms of wanting to provide information about the local neighbourhood to professionals, but crucially wanted to find out about the increased service provision and what was happening throughout the regeneration programme.

As one professional confirms in terms of trying to get more residents interested, the main (direct) benefit of becoming involved is conceived as increased access to information, "so this job, this role for me is just trying to get the residents more

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interested, and its hard because they are not really getting anything back in return, except information, you know but they don't get anything else out of it...".

The more information and knowledge that residents gain about how these spaces function can be seen to enable them to act more effectively within the participatory arena, thus encouraging a greater input into the decision-making arena.[75] Community representatives (predominantly conceptualised as receivers of information) can be seen to be more informed about service delivery, and therefore are perhaps more able to access services (in the case of PRNDC), and are more informed about the technical criteria of planning and are therefore more able to demand public works (in the case of PB). The extent to which the agenda is essentially predefined and how this is linked to the conception of community representatives as 'receivers of information', does, however, have to be recognised. Community representatives seen in terms of providers of information – a vital resource for the functioning of the programme- are much more likely to be listened to. This conception certainly would indicate the opening up of the political opportunity structure and the increased potential in the ability of community representatives to crucially define the agenda.

The relationship between knowledge, information and power is highlighted by a member of the senior management team in the PRNDC case study. Despite the recognition of the knowledge and information that community representatives bring to the sphere, the institutional arrangement (i.e. as residents are directors not managers) does not give residents the 'operational' power of the actual 'management' of the programme,

> "...Alan's got this huge amount of information, so he's much more knowledgeable than I am, and I ever will be, so then you've got a bit of a problem for Alan, he's got all this information, but he's not a manager, but I am.."

This, however does not negate the idea that residents participation in such arenas as the focus groups and community conferences does have some sort of input into service planning and consequently may have some sort of influence on defining the political agenda within the participatory space. In contrast to the PRNDC case study whereby

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[75] See Chapter 5 for a fuller discussion of this element.

community representatives sit on the board with professionals, in the PB case study, the COP is comprised solely of community representatives. One independent observer, however, highlighted that the governing body crucially still retains control of *what* information is published and *how* the information is presented. This crucially influences not only the setting of the agenda but decision –making within this sphere,

> "…, the local government, they don't have a right to vote… but this doesn't mean that they doesn't have power, they have a lot of power. Because they have all the information in their hands and they share it in the way they want with the people. It's sometimes, it's not easy for the people to realise the game in place, and there is a tendency to vote according to the information they have from the government.."

Agenda set before taken to Participatory Arena

The necessity of locating the neighbourhood and the subsequent participatory process within the wider economical and political context became extremely apparent, as regards taking into consideration the setting of the agenda within these participatory spaces. In both case studies there were examples, cited by community representatives, whereby it was perceived that decisions had already been taken at some higher level (beyond the neighbourhood) and the participatory space was utilised by the governing body to legitimise the decision that had already been taken.[76] In the case of the PRNDC this concerned the demolition of social housing, and in the case of the PB, concerned the financial investments in a motorway. In the case of PRNDC, one community representative explains how the National Government targets for social housing demolition became legitimised by resident participation, i.e. "I still to this day believe that we were used for the council… they got exactly what they wanted and made it look like it was our decision..". As she explains,

> " they went too far in demolishing the big three bedroom houses… …but it was always made to look like it was the residents choice,.. it was suggested, there was a government thing about too much social housing, it was under occupied, and the council was being told it had to reduce the numbers of properties, somebody from high up in the council suggested, that we needed to be looking at 800 houses…. they did some sort of survey, and they found a fault in a big percentage of houses and they all had to go. It was made to look like it was the residents decision, but we really do not believe it ever was, those extra houses,

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[76] See chapter 5 for a discussion of how participatory spaces can be utilised as a legitimating strategy by governance bodies.

they went supposedly because of the survey, but none of us ever saw it, and I still to this day, I believe that we were used for the council... they got exactly what they wanted and made it look like it was our decision..."

In the PB case study it also seemed as though a similar process was occurring as regards decision-making about the Third Perimentral.[77] Despite the fact that the COP voted for the investments a lack of real choice and input by community representatives was highlighted, and was seen as extremely problematic by some of the community representatives involved in the discussions,

"....the Third Perimentral, no-one asked if they'd asked for money and from where, it wasn't *really* discussed. And who is going to pay this bill? ....I don't know what they can say, because you have to pay, and how can we make investments? If you think that if you're a councillor of the PB, you have an option.. Well you don't.... no-one asked.....they don't *ask* anymore, ..."

Another community representative who was on the PB council at the time of discussions about the Third Perimental explains how, despite the discussions about the investment the agenda was indeed already set. Discussions of investment to basic services, i.e. crèches and basic education were precluded as "the local administration doesn't have a programme to construct crèches, (nor invest in) basic education" and therefore the alternative options for investment have been circumscribed before discussions even reached the participatory arena. This notion was confirmed by another community representative who explained her decision to stop participating in the PB due to the circumscribed nature of the discussions in the participatory sphere,

"I went to a meeting in Gloria, they were discussing a health programme for the family, and a guy said, no we are not going to do a health programme for the family, how can he decide we are not going to do this? In the PB you cannot go with the decision already taken, understand. So, these things for me, these great changes that have happened where some people, in the Local Government decide what participation exists...the participation is decided, that it will be 300 meters of pavement, the population might decide where it goes, but who decides that it'll be 300 meters is the Local Government., we cannot influence... "

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[77] The Terceira Perimetral (Third Perimetral) is the largest road work in Porto Alegre. It has been under construction throughout the city since 1999. The Terceira Perimetral is 12 km long, connecting the North and the South of the city.

Participation as a Technique of Government

One interesting theme that was developed with the analysis of the data was how participation acted as some sort of bridge connecting otherwise 'excluded' citizens to the governance arena. Citizens' participation in the PB case study, has meant that segments of society living in unregularised favelas, and whose previous contact with official services and government figures was minimal, now had increased contact with governance authorities. The 'private' space of the vila, usually out of reach to public authorities and officials, had via the participatory process become 'open' to services. Interestingly, one former secretary of the environment, explained how the development of the participatory process, had enabled the 'private space' of the vila to became 'public',

> "For example, the first demand was sewage, but with sewage and drinking water, was accompanied with the paving of the streets,.... And with the streets, like you had pavement, the transportation could reach the remote regions and the vilas were oxygenated, given oxygen. Because, the principal question of the vilas is to separate the public space and the private space. In the favelas the main problem is that you don't have a public space and a private space,....then with sewage, pavement, and transportation for remote regions there became established a clear, public space in the favelas, and private space. This is fundamental to understand the environment.... because in these streets, now the police and ambulance could reach these remote areas, and could reach the very restricted spaces. And this process occurred in all regions, poorer regions of the community."

He explains how this process has occurred by using an example of his own work, an environmental project that he is managing in one of the vilas of Porto Alegre. He maintains how this project would not be possible in the popular favelas of Rio de Janeiro, Brasillia, or Salvador, and is only possible due to the PB process of Porto Alegre,

> "...I am working with these popular people, poor people in the vila, no,....we go to the houses....in Morro de Cruz, Cruz hill, it's very popular, and we identified the environmental problems with the students. ... I named this process Intelligencia Laboratory of Urban System, in that school. For example, if you didn't have the PB,...this work for example, would not be possible, I couldn't go to the vila and organise the people, no? ...and in Porto Alegre you could go to the popular vilas, in Rio de Janeiro no, in Brasillia, no, in Salvador, no In Porto Alegre you could reach these regions, then the citizens, feel this, I think is the principal fact that has enabled the success of the PB...."

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This increasing presence of the governing body in the otherwise 'excluded', 'unregulated' favelas is presented as a positive development by the former government minister. However, interestingly enough, a former community representative describes this process, in terms of a literal encroachment of the physical space by a 'bourgoise concept', which would have had the effect of displacing many people from the vila. He is explicit in his rejection of how the governing authorities have attempted to reshape and regulate the physical space of the vila, making it more accessible to governing authorities and public services. He explains how community representatives entered into discussions about concepts of urbanisation, i.e. how they (community representatives) tried to challenge the dominant concept of urbanisation, in order that people who lived in the vila would not become displaced by the building of wider avenues throughout the neighbourhood,

> "they [the local authority] wanted to make massive streets, but the streets rose up practically, so we started to dispute the question of access, we didn't want... we wanted it accessible for the people, and our word of order was that the asphalt comes, and the urbanisation but the vilas are here, they stay,,, that the urbanisation comes... you put asphalt down but it stays a vila. So we wanted a minimum removal [of people] for the urbanisation, ... so we tried to have a discussion about the concept of urbanisation.... Because, this question of the areas, we had an idea that to urbanise a region like Grande Cruzerio you don't have to throw people out of Grande Cruzeiro, because the small, small areas that you have were houses and would not be sufficient for the whole vila and to make the footpaths straight, imagine to make an avenue, so this was a dispute"

Here he explains how the governing authority wanted to 'regulate' the vila, to enable ambulances and fire-engines etc. to be able to circulate. A Foucauldian analysis of 'governmentality', could be seen to explain these developments i.e. how the increased 'regulation' of individuals in otherwise 'unregulated' spaces has indeed been made possible via the participatory process. However, one could also see how the participatory process has led to greater contact between the state and residents previously 'excluded' from any sort of contact with the governing authorities. This increased contact has created some sort of increased space for dialogue, therefore enabling discussions about challenging the very concept of 'urbanisation' whilst enabling residents of the vila access to health and education services.

Withdrawal of the State/ Administrator of Services

The participatory process could be seen as reproducing and reinforcing existing structures and meanings in terms of wider economic and historical processes that are happening at a variety of different levels. This could be seen very starkly in the PB case study as regards neo-liberal processes and the subsequent withdrawal of the state in terms of services. Interestingly, it seemed as though the community representatives currently involved in the PB process accepted these developments whereas, community representatives whom no longer were involved in the process were keen to challenge the aquiesence of the process to this trajectory. One community representative currently involved, is explicit in his recognition that it is the local government, which needs the community to organise. This is stated as a taken for granted assumption,

> "The working of it, the process of it, is, more or less this, *the local government needs* the population, to organise in their own communities, to have meetings, to choose their demands no? and choose and define their demands."

How the residents organisations, hence 'the population', have become an administrative function of the state in terms of administrator of services was indeed however, challenged by numerous community representatives who were no longer involved in the process. As one community representative explained in terms of how the residents' associations have changed from being a 'meeting place for the community' to an 'administrator of services',

> "the residents' association, is no longer a place where people go for fun.. it is an administrator of services, for the community, you arrive at the residents association, they are co-ordinating a crèche for children, they are coordinating a health post, they are organising extra classes for kids.... and now the residents association is a administrative figure, that does what the Local Government doesn't do, hasn't got the ability to do...its cheaper, more economical...they don't have the money to do it, they are given a small amount, and the community do it, and do it with the resources they have,...its become the machinery of the local authority."

6b: Explicit and Implicit Strategies of Resistance

The empirical research in both case studies highlighted that there were various differing strategies of resistance operating within these spheres at varying different levels, from within the participatory orthodoxy to outright rejection of this agenda.[78] These ranged from implicit rejection of basic assumptions on which the participatory policy is based, to resistance to traditionally accepted ways of working within these spheres. This can be seen on a continuum- from very subtle/ implicit resistance present in discourses, to more explicit resistance in terms of actions/ behaviour etc. Resistance, therefore, could not be conceptualised merely in terms of resistance to 'participation', ('participation' therefore conceptualised as representing one strategy of a disciplinary, all encompassing 'power'). The complexity of the 'realities' on the ground did indeed mean that paradoxically challenging, the 'disciplinary power' could in some instances mean invoking the participatory agenda whilst on other occasions this entailed outright rejection.

Strategies of resistance could be seen to encompass a wide range of elements in terms of strategies of explicit resistance to more subtle implicit acts of resistance. For example, how basic assumptions and discourses operating within these participatory spaces were challenged could be seen as an implicit form of resistance to the deeply engrained forces operating within these spaces. This could be seen on a continuum from scepticism to outright rejection. Individual acts of resistance also seemed to occupy a constituent part of the discourse in the PRNDC case study whilst collective strategies of resistance clearly formed an important part of the history of the PB case study. The analysis also fundamentally highlighted how, or to what extent, these strategies of resistance were indeed taken on board in terms of actually having some sort of material effect as regards the operation of these participatory spheres. The extent to which community involvement/ participation has actually challenged the existing structures and meanings within these spheres therefore became a pertinent question.

A Foucauldian analysis would begin to look at participation by first and foremost examining 'non-participation'. This makes absolute sense in terms of challenging a

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[78] Strategies of resistance, can be seen to mean a strategy of 'resisting' the encroachment of technology and discipline on the 'lifeworld'.

great deal of the normative assumptions embedded in the 'official' discourse of participation. The majority of research (including my own) takes participation as the starting point for analysis. The general assumptions imbued in the participatory agenda become taken for granted and are not seen or analysed as prescriptions or constructions. Participation is therefore inadvertently conceived of as the 'norm', and 'non-participation' therefore occupies the arbitrary 'abnormal' position. In terms of looking at participation from a merely quantitative perspective, it is readily apparent that the majority of people do not 'participate' in some sort of community decision-making arena and therefore to 'normalise' participation at the expense of casting 'non-participation' into the 'abnormal' realm does not make a great deal of sense. However, within the participatory orthodoxy, operating within the academy and on the ground within these participatory spaces the question of 'why are more people not participating?' is far more prevalent, than its basic counterpoint, 'why do people participate in these spheres in the first place?' This thinking therefore builds on the fundamental normative assumption that people 'should' be involved in these participatory spheres.

Resistance could be seen throughout the four data sets in terms of a basic scepticism that transcended some of the fundamental assumptions imbued within the participatory agenda. The gap between the rhetoric imbued in the participatory discourse and the 'reality' of the situation on the ground was highlighted as problematic in the PRNDC case study by one practitioner, "we make an assumption that people want to be involved, and it's not necessary true...". He sees the assumption that the participatory agenda is based on is the idea that people 'want to be involved' and goes on to challenge this assumption by using himself as an example of someone 'apathetic' and 'not that involved' due to his tiredness from work and the idea of 'leav[ing] it to someone else'. He sees community development as having to 'make those people be involved', this hints at the idea that that the assumption that participation is based on is not that 'people want to be involved' but that people *'should'* be involved. As a community representative from this case study explains in response to a question about what community involvement means to her,

> "well, I think that the community *should* be involved a lot, but it isn't because,
> I mean we've tried to get the community involved, and we've tried a lot and
> they're just not interested"

The normative element of the participatory discourse, i.e. that people 'should' be involved is reflected by this community representative whom is heavily involved. The idea that people who are not involved are 'apathetic', 'not interested' etc. was a dominant narrative throughout both sets of interviews with practitioners and community representatives in this case study. This narrative had the effect of constructing those not participating in these arenas as essentially passive. A counter-discourse (albeit less prominent) however, that could be detected, showed a scepticism of these participatory spaces. Apathy was in effect explained in terms of a more 'active' choice due to past involvement and cynicism about the potential to influence decision-making in these spheres. As one former community representative explained in terms of residents' reluctance to become involved,

> "then you get some who have been involved in the NDC in the past.. and asked questions, actually been to meetings… and not been given any feedback and so they say oh well, its just lip service, you know you're not really interested, so we are not bothering to go anymore…"

This scepticism and cynicism about the ability to influence decision-making in participatory spheres however seemed to run far deeper than having attended meetings and not been listened to. It seemed as though not having any input into decision-making about the area was so culturally entrenched it would take a huge leap of faith to actually believe that they will be able to influence decision making in the participatory arena. As she goes on to explain,

> "and I can't speak for a lot of them, I can only speak for one or two residents who've actually spoken to me, but, em, how can I put it, I think it's hard for some of them to still realise that they have got a voice and they can have a say, they don't think it's still happening and they don't think you know, it's really true, you know"

This discourse of resisting participation due to a general scepticism of their ability to influence (due to past participation) and a wider disbelief of being listened to seemed to be so culturally entrenched, that even those who did participate saw themselves predominantly in the role of 'recipients of information', finding out what was going on, as opposed to influencing developments. Subtle strategies of resistance could however be detected against the physical presence of increased officialdom on the estate. One worker (at the time also a resident on the estate) explains how residents would not answer the door to what were perceived as 'officials',

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"...I know one time, we were going round with some stuff, something for the board members, we'd been to a house and I'd changed my car, I had an old B-Volvo, then I had this Sierra, and it was old but it looked really tidy and had pads and locks on, everything, and I went to the house and knocked, and they never answered the door,.. and it was only afterwards they said they saw this posh car and were not answering the door. The other thing... was the way you dressed, if you went in a smart suit and a shirt and tie, people went and didn't want to know where as if you were in a skirt and t-shirt fine, she's one of us and it was very much like that..."

Cultural symbols were cited as either being accepted or rejected often on the basis of whether or not they were seen to be official. 'Posh', 'smart' in terms of appearance was rejected, whereas dressing in a 'skirt and t-shirt' were seen as 'fine'. Resisting the encroachment of 'officialdom' by not opening one's door is significant metaphorically, in terms of the encroachment and subsequent regulation of 'space'.

Official discourse and fundamental assumptions about social exclusion and deprivation in the neighbourhood seemed to be challenged within the case study areas. Typically both neighbourhoods have been categorised as 'deprived', 'poor', 'socially excluded' areas containing many 'social problems', labelled 'dangerous' and linked to 'drugs'. There did however, in both case study neighbourhoods seem to be a storyline, that challenged this 'official' classification, which emphasised the friendly, positive characteristics of the neighbourhood. As one former community representative explains,

"I think it's a good estate I think they're all friendly, I really do I mean, it was like when they first said about demolition, you know we all got together, we all went to town, and things like that, I mean when it comes to something like that they do all stick together, I mean I know you get your little hooligans and things like that, I mean we've had plenty of dealings with them like, but you get them all over as well, but yeah, I think it's a brilliant estate, I really do.."

People not involved in PRNDC yet who lived on the estate generally seemed to have a positive impression of the neighbourhood, often linked to family ties and friendships which seemed to occupy a very important place in the eyes of residents.[79] In terms of

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[79] Although the majority of data is taken from the interview transcripts I conducted preliminary research with the community development arm of PRNDC- Participatory Appraisal - whereby we (a team of six) went onto the streets to ask residents general impressions of the Preston Road area.

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Putnam's analysis bonding social capital seemed to be one of the neighbourhoods' greatest assets according to residents.

Individual and Collective Acts of Resistance

Individual and collective acts of resistance were cited as challenging the 'disciplinary' or 'dominant power' exercised throughout and beyond these participatory spaces.   In the PRNDC case study various actions/ incidents were cited whereby   individual residents had in some form or another challenged the hegemony of professionals knowledge/ ways of working with effect. Although these 'acts of resistance' were not fundamentally challenging the participatory agenda, (as one could perhaps classify the 'active' choice of non-involvement) they must be seen as acts of resistance in terms of challenging 'disciplinary power'. In the PB case study, collective acts of resistance were cited as being fundamental in terms of the emergence/subsequent development of the participatory sphere, and could be seen to be fundamentally challenging existing ways of working.   These explicit acts of collective resistance or the challenging of 'disciplinary power' must be recognised as constituting the fundamental historical basis of the participatory process. In both case studies however, one could see that perhaps the most obvious strategy of resistance as regards community representatives' participation was exit from the participatory sphere all together.[80]

Individual Acts of Resistance: PRNDC

In the PRNDC case study, the same few   incidents, or 'stories' were indeed cited by different actors in these spheres and were presented as constituting some sort of resistance.   This therefore seemed to indicate that these specific cited incidents were *significant* in the minds of the research participants and were therefore *not* the usual ways of working.   This could be interpreted to mean that these actions/ incidents/ behaviours were indeed challenges to the 'normal'/ accepted   ways of working within these arenas. One 'story' repeated by various community representatives told of how the head of the appraisal committee stopped all the appraisals until the community

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[80] Although there were a variety of different reasons why people stated they had left the participatory arena including getting a job, not having enough time, e.t.c. that certainly could not be linked to resistance, a large number of community representatives that I spoke to in both case studies made some sort of exit due to a confrontation with the process.

representatives had at their disposal and understood all the relevant information. As another community representative, proudly explains, '(she) took the finance committee to task' and " she said, 'if you think I'm discussing this stuff, well cause I aren't, cause I don't understand a word it says, she.. has just pointed out that non of the figures add up, and you're the finance director now take it back and do it again', and it was done again". This community representative was able to utilise her role as chair of the appraisal committee to stop all the appraisals until they (certain community representatives) were able to understand all the information they had at their disposal. This comment does highlight how these participatory spheres can in fact provide some sort of space where the dominant/ hegemonic logic can in fact be challenged and confronted with some practical effect and could be seen to result in an increased understanding and hence increased input of community representatives into the various committees.

Where in certain situations residents and professionals were in disagreement, residents in this arena, were able to draw upon and utilise the discursive strategy of increased resident participation to challenge the existing way of working and open and widen some sort of space within the decision-making arena. The term 'resident-led' seems to be a discursive resource that residents were able to utilise materially in their favour.[81] The government emphasis on 'resident –led' – although ambiguous, does however, seem to have given individual residents negotiating power within the running/ management of the regeneration programme.[82] For example, a community representative explains how at the beginning, a local authority councillor chaired the meetings, and relates how she challenged his style of working 'we don't want to run the NDC like that' by drawing on the discursive resource of 'resident-led',

> ".. we had Councillor Humphreyes he was, ... oh yes, he was the chair of the NDC at the beginning,..and we were at a meeting once and there were people from other agencies there and Terry and Kate, and he was in a wheelchair, was Terry and it's hard, and they came in late to this meeting they'd been to hospital, he had something and Councillor Humphreys said, …. 'Why are you

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[81] New Labour has given participation a high rhetorical status, this does not necessarily mean that on the ground 'participation' within governance structures is merely empty words or lip service but how discourses of participation are utilised by participants within these arenas as a material resource to negotiate within these arenas. It seems as though the concept of 'discourse' – is a mediating concept between the high normative ideals/ rhetoric of participation and the practice on the ground, that can be utilised as a tool for increased bargaining power.

[82] The term 'resident led', has been watered-down, to 'communities at the heart' (see NRU, 2004 Transformation and Sustainability?).

late? This is not right.', well Kate said 'I'm sorry but we've come from the hospital, and we've come straight here' and he said, 'I think you'd better start living in the real world', and I thought him saying that to Terry who was in a wheelchair who was giving his time free, so I lost my temper...I said, 'you're out of order Mr Humphreys, living in the real world, I think they are', and he looked at me and I said, 'You're out of order', and well everybody went phhhhh, cause no-body dare say anything to him apparently, and after the meeting he came to me and apologised, and I said, 'we don't want to the run the NDC like that I'm afraid, it's not on, **it's resident led** and we're not having this, ..."

Another community representative is keen to point out how there have been incidents where the NDC has "had to listen to residents.... It had to be resident-led, I think there could be some situations where the NDC had to listen to the residents but it wasn't really what they wanted to hear you know". She goes on to explain how it's been difficult for 'professionals' who have 'done the job for years', to adapt to the 'resident-led' focus of the programme,

> "So it's different a director coming in and thinking right, I've done it like this for the last fifteen years at other places, and this is how I'm going to do it, and usually they have a job where they just come in and they do it their way, with the role of the NDC as resident-led they haven't been able to do that their way, they have got to have the input and take on board what they residents' say."

Another community representative also evokes the potential for power that has been bestowed on residents by the government, by defining the programme as 'resident led'. The government has effectively enabled the residents to lever space within these regeneration programmes, as he explains, "I feel if we go back to the resident-led bit we have the right, and if we don't feel happy with something, we're going to tell them". Another more explicit strategy of resistance in this case study, however could be seen by the sustained actions of one community representative. After attending most meetings, he abstains on every vote. As, another community representative explains, "..... I call him mister abstain, you know, he just abstains from every vote, you know so, I take him home in the car, because he's not too good on his legs and that, and I say 'why did you abstain?', 'well, if anything goes wrong they can't blame me', (...laughs)".

In the PB case study collective strategies of resistance were cited crucially   in terms of leading to the development of the process. How strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations had all led to an opening of some sort of space in the decision-making arena was invoked by both community representatives and professionals in this sphere. The collective strategies of resistance that were invoked by community representatives were predominantly those strategies of resistance against the military dictatorship in the late 1970s and early 1980s. These strategies of resistance then founded the basis for the history of the development of the process. It seemed as if the process has developed in a cyclical manner, i.e. strategies of resistance had led to the development of a social innovative process however, through time have become   institutionalised.[83] Collective 'strategies of resistance' explicitly confronting the military dictatorship were therefore extremely visible in this case study as the community movement demanded to be heard in the transition to democracy.   One former community representative explains how the neighbourhood became the principal site of resistance to the military dictatorship. This was due to the fact that the Unions and oppositional political parties had been shut down, thus leaving the community movement at the neighbourhood level the only possible sphere for resistance,

> "So the União das Vilas was affiliated to UAMPA, for us the struggle was local, national and international, it had an idea like this,.....The PT, the movements, the activities in the residents' associations,...We wanted to make politics in the centres of the neighbourhood, the unions were shut, and the parties, so the community struggle was the only way we could... militants from the left, make politics in a calmer way, so the residents association organised the residents .. so this was how the União das Vilas was born."

Another former community representative is keen to point out how collective organised resistance did not materialise from some abstract notion of resistance to the military dictatorship, however, sprung up from a basic necessity to keep ones home and prevent eviction. How this development provided the impetus for the formation of the União das Vilas is explained,

> "And here we organised the resistance against the eviction of the people,... and there we realised that one community would not achieve, one community, would not be able to resist the dispersion. But everyone together would get it. So there we constructed the União das Vilas, an organism that that united all the

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[83] See Theoretical Conclusion Chapter for a discussion of Social Innovation to Social Institutionalism

communities, and everyone was there, understand. They wanted to throw people out of one place and everyone went there... and if they tried to throw out some people, they'd have to throw out others as well... everyone there was defending the posture of others.. and when the hour arrived to challenge the government, and everyone was there together... "

Another community representative also comments on this process in relation to the emergence of the Cruzeiro Movement, "so each time they took/ tore down a vila, people united and people didn't let them, tear down the vila, this movement was born in this way, in an effort to unite in order to resist...". This notion of 'collective' resistance seemed to be a prevalent theme in this case study. Solidarity was often invoked as forming a key part of the fabric that enabled the 'community movement' to effectively challenge and confront the government. Those community representatives who were involved in the community movement in the 1980s invoked a 'collective' discourse of resistance, that was decidedly in contrast to the community representatives who were currently involved in the process who tended to speak about their involvement in much more individualistic terms (as did those currently involved in PRNDC).[84] Community representatives formerly involved in this sphere, were also keen to highlight how the development of the process of participation (specifically the development of the FROP) had indeed undermined the 'collective solidarity' of the autonomous community movement.[85]

Another theme linked to resistance in this case study that emerged from the empirical analysis was how strategies of resistance had indeed led to alternative ways of working. How resistance to existing structures, meanings and ways of working can indeed "provid(e) alternatives, possible sources for the development of new kinds of practices, narratives about belonging to and participat(ing) in society" is indeed crucial to recognise in an examination of participatory spaces (Holston, 1995:48 cited in Friedman, 1998:28). Resistance therefore, must be seen not merely in terms of being some sort of knee-jerk reaction to the exercise of 'disciplinary power' but must be recognised as being able to ignite sustainable alternatives to current ways of working. This substantive element of resistance was a major theme of analysis cited in the PB case study. Professionals and community representatives in this sphere cited technical

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[84] Here one must recognise the time element as being a prime determining factor, i.e. how the discourse of the left in the 1970s and 1980s, globally did indeed revolve around such notions such as 'solidarity' e.t.c. The end of the Cold War, and the 'triumph' of capitalism however, has undoubtedly been accompanied by a retreat from this discourse and a pervasive individualism can be associated with this process.
[85] See theoretical conclusion chapter for a thorough discussion of this point in relation to incorporation and co-option.

criteria of governance that were actually changed by the participation of community representatives, whilst others were keen to point out how the 'dominant' political culture of Porto Alegre had been challenged by the logic of increased citizen participation.

As one professional who currently works in GAPLAN explained,

> "I think that an important point is that many technical criteria in the local government have changed due to the debate with the local population. Because often we've had situations for example to do with basic sanitation, with drainage and there were trenches in the most distant parts of the city that had open drains, and the technocrats of the local authority said it would not be possible to carry out these works, I remember situations when everyone had to go to the locale to discuss it, because the population said, "you cannot do this, we live here, we need this to be resolved", so the position of the technocrats changed when faced with the necessities of the population."

Whilst another professional is keen to point out how she believes the 'culture of the city' has changed. From one characterised by a "relationship (which) isn't one of citizenship, of rights and responsibilities, but one of submission.... a paternalistic one..." to a situation whereby "Porto Alegre would no longer accept any more a process that is not democratic, that does not permit people to influence their city....".

Conclusion

Power within both case studies was seen as both reproducing existing structures and meanings, however also crucially enabling strategies or indeed acts of resistance within these participatory spaces. The relationship between power and knowledge, or more accurately different types of knowledge were seen as significant in both spheres, as different values seemed to be placed on experiential and technical knowledge. Whilst experiential knowledge seemed to be acknowledged at a rhetorical level the value ascribed to it, in terms of within the decision-making arena seemed minimal, at least in the PRNDC case study.

Within the PB case study however, examples were given during the early stages of the process whereby technical knowledge had been ignored, thus resulting in the carrying out of public works that were unable to function. The predominant conception of information was one whereby the governance arena in terms of PRNDC or the local authority in terms of the PB was seen to be the provider of information, and community representatives and residents as recipients. This has wide ranging implications in terms

of possible input into the agenda forming of the participatory processes. In both case studies, examples were given whereby decisions had already been taken at a higher level, before being discussed in the participatory arena. This was seen as a 'technique of governance' in an attempt to legitimise decisions taken. Individual and collective strategies of resistance, however, could indeed be detected. These encompassed subtle, implicit challenges to dominant discourses and assumptions to physical collective action. To what extent therefore can participatory processes be seen as vehicles for change or tools for co-option? It is to this final question that we now turn.

7. Participatory Processes : Vehicles for Change or Tools of Co-option ?

This conclusion highlights the overall theoretical and methodological implications of the interdisciplinary research I have undertaken. I have developed a framework from the grounded theory research approach that highlights how, despite the two very distinct models of democracy that were referred to, in the case studies, similar social processes could be detected across and within the two case studies under examination. *Different* democratic models influence the political opportunity structure in terms of ability to enable social justice. The different political opportunity structures were characterised by how 'agency' and 'citizenship' were framed in each case study and the subsequent ability of community representatives to influence these spheres. This dynamic is explored in a holistic portrayal of each case study in relation to the distinct democratic models with which they refer.[86] Despite the different democratic models, referred to by actors in the distinct case studies, *similar* social processes and dynamics affected the ability of community representatives to lever open 'space' within these arenas. These similarities have been explored in the three empirical chapters. The similarities are explored in three conceptual areas: 1) the production of participatory processes, 2) the democratic nature of these participatory spaces and 3) the power relations and practice of participation. These key elements were the crucial components in terms of explaining the political opportunity structure in both case studies. A cross-case approach enabled theoretical development which transcended the tyranny-transformation dichotomy. These findings however are seen to operate on the more theoretical level and therefore policy recommendations were also developed in an attempt to highlight the findings as regards the 'practice' of participation.

My conception of how the research changed throughout the process will also be discussed in terms of developing from a 'policy learning' strategy to more in-depth analysis of the micro politics within these spaces. The influence of ideas stemming from notions of universalism and particularism in terms of the methodology, epistemology and substantive issues of the research will also be considered. The last section, will identify avenues for future research and will examine how the framework developed from the empirical research, calls for more case study research looking at

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[86] See section 7b, 'Two Distinct Models of Participation'.

participatory spaces in terms of the 'practice' of participation. I also emphasise how the study of the micro-politics of participatory spaces needs to be linked to wider contextual issues, for example the political economy within which the participatory space is operating, to enable a more thorough examination of the 'politics' of participation.

7a: The Development of the Theoretical Framework

Interdisciplinary and Grounded Theory : The Interweaving of the Empirical and the Theoretical

The interdisciplinary nature of the research can to some degree be seen to be linked to the complexity of the empirical 'realities' on the ground. The milieu of issues/ findings that were developed as part of the grounded research process demanded an integrated interdisciplinary approach that was able to recognise the complex configuration of factors (i.e. historical events, processes, practices, discourses, structures, meanings) that resulted in the subsequent empirical findings. This demanded a thorough examination of the complexity of the situation that could not be adequately explored from the theoretical perspective of merely one discipline. The empirical thrust of much of the urban regeneration literature was seen to be complemented essentially by the arguably more theoretically developed approach of some development studies literature.[87] This decision to retain the basic premises of a grounded theory approach to empirical research in terms of presenting the integrated conceptual framework developed as part of the analytical process has meant that the subsequent 'theory building' process has been influenced by a variety of different disciplines, theories, and social theorists. Amongst others, theories of governance, social movements, and democracy have been utilised, whilst ideas developed by social theorists such as Lefebvre and Foucault have also been instrumental in the theoretical development of the thesis presented here. I have in this conclusion attempted to highlight the main theoretical elements that I believe have been highlighted by my empirical research, in terms of how different democratic 'models' were invoked and referred to throughout the 'practice' of participation in the two different case studies. In the PB case study a more developmental democratic model was evoked by key players and community

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[87] Predominantly emanating from the Institute for Development Studies, (IDS), University of Sussex and the Institute for Development and Policy Management, University of Manchester.

representatives in their explanation of the participatory process. In the PRNDC case study, the description and explanation of the role of participation could be linked to a more liberal representative democratic elaboration of the concept. Despite the different models that were evoked in each case study, similar processes in terms of various different issues were seen to be at play in the case studies. This can be seen in the structuring of the three empirical chapters (4, 5 and 6) (i.e. on a thematic/ conceptual basis), and is highlighted in the following table, 'Participatory Spaces: Explaining the Political Opportunity Structure'. Crucially, the very fact that the empirical research in these two distinct case studies led to the development of a theoretical framework that was able to *explain* similar dynamics in both case studies is extremely significant. These explanations cannot be classified in either case study as *tyranny* or *transformation* as detailed empirical analysis highlighted how constraining and enabling processes were at work in both case studies. 'Disciplinary power' was exercised as a technique of governance, constraining change, yet crucially had to be conceptualised as 'non-totalising' as 'strategies of resistance' were seen to be present, fundamentally challenging existing ways of working and meanings to various degrees in both participatory spheres.

The Research Process: From the Central Research Question to The Representation of Analysis

A review of the literature on participatory spaces confirmed that the main debate centred on how commentators regard these spaces- as forums in which excluded groups exert influence on the distribution of resources, or as tools of co-option by the governing powers.[88]   This key debate led to the formation of the central research question, "To what extent do participatory spaces in institutionalised governance structures create political opportunity structures to enable change/ transformation in favour of social justice?". Mason's (2002) idea of a 'research puzzle' helped to conceptualise this key theme in the literature and operationalise it methodologically in terms of creating research questions and applying them to the empirical world. A grounded theory iterative approach to fieldwork and analysis complemented this strategy by progressively channelling the research within an inductive framework. The three empirical chapters show the findings of the empirical research and the substantive

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[88] See Conceptual Framework.

theory developed, centring around the three main explanatory concepts, 1) the production of the participatory process, 2) the democratic nature of participatory spaces 3) power relations and practices of participation.

The analysis of the empirical research led to the construction of two distinct 'representations' of participatory processes in the different case studies. This representation is shown in this chapter, in the section entitled, 'Two Distinct Democratic Models of Participation' and represents both case studies holistically in relation to perhaps the greatest *difference* between the case studies. Despite the complexity within a) key players and community representatives' conceptions, perceptions and interpretations of the participatory spaces and b) the way these spaces were organised and occupied, it could be broadly discerned that these two processes embodied elements of two distinct 'ideal types' of participatory processes/ democratic models. Despite recognitions of the criticisms that one must not judge participatory processes against some sort of 'unachievable', 'ideal' yardstick, I have attempted to look at how social actors within these spheres invoked both implicitly and explicitly elements of these different democratic models to explain their experiences of these two distinct participatory processes. The way these two different 'democratic models' embed different notions of change, influenced the way that political opportunity structures were created, and their subsequent ability for transformation in favour of social justice. The implications of these findings are significant in terms of the need for more detailed empirical research of specific participatory spaces and processes. Generalisations about the democratising or de-democratising nature of these new governance arrangements therefore need to be cautioned against, as various different factors need to be taken into consideration.

Despite the differences imbued and evoked within these two participatory spaces, in terms of democratic models, *similar* issues, social processes and dynamics could be seen as operating within, and across both participatory processes. This recognition led to a comparative analysis operating within a broader theoretical framework that attempted to explain the dynamic of the political opportunity structure *beyond* that of the different democratic models. That similar processes, power dynamics and relations could be detected in the distinct case studies was seen to be highly significant in terms of explaining the dynamics occurring within and across these spaces. Three main concepts a) the production of the participatory process, b) the democratic nature of the

participatory space, c) power relations and the practice of participation, could be seen to crucially explain the political opportunity structure within both participatory processes. These three concepts therefore form the basis of the more 'formal theory' in terms of explanations of both change/ transformation in favour of social justice within participatory processes. A re-conceptualisation of power that saw it as both constraining yet enabling force present in both case studies enabled me to transcend the tyranny- transformation dichotomy.

Explaining the Political Opportunity Structure: Beyond the Tyranny-Transformation Dichotomy

The following framework was constructed as a result of the grounded empirical research process, and attempts to explain the dynamics of the political opportunity structure in both case studies. It is in essence a summary of the three empirical chapters of this thesis, combining the major findings of my analysis into table format. It takes into consideration both the temporal dynamic (i.e. charting the development of the participatory process, from its emergence through to its maturation) whilst also taking into consideration cross-cutting issues such as representation, legitimacy and accountability. This is important in terms of retaining the holistic approach to case study analysis whilst at the same time enabling cross-case analysis. The findings of the research are extremely localised both geographically and temporally (pertaining to the participatory process, the neighbourhood under consideration and a snapshot in time) therefore pretensions to generalisation must be cautioned against. Many of the themes that were developed were applicable in both case studies, however, often in different guises and with specific contextual variations. This approach enabled an enriched exploration of the concepts developed throughout the grounded theory process, whilst also aided theoretical development by highlighting the substantive gaps in the specific body of literature pertaining to each case study. This comparative approach therefore enabled a fresh theoretical perspective to be elucidated in terms of transcending the tyranny- transformation distinction. In both case studies elements of participatory spaces could be linked to notions of disciplinary power and could be interpreted in terms of 'tyranny'. However these had to be conceived as 'non-totalising' as 'strategies' and 'acts of resistance' were present in both spheres and could be seen to be linked to ideas of 'transformation' in terms of challenging existing meanings and ways of working.

		Participatory Budgeting (Cruzeiro do Sul)	**Preston Road Neighbourhood Development Corporation**
The Shaping of Participatory Processes			
The Production of Participatory Spaces Framing: Practitioners/ Key Players	How participatory spaces are conceived, perceived and interpreted.	Conceptions, Perceptions and Interpretations of community participation *(Homogenous conception)*	Conceptions, Perceptions and Interpretations of community participation *(lack of clarity and rationale)* *(National Governance Initiative – elevates importance of interpretation at local level)*
		Community Participation interpreted in relation to • redistribution *(instrumental)* • citizenship *(process dimension)*	Community participation interpreted in relation to following agendas amongst others • social inclusion • social cohesion • social capital • service delivery • governance
	How participatory spaces are organised	Physical/ Historical Production and Institutional Mechanisms Systematic process of participation *(Institutionalised- 16 years)* *(local governance initiative- those that conceived it helped construct it)* External Elements identified as conducive to the historical development of process • Political Approach of Government- willing to listen • Strong, organised civil society	Physical/ Historical Production and Institutional Mechanisms Lack of concrete process of participation • Political Will to create participatory space (at National level) • Lack of organised civil society

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		Institutional Mechanisms that enabled process to develop • Creation of GAPLAN • Process encompasses decision-making and implementation • 100% of resources for investment distributed by process • autonomous self-regulation of process	
	Relationship Between Ideas and Practice	Concurrence of homogenous conception of role of community participation with well defined institutional process	Confused and heterogeneous conception of role of community participation can be linked to a lack of clear process and concrete institutional mechanisms of community participation
Framing: Community Actors The motivations of community actors		Individual/ Micro Explanations for Involvement *(minimal articulation of involvement)*	Individual/ Micro Explanations for Involvement *(predominant articulation of involvement)* • providing a specific function for individuals • being able to employ resources that actors were in possession of
		Unexpected Events/ Intervening Conditions that Resulted in Actors Involvement • random events – strategically orientated action (on part of org./ governing body) • friends involvement legitimises process • visible concrete results of participation	Unexpected Events/ Intervening Conditions that Resulted in Actors Involvement • random events - strategically orientated action (on part of org./ governing body) • friends involvement legitimises process • visible concrete results of participation
		Structural/ Macro Explanations for Involvement *(Predominant articulation of involvement)* • Recognition of need for	Structural/ Macro Explanations for Involvement *(minimal articulation of involvement)* • Recognition of a need for change

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		change • Fundamental necessity of basic services/ lack of infrastructure in neighbourhood • Resistance to eviction	
The Governance and Democratic Nature of Participatory Spaces *[Framing Key Players and Community Reps]*	**Developmental / Civic republican Democracy** *(stress on process dimension)* • Personal development • Community development • Trust in institutions of government • Social cohesion • Acceptance of collective decisions	• Developmental aspect seen as crucial component of the process • Stress on educating about the functioning of the state • Explicit link made between gaining experience and understanding, and gaining more control over state • Developmental aspects include bridging social capital	• Developmental aspect (Community Development) part of programme significantly absent despite.. • ..Resident deficit rational for programme (cited by key players) however, • No explicit link made between community development and increased influence in participatory arena • Pressure by Treasury to spend mitigates against community development
	Representation and Accountability: Conceptions and Perceptions	• Clear conception and institutional process of representation • Echoing/ reflecting concrete institutional mechanisms of representation • Key players see community representatives as 'activists'- i.e. unrepresentative of 'true community- concern to reach 'wider community' • Idea of 'common good' stressed • Conflictual element of process stressed (although ideas of 'common good') • Gatekeeping seen as problematic in terms of a) development of participatory sphere b)	• Confused conceptions of representation- lack of clear institutional process of representation • Community reps. very different ideas about what representation meant from ideas associated with direct democracy to focus on 'community leaders' • Key players see community representatives as 'activists'- i.e. unrepresentative of 'true community – concern to reach 'wider community' • Community seen as homogenous- therefore emphasis on consensus • Gatekeeping seen as problematic in terms of a) development of participatory sphere b) preventing wider

		preventing wider accountability and involvement by key players • Tension between wider representation and accumulation of knowledge recognised (can't be a councillor more than twice)	accountability and involvement by key players • Tension between wider representation and accumulation of knowledge- recognised but (No current institutional rules)
	<u>Institutional Mechanisms of Representation and Accountability</u> Representation Accountability	• Clear/ consistent institutional process of representation • Institutional Mechanisms of accountability: 1. Annual Plenaries 2. Delegate System (FROP) (extensive process/ system of participation linked to 'burn out') • Recognition of divorce between comm.. reps. and 'wider community'	• Community reps. arrived to board in variety of different ways • Institutional mechanisms of accountability – lacking (comm. reps) • Attempts to encourage wider participation: 1. Focus groups 2. Community Conferences (seen as unsuccessful)
	Legitimacy	• Transparency • Consistency • Tangible Outcomes • Self-regulating process	• Transparency • Consistency • Tangible Outcomes
Power Relations and the Practice of Participation *[Framing Key Players and Community Reps]*	**Reproduction of Existing Structures and Meanings** Power and Knowledge	Recognition of different types of knowledge (technical and experiential). At first more stress on experiential knowledge yet increasing emphasis on technical knowledge	Despite recognition of different types of knowledge yet technical knowledge **valued** over and above experiential knowledge
	Information Agenda set before taken to participatory arena	Community Representatives seen as recipients of knowledge • Info seen by key players as informing residents about technicalities of process Example • Funding of Third Perimetral	Community Representatives seen as recipients of knowledge • Info seen by key players as informing residents about services/ projects Example • Demolition of social housing

	Participation as a Technique of Government	Increased Regulation of the population, public/ private space	
	Withdrawal of the State	How residents associations are now administrators of services	
	Strategies of Resistance (explicit to implicit)	Challenging the labelling of the neighbourhood as a 'problem' area	Challenging labelling of the estate as a 'problem' area
			Challenging assumption that people not involved are 'apathetic' – wide spread scepticism about ability to influence
	Acts of Resistance	Collective Acts of Resistance (cited as being a crucial component of the historical development of the process)	Individual Acts of Resistance (comm.. reps. challenging existing ways of working)
		Actually changed ways of working.	How 'Resident led' became a 'discursive resource' that comm.. reps. could invoke to resist existing ways of working

7b: Theoretical Framework: Beyond the Tyranny- Transformation Distinction

Theoretically, I have developed a framework to explain the dynamics of the political opportunity structure in each case study. This approach highlighted how the historical production and construction of these participatory spaces fundamentally impacted on the degree to which the participatory space was 'open to' influence by community representatives. In the two case studies under examination, very different models of democracy were referred to. This not only emphasised the fact that 'real', 'functioning' participatory spaces cannot be conceived homogenously in terms of either undermining or contributing to local democracy, but crucially highlights how *"another democracy is possible"*. This is extremely important point in terms of how the notion of 'democracy' predominantly conflated with the Anglo-Saxon (representative democratic) model has been hijacked, exported and imposed around the world. Pateman's (1970: 16) insight that "normative content [of representative democratic theory]..that *implies* that

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we- or, at least, Anglo-Saxon Westerners – are living in the 'ideal' democratic system", could not be more relevant in the contemporary era. These different democratic models certainly imbued different notions of change, crucially centring on how the public was conceived in terms of 'agency' and 'citizenship'. Despite how different ideas of agency could be seen as 'enabling' or 'constraining', in both case studies, these projections had to be conceived as non-totalising as participants in these spheres were seen to challenge these ideas. A reconceptualisation of the dynamics of power from a Foucauldian point of view, therefore enables one to transcend the tyranny- transformation, cooption-change dichotomy in an analysis of each participatory space.

Interestingly enough however, that similar dynamics were occurring within such distinct participatory spaces indicated the salience of this explanatory framework, and ironically highlighted the necessity for examining the contextual, cultural, political and historical constructions of these participatory spaces. The following section therefore, details the two distinct case studies holistically, emphasising the most crucial *difference* between these two case studies (different democratic models). This however, is followed by a thematic discussion of the main findings in terms of explaining the dynamics of the political opportunity structure across both case studies. This analytical framework fundamentally highlights the *similar* processes that were occurring within both case studies and enabled the development of 'formal theory' that attempts to explain the dynamics involved in participatory spaces as regards change/ transformation in favour of social justice.

Two Distinct Democratic Models of Participation

The commentary about the transition from 'government' to 'governance' and the subsequent implications in terms of local democracy has tended to be made on a general level. For, example there is an assumption that all participatory spaces can be lumped together and assessed in terms of their contribution to or undermining of, local democratic practice. This can however obscure the need for detailed empirical assessment of concrete participatory spaces, or governance bodies, in terms of how actors within these spheres explain their experiences of participatory processes in relation to different elements of democracy, i.e. the micro-politics of these spaces. What the generalised approach fails to recognise is the diversity and the heterogeneity of specific participatory spaces currently operating throughout the world, and how these

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different participatory spaces can certainly invoke different democratic models. As Davies (2002:319) is keen to point out, in the realm of governance, "theories must give recognition to the possibility that globalizing tendencies like policy transfer can produce divergent outcomes". These generalisations are hardly surprising given a) convergence thesis of a great deal of the globalisation literature, in terms of shift towards neo-liberalism, and b) the homogenous rhetoric/ language that surrounds participatory spaces, in terms of associated concepts like, 'empowerment', 'social inclusion', 'social capital', 'citizenship', etc. This approach therefore fails to look crucially at the *'practice'* of participation and the distinctions imbued within these spaces.

Throughout the empirical research looking at these two participatory spaces, references to various elements of democratic theory embodied in practice were expressed by all four sub groups of interviewees in both case studies. These encompassed references (*both implicit and explicit*) to the predominantly different conceptions of participation defined by the two democratic models, direct or participatory democracy, liberal or representative democracy (Held, 1995:5). The findings of the empirical research undertaken for this thesis suggest that two different democratic models were invoked in the two case studies under scrutiny. This however, was not only confined to the institutional mechanisms of participation but, also crucially the meanings that actors within these spaces give to different concepts like, participation, representation, and so forth. Most participatory democratic theorists are keen to stress that their thinking is indeed meant to supplement and build on the liberal democratic model. It, therefore becomes important to present these 'models' as complementary, the former as an extension of the latter (see Mouffe, 1992, Bobbio, 1996). As Cornwall (2007:2) asks, in relation to the range of case studies of participatory spaces, "to what extent (does).. the expansion of the participatory sphere serve to further the project of democratization, via the inclusion of diverse interests and the extension of democratising practices in the state and public sphere..".

Rather than judging these spaces against the 'normative' yardstick of different elements of democratic theory, I have tried to show how actors in both case studies invoke and employ different elements of different democratic theories, to try to explain and indeed make sense of these spaces. Despite the fact that "different theories of citizenship are linked with particular models of participation, (...) the converse is also true: that different modes of participation implicitly create different models of citizenship" (Leach

et al, 2005:216).   It became very apparent within the analysis, that the dominant narratives emanating from the two case studies in terms of *how* the different elements of democratic models were referred to differed significantly and therefore embodied different conceptions of citizenship.   How the role of community representatives and notions of agency embedded within predominant conceptions of residents were constructed by key players was seen to have a crucial effect on the functioning of the participatory space and subsequent effects on change.

Crucially, elements that could be considered as related to a more participatory democratic model with an emphasis on the developmental elements in this sphere   were explicitly referred to in the PB cases study in Porto Alegre. The developmental elements of the participatory process, in terms of 'learning how the state works' were crucially linked to the decision-making arena, the process element *(the means)*, was crucially linked to the outcome *(the ends)*.   Community representatives were seen in this sphere as active agents, citizens whose input into the process had direct material consequences. In the PRNDC case study, the developmental elements of the programme, were described in terms of failure, or these elements were not *explicitly* discussed. In this case study ideas related to a liberal democratic conception of the place of participation were much more prevalent in terms of conceptions of representation, leadership and accountability.   In this case study ambiguity of different conceptions of participation and related concepts elevated the importance of how key players constructed community representatives.   Community representatives and residents in general were predominantly conceptualised in terms of 'deficit', as 'consumers' of services predominant in the more liberal notion of participation. Essentially the different notions of change embedded within each model and subsequent conceptions of agency can be seen to explain the potential of the political opportunity structure and its ability to stimulate change in favour of social justice.

PRNDC Confused Conceptions and Institutional Mechanisms of Participation : A Liberal Representative Democratic Model

In the U.K urban regeneration context various authors highlight the ambiguity of the place of community involvement in policy, and the subsequent gap between the 'rhetoric' of participation and implementation is perhaps one of the greatest themes in

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this body of literature. This was a major theme developed in the empirical analysis. This ambiguity could be seen to have various effects including a) discouraging residents from becoming involved in the programme b) marginalising the policy focus of community engagement as one of the many competing agendas within government. The lack of clarity about the role of participation at the national level could be seen essentially to devoid the notion of 'participation' of any sort of concrete meaning and therefore elevated the importance of recognising how participation was put into 'practice' at the local level. The analysis of the empirical research in this case study showed that at the level of 'practice' i.e. implementation, elements associated with the 'developmental' democratic model were absent. The role of participation was predominantly conceptualised within the liberal representative democratic framework.

The predominant conception of residents/ the public including community representatives certainly stemmed from a 'deficit' perspective and this was accompanied by a paternalistic discourse that seemed to mitigate against any notion of 'agency' attributed to residents. Community engagement was unsurprisingly located as an attempt to create a more 'efficient' and 'effective' regeneration programme, in terms of *influencing* service delivery, rather than in terms of decision-making based on concepts of 'active citizenship' instilled within the governance agenda. Representation, despite being interpreted differently by various actors within this sphere, was linked to ideas of 'leadership', thus negating an emphasis on wider accountability. This had the effect of delinking those community representatives involved in the participatory sphere from those residents not involved. The concepts of 'representative' and 'unrepresentative' were also interestingly invoked by key players to legitimise decisions taken, the former in terms of having the support of the 'community' or the latter, to dismiss community representatives as 'activists' and therefore not 'representative' of the population. Community representation was also conveniently linked to notions of a 'homogenous' community and seemed to negate a need for the recognition of diversity. This could be seen in terms of the problems that a feminist project had in being represented on the decision-making board in the context of a predominantly paternalistic, patriarchal environment. The institutional mechanisms of accountability to the wider community, for example, the community conferences, were seen as failures due to resident 'apathy' whilst accountability upwards to the Treasury was seen as a crucial element of the programme. The participatory sphere was invoked cynically as a legitimating strategy by those who saw that decisions had already been

taken at a higher level, and came to the decision-making arena, solely to enable a 'legitimising' seal of approval. Perhaps the biggest testament, however, in terms of locating this case study within a predominantly liberal democratic notion of democracy, as opposed to a developmental model, was the lack of community development institutional mechanisms, and that conceptions of participation were firmly set within this frame.

Citizenship: Public constructed in terms of Deficit Model

"For people to be able to exercise their political agency, they need to recognise themselves as citizens rather than see themselves as beneficiaries or clients." Cornwall, (2007:8)

In this case study both community representatives and key players seemed to frame community participation with a very limited notion of residents that could be defined in terms of 'deficit'. Residents in this case study were seen to lack a variety of different attributes from skills, to experience in other decision-making arenas, e.g. committees, resources, general experiences, to acceptable behaviour. Residents were seen in terms of a very limited notion of agency which was reflected in the paternalistic approach of the NDC. Residents were seen as 'consumers', 'clients' or 'beneficiaries' of services, not as 'citizens', as receivers of information, not providers, cast as 'apathetic' and not interested in 'shaping' service delivery as opposed to cynically aware of the limited influence that they could exercise. It seemed as though this general conception, however, was not merely confined to key players' conceptions of the place that residents could occupy in the programme, but was also reflected by residents' tacit acceptance of this projection. For example, residents seemed to see themselves, essentially as participating in the arena to obtain information about what was happening in the neighbourhood, i.e. what new services and projects were on offer. They did not see themselves, crucially as *providers* of information, i.e. to influence and tailor service provision to their articulated needs. They often articulated their involvement in terms of 'finding out what was going on' and rarely in terms of being able to 'shape' the programme. 'Experiential knowledge' was superficially recognised at the level of discourse within this arena by professionals, as an essential element of the regeneration programme, however the value actually ascribed to it was minimal in comparison to the technical knowledge that professionals brought to the arena. Residents cited examples whereby their knowledge of the neighbourhood should have been a crucial element in

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terms of project planning, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency yet it was often overridden by technical considerations. Also the simplistic distinction of experiential and technical knowledge, the former being attributed to residents and the latter to professionals proved problematic as some residents also possessed technical knowledge due to past work experience. Residents however, gave examples where this was also overlooked. The implications of this conception of the public in terms of decision-making in the governance arena are significant if we think about the organisational structure of the PRNDC, and the decision making power that the residents on the board wield. It is also highly significant if one also considers the extent to which the professionals on the board and working within the programme are likely to listen and take into consideration the suggestions and insights of residents within deliberative arena. Within this case study it seemed as though the notion of resident deficit was so ingrained in the framing and habitus' of both key players and residents that the potential of this innovative policy model was curtailed.

Spaces for Change?

Despite the predominant conception of community representatives and residents in terms of a deficit perspective, and the predominantly liberal conception of participation casting residents as 'consumers' of services, within this case study, narratives were present that showed how existing meanings and structures were indeed being challenged. Ironically, the ambiguity of the place that community engagement occupied within government policy could be seen as giving 'strategic room for manoeuvre' for community representatives within this sphere. The heavily touted discourse of 'resident-led' could be seen to have material implications as residents invoked this language to challenge the dominance of professionals in this sphere. The discursive space created could be seen as significant, on a variety of different levels, however it must be recognised how it was fundamentally enabled by the deliberation inherent within the participatory space.

PB: Redistribution and Citizenship. A Developmental Democratic Model

In the PB case study, a homogenous rationale of community engagement was presented by key players as relating centrally to ideas of redistribution and citizenship. This can be explained by a variety of factors including a) the political 'approach' of the PT (Souza 1999) and b) the emergence of the approach as a pragmatic response to the historical conditions/ context in which the PT found itself in. In this case study a very homogenous, clear conception of the rationale for participation was expressed by key players in terms of a) an *outcome* of redistribution of investment in services, pertaining to instrumental ideas of the rationale for participation and b) developmental democratic terms, i.e. providing a 'school of citizenship', - providing *the means* to enable excluded groups to gain some element of control/ influence over the state. This interpretation of community engagement could be seen to be linked to both clarity of process and a concrete institutional system of community engagement from decision-making through to implementation. The PB formed part of an explicitly local political project which had as its aim, the opening up of the state apparatus to traditionally excluded groups. This objective, key to its historical development, does perhaps go some way to explaining the tightly held conception of the rationale for participation, that is expressed by a variety of key players. The PB process (in contrast to the place participation occupies in U.K. urban policy) is highlighted in the literature as providing a 'systematic' process of participation from decision-making to implementation. As Utzig (1999) explains, "it seems to be a concrete process of participatory democracy, which effectively involves many citizens in public-discussion and decision-making". This process is often presented as a 'model' of participation in a variety of different arenas including the UN's 2003 annual report, which emphasises the PB as a 'model of public policy'. The developmental elements of the process were indeed very present in terms of institutional mechanisms.

Citizenship: Agency, Self-Government

The PB process was seen by key players as an important way to 'rescue citizenship' in a context of the marginalization of a great part of the population from decision-making arenas. The importance of individuals realising their 'citizenship' by participating in the process and 'demanding' investment in services was recognised to be vital, in a context traditionally characterised by the political and social exclusion of low-income groups.

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Residents and community representatives were not portrayed as 'beneficiaries' of services, 'clients' or as 'customers' but were represented as 'citizens', i.e. as possessing 'agency' as fundamentally taking an 'active' part in the decision-making process, as regards the budget. They were also given credit for having fundamentally created the participatory process. This fact seemed to not only give residents and the community movement kudos in the eyes of government officials working in this sphere, but it also meant that the process, i.e. the institutional mechanisms of the process to some degree had developed from the logic of the community movement. In this arena, residents, and community representatives were not framed by key players predominantly in terms of 'deficit', as it was recognised that it was not the community representatives that lacked the necessary attributes but somehow the 'system' (in terms of its historical, economic political and social legacy) that had failed them. When, however, ideas of some sort of 'deficit' were referred to, these were automatically linked to how the participatory process enabled those who traditionally had been marginalized from decision-making arenas, to gain the relevant experience necessary to function effectively within the participatory arena. This was explained in terms of learning 'how the state works' and opening up the arena of decision-making.

Power: The Reproduction of Existing Structures and Meanings Social Innovation to Social Institutionalisation

Despite the fact that the PB process could be seen to embody various elements of a participatory democratic model, and has been exhibited as a classic example of social innovation, many of the community representatives I spoke to emphasised how the process had changed, had become bureaucratized and lost its innovative potential. A major theme that was developed throughout the empirical analysis encompassed ideas to do with, not so much how existing meanings, structures and institutional ways of working were reproduced over time, but how previous ways of working had crept back into and had begun to define a once socially innovative governance structure. This major theme centred on the notion of how a socially innovative process/ programme/ governance structure can become institutionalised and looses its innovative potential. This is looked at specifically in relation to the tension between autonomous collective mobilisation, participation and co-option/ incorporation. Habermas (1984:1990) contends that developing an autonomous public sphere outside the domain of the state is

a precondition for citizen engagement that does not simply serve to legitimate the existing political system. Community representatives spoke of how after 16 years in power those representing local government had lost their original hunger for social innovation. The increasing bureaucratisation of the process had led to a rationalised system of participation with a very well-defined division of labour. This was seen to have had the effect of not only divorcing the community representatives in the COP from the wider constituency, through a process of formalisation and professionalisaton but the incorporation of successful civil society organisations and individuals into the state apparatus.

Community representatives that had previously been involved in the process were keen to present these developments as a weakening of an 'autonomous civil society' no longer able to challenge the local government. Community representatives gave the example of the creation of the FROP to demonstrate how the local government had critically weakened and undermined one element of 'autonomous organised civil society'.[89] My empirical research certainly highlighted the axis between current community representatives' conceptions of the process orientated around notions of 'conflict' whilst those previously involved stressed notions and ideas linked to 'solidarity'. This was perhaps the most obvious example cited by community representatives. Some key players, however, also noted the trends of increasing bureaucratization and seemed to be frustrated how the innovative governance structure had morphed into more traditional systems. Thus noting how initial reframing of dominant discourses and practices and radical institutional mechanisms for involving traditionally marginalised groups had ironically evolved into a bureaucratic process stymieing change. As Novy (2005:2030) highlights, it seemed as though "the people of Porto Alegre are indeed learning democracy and it has become part of their everyday lives. At the same time, the utopia of an alternative society was lost from sight. Political education and a holistic perspective on development have rarely made their way into discussions within the PB". Efforts to challenge the bureaucratic culture

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[89] The União de Vilas was an umbrella organisation of all the neighbourhood organisations in Cruzeiro do Sul. Representatives of each neighbourhood association in Cruzeiro do Sul would distribute the resources gained throughout the process. People spoke of the forum as one of 'strategic solidarity' for the region. It was however cited that the FROP was an organ created by the government, to serve the same purpose yet facilitated by the administration. With this development it was seen that solidarity was essentially weakened and the dynamic changed from one of solidarity to one of conflict. Despite the fact that both organs still meet and have a place within the process the União de Vilas has undoubtedly been undermined as it is necessary to attend the FROP whilst the former has become optional.

through the development of institutional mechanisms by the local government have ultimately proved unsuccessful. Some community representatives in this case study went as far as to describe the participatory process as a technique of government, in terms of enabling greater 'regulation' of the population by the governing body. This discourse was also accompanied by a recognition that some of the functions of the state as an administrator of services, had been transferred to the realm of 'civil society', thus essentially facilitating the neo-liberal agenda in terms of an attack on the state. Decision making in terms of the Third Perimetral was cited as an example where the COP were utilised as a legitimising strategy, to a decision already taken at a higher level.

Explaining The Political Opportunity Structure of Participatory Spaces : Beyond the Tyranny- Transformation Distinction

The representation of the two case studies above highlights the very contextual nature of these participatory spaces, and emphasises the distinct democratic models, and subsequent conceptions of agency that these participatory processes evoke. Despite this representation, the developed theoretical framework, reflected by the structure of this thesis, specifically the three empirical chapters (4, 5, and 6), and shown more explicitly in the table, 'Explaining The Political Opportunity Structure of Participatory Spaces', highlighted, how within such distinct case studies similar issues, processes and dynamics were occurring. A grounded theory approach to empirical research led to the development of a theoretical framework that could explain the different facets of participation in the case studies. That such diverse case studies could be explained within a broad theoretical framework is significant in itself and warrants further explanation.

The three major *explanatory* categories developed to answer the central research question in terms of whether the participatory process created a political opportunity structure, leading to change/ transformation in favour of social justice are a) the production of participatory processes, b) the democratic nature of participatory spaces and c) the practice and power relations of participatory spaces. I will elucidate the three main explanatory concepts in terms of formal theoretical development and show how this enabled an analysis that was able to reach beyond the tyranny/ transformation dichotomy. Despite a recognition of the importance of retaining the complexity

inherent in any representation of the social world (which is presented in the empirical chapters) and a reluctance to reduce this complexity to three main basic points, the proliferation of participatory spaces and their subsequent analysis highlights the need for guaranteeing the accessibility of findings. This section can therefore be seen with this aim primarily in mind. It should not be regarded as a summary but a mere snapshot of some issues that need to be considered when evaluating the innovative potential of participatory spaces. Evaluations of participatory spaces thereby ought to consider the following elements:

1. *The Construction/ Production of the Participatory Space*

The construction/ production of the participatory space certainly influenced its ability to create the institutional mechanisms necessary for change/ transformation in favour of social justice. How participatory spaces are conceived, perceived and interpreted by key players within the participatory spaces was seen to be crucially linked to the construction of these spaces, the institutional mechanisms and historical development of the participatory sphere. The construction of the public projected by key players within these spheres was also seen to enable or constrain the ability of participants within these spheres to influence the decision-making arena. These constructions do however have to be seen as non-totalising, and researchers need to investigate the extent to which participatory spaces enable community participants to crucially 'reframe' debates by 'opening space' to articulate their experiences and perspectives. Cornwall's (2002:3) distinction between *'invited spaces'* and those spaces that people *'make and shape'* for themselves, is a crucial consideration in order to 'explore...the dynamics of participation in practice'. The 'invited' versus 'taken' distinction can be used to explain the different processes as regards linking the historical development of these spaces with their subsequent innovative potential. Participatory spaces therefore need to be contextualised politically, historically, geographically, and temporarily whilst the rationale for participation needs to be explicitly taken into consideration (Goodlad et al, 2004).

2. *Participatory Processes and Developmental Democratic Theory*

Exploring the conceptions, perceptions and explanations of participatory spaces as regards evoking different democratic models helps to explain how these spaces can be

linked to opening up the political opportunity structure. Developmental elements are crucial within participatory spheres and this finding alludes to some of the fundamental tenets of participatory democratic theory, whereby the developmental dimensions are seen as crucially linked to the *outcomes* of these participatory processes. The interaction between the learning processes and the personal development of participants within these spheres is crucially linked to increased influence in the decision-making arena. This element corroborates "the theorists of participatory democracy [who] focus our attention on the interrelationship between individuals and the authority structures of institutions within which they interact" (Pateman, 1970:103). An analysis of how key players and community representatives in both case studies emphasise different elements of a variety of democratic models (implicitly and explicitly), explains some of the real concrete tensions that exist on the ground in these participatory spaces and subsequently effects the functioning of these spheres. This highlights the necessity of researching how actors within these spheres invoke implicitly and explicitly distinct democratic models as oppose to judging these spaces against unrealistic yardsticks.

3. Power Relations and the Practice of Participation: Beyond the Tyranny/ Transformation Dichotomy

Power relations and processes *beyond* those embodied in institutional mechanisms are however, seen to be the most potent element in terms of whether participatory spaces enable change/ transformation in favour of social justice. Power conceived as a 'disciplinary' phenomena exercised as a technique of government, perpetuating existing meanings and ways of working, was seen to be present, subtly regulating the population within these neighbourhoods. It could be seen as operating within the cultural sphere, deeply structuring and framing these spaces, essentially constraining the innovative potential. Deeply ingrained assumptions, held by both key players and community representatives, seem to prevent 'space' being levered open by community representatives. Despite the pervasiveness of this 'disciplinary' power, it must be seen as essentially 'non-totalising'. Strategies and acts of resistance form an important part of the dialectic of these spaces as participants are seen to resist and challenge, both explicitly and implicitly projected assumptions. Existing ways of working and meanings within these spaces can be challenged by participants thus influencing and fundamentally changing the operations of these spheres. These two interdependent elements of power were indeed present in both case studies thus emphasising how

generalisations in terms of the tyranny- transformation dichotomy fail to capture the complexity inherent within participatory spaces. The labelling of these spaces in terms of tyranny-transformation effectively caricatures these spaces as encompassing a linear model of development whether it be towards a 'transformatory' goal or in terms of increased social 'control' and 'regulation'. This characterisation fails to recognise that power can operate within the same space constraining yet also enabling change (Cornwall, 2002, Taylor, 2007). This re-conceptualisation of power means that the relationship between governing bodies and community representatives needs to be carefully examined in terms of the complexity and micro-politics of these spaces.

Policy Recommendations (Policy Makers) and Thoughts for Reflection (Community Representatives)

The above explanatory concepts are perhaps more relevant to academics researching the subtle social dynamics and processes within these spaces. There does, however, remain a need to develop some sort of policy recommendations that are readily applicable at the level of *practice* to these participatory spheres. Following Fitzpatrick et al (1998) and Taylor (2007) the following policy recommendations are divided into guidance for policymakers and practitioners, and thoughts for reflection relevant to community representatives. This is in recognition of the different actors and their subsequent interests driving their participation within these spheres. Despite a reluctance to reduce the analysis to 'what should be done' and therefore operate within the 'what works and why' paradigm (see, conceptual framework) I will instead highlight the various tensions that policy has to address with regard to participatory spaces.[90] Some of my research findings, could however be seen to reinforce a range of policy recommendations that are in fact already familiar in the literature. These will be discussed with regards to the existing policy literature and will be followed by a brief discussion of the more innovative recommendations. These will be related to a) the various tensions that policy needs to address, b) feasibility, in terms of implementation and c) how (and whether) these tensions might be addressed.

Existing policy recommendations confirmed by my research are for example,

- *Early involvement of Community Representatives*

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[90]This would in a sense mean that the thesis ends where I in fact started.

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- *Clarity and Defining Rationale for Community Participation*
- *Recognition of the 'Community' as heterogeneous*
- *Honesty and Transparency essential for legitimacy of the Process*

Early Involvement of Community Representatives

The involvement of community representatives as early on in the process as possible is by no means a new idea. In fact, the policy design elements of the NDC regeneration programme (see methodology chapter, choice of case studies, Foley and Martin, (2000: 483/4) was in fact based on this premise: "One of the most important features of the New Deal for Communities programme is its requirement for a carefully researched delivery plan, developed through extensive community participation...as a condition of further funding" (NRU: 2000). My research however showed the importance of involving the community at the initial *defintional* phase at a strategic, national level. This is important to enable community representatives to 'frame' issues and crucially be involved in the *production* of the participatory space at a conceptual level. This is relevant at the policy design phase at the national level and also needs to be maintained throughout implementation at the local level (see Edwards, 2002, as regards a full discussion of this issue in terms of disabled people). More recent work looking at public participation from the discipline of Science and Technology Studies (STS) has been keen to emphasise early involvement of the public in research and development phases of science and technology (Wilsden and Willis, 2004). This is named 'Upstream Engagement' and must be applied to social policy if the public is to have any real influence at the policy design level.

Clarity and Defining Rationale for Community Participation

Despite the recent advances in terms of specifying what community engagement consists of, how it is recognised, measured and designed in programmes (see ODPM, 2002:6) there is still a need for clarity in terms of the lexicon surrounding community participation and its rationale, i.e *what is it trying to achieve?* As Chanan states (2002:16) "clear policy objectives for community involvement would be a major step in deepening democratic practice and forging a new kind of understanding between state and citizen". Governing bodies need to explicitly state what participation *means*, how it is *defined* and crucially what it attempts to *achieve*. What is the rationale for

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community engagement? Community representatives should be involved in this *definition* process from policy making arenas (at National level) to *interpretation* and *implementation* at the local level. A clarity of the rationale for community participation could lead to greater flexibility in interpretation and implementation at the local level. There also needs to be greater synergy between the levels of community involvement from the very local neighbourhood level, to the City level to the Regional level, through to National level. This would create what Burton (2003) has identified as necessary, in terms of creating "a more differentiated conception of community engagement in neighbourhood regeneration....if more sophisticated notions of what works in this field are to be developed" (Goodlad et al 2004:41). This must also be accompanied by more research at the level of the participatory process as to how officials and key players see the purposes of community involvement (ibid:38) and what effect this *interpretation* has on *implementation*.

The 'Community' as a Heterogeneous Entity

Despite recognition in the academic and policy literature that the community must not be seen as a homogenous entity (see Guijt and Shah 1998, Edwards, 2001) this issue was a major theme in the NDC case study. Despite, policy guidance that states that 'diversity is an advantage' for example in the DETR (1999) 'New Deal for Communities, Race Equality Guidance', it is much more difficult in practice to ensure dominant voices do not become hegemonic. Fitzpatrick et al (1998:33) argue in relation to youth forums, which they see as "play[ing] a useful role if they are well organised and resourced, and integrated into wider structures" they are however "not the solution to securing effective youth participation". The mere presence of representatives of diverse groups does not impede the operation of power dynamics within these spheres. These power dynamics can prevent certain voices from being heard, value certain types of knowledge, cultural and material resources over and above others and essentially marginalise individuals within these spheres. Although the above race equality guidance represents an important step in terms of policy, more subtle differences in terms of culture, outlook, frames and discourses present within these spheres need to be recognised. Different cross-sections of society need to be not only represented in these spheres, (with places reserved for minority ethnic groups, young people, faith groups e.t.c.) but their input needs to be valued, respected and crucially

acted upon. This is essential if participatory spaces are to provide a forum where plural discourses can co-exist enabling outcomes to reflect negotiated goals.

Honesty and Transparency are Crucial Elements of the Process

Transparency and realism need to be transmitted about what is up for discussion in the participatory arena and what is not. There is a need to be explicit about what decisions lie outside the participatory arena – *(is the agenda set before taking it to the participatory arena? How can the participatory arena link in with decision-making bodies at a higher level?)*. This is crucial to create trust as the ODPM (2002) Urban Research Summary, 'Community Involvement: the Roots of Renaissance?' notes,

> "A more penetrating approach to community involvement would also have to acknowledge the dangers of tokenism and manipulation, for example where consultations are ignored in decision-making, or where decisions are alleged to have been 'stitched up' by the powerful players behind closed doors whilst communities or their representatives are in theory being involved"(ODPM, 2002:4).

At a broader level and in agreement with Oxfam's (2000) GB Policy Paper 6, a response to the 'National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal: A Framework for Consultation' consistency within government policy is crucial to build synergy between residents in deprived communities and local and national governance structures,

> "if the government is seen to be breaking the implicit contract it has with the population on welfare provision.., it is less likely to be trusted in other policy areas such as neighbourhood renewal. The emphasis on individual responsibilities/ duties in the government's approach which can translate into coercive policies in some areas, could undercut attempts to involve and empower local people, particularly in those neighbourhoods where it is more difficult to see the additional opportunities which the government sees as the other side of this new contract" (2000:4)

Innovative Recommendations for Policy Makers, Key Players and Practitioners

The following section will discuss the more innovative recommendations from analysis of the empirical research. These will be related to the various tensions that policy needs to address, how and whether these tensions might be addressed and feasibility as regards implementation. These will revolve around the following issues,

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- *Decision-Making linked to Implementation: Defined Institutional Mechanisms vs Flexibility and Innovation*
- *Wider Representation vs Accumulation of Knowledge*
- *Self-Regulation of Participatory Processes*

1. *Decision Making linked to Implementation: Defined Institutional Mechanisms vs Flexibility and Innovation*

Clear processes, procedures and institutional mechanisms need to link participation in decision-making arenas to implementation, however without stymieing innovation and change. As Fung and Wright (2001:31) are keen to point out, "the fact that collective decisions are made in a deliberative, egalitarian, and democratic manner is no guarantee that those decisions will be effectively translated into action". The PRNDC case study reflected Chanan's (2002:15) description of the status of community involvement in U.K. policy as "loudly trumpeted in narrative,...often absent from listed outputs, outcomes and budget categories". This could be seen as reflected at the local level as some residents felt that despite their involvement in decision making arenas, outcomes and outputs of the programme did not accurately reflect their involvement. The gap between participating in decision making forums and the implementation of these decisions may be explained by institutional and procedural ambiguity. The case study confirms that "... involvement [is] still something of a mantra, much invoked but still neglected or confused in practice" (ODPM, 2002). This is crucial on a variety of different levels and significantly linked to the legitimacy of the process as participants' willingness to remain involved is often dependent on tangible outcomes, for example being able to see the physical fruits of their participation. Many authors note how community activists may be motivated from the instrumental gains from their involvement (Anastacio et al 2000, and Goodlad et al 2004a). Osborne et al (2002) stress the importance of clarifying the nature of community involvement throughout a range of activities from direct involvement in project management to selective involvement in strategic planning. Clear institutional mechanisms and transparent processes linking decision making and implementation need to be developed, with explicit recognition of the precise powers that specific involvement mechanisms have (Khemis, 2000).

The PB case study has a clear institutional structure linking decision-making to action, "the deliberations of regional assemblies are passed on to a citywide body whose budget must then be approved by the mayor. These budgetary decisions must then filter back down the municipal apparatus before, say, a sewer gets built or a street gets paved" (Fung and Wright, 2001:31). Despite criticisms that the gap between decision making and implementation is too great (ibid) a general understanding of the process does mean that those who are involved in decision-making are able to follow decisions they have been involved through to implementation. It becomes far easier to identify at what stage of the process decision-making becomes delinked from implementation. But without clear processes, procedures and institutional mechanisms this is impossible. In the PB case study institutional mechanisms, processes and procedures had in fact begun to stymie change. After functioning for sixteen years bureaucratisation and institutionalisation of the process set in. This highlights the tension that exists between on the one hand clearly defined institutional mechanisms, processes and procedures to facilitate transparent implementation and the potential negative effect that this institutional straitjacket may have on innovation and flexibility. In this case study despite the clear linkages between decision-making and implementation, an immense participatory structure had in fact deterred some participants from becoming involved whilst some of those involved felt that their time was being wasted, as discussions were repeated in different forums. In this case study it had become necessary to streamline and perhaps simplify the participatory structure whilst retaining the key links (in terms of accountability and representation) from decision making to implementation.

2. *Wider Representation vs Accumulation of Knowledge*

In both case studies there was a tension between accumulation of knowledge of participants in these arenas and the need for wider broader representation in these spaces. Community representatives in both case studies highlighted how they needed time to learn how to function effectively within these spaces. Professionals, however in these spheres often spoke of the necessity for institutional mechanisms to prevent gatekeeping (for example in the PB case study the amount of time a councillor can be on the COP is limited to two terms). This was often perceived by community representatives as a strategy to ensure that the governing bodies retain the upper hand in these spheres. As Goodlad et al (2004:32) note, "while there is evidence of local professionals expressing disquiet at the longevity of some people's role as

representatives, there can also be a problem of turnover and the consequential loss of community memory and experience" (Fitzpatrick, 1998). One possible solution to this tension could be the establishment of forums where experienced community representatives can transmit knowledge and experience to those newer to these arenas. This, however, would have to take place *outside* the governance sphere and would have to occur before community representatives leave these spaces. This may be a possible way to ensure that the knowledge accumulated by participants in these spheres can be passed on to newcomers whilst also creating greater social links and networks between those previously and currently involved.

3. *Self-Regulating Process*

The participatory process should incorporate a *self-regulating element*, ensuring flexible space for the evolution of the process, via punctual evaluation by participants. This was one of the most successful elements of the PB process that could be developed in the U.K. context .[91] As Novy and Leubolt (2005:2027) state,

> "PB has always been treated as an on-going social experiment of linking elements of direct and indirect democracy. PB has never been understood as a completed finalised concept but, but as one that was to develop through conflicts, as a step-by-step institutionalisation of popular participation in local politics, combined with on-going participant-orientated evaluation and modification of the process."

This meant that as the process evolved it did in fact reflect the logic and knowledge of the participants in this sphere. In the NDC case study this could prove useful if one considers how community representatives become fed-up with the process and often leave feeling frustrated that their input has not been listened to. If community representatives, however, had the space to actually modify and influence the process itself perhaps this would a) help to retain community participants and b) encourage the process to adapt to and reflect their experiences within these spaces. As Goodlad et al (2004b:8) recognise, "the case for more participatory approaches to evaluation is rarely disputed in the field of evaluation and favoured even more strongly in relation to evaluating community involvement itself". This may be a way of encouraging issues identified by residents to get on the agenda in the first place. As Dobbs and Moore

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[91] The PB currently has its legal foundation in the Municipal Organic Law, article 116. This acts on the sphere of attributions of the Executive Power, which has the task of preparing the budget proposal. Its rules of functioning are defined by the participants who constitute the Bylaws reviewed yearly. This practice has proved to be an important instrument to revitalise the democratic process.

(2002:157) note .. "community involvement in evaluation, by employing, training and supporting local residents to carry out a range of baseline and impact surveys..(led to) the data (going) beyond the initial requirements of the partnerships, to provide an insight into issues identified as significant by the community". In this example community researchers were paid university rates and 50% found further employment after the scheme finished.

Thoughts for Reflection : Community Representatives .

The following thoughts and reflections are intended for those participating within participatory governance structures. It must be recognised that those participating in these spheres have different interests to be acknowledged. Lowndes et al (1998:37) recognise that one " key ... is to recognise the gap between the official perspectives on participation and the public's view. There is a gap and it will never be fully closed, reflecting as it does the inevitable distance, the 'us and them' dimension, to relations to government and the people...'". One of the areas that may be examined in the future is the meaning of policy recommendations for community representatives, recognising that community representatives are generally *affected* by policy. Their principal roles are not as policy *makers*. This section, encompasses thoughts for reflection for community representatives which coalesce around the following themes, the power of collective action and strategies of engagement and resistance.

1.   *The Power of Collective Action*

The power of collective mobilisation should not be underestimated in influencing and constructing long term strategies for change. This was extremely apparent in the PB case study in terms of its historical development. Citizenship was claimed 'from below' (Hickey and Mohen, 2004). This power and energy can be harnessed to negotiate some kind of contract for engagement. In the current climate, where partnership and community involvement are often written into funding arrangements at a variety of different levels this bargaining tool becomes extremely significant. As Gonzalez and Healey, (2005) point out using the social movement literature, "socially innovative governance initiatives promoted by non-traditional actors and centred around area-based

development projects are likely to have the greatest potential to expand and accumulate the power to transform established governance discourses and practices". (Mouleart et al, 2005:1985). Similarly, Taylor (2007:304) quotes Tarrow (1994:190) to highlight the lasting influence that collective action and social movements can have on innovative governance arrangements even when these movements themselves have become weakened "they leave behind them incremental expansions in participation, changes in popular culture and residual movement networks".

2.   *Strategies of Engagement and Resistance*

The strategies of engagement and disengagement, resistance and compromise can be effectively utilised in order to have a greater influence within these spheres. Coaffee and Healey (2003:1997) argue that community representatives have a difficult choice "it remains difficult to decide whether to get involved....or whether to maintain a critical distance and capacity for 'alternative resistance strategies'" (Taylor, 2007:310).   Fung and Wright (2003:263-4) point out, "where counterveiling power is weak or non-existent, the rules of collaboration are likely to favour entrenched, previously organised or concentrated interests...Collaboration, under these conditions, is much more likely to become top-down collaborative governance involving experts and powerful interests..". However, as Gaventa (2004:28) recognises, "in any given issue or conflict, there is no single strategy or entry point for participation.   Much depends on navigating the intersection of the relationship, which in turn create new boundaries of possibility for action and engagement."   The power of strategic engagement can be immense in the hands of those outside traditional governance arrangements.

7c: Reflections on the Research Process

How my conception of the research changed throughout the research process

My initial reasons for choosing the PB process in Porto Alegre as forums for study were congruent with ideas about the importance of institutional development, originating from a perspective of policy learning, underpinned by a 'universalist' approach.   The idea of 'policy learning' was not merely a recognition of the 'successful' nature of institutional design, but also however an attempt to challenge received wisdom, i.e. the

relationship between popular mobilisation and elite democratic theory. During the empirical research the importance of the 'realpolitik'- power relations operating in the sphere – became more apparent and meant that the emphasis of research changed. These developments began to dominate the research agenda and the analysis of the research. The research started from a post- positivist research paradigm i.e. 'What can we learn from the Porto Alegre model'/ with an emphasis on understanding institutional design and development, (which is often the focus of academics in this field). However, as the research developed – the importance of context (i.e. the historical development of process, temporal, geographical issues) took precedence. The 'real' practices operating within participatory spaces became more important than how participatory spaces were 'supposed' to work. Consequently, an analysis of power relations at the cultural level within these spaces became predominant. How different concepts were conceived, perceived, and interpreted and their influence in constructing the participatory spheres perhaps became the greatest focus.

Participation, Universalism and Particularism: Methodology, Epistemology and Substantive Issues

It is important to examine participation in terms of wider debates in the social sciences and social/ political theory. This can explain the gap between theory and practice, which is perhaps the most dominant issue in the analysis of participatory spaces. Framing the debate *explicitly* in these terms goes some way towards explaining the gap between policy guidance documents - often imbued with the normative approach of how these participatory spaces *should* operate - and the often distant *'realities'* of what is happening on the ground. Although one can not conflate universalism, enlightenment thinking, an emphasis on the 'ideal' with Habermas and attention to particularism/ contextualism, an emphasis on difference and the operation of power relations with Foucault, these two contemporary thinkers may be used to highlight divergent perspectives. It is only by explicitly considering and recognising the effect of these two divergent perspectives (that characterise the majority of research/ policy guidance looking at participatory spaces) that one can begin to transcend the impasse that seems to characterise much contemporary research looking at participatory spaces.

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The research project may be characterised as attempting to weave together different elements of contextualism and particulurism with more universal ideas and theories. These tensions certainly characterised the research project in numerous different ways and could essentially be seen to structure the subsequent thesis on numerous different levels. The influence of a more post-modern approach influenced by Foucauldian ideas is present thoughout the thesis as are elements characterised by ideas inherent in a more 'modernist' rational, universalist approach. This could be seen in terms of methodology, epistemology and the development of substantive issues.

Methodologically, universalism, imbued within the rationalist enlightenment project certainly influenced the research project in providing the social and democratic theory that provided the foundation for the project. The iterative theoretical development of a grounded research approach meant that the categories developed as part of the empirical research process in fact referred to democratic theory. Therefore various 'universal' substantive categories could be developed (see empirical chapter two, 'representation', 'accountability' and 'legitimacy'). Without a universal framework a comparative study of this nature would have been problematic. Different scholars have developed ways of conceptualising participation within a comparative framework of empirical analysis. For example see Cornwall, (2002)'s notion of 'participatory spaces', Fung and Wright's (2002) model of EDD, Avritzer's (2002)'s Participatory Publics and the notion of 'social innovation'. These ways of conceptualising participatory spaces enable a thorough analysis of different empirical contexts and facilitate conceptual abstraction and the development of theory.[92] The central research question at the heart of the thesis could certainly be seen to be stemming from this premise in articulating key concepts, i.e. 'participatory spaces', 'political opportunity structures', 'change/ transformation' 'social justice'.

Epistemologically and ontologically, this approach may be interpreted as stemming from a (post) positivist approach. It may therefore, be seen as influencing the critical realist element of the research with its focal points of a) the historical development of the participatory processes and b) the institutional analysis of the mechanisms of participation. In terms of the literature and substantive issues related to participation one must recognise that a great deal of the literature providing policy recommendations

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[92] The development of theory within the social sciences is the principle means of enabling generalisation and could be seen to be the motor of the social sciences.

in terms of participatory spaces, is based on notions of 'ideal' models emanating from a universalist rationale. Some commentators looking at participatory spaces from this perspective tend to assess participatory spaces either from an 'ideal', normative yardstick, or fail to deal with the 'realities' of how these spaces actually function on the ground i.e. their power dynamics and the 'practice' of participation.

Post-modern thinking - in terms of emphasis on the local, contextual nature of phenomenon - fundamentally influenced the research project. The scale of the comparative study - in terms of the 'neighbourhood' - was chosen to highlight the very embedded contextual nature of the participatory process. A qualitative research approach was used to emphasise the complexities of the various processes at work and proved exceedingly important in terms of attempting to represent the different view points, visions and 'realities' of those interviewed. Epistemologically and ontologically, it also resulted in an approach that was able to take into consideration different 'realities' and their constructions This approach helped an analysis focus on how different people interpret and give meanings to a variety of different concepts. In terms of the substantive issues that various commentators from different disciplines mention, a research focus based on a more specific 'contextualised' premise is better able to explain micro-politics and power relations on the ground. This may be contrasted with the 'ideal model' approach that these participatory spaces are supposed to replicate. Some commentators, however, from this second school of thought tend to not recognise the common themes, components and processes, that are operating in different participatory spaces and different contexts. Although the minutiae of power relations in very specific, contextualised processes are analysed this approach often fails to see the broader processes that are at work.[93]

In this thesis the research approach encompassing all these different elements was able to highlight how the debate about participation and participatory spaces is located in the fundamental gap between the 'ideal', the 'model' of participation and what actually happens on the ground, i.e. the 'practice' of participation. This key theme (and a wide range of others on various different levels) is a common topic in the analysis of various localised, contextualised participatory spaces is significant across different disciplines

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[93] An exception is Cooke and Kothari in (2001) 'Participation: The New Tyranny?'

and literatures. . As Wynne (2005: 73) explains, "globally diverse case studies help to show the importance of 'context' as *substantive* to the meanings of such issues for their actors..". The empirical research also confirmed that similar themes, issues and problems (developed by categories) linked to participatory spaces were occurring in diverse contexts that the findings of the empirical cross-national case-study research at the neighbourhood level could be analysed thematically. This element highlights the pervasiveness of the issues surrounding 'participatory processes' traversing such different contexts.[94]

Further Avenues for Research

To what extent however, is the developed framework applicable to other participatory spaces? This framework although having been developed from the specific contexts of two case studies would undoubtedly be enriched and enhanced by further case-study research. This would complement the comparative perspective in terms of highlighting the similar and different themes and issues stemming from diverse contexts. Unlike the majority of frameworks developed to assess participatory spaces, this framework stresses the historical development of the process as an intrinsic element in its subsequent success. Perhaps most importantly it attempts to capture the material elements of the participatory processes (in terms of institutional facets, historical developments and procedural elements of the processes) and the more cultural framing elements (i.e. the conceptions, perceptions and interpretations) bounded within the case studies of these participatory processes. That these two elements are inextricably linked is beyond doubt. However, explicit recognition of each element and how these two elements are linked became a focus of the research project. This might provide a focus for future research projects looking at participatory processes in various different locations. This approach also highlights how an ethnographic approach to the study of participatory spaces may be able to capture the complexities inherent within these spaces.

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[94] See Cooke and Kothari (2001) 'Participation: The New Tyranny?' for this approach. To what extent is this a reflection of the global shift (in terms of convergence) to neo-liberalism.

A study of the micro-politics of participatory spaces, however, needs to be connected to the study of wider processes occurring at the 'meso' and at macro-levels. In-depth empirical studies of concrete participatory spaces are essential, if broad generalisations about participatory processes are to be avoided, (my empirical research showed how different 'democratic' models were indeed invoked in the two case studies). However, a focus on the intricacies within these spaces, can overlook key factors in terms of broader economic, social, historical and political processes, that circumscribe and enable the transformatory nature of these participatory spaces. It, therefore, becomes necessary to pursue a research agenda linking the study of the dynamics within these spaces to the wider political and economic context. Combining the approaches of Cornwall (2002) 'participatory spaces', and Avritzer (2002) 'participatory publics' and Fung and Wright (2001) 'EDD', to a political economy approach of authors, like Jessop (2002) would be fruitful. A research agenda linking these approaches would therefore encourage a thorough analysis of participatory spaces locating them within a broader political economy. This approach is vital if participatory processes are to be assessed in relation to their ability to 'open' up space to challenge existing meanings and ways of working.

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Glossary

Assembléias Plenárias Regionais (Regional Plenary Assemblies)
> In order to allow the broad participation of the population the city was divided into 16 regions based on geographic, social and community organisation criteria. The regional plenaries are arenas where participants discuss and define the priorities of their region.

Assembléias Plenárias Themáticas (Thematic Plenary Assemblies)
> The Thematic Plenaries were established in order to encourage the participation of citizens and organisations linked to other movements for example health, education and culture and to coordinate the general needs of the city. There are six participatory structures based on specific themes: City Organisation and Urban and Environmental Development; Circulation and Transportation; Health and Welfare; Education; Sports and Leisure; Culture; and Economic Development and Taxation.

Associaçãos dos Moradores (Residents Associations)
> A community organisation based at the neighbourhood level with autonomy vis-à-vis the local authority. The community organisations have a role in organising and mediating between citizen participation and choice of priorities for city regions.

CARs: *Centros Administartivos Regionais* (Regional Administrative Centres)
> The PB has had a strong influence on the political and administrative decentralisation of the City administration. In order to be closer to the population, the Regional Administrative Centres were created by the local government. Currently there are eight of them, serving the 16 PB regions.

Conselhos Populares (Popular Councils)
> A network of community organisations (residents associations) with autonomy vis-à-vis the local authority. The community organisations have a role in organising and mediating between citizen participation and choice of priorities for city regions. An example of a popular council is the *União das Vilas da Grande Cruzeiro*.

COP: *Conselho do Orçamento Participativo* (Participatory Budgeting Council)
> This body is the highest decision-making body as regards the budget proposal in the city. The PB Council is made up of councillors as follows: two members and two deputies from each of the sixteen regions; two members and two deputies from each of the six thematic forums; one member and one deputy from the Porto Alegre municipal workers union; one member and one deputy from the union of Porto Alegre Resident's association (UAMPA); two representatives from the municipal government, but without the right to vote.

FROP: Fórum Regional do Orçamento (Budgeting Regional Forum)

> The forum of delegates are elected by each of the 16 regions. The role of the delegates (district and sectoral) is to function as intermediaries between the COP and the citizens, this can be on an individual basis or as participants in community/ regional or thematic organisations. Their role also includes supervising the implementation of the budget.

GAPLAN: Gabinete de Planejamento (Planning Office)

> The Planning Office is the local government agency in charge of the preparing the budget proposal, the Law of Budgetary Guidelines, (LDO-Lei de Diretrizes Orçamentárias), the Pluriannual Plan and the Plan of Investments and Services, based on demands of the communities and proposals presented by the Secretariats. This is the agency in charge of setting up and implementation of the municipal budget.

GRC: The Gabinete de Relações com a Comunidade, (Community Relations Office, formerly CRC)

> The GRC is the local government agency in charge of establishing the political coordination of community relations. The most important role of the GRC is working with the PB councillors and delegates elected by the regional and thematic plenaries. A large part of its role is co-ordinating the assemblies and the meetings of the COP. The GRC is important directly and through its regional and thematic co-ordinators.

União das Vilas da Grande Cruzeiro (Network of Residents Associations)

> An autonomous network of residents associations in the Cruzeiro region formed in 1979 to demand access to health, paving, education among other basic necessities. The community organisations have a role in organising and mediating between citizen participation and choice of priorities for city regions.