

PORTO ALEGRE AND THE PARTICIPATORY BUDGET: CIVIC EDUCATION, POLITICS AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR REPLICATION

*Rebecca Abers*¹

INTRODUCTION

Brazilian cities are characterized by extreme inequality in the distribution of urban infrastructure and services. Middle-class neighbourhoods are typically well served with paved streets, running water, sewers, storm drains, schools, health care and public transportation. Poor neighbourhoods—where the vast majority of the population lives—largely go without such basic resources. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, as social movements of all kinds were flourishing throughout Brazil, protests demanding basic urban infrastructure and services in poor neighbourhoods became increasingly common in the cities.

Porto Alegre is a city of 1.3 million people in the south of the country. It was there that these protests led to the proposal that the government not only attend

¹ Paper prepared for the Carold Institute project “Building Local and Global Democracy” (2004-2006), www.carold.ca.

to the demands of the most organized neighbourhoods, but that it give civic groups more generalized control of the allocation of capital expenditures throughout the city. In 1989, a political party came to office that would be the first to take that demand seriously.

Created in 1980, the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT or Workers' Party) was a democratic socialist party comprised of a diverse coalition of social movements and radical union groups. All of the 36 PT mayoral candidates elected in 1989 proposed platforms of social justice and popular control of public decision-making. But few were able to live up to those ideals while maintaining the support necessary to guarantee party re-election four years later. The Porto Alegre administration was an exception and the Participatory Budget policy (PB) was at the heart of that success. This policy involved thousands of local residents, especially the poor, in defining the city's capital budget. The Porto Alegre PT gained so much popular support that it was re-elected not once, but four times. It stayed in office from 1989 until December 2004. Such political success often requires making concessions on more radical proposals, especially those that devolve political power to the poor. In Porto Alegre, however, the opposite was true, at least in the early years of the administration. The PT's popularity was strongly connected to the legitimacy of the PB and this helped ensure that as time went by, participants gained more and more control over budget decision-making.

Between ten and fifteen thousand people participate in the Budget assemblies each year. Studies have shown that these participants are poorer than the general population and that the vast majority of them believe that the government respects their decisions (Abers, 2000; Fedozzi, Pozzobon and Abers, 1995). Other research has demonstrated a change in public resource allocation patterns: poorer regions of the city have been privileged, a reflection of the fact that these regions participate more intensely than the middle class areas of the city (Marquetti, 2002). My own research found that participants had real control over government decisions: almost all decisions approved through the PB were eventually implemented, although sometimes with a delay (Abers, 2000).

By implementing a policy that created forums of public debate on how municipal infrastructure and services were allocated, the PT administration not only keyed into the most central needs of poor urban residents, but also challenged long-standing political traditions. Like most Brazilian cities, Porto Alegre had historically been dominated by traditional and populist elites who were accustomed to benefiting personally from the way that municipal revenues were used. Creating a public discussion about city expenditures to which all were invited and from which all had an equal right to benefit dramatically challenged this system.

Under what conditions can elected local governments promote radically democratizing changes? Direct participation in decision-making is often proposed as a

key element to radicalize democracy. Nevertheless, many have noted that if underlying social inequalities are not addressed, simply creating “open” forums does not guarantee the empowerment of traditionally excluded groups. Social groups that are better off will still prevail because they have more resources to take advantage of a participatory system. For many, protecting the needs of the poor thus requires limiting the power of participatory forums. Certainly, a truly radical democratic perspective must combine substantive and procedural democratization. But in Porto Alegre this occurred without one type of democracy limiting the other: the participatory system itself was both a mechanism of empowerment of the poor and of redistribution of public services in their favour.

This paper will discuss how the Participatory Budget policy promoted radical democracy in Porto Alegre and consider the extent to which that experience can be replicated. It is based on field research conducted in Porto Alegre between 1994 and 1997 as part of a doctoral dissertation (later published as Abers, 2000) and on secondary sources published by other authors since then. Fieldwork in Porto Alegre involved lengthy, structured interviews with 56 current and former government officials and 42 PB participants and community activists. I also attended over a hundred PB assemblies at various levels and moments of the process and, in collaboration with the local government and two local non-governmental organizations, applied a sample survey to 622 budget participants.

In the next section, I briefly describe how the PB works. I will then demonstrate how that system transformed civic associations and built a consciousness of democratic practice among participants. The paper then goes on to discuss the problems and possibilities for replicating this experience elsewhere.

THE WORKINGS OF THE PARTICIPATORY BUDGET IN PORTO ALEGRE

The PB evolved slowly over the first years that the PT was in office. The first step was to decide who should participate. In opposition to the wishes of many neighbourhood leaders, the government decided that participation should be open to all citizens and that individual residents rather than associations would be the participants. The second step was to divide the city into 16 “budget regions.” Defined through the participation of community groups, efforts were made to ensure that region boundaries followed the territoriality of existing neighbourhood organizations, which in some parts of the city had formed regional councils. They were also planned to respect socio-economic differences and the city’s road network. Numerous adjustments were made over time.

For the first four years of the budget experience, the participatory process focused on community projects within these regions, through a two-way process. From the bottom up, open neighbourhood assemblies would start by defining priorities

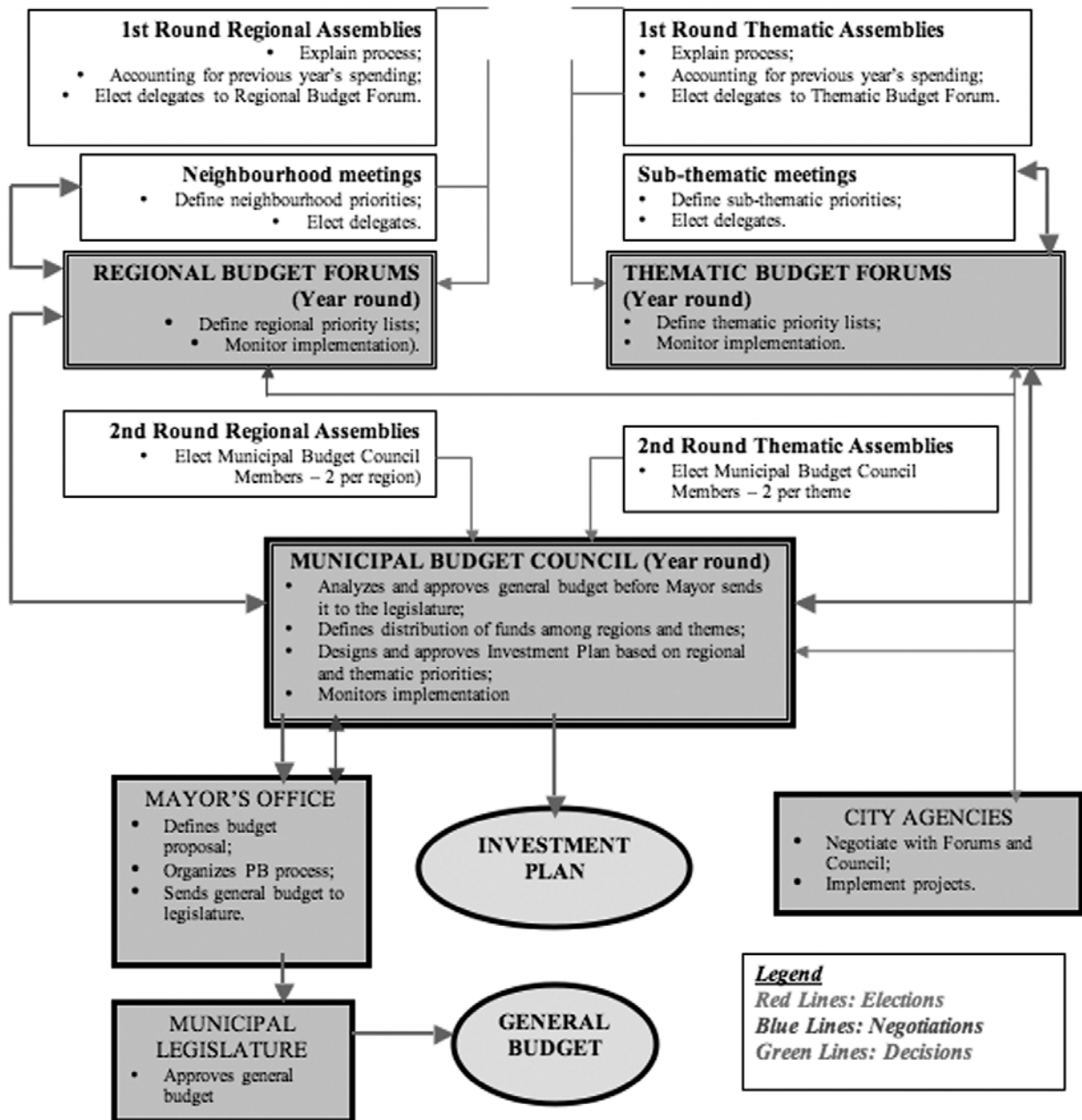
for investment in a series of budget categories (sanitation, pavements, schools, etc.). These priorities were then discussed and prioritized by Regional Budget Forums, whose members were elected at neighbourhood and region-wide assemblies (one for every 10 or 20 people present—rules varied from year to year). Open regional assemblies also elected members of the Municipal Budget Council (two for each region). From the top down, the Municipal Budget Council defined the general rules of the process, approved the general budget, decided how to distribute capital investment funds among regions, approved a detailed investment plan, and monitored implementation. Thus, it was the Council's responsibility to decide how to divide the capital budget into investment categories (e.g., whether Sanitation or Pavement should receive more funding this year) and among regions (how much each region should receive in each category). Once those decisions were made, the order of priority defined by the regional forums would be strictly followed to determine which projects would be included in the following year's Investment Plan. This occurred (and still occurs) through a year-round cycle beginning in February of each year.

In response to criticisms that emerged after the party's first re-election, i.e., that the PB only dealt with small investments, a series of Thematic Forums were created to discuss citywide expenditures in areas such as urban planning, transportation and economic development. The process of defining these expenditures followed about the same structure and timing as the Regional process. With variations from year to year, the PB works more or less as pictured in Figure 1.

As time went by, the Forums and Council gained more and more power. By 1997, for example, the Municipal Budget Council not only defined the Investment Plan but also analyzed and approved the city's personnel and maintenance budgets. Although they did not have the time and capacity to analyze every detail of the vast budget document each year, its members could challenge any point in the government proposal and were consistently respected by the administration when they did so.

Two aspects of the process should be highlighted in order to understand its potential for democratizing decision-making. Firstly, at least during the period that I studied, the process was extremely open: any adult individual could participate in the first and second round assemblies and elect the members of or be elected to the Thematic and Regional Forums or the Municipal Budget Council. Secondly, once members were elected, the Forums and the Council met regularly all year round, providing a space in which members made decisions after extensive discussion. Thus, the process was accessible to the entire population, and at the same time, encouraged high quality, in-depth debate.

Figure 1: The Participatory Budget Process in Porto Alegre



PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING AS A SPACE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

The climate within the participatory spaces of the PB is highly competitive. Each group goes to the meetings with the hope of resolving some urgent problem in its neighbourhood. Meetings are therefore tense. Sometimes associations mobilize hundreds of residents to fill up meetings in an effort to elect more delegates so that they will have a better chance of pushing their priorities through. Neighbourhood groups seek to form alliances to build winning coalitions. In regions

where well-organized civic movements did not exist previously, meetings sometimes disrupted into arguments and name-calling as frustrated participants complained that less organized and needier areas were being pushed aside by more organized groups. This led many observers to complain that the PB nurtured individualism and competition rather than solidarity.

My analysis of the process is somewhat different. In my view, the competitive character of the meetings resulted from the fact that participants believed the issues at hand to be of great importance. It was precisely because the PB keyed into local residents' immediate self-interest that so many people were willing to spend their time going to long meetings and arguing their case. By targeting issues around which people would compete, the policy also created an opportunity for participation to become something more than a space of competing interests. There are two ways that this occurred: through a process of strengthening civic organizations and through a process of social learning.

STRENGTHENING CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

There is substantial evidence that since the PB was initiated, civic associations have expanded dramatically in Porto Alegre. Between 1990 and 1998, the number of neighbourhood associations in the city grew from 380 to 540 and the number of regional (multi-neighbourhood) councils grew from 5 to 11 (Baiocci, 2003:58). In the decade before the PT came to office, only a few areas of the city were characterized by combative civic organizing. Most associations were closed to broad participation, maintained a patronage-based relationship with public authorities and operated mostly as vote-getting organizations for specific politicians. The combative associations had the capacity to mobilize residents and were thus the first to see the fruit of participating in the PB as investments started to be made in their neighbourhoods. However, this picture changed only a few years later. Regions of the city that had been dominated by non-combative associations began to mobilize and by 1994, the majority of participants in this process were from those regions (Abers, 2000).

A 1995 survey of participants in Regional Assemblies confirms that the PB was directly related to increased participation in civic associations. Of those interviewed, 76% were members of some kind of civic association. Nearly 60% of these declared that their participation had increased in the context of the budget policy (Fedozzi, Pozzobon and Abers, 1995).

My qualitative research in Porto Alegre demonstrated how new associations were created and existing associations were transformed. In some neighbourhoods, local residents created new associations, either because existing associations were closed to more participatory approaches or because they did not exist at all. In others, associations that had been closed to community participation began to

change their ways, holding more open meetings and encouraging new people to take on leadership roles. All this occurred in response to the incentive created by the PB. Neighbourhoods that could get more people to go to meetings would have more delegates and thus better chances of getting their projects in the Investment Plan. This meant that successful neighbourhoods were those that could not only mobilize large numbers at the annual assemblies, but that could also guarantee the constant collaboration of their delegates in the regular meetings of the Regional Budget Forums. The connection between mobilization and concrete results thus created pressure for associations to change their ways and get more residents involved.

This process did not always happen by itself. The work of community organizers hired by the government proved crucial both for activating existing neighbourhood organizations and for creating new ones. Such organizers worked in each area of the city. They traveled the regions, met with existing organizations, identified potential leaders in neighbourhoods that lacked such associations, called meetings, encouraged groups to form new associations and encouraged existing leadership to promote more open participatory arrangements.

SOCIAL LEARNING

Through participation, people change how they understand their role in decision-making and how they perceive their own interests. In Porto Alegre, this occurred in several ways. First, participants had to pit their own demands against those of others and engage in debates about them. This confrontation led participants to recognize the importance of other neighbourhoods' demands, especially those that in debates were revealed to be much more serious than theirs. The social space of participation, in which delegates met repeatedly over a period of several months, and for many, extended over several years, was also a space in which egalitarian norms, strong in Brazilian culture, were nurtured. It is important to note, however, that this increasing solidarity did not replace self-interested perspectives. Instead, the tendency was for delegates to make compromises that addressed the demands of the neighbourhoods that had mobilized the greatest numbers while still including the more serious demands of some of the less mobilized neighbourhoods.

Second, by discussing their interests with each other, delegates would begin to realize that their interests went beyond their own neighbourhoods. In one region I studied, I observed that after two years in operation, the Forum began to focus on proposals for a regional development plan. Investments related to this plan began to be prioritized above the more localized proposals presented by the neighbourhoods. Delegates supported the plan because they now viewed the regional issue to be in their interest. A result of this changed sense of interest was

that some participants went on to engage in other, broader issues, participating, for example, in the Thematic Forums or in other civic councils in Porto Alegre that dealt with more general policy issues such as housing, culture, and human rights.

Third, the PB involved not only the case-by-case confrontation of demands, but, as it became more sophisticated, the discussion of the general rules of distributing municipal spending. The idea that distribution should follow objective criteria—rather than be determined solely by the capacity of each region to mobilize—was addressed early on in the Municipal Budget Council. Starting in 1989, at the end of each budget cycle, the Council defined the rules governing the allocation of funds among regions in the following year. A few years later, Budget Forums began to conduct similar discussions in several regions. In one region I studied, this involved extremely complex public debates. Before voting on their priorities, each neighbourhood assembly voted for criteria that would be used more generally. How much weight should be given to numeric participation, to the neighbourhood's population, to its infrastructure deficit, to the priority it gave to a particular category? Delegates organizing the discussion had to learn how to explain the issue to less regular participants and to organize very complex voting processes. The result was incredibly rich; not only were participants now comparing and debating priorities, but they were also considering in a very practical sense the more general rules of distributional justice.

Simply creating a space for participation was not enough for all this to occur. It is important to mention three critical factors that transformed PB Forums into both spaces for expanding civic organizing and for social learning. First, participants were drawn into the process because they saw it as a means to reach their ultimate goals. This may seem obvious, but so many participatory spaces today fail to address needs that ordinary people see as relevant, focusing instead on complex or abstract technical issues. Second, the PB had credibility because the government respected the decisions made by delegates. This credibility was important because it made participation something worth investing hours of time and much emotional energy. Third, participants received support. Community organizers hired by the government were crucial because they helped local groups with the operational aspects of mobilizing. They also helped them coordinate debates and encouraged more collaborative and cooperative values in the discussion process.

THE POLITICS OF REPLICATION

The reason that the PB was so successful in Porto Alegre was not so much that it was a “good model.” The capacity of the PB to promote both democratization

and civic organizing grew directly out of the fact that the design of that model fit into an alternative political strategy. Thus, thinking about how to replicate the Porto Alegre experience requires focusing less on how to “copy the model” than on the art of politics.

Since the mid-1990s, the PB has become an obligatory policy for all PT governments in Brazil. Furthermore, it has been adopted in many municipal and state administrations governed by other parties (Ribeiro and Grazia, 2003:38). The general model of the policy is usually the same, with the division of cities or states into “budget regions,” the election of delegates in open regional forums, and a process of prioritizing capital investments by these delegates in each region. Few cities have created a city-wide budget council, as in Porto Alegre. Some have thematic forums alongside regional ones, while others created PBs only for some “themes,” such as education, forgoing the regional component.

Unfortunately, there are signs that most of these experiences have not involved real devolution of decision-making authority to participants. Of the 103 PB experiences studied by Ribeiro and Grazia, in only 12 could they confirm that participants decided more than 15% of the budget (Ibid, 86).² When only a small amount of the budget is subject to participation, the entire process can lose legitimacy, as Wampler shows in his study of the city of Recife, where participants decided on only 10% of the capital budget. Wampler claims: “As a result, the participants searched for other channels through which they could influence the government and implement their demands” (Wampler, 2002:69).

The problem is not always a lack of political commitment. Being pressured to copy other city’s policies can be itself a source of opposition. For example, in Viamão, a city in the Porto Alegre Metropolitan Region, the PT government was characterized by divisions between local activists and people from Porto Alegre who had re-located there to help out with the government and, especially, to design the Participatory Budget. The “identification of the PB as an initiative of a group/sector of the government and not of the administration as a whole” made it difficult to mobilize full governmental support around the policy (Silva, 2002:178). This somewhat extreme case demonstrates that by simply reproducing the model, one can end up bypassing a necessary local policy definition process through which key actors gain a sense of ownership. Without ownership, it is very unlikely that they will commit to the policy.

Replicating the success of the PB in Porto Alegre should not be understood as an issue of technical design. The most important lesson to learn from this experience is that it is possible to design successful political strategies around policies

² The authors note that finding out how much of the budget was subject to participation was extremely difficult. They could not obtain information on the percent of the budget discussed in 38 of the 103 cases.

that devolve important aspects of decision-making to the poor. This occurred in Porto Alegre not because the PB had the right number of assemblies, the most appropriate distributional criteria, or the best geographic division of budget regions. It occurred because the administration figured out how to make a participatory policy the centerpiece of an alternative political coalition. Rather than compete at the traditional patronage politics game that other political groups in the city were expert at playing, the Porto Alegre PT built support from a different set of actors around a different set of ideas.

Part of this involved taking advantage of opportunities. In the early 1990s, fiscal decentralization included in the 1988 Federal Constitution generated higher city revenues, but only Porto Alegre took advantage of this “growing pie” to make decision-making more participatory. The policy also came at a good time in political terms: the early 1990s was a period of national outrage against corruption, leading to the impeachment of the nation’s president. This outrage helped build middle class support for a policy that promoted the transparent use of public funds.

The administration ensured that key groups were not alienated: middle class neighbourhoods continued to receive government attention; public employees received decent salaries. Other groups benefited from the policy, especially civil construction companies that received contracts to build the public works defined through the PB. Finally, the international attention that Porto Alegre received during the period—ranging from visits by innumerable left-leaning intellectuals to receiving a United Nations award for best practices—helped build a local image of the government as exceptionally innovative. This image, which culminated in the choice of Porto Alegre as the site of the World Social Forum, gave a tremendous boost of legitimacy to a policy based on participatory and social justice ideals.

The political support that the PB acquired over time was important for the policy’s success not only because it helped the PT win elections, but because it gave strength to the participatory process itself. The more popular the PB became, the easier it was for supporters to convince the various actors involved that participants’ decisions should be respected. At the same time, this popularity also gave those participants bargaining power, because any publication by the antagonistic press that the government had failed to respect participants’ decisions became “big news.”

To reiterate, the possibilities for successful replication of Porto Alegre’s success have less to do with the reproduction of the policy’s design than with the need to build alternative sources of political support for radical democracy. Although it may not always be possible for local actors to build such alternative coalitions, the fact that this occurred in Porto Alegre at least reminds us that it is possible.

CONCLUSION

Participation is not a technical matter; it involves taking power away from those who have it and giving it those who do not. When groups representing the socially excluded do come to power, the struggle is not over. Those who lose elections can maintain influence over public opinion through control of the media. They are often in control of the businesses that provide services to the government and of higher levels of government that channel (or do not channel) resources into the city. They thus have the means to disrupt the daily lives of those whose votes are required to re-elect the government.³

At the same time, although some neighbourhoods may have strong participatory associations, residents of poor neighbourhoods are not always experienced in civic organizing and, especially in poor countries such as Brazil, have an enormous “repressed demand.” In numerous cities where Participatory Budgeting was attempted in the early 1990s, government officials confronted massive protests once it became clear that the promise of participatory decision-making could not be translated into a rapid solution to the innumerable demands that participants presented. In most of these cases, the government response was to halt the participatory process (Abers, 1996).

The Porto Alegre PT overcame these problems by combining a good general administration of the city with the slow expansion of participatory policy (and promises), and gained credibility by respecting participants’ decisions. The moment was a good one for implementing the policy, because of increased revenues, greater popular support for transparency, etc. But other political groups might have missed the chance. The Porto Alegre PT figured out how to capitalize on positive conditions and to deal with the negative ones. It also knew how to build upon initial successes. The government worked hard to build its own public image as socially just and participatory and to transform international attention on the city into a source of local political appeal. It constantly expanded the PB, so that each year a new proposal was under discussion and new groups were being called to join up. Building an image of competence and innovation was crucial to the administration’s capacity to get re-elected so many times.

Instead of focusing on the organizational aspects of the PB model, it is thus more useful to define some of the more general “categories of practice” that seemed to be successful in Porto Alegre.

³ For example, in 1989–1993, when the PT was in power in São Paulo, bus companies stopped operating on several occasions to demonstrate opposition to the municipal government. São Paulo also had problems with the federal government, which purposely slowed down fiscal transfers to that city while the PT was in office.

- *Focusing on political commitment*: all government agencies were pressured by the mayor to support it; the more the government publicized its commitment to PB, the more it had to respect decisions made there;
- *Fulfilling promises* built credibility and mobilized participants through a “demonstration effect”;
- *Pro-active mobilization*: organizing work in poor communities to help them mobilize rather than allowing social inequalities to reproduce themselves in participatory forums;
- *Trust in an open policy*: recognizing that a participatory forum that was open to all would provide more political support than one that only accepted party affiliates or members of certain types of organizations;
- *Reaching out in various directions*: Allowing the poor to benefit without abandoning the “middle class”; finding ways to make the policy favourable to some elite groups; building a political alliance around the policy; “framing” (and marketing) the policy in terms that were politically popular at the time (transparency, anti-corruption); all this *without selling out* (a difficult balance);
- *Taking advantage of political opportunities*: a period of increased revenues to change the way they were spent (the growing pie); international interest in the PT to gain recognition.
- *Starting small*: beginning with community-level participation and small-scale projects; expanding as the policy gained credibility and participants and state actors gained experience.

The specific organizational solutions that the PT came up with in each of these categories probably should not be replicated directly in different places and under different conditions, but the more general categories of practice should be, as long as replication is accompanied by a careful assessment of local conditions and thoughtful adaptation to them.

Political innovation must be continual. Even in Porto Alegre, nothing guaranteed that local actors could let the PB and the administration “run on auto-pilot” after it was consolidated as a highly popular and technically effective policy. In the first phase of the PB, those engaged in the policy were constantly revising and rethinking it, leading to many of the innovations that helped the policy maintain its vitality. But in the latter period of the PT’s tenure, this innovative spirit seems to have declined.

My research took place during the second of the PT’s four terms in office in Porto Alegre. Since then, parallel to glowing accounts, there has been much criticism suggesting that the politics of participation have changed as the PT administration gained perhaps too firm a hold on the mayor’s office. At some point, the government no longer depended on the credibility it received from the Participa-

tory Budget, especially as international attention had reached an almost ecstatic level and Porto Alegre was virtually sanctified as the capital of progressive politics. Some studies found that by the end of the decade, the PB stopped evolving. Many of the fragilities and problems that had long been criticized (such as participants' lack of technical training in budgeting) continued without solution (see Navarro, 2002:97 and Verle and Brunet, 2002). Others have argued that the PT has sought to take over the PB forums; what Navarro calls "party clientelism" (ibid, 119).⁴ People who have followed the policy more closely than I have further suggested (in personal communications) that, accommodated in office, the government no longer felt obliged to fulfill the decisions of the PB process—sometimes overriding those decisions or implementing projects that did not go through the Budget Forums. Most of these critics agree that the PB became "routinized," as rules and procedures became rigid and the actors involved increasingly did little more than "go through the motions."

Finally, in 2004, the PT lost the mayoralty elections in Porto Alegre. In addition to increasing criticism of the PB, other problems had assailed the administration, largely having to do with the fact that the PT was now in Brazil's presidency. Many PT militants moved to the federal capital, possibly explaining the lower level of party mobilization. Others who remained were likely disillusioned with the party, as it has implemented extremely conservative economic policies at the national level. In general, the PT has received much more criticism from its own allies (and even membership) than in the past, some of whom supported the opposition candidate simply on principle.

These problems reveal that the "solutions" found by the PT in Porto Alegre were not permanent ones and that the political creativity behind them would always need rejuvenation. The lesson that building participatory democracy requires more than "good models" eventually applied to Porto Alegre itself. Deepening democratization will require new creativity in the art of politics in the coming years.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abers, Rebecca. *Inventing Local Democracy: Grassroots Politics in Brazil*. Boulder: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2000.
- Abers, Rebecca. "The Workers' Party and Participatory Planning in Brazil: From Ideas to Practice in an Emerging Democracy," in *Latin American Perspectives*. 23, 4 (1996): 35-53.

⁴ Unfortunately, the author provides no specifics as evidence for this claim.

- Baiocchi, Gianpaolo. "Participation, Activism, and Politics: the Porto Alegre Experiment," in *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*, by Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, London: Verso, 2003.
- Fedozzi, Luciano, Maria Regina Pozzobon and Rebecca Abers. "Orçamento Participativo: Pesquisa sobre a população que participou da segunda rodada de assembléias do Orçamento Participativo da Prefeitura Municipal de Porto Alegre." Porto Alegre: CIDADE/FASE, 1995. Photocopy.
- Marquetti, Adalmir. "Participação e Redistribuição: o Orçamento Participativo em Porto Alegre," in *A Inovação Democrática no Brasil: O Orçamento Participativo*, Leonardo Avritzer and Zander Navarro, (orgs.) São Paulo: Cortez, 2002, pp. 129-156.
- Navarro, Zander. "O 'Orçamento Participativo' de Porto Alegre (1989-2002): um conciso comentário crítico," in *A Inovação Democrática no Brasil: O Orçamento Participativo*, Leonardo Avritzer and Zander Navarro (orgs.). São Paulo: Cortez, 2002, pp. 89-128.
- Ribeiro, Ana Clara Torres and Grazia de Grazia. *Experiências de Orçamento Participativo no Brasil: período de 1997 a 2000*. Petrópolis, RJ: Editora Vozes. 2003.
- Silva, Marcelo Kunrath. "A expansão do Orçamento Participativo na região metropolitana de Porto Alegre: condicionantes e resultados," in *A Inovação Democrática no Brasil: O Orçamento Participativo*, Leonardo Avritzer and Zander Navarro (orgs.). São Paulo: Cortez, 2002, pp. 157-188.
- Souza, Marcelo Lopes de. "Para Quê Serve o Orçamento Participativo? Disparidade de Expectativas e Disputa Ideológica em Torno de uma Proposta em Ascensão," in *Cadernos IPPUR*. V. 14, 2 (2002): 123-142.
- Verle, João and Luciano Brunet, eds. *Construindo um novo mundo: Avaliação da experiência do Orçamento Participativo em Porto Alegre*, Brasil. Porto Alegre: Editora Guayí, 2002.
- Wampler, Brian. "Orçamento Participativo: uma explicação para as amplas variações nos resultados," in *A Inovação Democrática no Brasil: O Orçamento Participativo*, Leonardo Avritzer and Zander Navarro (orgs.). São Paulo: Cortez, 2002, pp. 61-88.