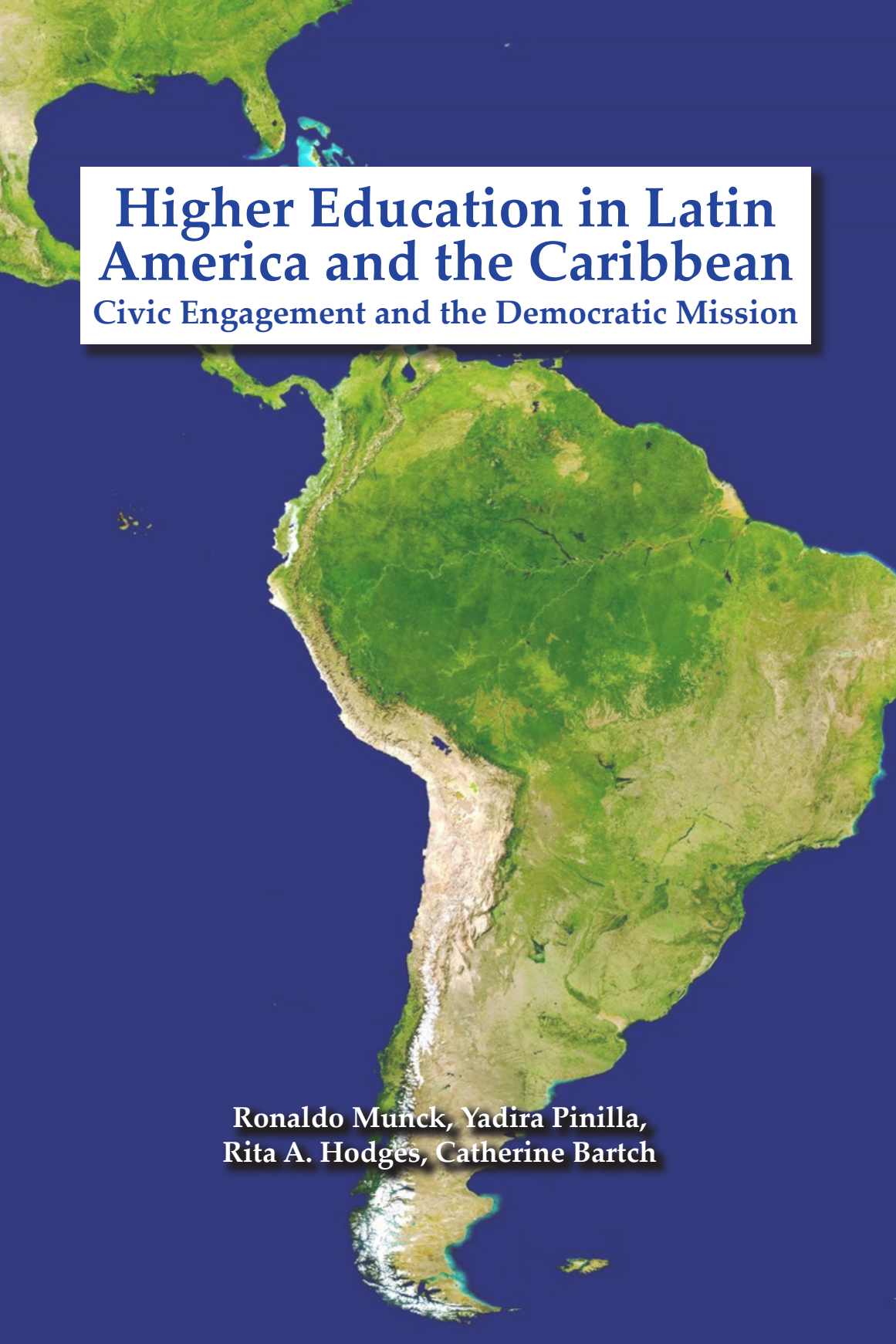

Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean

Civic Engagement and the Democratic Mission

Ronaldo Munck, Yadira Pinilla,
Rita A. Hodges, Catherine Bartch

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Machdohnil Ltd.

Published in 2023 by
Machdohnil Ltd.
Dublin 11, Ireland
info@machdohnil.com

A Catalogue record for this book can be obtained from the British Library.

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ISBN: 978-1-908689-45-0

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FOREWORD

Yadira Pinilla, Senior Specialist, Department for Human Development, Education, and Employment, OAS

The series of unfortunate events that the world has witnessed these past two years have demonstrated that contemporary problems – like the climate crisis, threats to democracy, racism, and economic inequality – are global in scope, and that we, as individuals, must revisit our priorities, interests, and ambitions on how we want to live with our families, professions, communities, and governments. The values we so love to talk about, but frequently fail to practice, have therefore been put to the test.

We are immersed in a world where change is the only constant and, in that fluctuation of uncertainties, it is impossible to expect a different result when we continue applying or proposing the same courses of action. In this context, having educational systems that are adaptable, flexible, and prepared to respond effectively and equitably to challenges - be that of health, climate change, or pedagogical origin – is essential. We cannot emerge from this situation less democratic, or with our peoples having fewer rights. To achieve this, democracy and a fair and equitable approach to human development is needed as the center of our policy focus. Investment in higher education, in its capacity as an incubator for active citizenship in democratic societies, is therefore necessary. With such investment comes an increasing level of participation, cooperation, and a commitment to the service of others for the advancement of sustainable democratic societies.

According to UNESCO, an education that is grounded in the principles of democratic culture and social inclusion, helps students develop their full potential and provides them with the means to overcome the barriers to their development, rooted in their socio-economic background. Therefore, we must acknowledge the role of education in moving beyond the development of knowledge and cognitive skills to building

values, soft skills, and attitudes that facilitate cooperation, global citizenship, and social transformation. In this century, education must help young people understand how to exercise their democratic rights, learn to cooperate with their fellow citizens, assess the media critically, develop environmental responsibility, combat hostile attitudes and hate speech towards vulnerable groups, and strengthen their sense of belonging. Attitudes and behaviors must be developed anew in each generation and maintained throughout life and education, through formal institutions, plays a critical role in this regard.

Today there are countless challenges for the Education Sector but alongside these challenges come opportunities for reform. Education is a right, and as such, involves an inescapable commitment of the State to its citizens. While increasing access to affordable education is still a major challenge in many countries of our region, improving the quality and relevance is more important today than ever, with due emphasis on the importance of values, attitudes, and skills that promote mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. In the aftermath of the pandemic and in keeping with our *new normal,* the Education sector finds itself at a critical juncture, where it can provide the impetus for a new generation of teachers and students, who can facilitate international cooperation, and promote social transformation in innovative ways, leading to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, and secure sustainable world.

The current post-pandemic context has made inequalities even more visible, especially within vulnerable populations. However, it has also meant that stronger alliances have been forged across the state, civil society, community, and the private sector to meet these new challenges. Our educational institutions must also face their new challenges, from ensuring a safe return to in-person classes, to tackling existing inequalities in terms of digital accessibility and lack of access to inclusive and quality education for people with disabilities. As such, a multidimensional perspective to guarantee educational continuity is becoming core to curriculum development across the world.

Access to higher education has historically proven to be a key component in the consolidation and strengthening of a democratic society. Likewise, higher education has been one of the major driving forces for progress in society. In the aftermath of the pandemic crisis, recognizing the role of higher education in developing and sustaining a culture of democracy will be even greater. Higher education must be seen as an essential means through which to rebuild and sustain the values and structures of a just and inclusive society.

The promotion and consolidation of democracy is one of the fundamental principles of the Organization of American States (OAS). The protection of human rights and the environment, integral development, and social inclusion are core to the education in democratic values that the organization seeks to advance across the region. A strong education system broadens access to opportunities and bolsters the resilience of communities – all while fueling economic growth in a way that can reinforce and accelerate these processes. Similarly, the transformative nature of education can bring about a fundamental shift in how people think, act, and discharge their responsibilities towards one another, their communities, and the planet.

In the 2018 Summit of the Americas in Lima, Peru, the Western Hemisphere agreed to develop a culture of citizen participation and prevention of corruption, with a view to strengthening democratic and civic values from early childhood and throughout life, by implementing teaching and learning programs focusing on civic education at all levels. Moreover, through the Inter-American Democratic Charter, Member States affirmed their commitment to carry out programs and activities designed to promote democratic principles and practices and strengthen democratic culture in the Hemisphere. They have also recognized that special attention must be given to the development of programs and activities for the education of children and youth, as a means of ensuring the continuance of democratic values, such as liberty and justice.

Subsequently, in 2018, the OAS Secretary General, Luis Almagro, pledged to work along with the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility, and Democracy and the Council of Europe to promote the role of higher education in the development of a democratic culture on campuses, in their surrounding communities, and within society. Secretary General Almagro has consistently expressed the view that "education is a crosscutting theme of the pillars of the Organization of American States, an essential factor to improve living standards, drive economic and human development, promote social inclusion in the Americas, and guarantee 'more rights for more people'". The OAS has since been working closely with the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education, which now also includes the International Association of Universities, to fulfill its mission of advancing higher education's role in fostering the development of democratic cultures representing the region, through a better understanding of the work of universities and associations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The OAS, committed to support the Global Cooperation in disseminating information and best practices for the fulfillment of a democratic and civically active global citizenry. In this, it set forth to establish the Learning Community of Higher Education Associations and Leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean. In collaboration with the Netter Center of the University of Pennsylvania, which houses the executive offices of the International Consortium, and Penn's Center for Latin American and Latinx Studies, the OAS leads this important mechanism of regional multilateralism, connecting more deeply the leaders of higher education in the Americas to the work of the Global Cooperation.

This innovative community shares perspectives on the role of higher education in advancing a democratic culture, discusses best practices that have been developed in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States, informs the work of the OAS, and supports the engagement of Latin American and Caribbean leaders with the Global Cooperation. It encourages dialogue and

facilitates access to best practices in education, it helps the region be better prepared to face the new challenges of this century, and it promotes a new phase in Latin American and Caribbean higher education cooperation, ensuring that students are prepared with the skills they need to improve their circumstances and those of their communities in the future.

The OAS marked the formal establishment of this Learning Community in February 2022, at the conference, *A Global Imperative: Recognizing the Democratic Mission of Higher Education – Learning with and from Latin America and the Caribbean*. Its accomplishments and highlighted regional expertise on institutional autonomy, social inclusion and educational access, social engagement, and democracy and social responsibility are also celebrated in this publication. The work of the Learning Community, combined with the outcomes of that 2022 conference, helped to elevate the voices of Latin American and Caribbean Higher Education at Global Cooperation's most recent *Global Forum on Higher Education Leadership for Democracy, Sustainability, and Social Justice*, held in Dublin in June 2022.

This new phase in international collaboration aims to support the development of comprehensive education systems, that embrace the values of human rights and intercultural understanding, civic responsibility, and tolerance, which are now more important than ever. This Community will not only create new avenues for information sharing and programs to develop capacities to address the needs of populations in most need, but it will also work to increase the participation of universities from the region in global dialogue and exchanges on educational policy reform at all levels. Through open discussions and regional and global forums, the Latin American and Caribbean learning community project hopes to establish a robust research agenda and a compendium for best practices, as well as policy contributions to the Inter-American agenda. Our hope is that this Community will contribute to the already existing body of OAS work, in improving access to, and the quality of an education, that recognizes the importance and

value of civic engagement as an essential part of the positive transformation of our societies.

PREFACE

This publication follows on from a conference in February 2022, held to mark the official launch of the Learning Community of Higher Education Associations and Leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean. The conference was hosted by the Organization of American States (OAS), the Netter Center for Community Partnerships, and the Center for Latin American and Latinx Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. It brought together researchers, practitioners, and education representatives from across the region, as well as global partners, to share best practices and create a pathway to strengthen global cooperation. The central theme addressed was, 'how can universities in the Americas advance the democratic mission of higher education with a particular focus on local community engagement?'

Latin America and the Caribbean, as with other regions, continue to face serious challenges, including fragility of democratic institutions and increasing social and economic inequality. In the past decades, access to higher education has been demonstrated to be key in furthering democratic societies and increasing participation. In the aftermath of the pandemic crisis, the role of higher education, in developing and sustaining a culture of democracy and participation, will be even greater. Higher education must be seen as an essential means through which to support and strengthen the values and structures of a just and inclusive society.

The purpose of the 2022 conference, and now this publication, is to engage the leaders, students and staff of higher education institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean in a conversation around how we might share best practice. We consider how universities can better address the issues of social inclusion and educational access with excluded communities, such as the original peoples and the Afro-descendants, within a framework of democratic values.

The key organizational objective of the conference was the formal establishment of a Learning Community of Higher

Education Associations and Leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) which will collaborate with the OAS to contribute to the work of the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education, including through participation in the biennial Global Forums, which bring together higher education leaders from around the world.

This publication, and the network we are building, seek to enhance the role of higher education in advancing civic responsibility, community engagement, and the promotion of democratic principles; create opportunities for open discussion to increase understanding of, and commitment to, the role of higher education in advancing democratic societies in the Americas; develop a research agenda relating to higher education's role in promoting democracy; and form partnerships and mechanisms for ongoing cooperation based on the rich experience from within the region.

The book is an important step in the creation of this Learning Community and presents an overview of the democratic mission and civic engagement across higher education in Latin America and the Caribbean. It serves to bring together diverse voices and the experiences of different countries and higher education institutions. The decision to publish in English rather than Spanish, the language of the majority of the contributors, is a considered one as we see the book having a role in bringing the Latin American and Caribbean experiences and lessons to a wider global audience. Thus, Latin America and the Caribbean seek to join the global conversation on the democratic mission and civic engagement, referencing the region's own rich and varied experience over the years.

CONTEXT

This is a scene setting section with a contribution by Rita A. Hodges and Ira Harkavy, reflecting on the experience of the US and the wider international higher education network for democracy and civic engagement. The second contribution in this section is from Ronaldo Munck and it explores the particular history and experience of these issues in Latin America and the Caribbean, and how they might inform the international debates. These set the context for the two subsequent sections on the 'Democratic Mission' and 'Civic Engagement' respectively. They help us understand that the two subsequent sections are totally inter-related and it is only for the purpose of clarity of presentation that they are separated. In practice, the democratic impact of the university depends, largely, on its commitment to the civic or societal mission. Our purpose overall is to explore the diverse Latin American and Caribbean experiences and bring them into conversation with the experiences in other global regions in order to enrich that debate.

1.
GLOBAL COOPERATION FOR THE DEMOCRATIC MISSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION (A US PERSPECTIVE)

Rita A. Hodges and Ira Harkavy

Introduction

Democracy is seriously threatened throughout the world. In the United States, the chasm-like inequities laid bare by COVID-19, the ongoing killing of Black Americans and other minorities, the gun violence epidemic, the President-inspired and instigated armed insurrection at the Capitol, and the attempt by a large segment of a major political party to subvert the electoral process are powerful indicators of a system in crisis. These developments reflect global trends that are also signs of deep and chronic problems, including:

- Increasing economic, political, social, educational, and health inequalities
- Increasing racism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia
- Increasing attacks on science, knowledge, and democracy itself
- Declining trust in nearly all major institutions and the concomitant rise of autocracy (Bergan et al. 2022; Broadwater 2022; Harkavy 2022; Lopez 2022; Fisher 2021; Guardian 2021).

Many things, obviously, contribute to the present situation. Among them, in our judgment, is the failure of universities to sufficiently do what they are supposed to do – educate students to be engaged democratic citizens and advance knowledge for the continuous betterment of the human condition, which significantly involves developing and maintaining a democratic society.

Core purposes of higher education

As stated, we believe there are two core purposes of higher

education in the U.S., and perhaps elsewhere. Education for citizenship is, for us, the most significant purpose of the university. Specifically, higher education must educate not only able, but also ethical, empathetic, engaged, effective, justice-seeking democratic citizens of a democratic society. In 1947, as a 19-year-old freshman at Morehouse College, Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote an article for the campus newspaper on the *Purpose of Education* that powerfully captures this idea. "We must remember," he wrote, "that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate" (King 1947: 10).

In an 1899 speech at the University of California, William Rainey Harper, as the first president of the University of Chicago, claimed that "[e]ducation is the basis of all democratic progress. . . .the problems of education are, therefore, the problems of democracy" (Harper 1905: 32). For Harper, universities are also the primary shapers of the American schooling system. In that same speech, he perceptively observed that "[t]he school system, the character of which, in spite of itself, the university determines and in a large measure controls. . . . [T]hrough the school system every family in this entire broad land of ours is brought into touch with the university; for from it proceed the teachers or the teachers' teachers" (Harper 1905: 25). Agreeing with Harper, we assert that higher education institutions powerfully shape the learning, values, and aspirations of students from kindergarten through graduate school (Benson et al. 2017).

The other central purpose of universities, as noted, is to develop the knowledge needed to change society for the better. In 1899, while an instructor at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, W.E.B. DuBois wrote *The Philadelphia Negro* about conditions in the Seventh Ward, the city's oldest African American community. At the conclusion of chapter one, he described the purposes of his groundbreaking research as "serv[ing] as the scientific basis of further study, and of practical

reform" (DuBois 1899/1996:4). That same year, in a paper delivered to the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Jane Addams, activist and feminist founder of Hull House settlement in Chicago's poverty-stricken immigrant 19th ward neighborhood, claimed that it was essential to "attempt to test the value of human knowledge by action" and "to apply knowledge to life" (Addams 1899/1985: 78).

Given the current state of the world, universities have an increased and pressing responsibility to contribute to both the education of informed democratic citizens and the advancement of knowledge for the continuous betterment of the human condition.

Historic roots of university engagement in the United States

The early history of colleges and universities in the United States strongly supports our claim that the democratic mission is, and should be, the primary mission for U.S. higher education. The founding purpose of every colonial college, except for the University of Pennsylvania, was largely to educate ministers and religiously orthodox men, capable of creating good communities built on religious denominational principles. Benjamin Franklin, on the other hand, founded Penn as a secular college to educate students in a variety of fields. In 1749, envisioning the institution that would become the University of Pennsylvania, he wrote of developing in students "an *Inclination* join'd with an *Ability* to serve Mankind, one's Country, Friends and Family; which *Ability*… should indeed be the great *Aim* and *End* of all Learning" (Franklin 1749: 150-51).

Franklin's call to service is echoed in the founding documents of hundreds of private colleges, established after the American Revolution, as well as in the speeches of many college presidents (Rudolph 1962). A similar blend of pragmatism and idealism found expression in the subsequent century in the Morrill Act of 1862, which established land-grant colleges and universities, whose purpose was to advance the mechanical and agricultural sciences, expand access to higher education, and cultivate citizenship. Using language typically found in

documents from these institutions, the trustees of the Ohio Agricultural and Mechanical College (now The Ohio State University) in 1873 stated that they intended, not just to educate students, as "farmers or mechanics, but as men, fitted by education and attainments for the greater usefulness and higher duties of citizenship" (Boyte and Kari 2000: 47). Later, the University of Wisconsin's 'Wisconsin Idea' would broaden the concept of civic engagement, from preparing graduates for service to their communities to developing institutions intended to solve significant, practical problems that affected citizens across the state (McCarthy 1912; Maxwell 1956: 147-48; Stark 1995-1996).

Urban universities, at the turn of the century, had a similar emphasis. For example, in 1876, Daniel Coit Gilman, in his inaugural address as the first president of Johns Hopkins, the first modern research university in the United States, expressed the hope that universities would "make for less misery among the poor, less ignorance in the schools, less bigotry in the temple, less suffering in the hospital, less fraud in business, less folly in politics" (Long 1992: 184). Belief in the democratic purposes of the research university echoed throughout higher education at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1908, Harvard's president Charles Eliot wrote: "At bottom most of the American institutions of higher education are filled with the democratic spirit of serviceableness. Teachers and students alike are profoundly moved by the desire to serve the democratic community… This is a thoroughly democratic conception of their function" (Veysey 1965/1970: 119).

Simply put, strengthening democracy at the expense of old social hierarchies served as the central mission for the development of the research university in the U.S., including both land-grant institutions and urban universities. However, scholarship focused on producing a direct and positive change and "serving the democratic community," largely vanished from universities after 1918. World War I was the catalyst for a full-scale retreat from action-oriented, reformist social science. The brutality and horror of that conflict ended the buoyant

optimism and faith in human progress and societal improvement that had marked much of the, so-called, Progressive Era in the United States of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Ross 1991).

Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a substantive and public re-emergence of, what might be termed, engaged scholarship designed to contribute to democracy. The academic benefits of community engagement have been illustrated in practice – and the intellectual case for engagement has been effectively made by leading scholars and educators, including Ernest Boyer (1990), Derek Bok (1990), and Andrew Delbanco (2012), as well as by current and recent university presidents such as Nancy Cantor of Rutgers University-Newark, James Harris of University of San Diego, and Eduardo Padrón of Miami Dade College. That case, simply stated, is that higher educational institutions would better fulfill their core academic functions, including advancing knowledge, teaching, and learning, if they focused on improving conditions in their societies, including their local communities. More broadly, a burgeoning higher education democratic civic and community engagement movement has developed across the United States, and perhaps elsewhere, to better educate students for democratic citizenship and to improve schooling and the quality of life. Service-learning, engaged scholarship, community-based participatory research, partnerships with primary and secondary schools, and community economic development initiatives are some of the means that have been used to create mutually beneficial partnerships, designed to make a positive difference in the community and on the campus (Benson et al. 2017).

Moving forward: A call for democratic civic universities

Despite an increase in civic and community engagement, however, no higher education institution, as far as we can tell, has the depth and breadth of engagement needed at this time. The post-pandemic (or more accurately, the pandemic-impacted) university needs to be radically different from what

now exists. Its primary mission should be advancing democracy democratically on campus, in the community, and across the wider society.

In *Higher Education's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Building a Sustainable and Democratic Future* (2021), the co-editors (Sjur Bergan, Tony Gallagher, Ira Harkavy, Ronaldo Munck, and Hilligje van't Land) labeled this new kind of higher education institution a "democratic civic university", that would involve significant and ongoing engagement of an institution's comprehensive assets (academic, human, cultural, and economic) in partnership with community members, to produce knowledge and educate ethical students with the ability to help create and maintain just, antiracist, democratic societies (Bergan et al. 2021). Importantly, a democratic civic university would infuse democracy across all aspects of the institution. Participatory democracy and a culture of democracy, not just democracy as defined by voting or a system of government, would be central goals. It would work to realize, in practice, the U.S. educator and philosopher, John Dewey's, vision of democracy as "a way of life" (Dewey 1939/1993: 229) in which all members of the community (on and off campus) actively participate in the communal, societal, educational, and institutional decisions that significantly shape their lives.

A democratic civic university would also expand the definition of expertise and knowing to include other voices – those not necessarily steeped in professional credentials or academic knowledge, but in lived-experience of the conditions and actualities under examination. What is needed is a movement away from a narrow definition of an expert, to a 'community of experts' (Cantor and Englot 2013: 121) – a broadening of context to include indigenous place-based knowledge. Sustained inclusive engagement of this kind, we believe, can both create positive change in local communities and make significant contributions to research, teaching, and learning (Benson et al. 2007; Cantor and Englot 2013; Harkavy 2022).

Penn's Netter Center, where we work, is dedicated to practicing the approach to scholarship and engagement described above. The early Wharton School, in particular the work of Leo S. Rowe, a professor of political science from 1869 to 1917, served as a model for the Netter Center. Rowe helped Wharton (where, as noted, DuBois also taught) become perhaps the leading center for an engaged social science and academic-community partnership during the first two decades of the twentieth century (Benson et al. 2017). Rowe understood that young adults could both learn from engagement with the city of Philadelphia and its institutions, and contribute meaningfully to scholarship and social reform through research connected to that engagement. He created a curriculum designed to do just that.

In 1904, Rowe presented Wharton's curriculum at the annual meeting of the National Municipal League. He had designed an instructional plan in terms strikingly similar to Franklin's call to service in his 1749 *Proposals*: "Bringing the student into direct contact with the actual operation of political institutions" would be "the most effective means of developing an ability and arousing a willingness to do service to the community." Such "direct contact with the affairs of the city" was, he continued, "not only feasible . . . but productive of excellent results." Describing the Wharton program for undergraduates and its educational benefits, Rowe hoped to inspire social scientists at other universities to create similar programs. "The zeal, ingenuity, persistence and attention to detail with which the college student will take up a work of special inquiry," he said, "is one of the most inspiring, as well as the most hopeful, indications of the civic effects of these special investigations" (Rowe 1904: 242-248).

Rowe's curriculum for the early Wharton School, not only significantly shaped the core approach of the Netter Center, but his emphasis on partnerships among countries – particularly while serving as Director General of the Pan American Union (the precursor of the OAS) from 1920 until his death in 1946 – resonates with Netter's work to help build and contribute to

higher education networks, committed to advancing local community engagement and democracy in general[1].

Global cooperation and the need for Latin American and Caribbean experience

Since the Netter Center's inception, one of its objectives has been to cultivate regional, national, and international networks of individuals and institutions of higher education that are committed to democratic civic engagement with their communities. We build these networks in order to learn from, and work with, others; to stimulate change in other localities; and to help develop a higher education democratic civic and community engagement movement. Creating, developing, and sustaining a large movement, in our view, is necessary to transform communities and universities for the better.

The most significant and enduring global organizational development has been the formation of the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy (IC) in 1999 to work with the Council of Europe (CoE), and the expansion of this global partnership to form the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education in 2021. This recently established body works to build a global movement to fulfill higher education's democratic mission and to strengthen the role of higher education in developing, maintaining, and sustaining democracy on campus, in the community, and in the wider society. The cooperation is comprised of four pillar organizations: the Council of Europe; the International Association of Universities (IAU); the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility, and Democracy; and the Organization of American States (OAS).

[1] According to the OAS website, "Dr. Rowe devoted his life to furthering understanding and integration among the countries of the Americas, particularly through higher education" (Organization of American States n.d.)

As noted, the Council of Europe and the International Consortium have worked in cooperation since 1999 to advance higher education's role in the development of democratic culture. The International Consortium, indeed, was founded to work with the Council of Europe to develop, explain and advance contributions of higher education to democracy on college and university campuses, their local communities, and the wider society. The IC is composed of the United States (represented by a Steering Committee from: the American Association of Colleges and Universities; the American Association of State Colleges and Universities; the American Council on Education; Anchors Institutions Task Force; Campus Compact; Democracy Commitment; and NASPA-Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education), Australia (represented by Engagement Australia), the United Kingdom (represented by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement), Ireland (represented by Campus Engage), South Africa (represented by Universities South Africa) and the Magna Charta Observatory.

The cooperation has undertaken cross-national research projects and joint meetings to share best practices, as part of its efforts to advance the contributions of higher education to the development of democratic societies. The first cross-national research project between the CoE and the IC started in 1999, with the research findings published by the CoE in *The University as Res Publica: Higher Education Governance, Student Participation and the University as a Site of Citizenship* (Bergan 2004). Since then, seven global forums have been hosted and the CoE has published monographs on each conference theme: *Higher Education and Democratic Culture: Citizenship, Human Rights, and Civic Responsibility* (Huber and Harkavy 2007); *Higher Education for Modern Societies: Competencies and Values* (Bergan and Damian 2010); *Reimagining Democratic Societies: A New Era of Personal and Social Responsibility* (Bergan et al. 2013); *Higher Education for Democratic Innovation* (Bergan et al. 2016); *Higher Education for Diversity, Social Inclusion, and Community: A Democratic Imperative* (Bergan and Harkavy 2018); *Academic*

Freedom, Institutional Autonomy and the Future of Democracy (Bergan et al. 2020); and a publication from the 2022 forum is now in development. Two other books have also been published which, while unconnected to a global forum, were stimulated and edited by partners involved in the Global Cooperation. These are *The Local Mission of Higher Education: Principles and Practice* (Bergan et al. 2019) and *Higher Education's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Building a More Sustainable and Democratic Future* (Bergan et al. 2021).

At the 2006 Global Forum, a declaration on 'The Responsibility of Higher Education for a Democratic Culture: Citizenship, Human Rights and Sustainability', was adopted by acclamation, affirming the need to increase the commitment of higher education institutions to democratic culture and sustainable societies. It also called for action to promote the principles of democratic citizenship, human rights, and civic responsibility. At the 2019 Global Forum, participants adopted a declaration, now widely distributed, supporting the role of academic freedom and institutional autonomy in ensuring the future of democracy.

The partners, in their commitment to understanding and advancing the role of higher education in developing democracy across the world, recognized the lack of participation of other regions of the world, particularly countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. As a result, the Organization of American States (OAS) was invited to join the international cooperation to represent the region and to contribute to the cooperation's goals through the work of universities and associations in Latin America and the Caribbean. The OAS officially joined the cooperation between the IC and CoE in April 2018, and in June 2019, the OAS was a co-host of the bi-annual Global Forum in Strasbourg, France, where Francisco Guerrero Aguirre, OAS Secretary for Strengthening Democracy, made a presentation on the relationship between higher education, democracy, and democratic values in the Americas. Following this event, Ira Harkavy was invited to present the work of the International Consortium and the emerging Global Cooperation

before the Permanent Council of the OAS in November 2019. The International Association of Universities (IAU) joined the cooperation in October 2019, and it was in January 2021 that the CoE, the IC, the OAS, and the IAU officially named their partnership the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education.

The OAS, in conjunction with the Netter Center and the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Latin America and Latinx Studies, agreed on the need to further connect the leaders of higher education in the Americas to the work of the Global Cooperation. Thus, a proposal to establish a Learning Community of Higher Education Associations and Leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean was approved and a successful virtual conference, 'A Global Imperative: Realizing Higher Education's Democratic Mission: Learning from and with Latin America and the Caribbean' was held in February 2022. The event provided an effective platform for launching the learning community and contributed to robust Latin American and Caribbean participation in the 2022 Global Forum.

In June of that year, the 2022 Global Forum on 'Higher Education Leadership for Democracy, Sustainability, and Social Justice' was held at Dublin City University. It was the seventh global forum and the first gathering officially co-hosted by the partners of the Global Cooperation for the Democratic Mission of Higher Education. While OAS's participation in the cooperation had been initiated within the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy, it had transferred to the Department for Human Development, Education, and Employment in the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development in February 2020. At the 2022 Forum, Kim Osborne, Executive Secretary for Integral Development, represented OAS and delivered remarks on the inextricable connections between development and democracy in the Americas. One hundred participants from 40 different countries across the globe gathered for the Forum. Speakers hailed from Central, Eastern and Western Europe, across the US, Latin America and the Caribbean, South Africa and Australia. Included among them were higher education

leaders from a range of colleges and universities, national and international associations, public authorities and student unions (Bergan et al. 2022).

The Global Cooperation is rooted in the Enlightenment idea, powerfully expressed by Francis Bacon at the turn of the 17th century. For Bacon, true advancement of learning is contingent on "a closer connection and relationship between all the different universities" (Bacon 1605/1999: 54). Bacon's frame of reference was limited to 'the universities of Europe', but his proposition provides a pragmatic rationale for collaboration between, and among, universities in today's global society. The more universities combine insights, ideas, and resources to focus on and help solve multifaceted community and societal problems, the greater the likelihood of advances in learning and well-being. Moreover, contemporary problems, such as the climate crisis—as well as racism, economic inequality, and threats to democracy—are global in scope, requiring a global understanding and action, in addition to local action, if meaningful change is to occur. The new Learning Community of Higher Education Associations and Leaders in Latin America and the Caribbean is, therefore, highly significant. The voice, expertise, and experience of colleagues in Latin America and the Caribbean are necessary not only for global dialogue, but also for a genuinely global movement to fulfill higher education's democratic mission.

Global change through local democratic engagement

At the 2022 Global Forum, a central theme that emerged from speakers around the world was the need for universities to develop deep, democratic, transparent relationships with their neighbors and function as democratic anchor institutions that involve their comprehensive (intellectual and institutional) resources in mutually transformative partnerships with their community (Bergan et al. 2022).[2] The principles of democratic

[2] The comprehensive democratic engagement of universities and other anchor institutions, enduring organizations that are rooted in their

purpose, process, and product, when put into practice locally, can powerfully contribute to mutually transformative university-community partnerships that can inform and advance a global movement. We have summarized and expanded upon these principles, originally identified by higher education leaders (including Harkavy) at a 2004 conference.

- Purpose: An abiding democratic and civic purpose is the 'rightly placed'[3] goal if higher education is to truly contribute to the public good. More specifically, participatory democracy, not just democracy as defined by voting or a system of government, should be the primary goal.
- Process: Members of both the higher education institution and the community should treat each other as ends in themselves, rather than as means to an end[4]. The relationship itself and the welfare of the various partners are the preeminent value, not simply developing a specified program or completing a research project. Democratic processes also involve inclusivity, transparency, and openness. These are the types of collaborations that tend to lead to a relationship of genuine respect and trust, and most benefit the partners and society.
- Product: A successful partnership strives to make a positive difference for all partners – this is the

localities (including hospitals, foundations, and arts and culture institutions), is at the core of the Anchor Institutions Task Force (AITF). Harkavy serves as founding chair of the AITF. (See https://www.margainc.com/aitf/.)

[3] The phrase "rightly placed" is from Francis Bacon's admonition that to improve things for the better required a worthy goal: "It is not possible to run a course aright when the goal itself has not been rightly placed" (Bacon 1620/1858: 79).

[4] This approach resonates with Kant's second categorical imperative: "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end" (Kant 1785/1993: 30).

> democratic product. Contributing to the well-being of people in the community, (both now and in the future) through structural community improvement, should be a central goal of a truly democratic partnership for the public good. Research, teaching, learning and service should also be strengthened as a result of a successful partnership. Indeed, working with the community to improve the quality of life in the community may be one of the best ways to improve the quality of life and learning within a higher education institution (Harkavy and Hartley 2009).

Local democratic engagement of universities is rooted in an inclusive epistemology that involves knowledge possessed 'on the ground' by community members, which is required for the effective solution of locally manifested universal problems (such as poverty, health and educational inequities, and environmental sustainability). It also leads to powerful advances in research, teaching, and learning. This argument was highlighted at the 2022 Global Forum as a way to also increase higher education's contributions to sustainability, social justice, and democracy. The Forum further concluded that sustained, place-based engagement of universities as democratic anchor institutions with their local communities is a necessary basis for a global movement that makes a genuine difference in people's lives (Bergan et al. 2022). In our judgment, creating, developing, and sustaining such a locally rooted global movement will help transform communities and universities for the better and contribute to participatory democracy in societies throughout the world.

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2.
RETHINKING HIGHER EDUCATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: HISTORY AND PROSPECTS

Ronaldo Munck

We are currently witnessing a resurgence of interest in the different ways that higher education institutions (HEI's) can contribute to democratic development through closer engagement with civil society. In Latin America the 'university extension' movement dating back to the early 1900's is going through a revival that is contributing to the democratic mission of the university. It takes different forms and is given different names (extension, engagement, linkages, social responsibility, etc.) but they all share a common purpose, namely, to place the traditional teaching and research functions of the university within the context of the society in which they operate. The experience of Latin America needs to be part of the global conversation around the democratic mission of the university and the way it may best engage with civil society. It is vital that the global debate on a way forward for the democratic and civic engagement missions should learn from the Latin American and Caribbean debates and these, in turn, can learn from the diverse experiences and lessons in other regions.

There are, of course, national and regional particularities in the way in which universities engage with society, a diversity that reflects particular historical paths. There is, also, an overarching North-South divide and we cannot expect those with far less resources and connections to 'deliver' on civic engagement in the same way. In a 'view from the South', Bawa and Munck argue that "a new global model for CE [civic engagement] will only emerge out of a global dialogue. Globalization has not produced a 'flat world' as some optimistic analysts predicted. Rather it has accentuated regional, spatial,

gender, ethnic, and age differentials and imbalances" (Bawa and Munck 2012: xviii). There are also huge differences at a national level between the great urban universities of Buenos Aires, Mexico City and São Paulo compared to much smaller newer institutions in Patagonia or the Amazon Region, for example. The uneven development of Latin America and the Caribbean is an ongoing issue that needs to be addressed through sustainable development strategies in which the higher education institutions have a considerable role to play. Furthermore, in the same way that analysts have successfully created a common frame to analyze and compare the 'varieties of capitalism' (Hall and Soskice 2001) we might seek to contribute the experiences of Latin America to the global discussion on the values and modalities of civic engagement. We are seeking a grounded comparison of different regions, with none of them assumed to have pre-eminence as a model of best practice. From that exercise, we might help contribute to a new critical global theory and practice of higher education's engagement with society.

Roots

Too often, the analysis of civic engagement is characterized by a policy-driven focus on the present, that is perhaps understandable but from an analytical perspective, quite limiting. To properly understand national and regional particularities, we need to delve into the historical roots of civic engagement in each context. It is thus history, as elsewhere, that shapes the higher education institutions of Latin America and their discourses. A foundational event in regard to civic engagement in Latin America was the Córdoba University reform movement of 1918 that took place in an isolated, conservative, and clerical university city in the interior of Argentina, but had reverberations across the continent. The revolt/reform movement took place in the context of a rising middle class that wished to create economic and political space for itself within an oligarchic non-democratic order. The reform of the university they demanded was quite modern for the era (see Appendix: *Córdoba Manifesto*) and included:

- university autonomy: that is the right of the university to choose its professors and programs, without government interventions,
- co-government, with staff, students, and graduates all having the same voice,
- free access: that is no tuition fees,
- secular education: that is the removal of the Catholic Church influence in the university.

These demands were largely met, and the middle-class democratic party of the day (the *Radicales*) were happy to concede. There was also a more general modernization of the university with the old order of inherited chairs being done away with. Crucial, from our perspective here, was an emphasis on 'university extension', particularly courses being opened to the emerging working class. From then onwards, 'university extension' took on a general hue of encouragement of outreach, the 'popular university' never came to fruition, and, as we shall see, 'extension' can mean many different things. It is, perhaps, an 'empty signifier' that only takes on meaning in a particular context. Nevertheless, Córdoba 1918 had a huge demonstration effect at the time. Signing up to the Córdoba Charter followed rapidly in Buenos Aires, the capital city, and thereafter it spread throughout Latin America with Mexico City hosting an International Student Congress on University Reform in 1921, and similar movements with nearly the same demands emerging in Chile, Peru, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, and neighboring Uruguay (see Cuneo 1978). This would be an early example of a transnational social movement in Latin America, showing that there was a certain commonality across the countries created by the colonial powers.

The inclusion of 'extension' as a 'third pillar' of university activity, along with teaching and research, was one of the principal goals of the 'University Reform' movement, which quickly spread throughout Latin America after Córdoba 1918. A regional movement began, that created favorable conditions for the development of university outreach programs and, since then, extension has been one of the hallmarks of higher

education in Latin America. However, there has been somewhat of a disconnect between this activity and the rest of the academic activity of the university. What also happened is that the extension mission expanded in a somewhat unplanned way, taking on more and more functions as a 'catch all' or leftovers category. Not surprisingly, many traditionalists accused the university extension movement of lacking cohesion and academic rigor. Even its promoters began to recognize in the 1960s that the movement lacked cohesion and was in need of a reboot, reflecting the mood of the time of course.

This was a period in which Latin America and the Caribbean made a significant theoretical mark on the global scene in regard to the knowledge project and the role of community-based research methods, in particular. Community-based research is often traced back to the work of Orlando Fals Borda in Colombia in the late 1960s (Fals Borda and Rahman, 1991). Trained in the United States in a quantitative social science approach, Fals Borda began to find it inadequate to deal with the pressing issues of rural reform in Latin America. Social justice was beginning to come to the fore as a major concern for social researchers. Barrington Moore's (1966) comparative historical work, for example, influenced him strongly, and positivist methods within a Cold War political framework were not attractive from that perspective. Fals Borda moved towards, what he called, Participatory Action Research (PAR), which meant the following:

- Do not monopolize your knowledge nor impose arrogantly your techniques, but respect and combine your skills with the knowledge of the researched or grassroots communities, taking them as full partners and co-researchers. That is, fill in the distance between subject and object.
- Do not trust elitist versions of history and science which respond to dominant interests, but be respective to counter-narratives and try to recapture them.

- Do not depend solely on your culture to interpret facts, but recover local values, traits, beliefs, and arts for action by and with the research organizations.
- Do not impose your own ponderous scientific style for communicating results, but defuse and share what you have learned together, in a manner that is wholly understandable and even literary and pleasant, for science should not be necessarily a mystery nor a monopoly of experts and intellectuals (Fals Borda and Rahnema 1991).

PAR was ultimately a research philosophy that combined academic knowledge and the wisdom of communities. It was quite clearly overdetermined by the general effervescent political mood of the post-1968 period. Student radicalism, the war in Vietnam, the French events of May 1968, the Cordobazo student uprising of 1969 in Argentina—all these influenced the debate among social scientists.

As a Latin American 'school,' PAR was part of a much broader wave of critical thinking, including the then emerging dependency theory and, above all, the not-unrelated work of Paulo Freire around *concientização,* as a philosophy and practice of popular education. *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1969, 1970) had a huge influence beyond Latin America in promoting a humanist approach to education and research, which foregrounded the subjective experience of ordinary people. This reflexive-critical approach, or method, has now spread across many disciplines, often taking the name of the 'bottom-up' method. It can take different forms, but it has very much influenced the flavor of non-positivist approaches to social research. It is worth noting that Freire was Director of Cultural Extension at the University of Recife prior to the 1964 military coup that drove him into exile.

As to Córdoba 1918, as an event and as a cultural movement, it continued to resonate down the years, both in the university context and in terms of the movement for democratization. In 1949, for example, Luis Sánchez would write that the 'student third' in terms of co-governance was quite often more symbolic

than real but, when it was suppressed "it was due always to dictatorial governments of a militarist type" (Sánchez 1949: 88). Darcy Ribeiro would go on to argue in 1973 that student participation in co-governance was "the basic requisite for the building of the University that we need" (Ribeiro 1973: 158). This democratic university discourse reached its peak in the 1970's. For example, the UDUAL (Unión de Universidades de América Latina) conference of 1972 carried a resolution which stipulated that: "university extension is the interaction between the university and other components of the social body through which it assumes and fulfils its commitment to participate in the process of creating culture and of liberation and radical transformation of the national community" (UDUAL 1972: 478). Creating culture and the transformation of society were to go hand in hand.

It could legitimately be asked, however, what a university reform movement of 1918 has to do with the current debates around higher education and civic engagement in Latin America (Tünnermann 2008). We could say in response that the principles of 1918, such as university autonomy and university extension (into the community), have not in practice been followed through except rhetorically. We might also conclude that student participation in the co-governance of the big urban universities has become a highly politicized (as in party political) affair. Nevertheless, I would argue that in the 'spirit of 1918' we can rethink what is needed today to meet the crisis of perspectives of the Latin American university. As the students of 1918 in the remote conservative city of Córdoba did, we can rethink what it means to be a university, to be a student and to be an academic staff member. The notion of democratic citizenship was just emerging in Latin America in 1918; today it is probably the key issue to ensure a sustainable democratic society where no one is excluded or left behind. Higher education can thus play a key role in promoting a sustainable and equitable order where democratic development is the key driver.

Varieties

Given all the various forms that civic engagement can take, we could argue that there is no 'one right way' to do civic engagement. That was probably the mistake of neoliberal fundamentalism in the 1990s, which preached that there was a universal economic doctrine that could work everywhere, and at all times. Back in the 1950s, a similar universal model of development prevailed, namely Walt Rostow's (1971) 'stages of economic growth' model. That very particular North American perspective set the parameters for the further development process right up to the 1970s. What is most interesting is how community service in the United States also emerged at the same time, through a commission on higher education set up by President Truman. Thus, both initiatives - overseas development and community development at home - emerged at the same time and under the same ideological sign. Both were marked by a confident US position in the postwar order as the former colonial powers faded in importance. Both had democracy at their core, but it must be said it was a model of democracy that was rather ethnocentric. From a Latin American perspective, the type of economic development strategy to follow was one based on 'economic growth with equity' (ECLAC 2007) and a recognition of the unbalanced nature of the global economy.

What we need to be aware of, from a critical global perspective, is the danger of taking one particular national model as the norm for civic engagement. Whether it be the US 'service' model or some other one, we need to accept that 'one size fits all' is not a viable philosophy for civic engagement. In the same way, there are distinctive models of capitalism - never mind the non-capitalist alternative - each with social and cultural contexts that will be highly variable. Even the market means different things when it is socially embedded (or not) in different ways. Civic engagement in the United States is not the same as civic engagement in Western Europe. The term 'service' has very different meanings even in the English-speaking world, never mind in Latin America for example. In the global South

the academic engagement with the community has often been on a more openly political basis supporting democratization, and social transformation. Sometimes perspectives that claim to be apolitical are in fact conservative approaches committed to the status quo. This is as much the case for civic engagement programs as it is for national development plans. Thus, national and regional development plans in Latin America have stressed the negative impact of external domination and the need for inward-oriented development. Likewise, the university extension movement has stressed the need to address the pressing social and economic inequalities that continue to beset Latin America and the Caribbean.

How we all 'do' civic engagement or university extension work will depend on the context within which our higher education institutions work. The engaged university is one we all aspire to but how we deliver on this will vary across countries. We probably need to be more open about the politics involved in different models of engagement and might usefully focus on the need for 'bringing politics back in'. This seems to be a more productive - if a difficult - way to reinvigorate the debate around higher education and civic engagement. Certainly, an apolitical approach might, in the short term, suit some institutional actors but in the long run it only stores up tensions and contradictions. We have nothing to lose by "letting a thousand flowers bloom" I would argue, and we may gain much through accepting a diversity of perspectives.

The current horizon of university extension and civic engagement in Latin America shows a great deal of vitality and varieties. As Tapia notes "we could say that throughout the 20th Century the development of diverse institutional forms of social commitment became an identifying feature of higher education in Latin America" (Tapia 2018: 5). This was expressed in a variety of ways not least through 'service learning' (dubbed as 'solidarity service learning' in the region), different forms of community engaged research such as PAR (participatory action research) and various outreach and access programs in the community. However, if we review the various national

situations, we will find that this extension /engagement element is not always integrated into the core mission of the university. More recently there have been moves to overcome the semi-detached nature of the 'third mission' by integrating it more closely into the teaching/learning and research elements of strategy, still often dubbed 'core business'.

The trajectory of university extension/engagement in Latin America has gone through various phases. In the 1950's and 1960's it was part of the state led national development strategies that were then prevalent. The university would play a key role as a knowledge hub and in terms of creating and sustaining a national culture. This was followed, in most countries, in the 1970's and 1980's by a period of military dictatorships which involved direct intervention in the governance of universities and the removal of any semblance of autonomy. In this era, despite the dangers involved, a certain degree of civic engagement activities was maintained. This era was followed in the 1990's by a period of re-democratization but within a market model dominance and the rejection of the previous state led national development model. The university was to be 'modernized' and enterprise engagement was to take the place of civic engagement (see Cano 2021). Post 2000 a wide range of, more or less, progressive governments took over with a commitment to 'growth with equity' and civic engagement came again to the fore.

The situation regarding university extension/engagement since the turn of century has been quite mixed. In the big urban centers, the national universities have returned to an institutionally sanctioned civic engagement strategy with varying degrees of legitimacy and embeddedness. Outside of the capital cites there is a struggle to balance the social engagement mission with the new demands to provide disciplinary based knowledge input to business. However, the COVID-19 crisis did create a better understanding, in dramatic circumstances, of the need to deepen the university's engagement with its surrounding communities and society more broadly. As Tapia concluded in a review of the situation,

the current challenge, a hundred years after the great university reform movement in Latin America, is "to effectively institutionalize social commitment through the teaching, research and extension missions which implies reviewing the pedagogical methodologies, the formation of university lecturers and the adequacy of the curriculum" (Tapia 2012:55).

A radical democratic version of extension/engagement could begin to emerge in Latin America. It would be in keeping with the important role of the university, as signaled by cultural critic, Angel Rama, in his classic, *La Ciudad Letrada/The Learned City* (Rama 1984/ 1996), which shows how the learned (educators, writers, public servants, religious) have played a key role in creating a public national culture, with the university its pivotal agent. The extensionist project, that began even before the 1918 university reform, is part of this process of cultural and science dissemination that has been so important in Latin America. The university extension movement has helped break down spatial boundaries and has played an important role in the democratization of power/knowledge relations. The engaged university is part of that long tradition in Latin America, and despite the various contested meanings of 'extension', there is a shared understanding that it contributes to a critical public discourse.

Challenges

There are challenges in Latin America that are similar to elsewhere, in terms of how to implement civic engagement strategies. These include the distance between rhetoric and reality when it comes to the actual delivery of civic engagement on the ground. This is partly due to the pressure exercised by the dominant global paradigm of university rankings and the role of selected journals (usually in English) in determining academic merit. This means that lecturing staff are pushed into productivist norms that do not encompass social commitment. While there may be political reasons to engage in social outreach in terms of teaching and research, in terms of career prospects this in not encouraged. Nor do most Latin American universities

have the resources to 'compete' in the global academic market and, at the same time, deliver on the pressing social and economic needs of their city or region.

Many of the challenges in Latin America are due to resource constraints. The demands placed on regional universities, in particular, are hard to meet under current circumstances. The social and economic deficits cannot be remedied by the universities as institution on their own. Nevertheless, the legitimacy that the university can accrue through its extension/engagement work can have considerable benefit for it. There is no going back to the university as 'ivory tower' which, anyway, was not as prevalent in Latin America as it was in the Global North. The Latin American university has become, increasingly, part of the national eco-system for research and innovation. Scientific and technological research – 'innovation' in short – is increasingly articulated with social engagement, not least to due to the acknowledged need for the social legitimation of knowledge. Now we find an active pursuit by universities - and the university associations of the region – to create a new model of civic engagement as part of the broader task of social transformation.

What we may also note in Latin America, as elsewhere, is the challenge posed by the lack of a clear perspective on the best way to move forward. The discourse of 'social responsibility' that was prevalent in the 1990s led to a radical de-politicization of the debate. With illusions that globalization would create a 'flat' world (see Friedman 2005), where social exclusions, inequalities and oppressions were a thing of the past, the solutions offered were 'soft' ones at best. The university was now seen as a business, and students were seen as its consumers. However, the watchwords of 'participation' and 'responsible consumption' were simply not fit for the purpose of guiding the university extension programs. At best, extension was conceived as simply a means to disseminate the knowledge and technology vested in the university, although often the activity itself began to wane. From 2000 onwards, as part of a continent-wide period of political mobilization and transformation, this

began to change and the debates of the 1960s (not least the Freire aspect) were revived, albeit in a new context (see Chaui 2003, Gadotti 2021).

Maybe the best way to understand the challenges faced by civic engagement is by thinking of it as an 'empty signifier', that is to say a term that points to no actual object and has no agreed upon meaning. Democracy, for example, can be thought of as a floating signifier, open to articulation by radically different political projects. This allows us to think of how 'university extension' in Latin America can refer, at one and the same time, to enterprise engagement and the creation of a 'people's university'. To some degree, this polysemy is inevitable, and it does allow some countries and institutions to develop their own version of extension/engagement to suit their circumstances. However, it can be fixed in a way that is sustainable and empowering if we are clear on what a university is, its purpose, its ethos, its values, and its mission. Once that compass is established, then the higher education institution has a guide to help it discern the best form of extension/engagement to adopt.

Futures

The role of higher education concerning civil society has changed considerably through the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the challenges it has posed have been enormous – not least in Latin America – it has, as with many crises, also offered an opportunity to reconfigure the way the university intervenes in society. As the editors of a collection on the university response to the COVID-19 pandemic put it, "we can, indeed, expect their reputation to be enhanced by their dynamic role during the pandemic in so many ways. But we should also be asking more from our universities, not least that they become even more embedded in their local communities that have suffered so much from the health and now economic crisis" (Bergan et al 2021 :17). There is a general agreement across the higher education sector that we cannot allow financial stringency to provide cover for a retreat from the social responsibility role of the university. Nor can there be any return

to 'business as usual', if that means only paying lip service to civic engagement.

The COVID-19 crisis, and its aftermath, is prompting a re-evaluation of how civic engagement is practiced across Latin America. The health crisis highlighted the dramatic levels of socioeconomic inequality and the direct life and death impacts this could have. The depoliticized conception of university extension that prevailed, prior to the crisis, thought of the university as a corporation and its students as customers. University social responsibility simply mirrored the mainstream CSR/corporate social responsibility discourse. We now see a more critical approach emerging as the COVID-19 crisis has laid bare that we do not live in a 'flat world' where we are all just consumers. The question of democratic citizenship comes to the fore again. We also see the re-emergence a holistic territorial approach to the role of the university with democratic development at its core, in the encouragement of popular cooperative enterprises for example. There is also clear evidence that civic engagement is moving from a rhetorical add-on to become an integral part of both the teaching and research functions of the university.

In Latin America the embedded university is, by necessity, engaged in the task of development. While the literature on the university and the city in the North (see Goddard and Valance 2013) is focused on the networked advanced 'global city', in Latin America the 'politics of place' relates more to peripherality and underdevelopment. The 'boosterism' of the global city university has little purchase in a situation of highly uneven development and lack of basic necessities. We need to recognize that regional development cannot be based on economic innovation and competitiveness alone, as a simplified version of 'enterprise engagement' would have it. There is, for example little point in a peripheral university in Chile 'competing' with a similar one in Ecuador. What we are seeing now is a move towards a broader understanding of regional development across Latin America that would embrace the issues of social

equity and cohesion, democratic participation, and environmental sustainability.

If the university is not an ivory tower, nor an extension of the business world, then it needs to be socially embedded. There are dense social networks, some may wish to call them 'social capital', tying the university in with its local community. These can include social, economic, cultural, political, and sporting links. Social embeddedness is a two-way street - a relationship that is sometimes fraught but always productive. The university is - or should be - firmly committed to social transformation and the pursuit of knowledge for the benefit of the community. A socially embedded university becomes anchored in a community, with its positive democratic and communal values. In its turn, the university can (and does in part) put its considerable intellectual resources to imaginative uses. Our universities are at a crossroads. We can no longer do business as in the past - therein lies the path to obsolescence - but the pathways to the future are not yet clear. Universities are well placed, I would argue, to link the requirements of economic development with the demands of democratic citizenship. The production of knowledge was once engaged in by the university, simply for its own sake; now we see the instrumentalization of knowledge by market requirements, which has undermined the traditional elitist role of the university. The contemporary university can regain a positive role by prioritizing social goals, by researching in socially relevant ways, and by placing social inclusion at the heart of its mission. The university is also well placed to bridge the gap between science/technology and citizenship. Science needs to be relevant to people and to engage with the day-to-day life of the citizen. Technology - not least information and communication technology - permeates the world around us, but it needs to be humanized. There is a central role for civic engagement in this project through the necessary development of dynamic interfaces between the university and its social context.

Looking to the future more broadly, we might examine ways in which we can move 'beyond the fragments' of the diverse

modalities and philosophies of engagement that we see at present. Does the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for greater embeddedness allow us to make such a decisive move? The differences in language and terminology that we see sometimes reflects genuine differences but, at times, it just seems to be a matter of semantics. It is not about developing a common terminology and conceptual model for a global community-based teaching, community-based learning and student volunteering strategy. But we can seek to move 'beyond the fragments' and create a template for higher education's democratic mission and civic engagement while respecting national – and indeed institutional – histories and their diverse histories and modalities of intervention. I would argue that this mission is a global one and that Latin America and the Caribbean can, and must, play a greater role in these ongoing debates towards a more democratic future.

Appendix: ***Córdoba Manifesto***

From The Argentinian Youth of Córdoba to The Free Men of South America

Men of a Free Republic, we've just broken the last chain that, in middle of the XX century, tied us to the old monastic and monarchic domination. We've decided to call all things by their own name. Córdoba redeems itself. From today, we have in this country one less shame and one more freedom. The pains that remain are the freedoms we still lack. We think we don't err; our beating hearts warn us: we're stepping on a revolution; we're living an American hour. Rebellion erupts in Córdoba, and is violent, because here the tyrants had become arrogant, and it was necessary to erase forever the memory of May's counterrevolutionaries. Universities had been so far the secular refuge of the mediocre, the ignorant's tenure, a safe hospital for the handicapped and -what's even worst- the place where all ways to tyrannize and numb found a Chair to teach them. Universities have then become a true reflection of these decadent societies that insist in the sad spectacle of a senile immobility. That's why science passes silently through this mute and closed house or, maimed and grotesque, enters bureaucratic service. When, in a rare flash, it opens its doors to

high spirits, it's to regret it later and make life impossible for them inside their walls. That's why, in such regimes, natural forces lead to the mediocrization of teaching and the vital widening of academic organisms is not brought by organic developments, but by the breath of revolutionary periodicity. Our university system - even the most recent - is anachronistic. It is founded on a sort of divine right, the divine right of tenured professors. It creates itself. It is born and dies in itself. It maintains an Olympian distance. The University of Córdoba Federation stands to fight against this regime and understands that in doing so, it bets its life. It demands a strictly democratic government and argues that the university demos, sovereignty, the right to self-government is mainly on the students. The concept of authority that belongs to, and comes with, being a director or teacher in a home for college students cannot rely on the strength of an authority, foreign to the substance of the studies. Authority, in a home for students, is not exercised by ordering, but by suggesting and loving; by teaching. If there is no spiritual connection between teacher and student, all teaching is hostile and therefore sterile. All education is a long labor of love for learning. To search for guarantees of a fruitful peace in threatening articles of a regulation or a statute is, in any case, upholding military discipline, but not the work of science. To keep the current relation between those who govern and the governed is to stir the ferment for future disruptions. The souls of young people should be driven by spiritual forces. The worn springs of authority emanating from force do not agree with what our feelings and the modern concept of universities demand. The crack of the whip can only sign the silence of the unconscious, or the coward. The only silent attitude which befits an institute of science is that of who hears truth, or that experienced in creating and verifying it. That's why we intend to uproot from the university body the archaic and barbaric concept of authority that in these houses of study is a bastion of absurd tyranny, and only serves to criminally protect false dignities and false competence. Now we understand that the recent reform, honestly liberal and given to the University of Córdoba by Dr. Jose Nicolas Matienzo, has only come to prove that our ills were more distressing than we imagined, and ancient privileges disguised a state of advanced decomposition. Matienzo's reform has not opened a university

democracy; it has sanctioned the dominance of a caste of teachers. The vested interests of the mediocre have found in it an unexpected support. We are accused of being insurgents on behalf of an order that we do not argue, but that has nothing to do with us. If so, if in the name of order, we are to continue being mocked and brutalized, we loudly proclaim the sacred right of insurrection. So, the only door that is open to hope is the heroic destiny of youth. Sacrifice is our best encouragement; spiritual redemption of American youth our only reward, for we know that our truths are real - and painful- for the whole continent. That in our country one law - they say -, the Avellaneda's Act is opposed to our desires? Then on to reform the law; our moral health requires it. Youth always lives in the process of heroism. It is selfless, pure. It has not yet had time to become contaminated. It's never wrong in choosing its own teachers. Young people are not swayed by flattery or riches. They have to be allowed to choose their teachers and principals themselves, confident that the success will crown its determinations. Henceforth, only the true builders of souls, creators of truth, beauty, and goodness will be allowed to be teachers in the future university republic. Córdoba's university students believe that it is time to raise this serious problem to the attention of the country and its representative men. The recent events at the University of Córdoba, on the occasion of the election of the University President, make singularly clear our reasoning in appreciating the university conflict. Córdoba's Student Federation believes that it must inform the country and America of the circumstances of moral and legal order which invalidate the electoral process, verified on June 15. By confessing the ideals and principles that motivate young people in this hour of his life, it only wants to describe the local aspects of the conflict and raise high the flame that is burning the old stronghold of clerical oppression. The National University of Córdoba and this city have not seen disorder; what was, and is being, seen is the birth of a revolution that will soon reunite, under its banner, all free men of the continent. We'll refer to events that show how reason assisted us and how much shame brought to our face the cowardice and perfidy of the reactionaries. The violence of which we claim full responsibility was brought about by the exercise of pure ideas. We deposed what represented an anachronistic coup and did it to be able to, at least, keep our hearts above the ruins. Those

violent acts are also the measure of our indignation in the presence of moral misery, simulation and cunning deception that were meant to filter through, with the appearance of legality. The moral sense was obscured in a ruling class by traditional hypocrisy and an appalling poverty of ideals. The spectacle of the university assembly was disgusting. Amoral groups, eager to capture the goodwill of the future president, explored the contours on the first ballot, to lean towards the side for which victory seemed sure, not remembering publicly pledged supports, the honor-bound commitments made in the interest of the University. Others - the majority - in the name of religious feeling, and under the patronage of the Society of Jesus, exhorted to treachery and subordination (curious religion that which teaches to despise honor and depress the personality! Religion for the defeated or the slave!). A liberal reform had been obtained through the heroic sacrifice of youth. A guarantee was thought to be won and the enemies of reform were seizing that same guarantee. In the shadows, the Jesuits had prepared the triumph of a deep immorality. Consenting to it would have meant another betrayal. To mockery we responded with revolution. The majority vote expressed the full burden of repression, ignorance and vice. So, we gave the only proper lesson and scared away forever the threat of clerical rule. The moral judgement is on our side. The legal right also. They tried to obtain legal sanction, barricade behind the law. We did not let them. Before iniquity was a legal fact, irrevocable and complete, we took the hall and threw such mob, only then frightened, by the side of the cloisters. That this is true, is made obvious by the fact that then the Student's Federation gathered in the university hall, and a thousand students signed, on the President's desk, the call for indefinite strike. In fact, the reformed statutes provide that the election of the President will be done in one session, proclaiming the result immediately after reading each ballot and the approval of the respective transcriptions of proceedings. We affirm, without fear of being corrected, that ballots were not read, that the transcriptions did not pass, that the President was not proclaimed and that, therefore, by law, there is still no President of this university. The university students of Córdoba declare that they never questioned names or employments. They stood up against an administrative procedure, against a teaching method, against a concept of authority. Public functions were exercised

in the interest of certain cliques. Plans or regulations were not reformed for fear that someone could lose their jobs amidst the changes. The watchword 'tit for tat' ran from mouth to mouth and assumed the pre-eminence of university charter. The teaching methods were flawed by narrow dogmatism, helping to keep the university out of science and modern disciplines. Lessons, locked in the endless repetition of old texts, kept the spirit of routine and submission. University bodies, jealous guardians of dogma, tried to keep youth behind closed doors, believing that the conspiracy of silence can be exercised against science. That's when the dark midland university closed its doors to Ferri, Ferrero, Palacios and others, fearing it would be disturbed in its placid ignorance. We then did a holy revolution and the regime fell before our strikes. We honestly believed that our efforts had created something new, that at least the elevation of our ideals deserved some respect. Then we look amazed as the crudest reactionaries allied themselves to snatch our conquests. We cannot leave our fate in the hands of the tyranny of a religious sect, or to the games of selfish interests. To them we are to be sacrificed. He who calls himself the President of the University of San Carlos has said his first words: "I'd rather have a pile of the dead bodies of students than resign". Words full of pity and love, reverential respect to discipline, words worthy of the head of a house of higher learning. He does not invoke ideals or purposes of cultural action. He feels protected by force and stands proud and threatening. Harmonious lesson given to youth by the first citizens of an academic democracy! Let us collect that lesson, peers from across America; perhaps it has the sense of a glorious omen, the virtue of being an appeal to the supreme struggle for freedom; it shows us the true character of academic authority, tyrannical and obstinate, that sees in each request a grievance, and in every thought a seed of rebellion. Youth no longer requires, it demands, to be granted the right to externalize its own thought in university bodies through its representatives. It's tired of supporting tyrants. If it has been able to make a revolution in consciousness, it cannot be denied the capacity to intervene in the governance of its own home. The university students of Córdoba, through their Federation, salute all fellow Americans and encourage them to cooperate in the work of freedom that starts.

Signed: Enrique F. Barros, Ismael C. Bordabehére, Horacio Valdés,presidentes. Gumersindo Sayago, Alfredo Castellanos, Luis M. Méndez, Jorge L. Bazante, Ceferino Garzón Maceda, Julio Molina, Carlos Suárez Pinto, Emilio R. Biagosch, Angel J. Nigro, Natalio J. Saibene, Antonio Medina Allende y Ernesto Garzón

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PART I: DEMOCRATIC MISSION

In this section, we explore the theory and practice of the democratic mission of higher education in Latin America and the Caribbean, showing different facets of this mission. It includes education for democracy, the access issues for hitherto marginalized sectors and the active promotion of citizenship from a higher education perspective.

We start with a broad-brush review of *Higher Education and Social Engagement in Latin America* by Andrés Peregalli and Enrique Ochoa, which examines, in particular, the region's engagement with service or community learning. While it has parallels with engagement in other regions, it also has its own particular features, marked by the distinct political context created by authoritarian and democratic regimes over the years. Syndia A. Nazario-Cardona and Eloy A. Ruiz-Rivera then take us on to the theme of *Democracy and Citizenship in the Caribbean: Challenges and Perspectives in the Development of Projects in Higher Education* which examines the role of higher education commitment and leadership in promoting democracy, sustainability, social justice, and civic responsibility in the Caribbean.

Abril Herrera Chávez and Karla Valverde Viesca next introduce a novel approach to *Civic Engagement and the Co-creation of Knowledge* which shows that the issue of democracy also pertains to the very way in which we do research, how we engage with civil society and how we might seek to 'co-create' knowledge.

Daniel Mato then highlights the challenges faced by the democratic deficit we see in relation to *Ethnicity/Race, Language, and Inequality in Higher Education* in Latin America. This is one of the most pressing issues facing higher education in the region, particularly the lack of access by Amerindian and Afro-descendent populations.

Then, Mauricio Devoto contributes to our understanding of *Teaching Democracy and Citizenship and Higher Education in Latin America.* In doing this, he outlines a general theory of democracy

that contrasts liberal and populist interpretations and demonstrates the importance of the debate in the region around the future of democracy and the role of higher education in promoting it.

Finally, we have the perspectives of two major Latin American and Caribbean higher education associations, namely the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education on behalf of which David Julien and Romel Castaños explore the theme of *Higher Education Networks and Democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean.* Roberto Escalante Semerena and Patricia Avila Muñoz, on behalf of UDUAL (Unión de Universidades de América Latina), make an important programmatic statement on *Higher Education, Democracy and Engagement in Latin America*, that closes this section.

3
HIGHER EDUCATION AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Andrés Peregalli and Enrique Ochoa

Introduction

This chapter explores the contribution of Service-Learning (SL) to the democratic and social commitment mission of Higher Education (HE). It is based on the experience of the Latin American Center for Service-Learning (CLAYSS-Argentina), which has been promoting this pedagogy for more than two decades. Its purpose being to strengthen the development of democratic culture and active citizenship. The following topics are discussed in the context of higher education and social engagement: (a) building a democratic culture; b) a model to (re)build; (c) Service-Learning (SL) for active citizenship; d) strengthening citizenship and democratic culture.

a) Higher education and social engagement: building a democratic culture

Democracy - understood as a system of government and a way of being in the polis - is increasingly taken as the thermometer to measure and evaluate the development of societies. In this context, the term 'democratic culture' designates the set of attitudes and behaviors expected of citizens so that institutions and laws work in reality. It is a relevant conceptual evolution of the old perceptions of democracy that focused on institutions, laws and formal procedures, highlighting the citizens' active role in its construction (Bergan, Gallagher & Harkavy, 2015). Most Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) work within democratic regimes that have a serious deficit in representativeness, with individuals and social groups having no belief in their potential contributions to solve or mitigate social problems (BID, 2021). In broad terms, democracies have developed through two models (Quiroga, 2000): procedural democracy, exemplified in 'the exercise of the vote'; and

substantive democracy, exemplified in the active participation of citizens in social, political, and economic processes (active citizenship).

Like other regions, Latin America and the Caribbean face important challenges, such as the fragility of democratic institutions and growing social and economic inequality. After the 'return to democracy' of the 1980s, different countries have faced the challenge of re-waving and re-producing the components involved in the social fabric. A great challenge for our societies is the construction of the associative networks that link different participants and institutions (e.g., HEIs with Civil Society Organisations) and the development of the active role of citizens. The CLAYSS promotion of Service-Learning pedagogy in education systems is found at the intersection of HE, the construction of democratic culture, and civic participation. In this setting, the conception of solidarity seeks to transform social issues collectively, moving away from paternalistic (unidirectional) models of intervention. Consequently, specific pedagogies have been developed to implement the calls made by numerous international organizations and conferences on the need for HE to practice social engagement for democratic life.

Democratic cultures are not built once and for all; on the contrary, they are processes developed in specific contexts that show progress and challenges: "The global higher education gross enrolment ratio increased from 19% to 38% (UNESCO-IESALC, 2020)." While these figures show progress in HEIs, for example, because of national policy support, issues of equity, quality and institutional performance remain critical (Peregalli et al. 2014; Peregalli & Etchevers, 2015; Peregalli & Goméz Caride, 2020). It is a major challenge to have access to, remain in, and graduate from high quality Higher Education, especially for those in the most disadvantaged sectors in Latin America and the Caribbean. According to the Regional Conference on Higher Education in 2018 (CRES), the average gross enrolment rate in the region for the period 2000-2013 rose to 43% (SITEAL, 2019:2). In 2015, tertiary education enrolment was almost 24 million students. However, only about half of those students between

the ages of 25 and 29 got a degree or diploma and almost the same number had dropped out or changed course by the end of their first year.

Although there is a major awareness of the relevance of HE for human development, the unequal distribution of educational opportunities is attracting sustained international attention, since it is an impediment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Universal access to HE is Target 4.3, of Goal 4, which expects, by 2030, to "ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university" (UN, SDG 4: 2015). Goolam Mohamedbhai, Honorary President of the International Association of Universities, stated in 2015 that: "The SDGs provide a unique opportunity to higher education institutions to demonstrate their willingness and capability of playing an active and meaningful role in the development of their respective countries and in contributing towards global sustainable development" (2015). Education that connects, in a coordinated and comprehensive way, research, teaching, learning and social engagement in a polyhedral, post-pandemic, diverse, multicultural, de-colonial world is essential for individual and social development (Tapia & Peregalli, 2020; de Sousa Santos, 2021). Building democratic culture through HE implies dismantling the 'black box' of institutions, to enable the emergence of integrated models (engaged HEIs) that coordinate their research, teaching, and social engagement/outreach activities.

b) Higher education and social engagement: a model to (re)build

Is it possible to build HE models that, guided by the identity and mission of their institutions, connect teaching, research and outreach/social engagement in an integrated way to build democratic culture? The experience and history of many HEIs worldwide, committed to the common good, community service and academic excellence, show that it is indeed possible. Many HEIs are undergoing paradigm shifts from 'ivory tower' to

'integrated' (engaged) models, but it is necessary to distinguish how they organize their social mission and to identify specific historical and regional movements, while also identifying the causes of inertia and the very real challenges (CLAYSS, 2014).

Traditionally, HEIs have had three missions: teaching, research, and extension. Each of them usually corresponds to an institutional framework and a specific organizational and management structure, which, supported by institutional policies, and produces its own organizational culture. Within HEIs these missions are often isolated or even in conflict, constituting 'islands' or 'fragments' of a whole which is neither coordinated nor integrated, giving rise to 'varied typologies', diverse recognitions, and differential evaluations. Depending on the structure of the social mission of HEIs, at least three models can be distinguished: a) ivory tower; b) context-dependent; c) comprehensive institution (Tapia, 2018). This is demonstrated in the contrast between 'serious/studious' vs. 'militant/ committed' models, between 'researchers' vs. 'committed professors', between 'professors who promote engagement and social responsibility in their subjects' vs. 'those who consider any community service a waste of time and an obstacle to academic excellence'. These antagonisms are, not only increasingly anachronistic, but also based on reductionist views of both academic quality and the social mission of HEIs. It is true that classical assistance 'solidarity campaigns' - usually necessary and meritorious - are not intended to contribute to improving scientific research. In addition, many voluntary activities are parallel to academic life and there is no need to use advanced knowledge. However, the fact remains that, to have a serious impact on, and transform social reality, it is necessary to come together with other social actors, to bring into play multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary scientific knowledge; to develop personal and group skills and to create the capacity for research, management, and innovation (Eyler Giles, 1999; EDUSOL, 2007; Ma et al. 2018). A well-planned intervention (grounded in its particular context) requires that research be conducted as meticulously - if not more

so – than that which is developed for the sole purpose of journal publication. Indeed, to intervene effectively in a community and solve real-life problems, students need to know more, not less, than the rote learning required to pass an exam.

In HEIs, the relationship between teaching, research and social engagement occurs with varying degrees of intentionality and effectiveness, but there are encouraging signs in the growing tendency to build bridges between 'thought and action', and between 'academic precision and social engagement'. It is not easy to establish the connection between scientific knowledge and social action or between learning and solidarity activity, from the epistemic (complex knowledge) perspective or from the university management perspective. However, it is essential to ensure that the knowledge produced within HEIs contributes to a better life for our societies and that the professionals trained in their classrooms contribute creatively and committedly to building a democratic culture. In this context, Service-Learning (SL), as part of a vast global movement, represents a pedagogy that connects and favors the integration of intentions, policies, and institutional cultures, which are often in conflict. It provides not only 'community-assistance experiences' but also a vision for the identity and mission of HEIs.

The institutionalization of the social engagement of HEIs is evidence of a paradigm that might seem distant, but is already implemented in many institutions worldwide (Peregalli & Gherlone, 2021). There is a long list of experiences globally in which academic life and social engagement are intertwined in the same activity in HEIs, embodying an institutional model that integrates the three missions mentioned above. From this point of view, HEIs increasingly see themselves as 'part' of the social fabric of the community, neither 'isolated' (ivory tower) nor 'subordinated to the demands of the outside' (dependent on their context). In this model, the community is no longer seen as a 'passive addressee' nor as a 'client', but as a space where learning, research, and partnerships are built, and where

community-based initiatives are a way for students, professors, and community partners to learn and conduct research.

In short, it is an integrating model in which HEIs become leaders in local development processes, establishing cooperation networks together with other participants. With the institutionalization of SL, research focuses on the needs of the territory, teaching takes place within a context and outreach addresses real needs, in participatory action with external organizations (public bodies, CSOs, companies, churches etc.). Thus, future professionals are trained by actively participating in the solution (or attention) to social problems in the community. This dynamic and dialectical movement between learning, teaching, research, and social intervention has a strong impact, not only on HEIs management, but also on the way knowledge is produced: "Social engagement is no longer seen as a 'third pillar', but rather as a critical approach to our teaching and research activities" (Younger, 2009). In other words, there is a virtual circle between learning and solidarity initiatives in the region, where academic knowledge improves service quality in joint work with the community, community action results in better integral education and knowledge production increases (EDUSOL, 2007:28). When HEIs are involved in solving real problems of a community, they work with complex realities that cannot be tackled through the narrow lens of only one academic discipline. This is why social engagement projects, eventually, overflow beyond the watertight compartments of academic departments and hyper-specialized disciplines, and open up to interdisciplinary activities.

Research and solidarity actions that deal with real problems allow us to, not only break the isolation of separate disciplines, but also to bring about new dialogue opportunities among those involved in knowledge production. This culture of dialogue and mutual recognition strengthens the fabric of citizenship and democracy. The scientific community acknowledges diverse languages and ways of producing knowledge by establishing a dialogue with the regions and designating the space as a *locus* of learning and knowledge. In this way, HEIs 'teach' and

'disseminate to' the community while, at the same time, learning from it and with it (EDUSOL, 2005). In other words, it promotes what Bordoni calls "research translation processes" (2008), as well as dialogue between the lay and the academic. This dialogue - which, in Africa, has existed for more than 50 years and is strongly associated with the decolonization of Higher Education - is now a growing trend in Latin America (Muñoz & Wangoola, 2014; de Sousa Santos, 2021). Through this, the HEI model recovers its essential mission of comprehensive training for new generations of professionals, integrating academic excellence with a social responsibility that is no longer mere lip service, but is being integrated into both the curriculum and institutional management.

Currently, HEIs are immersed in the tension between institutional models that show strong traditional inertia, and the search for alternatives to meet new and old social demands. Service-Learning programs are developed within these models, in an attempt to provide opportunities for co-ordination, both intra-institutional (within the institution) and inter-institutional (between HEIs and other institutions). They encourage the institutions to take an active role in social change, contributing to the construction of democracy and the common good in the multicultural and global village. In turn, the social engagement of HEIs worldwide pursues more and better techniques to assess civic engagement and strengthen democracy. This is reflected in the design of evaluation systems and specific tools that enable their evaluation and improvement (e.g., Holland, 2000; Furco, 2010; Wenger & Macinnis, 2011; TEFCE, 2020).

c) Higher education and social engagement: Service Learning (SL) for active citizenship

How can HEIs promote a democratic culture with a social engagement perspective? What new and deeper relationships should be established with local communities, especially those severely affected by the pandemic and its aftermath, in light of persistent inequalities? The massive SL movement in general, and the work of CLAYSS in particular, has provided some

answers to these questions, strengthening the role of HEIs, and indicating how to transform a large declaration of principles into concrete actions. The issues discussed below illustrate how it works and its pedagogy.

For twenty years, CLAYSS has been developing a series of national, regional, and global programs to promote SL pedagogy with institutions at different levels of the formal and non-formal education system and with public and private organizations. It works with educators, political and civil society leaders, and students, and seeks to contribute to better education and participatory, democratic, and fraternal culture, proving that students are 'learning to serve and serving to learn'.

Service-learning pedagogy has spread throughout the world over the last fifty years. It dates to the beginning of the 20th century (with the creation of the Mexican welfare system in 1910 and with the Argentinian Córdoba Reform Movement in 1918). The SL global movement has now been translated into active national and regional networks where several HEIs participate (Ochoa, 2010; CLAYSS-Ochoa 2014; CLAYSS-Ochoa 2016). SL practices are defined as practices that display three specific characteristics (Tapia, 2018:22): they are solidarity services designed to meet real and felt needs in a focused and effective way, with a community and not only for it; they are led by students actively involved in all stages, from planning to assessment; they are purposely integrated with learning through curricular reform, reflection on practice, development of skills for citizenship, work, and research.

CLAYSS provides a range of guidance and support services to HEIs, with a hundred HEIs having received such support to date. The following are examples of some SL projects carried out by HEIs or the curriculum areas that promote them:

- Interdisciplinary seminar for social urgency (SIUS), based in the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urbanism (FADU) of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), Argentina. This is an optional module where advanced students from all degree courses develop interdisciplinary projects for community-based

organizations. Among the activities carried out are: the design and building of soup kitchens; the refurbishment and furnishing of premises for community centers; the design of leaflets and displays; the production of institutional videos; and the making of uniforms for youth community 'murga' [street band] (SIUS, 2022).

- Internships in urban suburbs or rural health centers based in the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Tucumán, Argentina. At the end of the 1990s, a curriculum reform of this degree course established that, aside from the traditional practices in a teaching hospital, all students were required to complete a mandatory six-month practice in health centers located in rural areas or peripheral neighborhoods. In 2001, due to the social and economic crisis in Argentina, many children died from malnutrition in the province, which alerted the health authorities to the impact of the emergency on the health of mothers and children. During the medical internships in marginal urban areas in 2021, the students participated in a program known as 'BIN', designed to search for, identify, diagnose, and treat child malnutrition.
- Purification and sanitation of water for household use and human consumption for the residents of the Calderas community in the municipality of Amatitlán. This project was based in the Department of Sanitary Engineering I in Rafael Landívar University in Guatemala City (Di Lascio, Tapia, Camaño & Peregalli, 2021). Prompted by their Professors, the students undertook to tackle the situation of the communities affected by the tropical storm Agatha and the eruption of the Pacaya volcano, in their final class project. The aim of the project is to improve the quality and quantity of water used by the population of Calderas for household use and human consumption, while reducing water source contamination and the risk factors affecting people's health. This involved the

following elements: design of a new water distribution system; microbiological, metal and physical-chemical analysis of water; research into the solar water disinfection (SODIS) method, a simple home method to improve the quality of the water supply; training in domestic sanitation and home-filter construction; design and donation of a model toilet; study on the hydrology of the micro watershed; and design of a drinking water treatment plant.

- Service Learning: university-rural communities and the State link. This project was based in the University of Santo Tomás, Bogotá in Colombia. It involved the faculty of Rural Development and Agricultural Sciences working with the Agriculture Secretariats of the municipalities of Girón and Piedecuesta (Department of Santander) in the specific areas of Agricultural Production and Research (Di Lascio, Tapia, Camaño & Peregalli, 2021). The project was developed to meet the needs of the Agriculture Secretariats of the municipalities to obtain the primary data required to devise their General Plans for Agricultural Technical Assistance (PGAT). It provided the students with valuable experience of SL in action and enhanced their understanding of the complexity of rural development and of the institutions working there.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, a growing number of HEIs introduce SL as a specific part of their Institutional Project, adopting this term or other similar ones. Many University Social Responsibility (USR) programs develop SL activities together with other SL programs. Several universities have established regulations that make social practices compulsory for all their students (this applies in Argentina's University of Buenos Aires, National University of Mar del Plata, and the National University of Rio Cuarto, among others). Other networks and organizations in the region focus on this as well, such as Chile's 'University Builds Country' (Universidad Construye País) project. In other cases, HEI subject chairs

introduce service learning through professional practices or internships in their communities. Teacher-training institutes are beginning to include SL in their syllabus as part of their teaching practices.

d) Higher education and social engagement: strengthening citizenship and democratic culture

Building a democratic culture, based on responsible citizenship and solidarity, is a challenge for Latin American and Caribbean societies in general, and Higher Education in particular. It poses the challenge of reinforcing its service to society (based on its identity and mission) and contributing to "eliminating poverty, intolerance, violence, illiteracy, hunger, environmental degradation and disease, through inter- and trans-disciplinary approaches" (UNESCO, 1998). Good quality education needs the two fundamental pillars of the 21st century: learning to learn and learning to live together. This means that education must develop the skills for lifelong learning and training in attitudes, values and competencies that promote solidarity, democracy, and responsibility for the destiny of others (Tedesco, 2004).

Designing comprehensive organizational models for the social mission of HEIs is a relevant (meaningful) and pertinent (timely) aspiration for today's world. Promoting systemic change in Higher Education entails identifying the causes of inertia, and prioritizing courses of action that generate engaged and solidarity-based institutions and strengthen citizen participation, associative networks, and democracy. Service-learning is a pedagogy that offers the opportunity to achieve a democratic culture based on active citizenship, which addresses the challenge of fulfilling integral education in the 21st century, and with organizational and management models to support it.

In Higher Education, moving from 'words to deeds' implies 'getting down to work' and translating declarations and statements into specific plans, programs, and projects, that make change viable and provide the conditions for the best work of an institutional collective. It is a matter of redefining the parameters regarding the work of HE and redesigning and

positioning HEIs as key participants, with a clear political role in the pursuit of the common good. This ethical view refers to a way of being and being in the world, which echoes the words of professors and students at Argentina's National University of Tucumán-Faculty of Medicine: "For some universities, the object of their existence is academic excellence. We consider that the reason for our existence is service to the people and academic excellence its best tool" (EDUSOL, 2006:11).

Universities and Higher Education Institutions generally, are called on to participate actively in every aspect of the creation of a new social contract for education:

> *From supporting research and the advancement of science, to being a contributing partner to other educational institutions and programs in their communities and across the globe, universities that are creative, innovative, and committed to strengthening education as a common good, have a key role to play in the futures of education. (UNESCO, 2021:11)*

Social engagement in HE makes sense if it focuses on strengthening democratic culture. This challenge means re-imagining institutional structures and experiences, policies and cultures. Taking responsibility for redesigning HE - and making it a reality - is a pressing concern in different parts of the world, with inertia and a variety of opinions on the role it should play and the focus of its actions frequently being causes of tension. To that end, higher education must play a leading role in this complex global scenario. It is essential that it define specific courses of action that integrate its missions into the service of the common good, denouncing injustice and building active citizenship, based on solidarity and engagement. Thus, the role of HEIs will be strengthened, better professionals will be created, and a valuable and lasting contribution will be made to improving the living conditions of communities.

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4.
DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP IN THE CARIBBEAN: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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"Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife".

John Dewey, *The Need of an Industrial Education in an Industrial Democracy*, 1916

Introduction

The world is in the midst of a democratic recession, a historical period marked by a decline in democratic rights that has sparked concern in every corner of the globe. The emergence of authoritarianism and extremism have threatened the very foundations of liberal democracy and the principles that underpinned its governance models. The underlying issue is complex and has symptoms that spread worldwide, from xenophobia to violent demonstrations to prevent the transfer of constitutional power. The promises of the Enlightenment, consolidated in the French Revolution of the 18th century, seem to falter in the face of irrationality and intolerance.

There have also been many broken promises. Frustration has replaced disillusionment, and a loss of confidence in public policy has contributed to a dangerous disaffection for the democratic coexistence of society. The Caribbean experience differs from other parts of the world, even Latin America. The countries of the non-Hispanic Caribbean have demonstrated a degree of political stability and continuity since independence, from the former empires of the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands.

The Greater Antilles share certain political experiences, while also having others that are unique: Cuba has a socialist system,

Puerto Rico is a possession of the United States, the Dominican Republic is a sovereign country with a market economy, and Jamaica remains a member of the Commonwealth with the United Kingdom. Only Haiti, out of the whole group, has stayed in a state of governance crisis for more than a decade. This is due to a combination of factors, including poverty, natural disasters, and a lack of institutional structures.

However, the Caribbean continues to experience critical challenges in understanding the importance of education in building more sustainable democratic societies. The close relationship between democracy, ethics, and education began with Aristotle in ancient times, and reached its zenith with John Dewey in the 20th century, but it is still present today. The consensus in the literature, points to higher education's crucial role in democracy in a globalized, interdependent, interconnected, complex world, full of so many uncertainties.

The historical juncture at which Western cultures find themselves, and the modern world in general with its unanticipated volatility, need an in-depth discussion that respects and values diversity. We are at a point in time that demands a critically informed and conscious response in face of a complex reality. The countries of the Caribbean need a consensual discussion among the various social actors on how to frame their higher education, so that it results, as the literature argues, in the development, competitiveness, and innovation of a democratic society.

Taking up the agenda, started over two decades ago in various regional organizations in terms of a commitment to higher education, is more important than ever. It promotes the development of a citizen, aware of their reality, to transform it through democratic and responsible citizenship which is capable of building a just society based on solidarity and respect for human rights.

This chapter presents guidelines as a recommendation to universities in the Caribbean to develop projects for education around democratic values and citizenship. We begin with an outline of the common historical experience that Caribbean

nations share, resulting in a complex and fascinating melting pot that explains the collective imagination within which democracy operates. The literature review considers the current state of democracy worldwide, and discusses the relationship of higher education with democracy and citizenship.

The chapter goes on to describe two education projects in democratic values, developed at the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra in the Dominican Republic, and at the Universidad Ana G. Méndez in Puerto Rico respectively. These projects were selected as they are highly innovative and have become agents of change through their agendas, activities, and commitment to democracy and justice. They may serve as models for other universities to replicate. The chapter concludes by setting out a series of basic principles that might help similar projects in higher education.

Diversity, plurality, and common history in the Caribbean

The Caribbean is a geopolitical region, comprising 13 countries and 19 overseas departments and dependent territories, also known as Caribbean islands. It forms one of the four subcontinents of America in two archipelagos, the Greater Antilles, and the Lesser Antilles, located in the Caribbean Sea. They extend in an arc, from the southeast of the Florida peninsula, south of the Lucayan Islands, northeast of the Yucatan Peninsula, to the eastern coast of Venezuela. The current population is approximately 56 million people.

Although the linguistic, political, racial, and religious heterogeneity of the Caribbean stands out as its main characteristics, as Mintz (2015) points out, its diversity and plurality play as a counterpoint to similarities that have common historical roots (Naranjo, 2009). The Caribbean, as a sociocultural area, despite its differences, presents similarities in terms of social structure and social organization (Benítez Rojo, 1989). Its diverse origins are rooted in the past, with a legacy of the colonization by different empires, the extermination of indigenous societies, the plantation system, slavery, and authoritarianism.

Since the 16th century, the Caribbean has been the scene of confrontation between the leading imperial powers. In the decades after Spain's expansion, its possession was disputed by the Dutch, English, and French. Currently, the region groups countries that speak Spanish, English, French, and Dutch. Bosch called the Caribbean the imperial frontier (Bosch, 2003). After the Spanish-American War of 1898, the United States changed its foreign policy, occupying Cuba and Puerto Rico that same year, making the Caribbean one of its most important areas of influence. During the 20th century, it carried out military interventions in Haiti, Panama and the Dominican Republic. It had acquired the American Virgin Islands in 1917, during the First World War. In the middle of the 20th century, the region gained geopolitical, military, and strategic importance due to the Cuban Revolution.

Caribbean societies are diverse and have a continuous process of interaction, intermixing, and transculturation. They have experienced significant demographic and economic transformations in recent decades, with political and cultural ramifications (Naranjo, 2009; Guisti, 2015). The former colonial region has experienced poverty, inequality, violence, political clientelism, and dictatorial systems, making the Caribbean a complex scenario. These colonial legacies, the hegemony of European nations, and the direct interference of the geopolitical, economic, and cultural power of the United States, have posed critical challenges to democratization processes.

The Latin American and Caribbean region faces a complex economic situation, characterized by slow economic growth, growth inflation, rising interest rates, and volatility in international markets (ECLAC, 2022). On the other hand, it demonstrates an urgent need to continue with dynamic, inclusive, and sustainable growth, since economic growth will slow down in the coming years (WB, 2021). Economic indicators show that the Caribbean is experiencing the highest poverty level in decades, with multiple challenges of infrastructure, education, innovation, and efficiency. Various authors argue that it is necessary to continue investing in social programs and

infrastructure to consolidate recovery, promote growth, and reduce poverty and inequality (WB, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the governance problems that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean had been experiencing. A recent study indicates that it meant additional pressure on governance structures "already showing signs of deterioration and weakening" (UNDP, IDEA, 2022). The current quality of governance, and the state of its governability, show little capacity in their political systems to channel the growing social conflict and political polarization that the region is exhibiting. These two specific concerns are fundamental to the democratic future of the Caribbean.

Governance failures produce greater political polarization, social instability, and violent confrontations between citizens and the government. Other socioeconomic and historical problems, such as poverty, inequality, corruption, violence, and impunity, complicate the picture. Rather than strengthening the rule of law, they weaken it and pose a critical challenge to building democracy in the region (UNDP, IDEA, 2022).

The diversity, plurality, and shared history of the Caribbean region, constitute an opportunity to make the area a laboratory for democratic projects, that are in dialogue with the wider world of higher education. The serious threats that authoritarianism poses to democracy demand a return to the almost forgotten agenda of education and democracy, as pivots for global citizenship.

Democracy, citizenship, and higher education

The dialectic between education and democracy is well established (Alicea, 2018). Aristotle saw the intimate connection between constitutional democracy (polity) and ethics, as cultivating virtues and education transmitted by the family and institutions. For him, only wisdom as a practice of reason and education, could be the foundation of constitutional democracy (Alicea, 2018, 12).

But democracy is under threat all over the world. The intensification of political polarization, the erosion of centrist

parties, and the emergence of extremism are not exclusive to some European countries and the United States. Some of these patterns are experienced in Latin America, as was recently evidenced in Brazil under the Bolsonaro regime.

Discontent with liberal democracy, characterized by the fundamental importance of equal individual rights, law, and liberty, has grown in recent decades. Liberal societies grant rights to individuals, autonomy being their most basic right, their ability to make decisions about expression, association, beliefs, and political life (Fukujama, 2022). While democracy means "rule by the people," institutionalized in free, periodic, and fair multiparty elections through universal suffrage, liberalism refers to the principle of legality. This regulatory system restricts the powers of the executive. Liberal democracy is the system that has prevailed in North America, Europe, parts of East and South Asia, and other parts of the world since the end of World War II. Although the United States, Germany, France, Japan, and India established themselves as liberal democracies in the second half of the 20th century, countries like the United States and India have experienced setbacks recently (Fukuyama, 2022).

According to the US based, Freedom House, political rights and freedoms increased throughout the world in the period between 1974 and 2000. Over the 15-year period, 2006 - 2021, they have been decreasing until reaching a "democratic rescission" and even a "democratic depression" (Freedom House, 2021). Meanwhile, the report on the *State of Democracy in the Americas 2021* indicates that Latin America and the Caribbean continue to be the third most democratic region in the world (International IDEA, 2021). However, half of the region's democracies have suffered from erosion, and most of the region's democracies have stagnated at a medium level of performance (International IDEA 2021d). Citizens have seen their expectations shattered during the last decade, with direct consequences for democratic coexistence. One of the leading indicators is the drop in support for democracy in the region (Latinobarómetro, 2018; Zechmeister and Lupu, 2019).

There is a consensus among many authors that the discontent and disenchantment with liberalism have deep roots that urgently need to be understood and managed. This is reflected in a political polarization that has its roots in economic, social, and cultural divides, which has led to rhetorical and physical violence. These divisions have deep origins in economic, social, and cultural differences. The growth of an extreme right that assaults electoral systems, the courts, the media, legal systems, and the rule of law is but one example of how the landscape of civic education has transformed, due to political transition.

A lack of trust in institutions is not exclusive to the Caribbean and Latin America but, on the contrary, it is to be found across the world. This distrust delegitimizes political representation in all places. Castells notes, in this regard, "the gradual collapse of a political model of representation and governance: the liberal democracy that had been consolidated against authoritarian states and institutional arbitrariness through tears, sweat, and blood in the last two centuries" (Castells, 2017, 5).

The United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, stated recently that there is a crisis and fragility of democracy in the world. In the context of an armed attack against Ukraine, and a global food, fuel, and financial crisis, multiple challenges trigger the inequities that put social justice and human rights, measures against climate change, multilateralism, and the legal order, and international law itself in a precarious state. This has enormous consequences for human rights and democracy (Bachelet, 2022). A study, published in 2021, claims that the level of democracy an average person could enjoy in the world is similar to 1989 levels, after the end of the Cold War (Bachelet, 2022). The democratic gains made in the last 30 years have been reduced for the most part, showing an evident decline in Central Asia, Eastern Europe, and Asia Pacific, as well as in parts of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Attacks against the rule of law have been perpetrated, in actions against electoral bodies, constitutional courts, the media, and national human rights institutions, as well as vandalizing

attacks on buildings that house the powers of the State. The event in Brazil on January 8, 2023, a week after the inauguration of new president Luiz Inácio da Silva, is reminiscent of the attack on the United States federal Capitol two years earlier, almost to the day. However, we are not just talking about groups or political parties that seek to subvert the political order, but also about democratically elected parties that seek to challenge that order, by appealing to authoritarian and xenophobic policies in the form of protectionism and policies to defend national "identity" (Traverso, 2018). Yet, the democratic ideal endures and there is still an overwhelming support for representative democracy.

The democratic institutions that have taken over four decades to build up in the region of the Caribbean now face a dangerous threat. Currently, challenges that interact with one another continue to exist, exhibiting substantial ramifications for public affairs, the rights and freedoms of individuals, and the validity of the democratic system. According to the research project titled *Governance, Democracy, and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean* (International IDEA and UNDP, 2022), there are six primary issues to address in this regard: 1. Low and erratic rates of economic growth; 2. High-income inequality and concentration of wealth; 3. Fiscally constrained states; 4. Representative and democratic disaffection; 5. Fragmentation and polarization of the political system; 6. Lag and deterioration of the rule of law.

Of these issues, representative and democratic dissatisfaction is the one with the most profound implications for democracy, defined by Monsiváis (2017) as "the feeling or attitude of rejection, detachment or alienation that the institutions or agents of representation of a regime arouse in citizens politically." It entails three enormous risks for governance in the region. The first of these is the rupture of the social contract, whereby the legitimate institutions that represent the collectives of the people do not work or do not have credibility, making it impossible to reach broad social and political agreements, such as transforming and financing the "social contract." The second, is

the threat to social cohesion and financial viability. Without broad social and political agreements, it is not possible to consolidate the essential conditions for a democracy, such as the social cohesion of the community and the financial viability of the State (Casas-Zamora, 2021a). The third risk factor is that of increasingly fractured communities. In brief, the Caribbean's high levels of inequality, poverty, corruption, and violence, along with the State's fragility, provide an ideal ground for the growth of populist and authoritarian alternatives.

The anger, discontent, and distrust thousands of citizens feel toward their political classes, and the institutions they represent, are human feelings produced by significant social inequities and many broken promises. They are the signs of much deeper problems, linked to the lack of economic well-being and social mobility, insufficient or poor quality of public services, corruption, impunity, privileges, lack of transparency in the political function, irregularities -proven or alleged- in electoral processes, poor quality of public debate, or the replacement of the mediating role of political parties by social networks (Monsiváis 2017; IDEA, 2019).

Higher Education and transformation

Higher education has been immersed in a dramatic transformation process over the last three decades, in a world experiencing enormous and rapid changes, partly due to globalization and internationalization (Sousa Santos, 2019; Giddens, 200). The internationalization of education is an impact of globalization on the activities carried out by HEIs (higher education institutions). It is an engine that promotes the understanding of actions of individuals, groups, and social institutions transnationally in search of social, economic, political, or cultural benefits (Mitchell and Nielsen, 2012).

Higher education plays a crucial role in economic growth and global competitiveness, knowledge being the common denominator that drives cohesion and development between universities and society. Altbach (2004) and Salmi (2007, 2009) emphasize that the knowledge generated by universities is

critical for countries, enabling them to create globally competitive economies by developing highly trained, productive, and flexible human capital. Likewise, it dramatically influences the creation, application, and diffusion of new ideas and technologies.

In the past four and a half decades, the intensification of transnational interactions, characterized by the integration of world economies through trade, financial flows, the export of goods and services, and the proliferation of information and images through the media Mass communication and communication technologies, have transformed our traditional notions of the world (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Cornejo-Espejo, 2012; Delgado-Marquez, Hurtado-Torres & Bondar, 2012; Mitchell & Nielsen, 2012; Sacristán, 2006; Tarc, 2012; Tunnerman-Berheim, 2013; Viederyte, 2009).

This phenomenon has imposed far-reaching changes on society, with higher education being one of the most impacted sectors. The discussion on the role played by HEIs, as one of the main pivots for countries' development, competitiveness, and innovation, has gained momentum in the last two decades (Altbach, 2004; Carlson, 2018; OECD, 2018; Salmi, 2009). We are witnessing a transformation of the relationship between the university and society, redefining its role and function. HEIs are responsible for generating, disseminating, and transmitting knowledge, while also having the challenge of being relevant so that students can acquire knowledge and skills, and find their place in this global context. Democratic competencies are elements of the knowledge and skills that students must have in order to become global citizens, precisely because of the threat that democracy is currently facing.

The broader crisis of democracy that has impacted the United States and Europe since the 1970s frames the current context for understanding higher education's role in society (Giroux, 2013). The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) proposes a liberal education that provides the fundamental knowledge and skills that empower students to promote the common good through responsible and engaged citizenship in

local, national, and global contexts. HEIs must be committed to the development of democratic and critical educational practices. These are crucial to developing human beings who fight for a sustainable society (Beane and Apple, 2013). Aligning education with democratic values, and defining academic and civic efforts that provide students with experiential chances to comprehend what democracy implies, should be our top concerns.

The principle of equality is fundamental in a democratic society, where the right of all citizens to education is guaranteed, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, religious beliefs, or political ideas (Hooks, 2010). HEIs play a determining role in creating integral and global citizenship, as a vehicle to exercise a full democracy. Griffin affirms that "keeping the spirit of democracy alive requires a continuous revolution" (Griffin, 2010). The plurality of ideas that characterizes democratic societies in turn guarantees freedom of expression as a right of citizens under the protection of the constitution.

The US educational philosopher John Dewey, in his magnum opus *Democracy and Education,* defended his thesis that education as a laboratory of critical aptitudes is inherent in democratic forms of social organization. He understood that liberal democracy was not a theory of government, or a concept of the legitimacy of public power, but a "critical opening" style of living together. The numerous and varied interests, consciously shared as part of a community or society, and the free flow and communication between sectors of the community that allow changes and readjustments in social habits, stand out as the main characteristics (Dewey, 1916). Hence, his powerful sentence that "democracy has to be born anew in each generation, and education is its midwife" (Dewey, 1919, 1980, 139). What characterizes a democratic education is communication, understood as a process of sharing everyday experiences, beliefs, and values as part of a community.

A century later, Dewey's argument that democracy requires civic engagement to develop the potential of its citizens and

their communities, and education is the key to that engagement, remains unchanged. For this, HEIs must commit to a more progressive and open-minded education. They must establish transversal curricula that integrate the skills of knowing how to be, and how to live together, to promote informed civic participation and commitment to the fundamental values and principles of democracy. HEIs are responsible for guiding the development of civic and democratic awareness, to encourage competence and civic responsibility in children and young people. They should also stimulate their participation in the life of their community and the nation, in various expressions and aspirations. It is also their role to promote world awareness as part of civic education, to understand political life and the social system in which it develops. Civic education is committed to fulfilling those responsibilities.

Civic education projects in the Caribbean

When examining multidisciplinary projects in higher education in Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic that directly promote civic education, two stand out, one in the Dominican Republic and one in Puerto Rico. Both Antilles have a shared history but significant economic, social, demographic, cultural, and political differences. The Dominican Republic is a sovereign country, linked to the organizations of Latin American and Caribbean states. At the same time, Puerto Rico is an unincorporated territory of the United States, under the political modality of the Commonwealth. In many ways, the two projects diverge as much from each other, as from their countries' political and sociohistorical realities. However, they converge in that they both seek to advance, conceptually, the bases of a democratic education that promotes solidarity, equity, and social justice.

Dominican Republic

Dominican higher education is governed by Law 139-01, which proposes a National System of Higher Education, Science, and Technology and establishes the regulations for its operation, and

the mechanisms that ensure the quality and relevance of the services provided. These regulations place higher education within that tripartite model of 'higher education, science, and technology'. The legislation contemplates university extension as a tertiary or university level pillar. Among the essential values on which the work of higher education, science, and technology in the Dominican Republic is based are: respect for human beings, their dignity, and their freedom; the democratic spirit, social justice, and human solidarity; and equal opportunities in access to the benefits of higher education, without prejudice, due to social origin, ethnicity, religion, or gender. Currently, there are 50 HEIs: 31 universities, 14 specialized institutes of higher studies, and five technical institutes of higher studies. The enrollment for these HEI's is approximately 499,339 students of a population of 930,394 young people, between the ages of 18 and 22. As of 2022, the Dominican Republic had a population of 10,448 million. Thus, higher education students account for 8.9% of the overall population. Higher education in the Dominican Republic has significantly impacted access and equality, relevance and quality, and the connection to the productive sectors.

The university's third mission refers to the social aspect and community commitment, additional to teaching and research, and externally focused on the needs of the local and regional environment (Bueno and Fernández, 2007). According to Howard and Sharma (2006), third mission activities seek to generate, apply, and use knowledge and other capabilities of the university outside of academic environments. The Dominican legal framework for higher education recognizes the importance of the third mission and provides the mechanisms for its implementation. Guilamo (2013) points out the importance of the "contribution of the university to social welfare and quality of life, defending the best collective interests, through the link between university and society."

The Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM) is a private, non-profit, Roman Catholic run HEI which was created by Law 6150/62 in 1962. It was the country's

first private university, and has been distinguished, since 1987, with the title "Pontifical." It has two main campuses on the island. Based on the Annual Report, *Memoria 2021-2022*, PUCMM has approximately 11,763 students enrolled, and offers around 167 academic programs, including technical certificates, associate degrees, baccalaureates, masters, and doctorates.

The Civic Education Consortium of PUCMM was founded in 1997, within the framework of the Project to Support Democratic Initiatives (PID-PUCMM-USAID). Its mission was to promote and strengthen citizen training through civic education, working with the different actors of the Dominican educational community, to contribute to the construction of a democratic society, that allowed the exercise of responsible and participatory citizenship (Güílamo, 2013). The Consortium operated for close on 20 years, developing, and running, a variety of projects to promote civic education as a fundamental approach to developing a democratic nation, based on respect for human and constitutional rights. Ita activities were very much in line with its conceptual basis that raising awareness of civic and democratic education "makes its professionals more ethical and responsible, having a more active participation in the search for solutions to national problems, proactively influencing the development of public policies" (Güílamo, 2013: 9).

One of the objectives of the Consortium was to create awareness of the fact that citizenship education, in the context of higher education, is not restricted to a specific academic offer, concentration, or faculty, but rather is a multidisciplinary and transversal process. In the context of what is often referred to as the "third mission of the university," citizenship and ethics education are examples of services, beyond the academic, provided by higher education institutions to a nation. In the context of the Dominican Republic, they are referred to as "extensions."

The PUCMM Civic Education Consortium was designed to promote and disseminate knowledge to the public and improve the population's quality of life and transformation. It provided

staff training on topics such as moral and civic education, especially in its positioning in the primary and secondary education curriculum. It was involved in the design of textbooks for all grades. In its approach to teacher training, it adopted, and developed, a methodology that made teaching morality and civics practical and meaningful, using teaching-learning processes based on a content-teacher-student triangle, and involving a research-action and participatory research perspective. While the project remained active for two decades, there is no indication from documentation of any further such projects in the 2000s. However, this initiative has created a very strong model for future such initiatives in Dominican higher education and, indeed, in HEIs across the Caribbean more broadly.

In looking at the model developed by the Civic Education Consortium project, there are particular aspects that stand out as important pointers for any such future initiatives:

- This was a "third mission" collaborative project between the university and various sectors of society, seeking to strengthen responsible and participatory citizenship exercises in a democratic society.
- It was an academic and social project developed by a private university;
- It defended the democratic values of society and promoted civic and democratic education, to achieve more responsible and ethical professionals with an active disposition to transform their communities;
- Its content was developed from a multidisciplinary and transversal process, not limited to an academic offering;
- The project involved training teaching staff, design and publication of materials, such as textbooks; and design of education programmes, involving a didactic civic education methodology.
- The Dominican legal framework for higher education recognizes the importance of the third mission and provides the mechanisms for its implementation.

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rican public higher education is governed by Law 1-1966, known as the University of Puerto Rico Law. Private HEIs operate under Law 212-2018, the Law on Registration and Licensing of Educational Institutions, regulated by the Board of Post-Secondary Institutions, attached to the Department of State. It is recognised that higher education in Puerto Rico has contributed to social mobility and equity.

A project similar to the one developed in the Dominican Republic was established in Puerto Rico, at the private Universidad Ana G. Méndez (UAGM). The university serves as the global center of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) global citizenship education initiative. It is a non-profit university founded in 1949, accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), and licensed by the Board of Post-Secondary Institutions of Puerto Rico (JIP). It has three main campuses in Carolina, Cupey, and Gurabo and nine university centers across the island.

UAGM has approximately 23,000 students and offers around 240 academic programs, including technical certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctorates. The university's vision is to be recognized for academic excellence, research, and service, as well as for social responsibility and local and global projection. It commits to the promotion of social, economic, and cultural development and the well-being of Puerto Rican society, and other Hispanic communities outside of Puerto Rico. The university is characterized as an entrepreneurial university, with a strong focus on its third mission of civic engagement. Alongside its local and national focus, it is involved in international projects that address the defense and promotion of democracy and global citizenship as part of the development of the Caribbean region.

The UAGM project is underpinned by the following vision for global citizenship, and its role therein:

- Global citizenship is a set of values and principles that require an awareness of the magnitude of global

problems. It serves as a theoretical and practical mechanism that allows us to understand the global challenges that concern us all, going beyond local issues and national borders.

- As ordinary citizens who are part of the world, we can generate standard solutions, innovations, and proposals through multilateralism, the convergence of nations, and people making common cause on shared global challenges.
- Global citizenship is closely related to democracy, the rule of law, equity, social justice, and inclusion, all being essential issues in citizenship education. Comprehensive recovery agendas - economic, social, political, and institutional - cannot be advanced in the Caribbean if education is not at the center.
- The role of universities in articulating the theme of global citizenship is an ongoing and changing issue. Universities must create curricula emphasizing connections rather than separations, including models and epistemologies beyond the Western or Global North. In the same way, that reach must extend to courses, books, and experiences from many places and people with various languages, from all possible genres and media.
- Universities must strengthen experiential, dialogic, and critical pedagogies so students can relate their learning to the real world. We need systems that attract students from previously excluded communities based on color, gender, socioeconomic position, and age, for the institution to be visible to the local and global communities.
- Global citizenship is a concept, theme, and issue that should be regularly studied at local, regional, and global levels, considering factors such as isolation, exposure to diverse worldviews, and lack of access to unbiased information and diverse opinions.

As with the PUCMM Consortium, UAGM projects are collaborative initiatives between the university and various public, private, and community sectors, with much of the collaboration being international. One of its central collaborations is with the Organization of American States (OAS) to provide bilateral support to initiatives and projects, while supporting international students with scholarships.

A recent project developed at the institution is in education for global citizenship, which is supported by the Department of Human Development, Education, and Employment. The project's objectives are to develop curricular and co-curricular activities, both academic and institutional, to promote knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to transform the world into a more just, inclusive, and peaceful one. It is a dynamic initiative generated and promoted by the university administration, rather than from an academic program, making it a multidisciplinary process. UNESCO has designed the conceptual basis of the project, which aims to incorporate the teaching of democratic values in a transversal manner.

Through the project, students majoring in disciplines as varied as history, social sciences, criminal justice, communication, engineering, health, and business have all had the opportunity to participate in conferences, workshops, webinars, and seminars focusing on democratic principles, global citizenship, and human rights. Additionally, staff have presented at significant conferences on such themes, locally and internationally. The university has also developed several outreach initiatives with a view to disseminating and sharing new research. At the same time, the university's central administration, through the vice-presidencies for Government Affairs and International Affairs, have developed institutional initiatives in which they invite leaders from public, private, and community sectors to share their experiences with the university.

The 2021 conference on *The OAS and Global Citizenship: A Call to Action for Latin America* represented one of several initiatives that have served as a space for leaders from a diverse range of

bodies - such as the OAS, UNESCO, government, and academia - to come together to discuss common agendas for transformation towards peace and justice in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. This event served as a catalyst for other events developed by the different campuses of UAGM, and based on the OAS regulatory framework promoting education in democratic values based on civic participation.

UAGM's Gurabo Campus serves as the global center of the UNAI global citizenship education initiative, as referenced above. An element of this project involves activities that directly reflect its commitment to developing global citizens, ensuring that graduates are fully prepared to solve the problems humanity faces today.

To date, UAGM is the only HEI in Puerto Rico that develops projects that promote education with democratic and civic values, specifically from the concept of education for global citizenship. But, over the past two decades, there have been some other projects and initiatives undertaken that have revolved around democratic values, peace, citizenship, and justice. For example, in 2001, the Puerto Rico Department of Education developed a curriculum on civic and ethical education and, for many years, the public university, the University of Puerto Rico, held the UNESCO Chair of Education for Peace.

However, the UAGM project is much more far reaching in its remit and its achievements. It set out to identify elements that define, characterize, or exemplify global citizenship in the first instance and has provided a research-based foundation for global citizenship education worldwide and a clear path for further study, research and development. These projects at UAGM must continue to flourish to leave a significant legacy in higher education and democracy on an island in the Caribbean that has faced several social and ecological challenges over the last five years.

Finally, an anecdotal example provides some evidence of the success of this, and other such initiatives across HEIs. It is that, in a study conducted by researchers from UAGM, the concepts

of diversity, globalization, human rights, culture, and community were found to be the most used terms among more than 400 university staff, across five geographical areas.

Conclusions

Given the serious and complex challenges that liberal democracy is experiencing in the world, the role of higher education is more important than ever. At the same time, there is a need for Caribbean, Latin American, and North American states to re-affirm their commitment to democratic and civic values, peace, justice, and development in the region.

In this chapter we presented a glimpse of the development of the Caribbean as a geographic and socio-historical region, and its relationship with the current complex social, economic, political, and cultural dynamics that the region exhibits. We went on to consider the relationship between democracy, citizenship, and higher education in the context of the contemporary literature, which sees the role of higher education as crucial to countries' development, competitiveness, and innovation. We pointed to the need for HEIs to commit to, and engage in, progressive and open-minded education, establishing transversal curricula that promotes informed civic participation and commitment to the fundamental values and principles of democracy (i.e., civic education). Finally, we presented two multidisciplinary higher education projects that directly promote civic education, in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico respectively. The presentation involved an examination of the characteristics of the two projects and consideration of their positive outcomes. Both projects serve as possible models for future university initiatives to promote education in democratic values and citizenship.

In the future we aim to propose some guidelines to be considered in articulating higher education projects, initiatives, and activities in the Caribbean, informed by the research, literature review, and project experiences presented here. These will be based on a university project that promotes democratic, citizen, and ethical values in the Caribbean. The Laboratory of

Education, Democracy, and Citizenship of the Caribbean is a working group, made up of members of the academy and the public, private, and community sectors of various countries of the Hispanic and non-Hispanic Caribbean, that functions as an observatory of educational, democratic, and citizen issues. Its objective is to encourage states and HEIs to commit to a Caribbean higher education that prioritizes democratic and civic values, which are fundamental for guaranteeing and stabilizing rights in a political community.

Significant obstacles lie ahead for the changing landscape of higher education in the Caribbean. But, given the current circumstances, one has to have a lot of imagination and ingenuity to imagine that it is feasible to establish societies that are more democratic, just, and equal. It is of the utmost importance to replicate further HEI initiatives like those described above. Higher education's commitment to democracy and social engagement opens the door to new possibilities in our nations, founded on tolerance, respect, discourse, solidarity, cooperation, and justice.

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5.
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND THE CO-CREATION OF KNOWLEDGE: THE CASE OF THE NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF MEXICO

Abril Herrera Chávez and Karla Valverde Viesca

Introduction

For some years now, discussions around the role of the Latin American universities in transferring knowledge to society have been gaining relevance (Arocena & Sutz, 2001; Simbaña, 2015; Aguirre & Moreno, 2020). In part, this is the result of questioning of the formation of professionals who can attend to, and seek solutions to, the complex problems that today's societies demand. However, it also results from the lack of social awareness that graduates from different educational institutions have, in terms of their social context.

In this chapter, we discuss the central role of collaborative forms of producing science in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). We discuss some of the challenges faced by scientists in supporting public participation in research in their academic institutions, and we present some case studies from the National Autonomous University of Mexico to support our arguments.

Public participation with science: an engine for collaborative knowledge

Over the past fifteen years, the role of public engagement in research has regained popularity using more collective forms of research such as participatory-action research (PAR); crowdsourcing; collaborative, participatory, and co-creative research; hackathons; mapathons; and citizen science. While the combination of some of these methodologies with information and communication technologies (ICTs), may make them seem new, in fact, they have been extensively

used for some time. For example, for more than a hundred years 'crowdsourcing' has been used in ornithology for bird counting (Haklay, 2013), and in Latin America, the dialectics of oppression (Freire, 1970) and liberation (Gutiérrez, 1973/1988) strongly promoted the participation of indigenous groups in participatory research in the 1970s. This was seen as a means of social empowerment, which facilitated the production of local knowledge. More recently, public participation in research has breathed some fresh air into the role of non-traditional sources of data (i.e., the citizens) for knowledge production. It is now used among more diverse disciplines, allowing for the classification of millions of galaxies, generating gender-related violence data, and helping to map regions and people otherwise nonexistent in governmental repositories. The fact is that participatory knowledge-building methodologies, such as the ones previously mentioned, can incorporate a broad range of people, including those from outside academic institutions, into the production of scientific knowledge (Haklay, 2011).

Because participatory methodologies not only support the production of local knowledge, but also facilitate the faster collection and analysis of data, they have attracted the attention of disciplinary associations, and organizations such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Global Science Forum (GSF), The European Commission Directorate General for Research and Innovation, the UN Environmental Program, the Natural Environment Research Council, the US National Science Foundation, and UK Research and Innovation. These organizations, which see the great potential of public engagement in research in helping to solve some of the great challenges of the 21st Century (UNDP, 2021), have been calling for its integration within regular research and teaching activities in HEIs. For example, in the Lamy report, *LAB-FAB-APP*, which set the agenda for the EU research program 'Horizon Europe', citizens' engagement was mentioned as central to the future of European research activities. Also since

the creation of competence centers and governmental offices dedicated to supporting and encouraging participatory research methodologies, it has been a top priority in HEIs in Europe, the United States of America and the broader Global North. Meanwhile, in the Global South researchers continue to face multiple barriers to accessing the material means and the financial support that would allow them to develop such collaborative ways of doing research more sustainably.

Knowing that researchers around the world face different challenges in trying to incentivize participatory research in their institutions, the EU funded project, *TIME4CS* (2021) was set up with an initial brief to identify what factors (social and organisational[5]) could influence the pace at which public engagement in research could become institutionalized. At a social level, reaching collective understandings and defining shared values and motivations in the push for participatory research methodologies can be demanding and time-consuming, requiring a constant and long-term commitment to dialogue within the institution and with the project participants. At an organizational level, Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) such as universities and research centers can be constrained by their contextual conditions such as the local, national, and international regulations in place on engaged research. Each institution has its own internal forces in place in promoting and motivating change; thus the success of institutional changes in support of public engagement in research at one HEI, cannot simply be applied universally.

Yet, Herrera and Haklay (2022b) considered it possible to learn from others' experiences by capturing the elements of a transformational process, which then could be adapted to the

[5] As Herrera and Haklay (2022a) have described, the *social approach* starts from the modification of social patterns such as cognitive, emotional, relational, etc., largely shared by the people within an organisation, while the *organisational approach*, which should be seen as a complementary to the social one, tries to modify the organisational structures (i.e. norms, procedures, protocols, etc.) which are the basis for the organisational day to day activities.

specific requirements of each RPO. They performed a Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), based on 38 cases of RPOs around the world, where they identified as a starting point for institutional transformation the fact of having several participatory projects running in different disciplinary areas. They also found that, for transformation to succeed, it was necessary to have multiple researchers championing the use of such methodology in the institution, and to have financial means to engage in these forms of research. Lack of funding is one of the major barriers to participatory projects. Substantial funding is required to initiate and run projects, and also to maintain and sustain initiatives in the longer run. Engaged research can often be seen as a form of activism, rather than as a trustworthy scientific tool, thus making it more difficult to attract funding and support. In the Latin American context, public engagement in research faces additional barriers, such as a built-in inequality in relation to access to resources (e.g., only full-time academics from specific universities and research centers are formally allowed to engage in participatory research activities) and the possibility of reduced capital investment in research, linked to governmental policies (e.g., in Mexico, there has been a reduction of 12.66% in the national science and research budget since the beginning of the present left-wing government in 2019). Although, Latin American researchers tend to challenge these norms and despite the reduced support available they keep pushing for the inclusion of the citizens in their scientific activities.

In Mexico, the popularity of citizen-oriented research practices, beyond the academic community, is very recent. It is not until 2022 that the construction of a national institutional framework that recognizes the importance of local knowledge began. This framework is the result of the General Law for Higher Education (Ley General de Educación Superior- LGES, 2021), and is an attempt to homogenize the objectives of HEIs in the three Mexican subsystems: universities, technological universities, and teacher training schools. The General Law for Higher Education emphasizes the ethical responsibility of

higher education institutions to generate, transfer, and communicate knowledge and scientific research, to stimulate the country's development and the well-being of its citizens. For example, Article 18 and Article 22 refer to the need to link the work done by higher education institutions with society and to deliver research with social responsibility. The Law also stresses the importance of 'territorializing' higher education, that is taking account of regional and local contexts (and their social, economic, and cultural needs) and providing an education capable of contributing to community development (Cámara de Diputados, 2021). Under the Law, a National Council for the Coordination of Higher Education (El Consejo Nacional para la Coordinación de la Educación Superior-CONACES) has been established. It was installed in August 2021 and the call for its integration was published in December 2021. However, it is still at a very early stage of development and its reach, influence, and support in encouraging public engagement in research in HEIs is very limited.

The National University and the production of situated knowledge in Mexico

To exemplify how public engagement is embedded in the Mexican scientific environment we have selected the case of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, UNAM). UNAM is the largest university in Latin America, offers 132 degrees at undergraduate level and 95 postgraduate degrees (Master's and PhD programs), and runs 14 high schools throughout Mexico City which prepare students for higher education. The university has 15 Faculties, 5 Multidisciplinary Units, 9 National Schools, 35 research institutes, 13 research centers, and 13 university research programs. These are spread across the main university headquarters, 'Ciudad Universitaria', and the various external campuses in other states of the country such as Baja California; Querétaro; Morelia; Morelos and Yucatán. It also has an international presence, with campuses in the United States, Canada, and some countries in Europe.

UNAM's strategic social programs are captured in its Institutional Development Plans of 2015-2019 and 2019-2024 (UNAM, 2022b). These Plans emphasize the Mission of UNAM as a fundamental institution of society that, with the generation of interdisciplinary knowledge, aims to promote national development and achieve the construction of a better country. Indeed, the University's vision is to address the country's challenges and encourage cooperation, exchange, mobility, and extension to preserve and increase UNAM's leadership in the national and international spheres. 25% of all papers published by Mexican researchers are produced in UNAM and, on average in 2021, the university produced and published 30 new books per week (1,558 in the course of the year). With 42,535 academic staff, of which 5,430 are part of the National Research System, UNAM is a top Latin American leader in scholarship, capable of great national and international impact (UNAM, 2022a).

While in the past research activities at UNAM were usually concentrated in research Centers, nowadays a good percentage of the research generated at UNAM is carried out by academic staff from within the different Faculties and Schools of the University. These research activities are funded through two support programs, *PAPIIT* and *PAPIME*, which are offered by the University's General Direction of Academic Affairs (Dirección General de Asuntos del Personal Académico-DGAPA).

PAPITT, Support Program for Technological Research and Innovation Projects (Programa de Apoyo a Proyectos de Investigación e Innovación Tecnológica) supports the development of fundamental and applied research, technological innovation and the formation of research groups in, and between, academic entities through research projects and technological innovation, whose design leads to the generation of knowledge. PAPIIT funding is available for full-time researchers and professors and lasts a minimum of two, and a maximum of three, years. Since 2020, this Program has had a special call for inter-institutional projects whose main

objective is to promote research that contributes to solutions of national problems. In 2021 alone, PAPIIT funded 2,100 projects. Of those grants, 1,449 were for natural sciences projects; 130 were for applied science, or technological innovation, projects; 88 for research groups; 409 for specific tasks and 24 for projects aimed at developing research and teaching on topics of high relevance for Mexico (UNAM, 2021).

PAPIME, Support Program for Projects to Innovate and Improve Education (Programa de Apoyo a Proyectos para Innovar y Mejorar la Educación) promotes the improvement and development of academic staff by supporting projects that lead to innovation and improvement of the teaching-learning process. It is aimed at full-time career professors, researchers, associates, and tenured researchers, as well as full-time tenured academic technicians. It lasts a minimum of one, and a maximum of three, years.

Both *PAPIIT* and *PAPIME* are flexible in terms of the type of projects they support and, thus, receive a very high number of applications. This makes it harder for participatory-based research projects, with less defined outcomes, to receive financial support under these programs. For that reason, researchers interested in developing public engagement in research at UNAM tend to look to external sources of funding such as the ones coming from the National Science and Technology Council (Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología-CONACYT), or other national and international sources of funding aimed at specific purposes.

Undoubtedly, UNAM is an institution of excellence in scholarship. However, it is hard to believe that a higher education institution such as UNAM, which produces almost a quarter of the research produced in Mexico (Gaceta UNAM, 2021), does not have clear objectives to encourage and support public engagement with research. One of the possible reasons for this could be that much of the research funded under the funding programs is expected to produce short to medium-term explicit results. This is something that is very difficult for publicly oriented research projects to achieve. By their nature,

they have a long lead-in time, as researchers require time to build trust with participants before they can even begin to generate results, and then, results are not always predictable.

The role of collaborative research in Research and Innovation in México

While institutional support for participatory engaged research might be scarce at UNAM, researchers have continued with individual and collective efforts to include citizens and society in the development and production of research outcomes. However, given the size and geographical spread of UNAM, it is frequently the case that research projects with similar objectives can be going on across the university, without connections being made between them. Furthermore, most of the time participatory projects rarely look to institutional support, other than funding (when they can fit the particular criteria). Instead, they reach out to communities, increasing the outreach of their activities or results, or even engage internally directly with the student community. It is also the case that these projects rarely receive recognition for the academic promotion of those who champion them.

Despite those barriers, researchers at UNAM have developed a number of collaborative and participatory research initiatives. Examples of these include: the Research Centre in Complexity Sciences; the Research Centre in Environmental Geography; and the Ecosystems Research Institute and Sustainability. Within the Research Centre in Complexity Sciences, during the 2009 AH1/N1 pandemic, researchers developed REPORTA, a crowdsourced monitoring system. During the Covid 19 pandemic, researchers made efforts to promote information on products and services through web pages and other social media (see https:// coronavirusapoyamexico.c3.unam.mx). At the Research Centre in Environmental Geography researchers have developed projects such as the Citizen Observatory of Drought, another on Mapping, Measurement and Monitoring exploring participatory science and social innovation to improve community territorial management and defense, and

one on New Community Monitoring Systems as Bases for Socio-Territorial and Environmental Innovation in Rural and Peri-urban Communities in Situations of Poverty, Marginalization and Environmental Conflict. Researchers at the Ecosystems Research Institute and Sustainability are particularly interested in understanding the interactions between human groups and natural systems (socio-ecological systems). They undertake interdisciplinary projects, using tools from both the social and ecological sciences to enhance understanding of environmental problems, as well as to assist in the construction of proposals for solutions or mitigation of such problems. Their aim is to contribute to the construction of citizenship by using science-society research tools to narrow the gap between science (institutions, authors and products) and societies (in this case populations of rural areas, especially coastal areas). Within the Faculty of Architecture, there have been a series of interviews conducted, in collaboration with the centers of arts and crafts of six facilities dedicated to the exhibition and production of culture in Mexico City. In some undergraduate courses, participatory design is at the center of the study programs.

In search of cohesive cities: Project H2020 and Co-creation

Scientific and technological cooperation between Mexico and the European Union dates back several decades to the innovation and competitiveness programs of the 1980s, which are seen as the antecedents of H2020. In those years, Mexico was considered to be a developing nation and therefore eligible for European Union funding. However, as of 2014, Mexico was removed from the list of developing countries and, therefore, no longer able to avail directly of European Union funding. National researchers were still able to participate in joint projects with EU partners, which would qualify for funding. The body in charge of promoting the Mexico/EU research collaboration at the national level is CONACYT, while at the institutional level of the UNAM it is the Coordination of Humanities.

In the two years, 2015 and 2016, efforts were made to

coordinate the interests of Mexican and European scientists. The Faculty of Political and Social Sciences began collaborating with European universities on a proposal for a Horizon 2020 project and, in 2016, the European Commission approved funding for the collective project *The Cohesive City: Addressing stigmatization in disadvantaged neighborhoods (Co-Creation)*. The participating institutions are four universities: Oxford Brookes University (UK); University of Bath (UK); Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil); the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and three NGOs: European Alternatives (EA) (France); City Mine(d), (Belgium); and Tesserae (TSR) (Germany). The project is based at Oxford Brookes University, with UNAM's Faculty of Political and Social Sciences acting as headquarters and Mexican partner. The Collaboration Agreement between UNAM and the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Program of the European Union came into force in January 2017, with funding provided under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Agreement No 734770.

The main objective of the joint project is to reflect on innovative approaches in the field of development studies and direct the efforts of UNAM towards the generation of projects that provide relevant information on current problems in the field. For this, a platform has been created for the exchange of knowledge and the development of innovative approaches in the field of socio-spatial segregation and urban territorial stigmatization. The project aims to develop methods that will be translated into guidelines and tools that are useful for decision-makers in the development of public policies. The initiative brings together the complementary experience of the seven partners and is based on the exchange of knowledge and research between the team members.

For researchers at UNAM's Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, our project provides the opportunity to join Higher Education Institutions in a global and multinational discussion that seeks new theoretical directions to solve real problems faced by societies. In particular, it allows us to collaborate in the construction of a new concept of 'cohesive cities' and

contribute to reducing the inequality gaps that characterize societies, both North and South.

Acknowledgement
Part of the research included in this chapter was supported by European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101006201, project TIME4CS (Supporting sustainable Institutional Changes to promote Citizen Science in Science and Technology).

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6
ETHNICITY/RACE, LANGUAGE AND INEQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

Daniel Mato

Racism, as both the founding ideology and regime of power constitutive of the Modern World, is a crucial cause of pervasive inequalities in all of 'Latin American'[6] societies. As an ideology, it rests on the assumption that human beings would be classifiable into 'races' and that some of them would be 'superior' to others. In Latin America, this ideology and regime of power date back to the colonial period. They are constitutive of the establishment of postcolonial republican States, continue in force, and their consequences primarily affect persons and communities of African descent and indigenous peoples.

[6] For ease of communication, I use the term 'Latin America' to name the American continent countries whose official languages include Spanish or Portuguese, even though it is questionable. On the one hand, it is problematic because the name 'America' was given to this continental mass as part of the European colonization process, ignoring the fact that the Cuna (or Guna) Indians called it Abya Yala. For this reason, many indigenous leaders and organizations increasingly use the term Abya Yala instead of America. On the other hand, the adjective 'Latin' ignores the presence of Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples. According to the most recent census data, jointly taken, these two population groups constitute about 30% of the total population of this region of the world. The expression 'Latin America' was not part of the lexicon of the independence movements of the early nineteenth century, which usually used the term 'Hispanic America'. Both terms hide the presence of Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples. The idea of 'Latinity' and its application as an adjective was proposed in 1836 by the French intellectual Michel Chevalier. 'Latin America', as a compound name, first appeared in a book by the Colombian intellectual José María Torres Caicedo in 1865 (Ardao, 1980).

Histories and current situations vary from country to country, often between regional contexts within countries and in the cases of specific peoples and communities. However, beyond those differences, some commonalities are clear. Since the founding of postcolonial Latin American states, hegemonic social groups have legitimized their political and economic dominance over Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples through racist public, cultural and educational policies. Over time, they have increasingly used the press and other mass media to strengthen this endeavor. They have been so successful that racism is currently 'naturalized' in these societies to the extent that most of the population often limit the usage of the concept of racism to explicit facts of 'racial segregation' and 'racial discrimination', particularly concerning cases of police brutality in other world regions (Mato, 2021). This reductionism is indicative of the generalized ignorance of the role of racism in the historical origin of social inequalities, and how it currently permeates hegemonic forms of 'common sense', and is permanently reproduced through institutional norms, mechanisms, and practices.

Higher Education systems and institutions[7] have not been alien to the reproduction and naturalization of racism in Latin America societies and, in fact, worldwide. They have historically played several significant roles in this regard. Historically, they excluded the Afro-descendant's and indigenous peoples' world visions, histories, languages, and knowledge and learning systems from the curricula, or even presented them as backward or openly invalid. In practice, most of them have jeopardized

[7]I use the expression 'Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs) to refer to both universities and other kinds of higher education institutions as 'tertiary institutions' or 'higher education schools', among other names they receive in specific countries. I use the expression 'Higher Education Systems' to name the applicable laws, ministries, or secretaries in charge, quality evaluation and accreditation agencies, their norms, and practices. I indistinctly use the expressions 'Higher Education' and 'Higher Education systems and institutions' to comprehensively name the social field of both systems and institutions.

these peoples' access to Higher Education and the quality and success of the trajectories of those who managed to gain access. Several naturalized mechanisms have been instrumental in this regard, such as economic barriers, distant locations, monolingual education, and the absence or insufficiencies of reparatory or affirmative action programs. They have also trained professionals mono-culturally in every discipline. Because of this biased training, most of these professionals reproduce racism in their professional practices, including teachers for entire educational systems, journalists, historians, sociologists, physicians and nurses, and economists, among others.

Moreover, they have also projected their racist mono-cultural bias as public opinion producers and citizenship education institutions. In sum, most of them have significantly contributed to the reproduction and naturalization of racism. However, a few Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and some issue-focused teams, within some of them, have developed valuable critical practices to fight or contest racism in HEIs , and even beyond them, in their respective societies. Some of these critical agents have built networks that work collaboratively to fight racism in Higher Education and transform universities to further contribute to the eradication of racism in our societies (Mato, 2022).

This chapter seeks to contribute to the debate on eradicating racism in Higher Education systems and institutions in Latin America by contextualizing and disaggregating the idea of 'structural racism', to study the specific ways it operates in this particular social field. Thus, it hopes to facilitate the construction of concrete ways of intervention to eradicate it.

On the idea of 'structural racism' and the problematic consequences of some of its usages

Racism is not only expressed and exercised through openly visible norms and practices, which is what the expressions 'racial segregation' and 'racial discrimination' designate. It also operates through economic, political, and social disadvantages,

accumulated over centuries, whose existence has been 'naturalized' and therefore has become almost 'invisible' to most social agents. These disadvantages result from inequities and forms of inequality and exclusion initially built up during the colonial period, and subsequently deepened and extended by the political and economic social groups who ruled the postcolonial independent states. The new ruling social groups furthered the colonial practice of seizing the indigenous peoples' traditional territories. Moreover, they also reduced many of the indigenous people to diverse forms of forced work, and displaced others as landless populations who, in practice, were forced to enter the labor market in particularly unfavorable conditions. These new ruling groups also continued to exploit the enslaved afro-descendants for a period, the length of which varied from one country to another. Then, at the time of their emancipation, the formerly enslaved persons did not obtain any economic reparation, not even material resources to ensure their daily life.

These have been the adverse conditions, which set the context for the indigenous and Afro-descendant populations and their lives in the new republican 'democracies'. Since that initial period, multiple laws, public policies, and institutional practices have continued to reproduce those initial inequities, efficiently legitimized through cultural and educational policies that produced the current hegemonic forms of 'common sense'. The idea of 'structural racism' refers coherently to these historic inequalities and their ongoing reproduction through many means (Almeida, 2019; CEPAL & FILAC, 2020; CEPAL & UNFPA, 2020; United Nations, 2005).

Even though the concept of 'structural racism' is correct to stress the role of racism in the construction and reproduction of contemporary societies, some usages of the term may be misguided in designing and implementing effective interventions to fight racism. We must contextualize and disaggregate this broad category and identify how racism operates in social spaces and institutions. It consistently lies hidden, or almost invisible, to most social agents, who perceive

it as a problem, taking place solely 'outside' of their respective context of practice. The idea of 'structural racism' is frequently understood as if racism were 'coming from outside' and therefore beyond one's capacity to intervene. In this sense, it works as an "epistemological obstacle" (Bachelard, 1972 [1934]), an assumed truth that blocks further inquiry and, what is particularly problematic in this case, blocks any action.

I have had numerous opportunities to observe how particular representations of the idea of 'structural racism' operate in Higher Education.[8] For instance, significant decision

[8]It seems necessary to explain the basis for my statements in this paragraph and others throughout this text. The analysis and interpretations offered in this chapter do not only rely on published sources but also on my involvement in the field. Apart from bibliographical and documentary research, they are based on personal learning, achieved through participant observation, interviews, and other exchanges with numerous university teachers, students, and authorities; Afro-descendant and indigenous intellectuals, leaders, and other activists; and governmental officials. I derived those learning opportunities from lectures, seminars, workshops, advisory missions, and other activities in which I engaged at over a hundred universities and other institutions and related social organizations in fourteen Latin American countries since the 1990s. Two specific engagements greatly enhanced my knowledge about the matters discussed in this chapter. Firstly, a fruitful source of learning has been my position as director of three region-wide research and policy advice projects on Higher Education, Afrodescendants, and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America, commissioned by the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNESCO-IESALC). The development of these projects involved the participation of about eighty colleagues from twelve countries and took me into field research and advisory activities throughout the region between 2007 and 2018. The second enriching source derived from my role as the director of the Programa Educación Superior y Pueblos Indígenas y Afrodescendientes en América Latina (Programa ESIAL), at the Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, since 2011. From this program, we promoted the creation of the Red Interuniversitaria Educación Superior y Pueblos Indígenas y Afrodescendientes en América Latina (Red ESIAL), which currently has the participation of

makers, and other parties in Higher Education, often assume that the absence, or small proportion, of teachers and students of Afro-descendant and indigenous populations in HEIs is 'simply' the consequence of 'structural racism'. This established assumption prevents contextualized empirical research about the matter and facilitates the conclusion that Higher Education systems and institutions cannot do anything to fight this problem. Something analogous happens with regard to the absence of these peoples' worldviews, languages, epistemologies, and knowledge systems in the curriculum. These assumptions place the problem and any possible responses outside of the control of Higher Education.

Eradicating racism in Higher Education is crucial to democratizing contemporary societies because it affects, not only the lives and human rights of Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples, but also the quality of Higher Education at large. This, in turn, has severe consequences for the respective societies. HEIs train professionals that occupy social, economic, and political positions of significant influence in their societies. They train teachers who play critical roles at all educational levels. They train experts in social communication, sociology, political science, and related fields that guide public opinion trends and public policy orientations. They train specialists in Health, Agronomics, Engineering, and Economics, who make decisions for whole 'pluricultural' societies based on

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sixty universities from eleven countries, and has sponsored six region-wide working meetings that included presentations on more than one hundred experiences in this field. Co-working with participant colleagues and students at these meetings has been a most valuable learning experience. From the Programa ESIAL, we have also launched the Iniciativa para la Eradicación del Racismo en la Educación Superior en América Latina, and three regional campaigns, involving the participation of over fifty university teams from seven Latin American countries. I do not pretend that these antecedents grant any 'truth' status to the discussion offered here, I only present it to illustrate the types of empirical referents on which it is based and my relationship to the field.

their 'monocultural' knowledge and prejudices. HEIs not only constitute spaces for technical and professional training, but also carry out research, engage in public issues and projects, and form citizens and public opinion.

Multiple racism factors challenge the equity and quality of Higher Education

In Latin America, HEIs have historically played essential roles in hiding cultural diversity, through the building of homogenizing representations of the supposed majorities of the respective countries' populations. On the other hand, they have 'otherized' indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples and transformed them into objects of study, even against their will. They have done so from Eurocentric research approaches that produced disqualifying representations of the ways of life, worldviews, languages, knowledge systems, and future projects of their 'races'. Moreover, they have trained professionals in every discipline on this basis, thus contributing to naturalizing and reproducing racism throughout society.

Fortunately, mainly since the 1990s, in an increasing number of Latin American countries, various intervention modalities have been implemented to fight racism, or at least contain its consequences, in Higher Education systems and institutions. There is a large set of very diverse initiatives. A few of them have been established by governments and international agencies, but most of them by 'conventional' HEIs, 'intercultural' HEIs, and 'own' HEIs as created by Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples' organizations themselves.[9] It is beyond the aim of this

[9]I indistinctly use the adjectives 'monocultural' and 'conventional' to name the predominant kinds of HEIs whose mission, institutional design, or curriculum does not explicitly consider the rights or demands of Afro-descendant or indigenous peoples. In contrast, following the predominant usage by Afrodescendant and indigenous peoples' organizations, I employ the adjectives 'intercultural','own','indigenous', or 'Afro-descendant', depending on specific cases, to identify those other universities that these peoples' organizations have created. Several publications discuss the reasons

chapter to discuss these different kinds of experiences; many of which have been examined in former publications (See: Baronnet & Bermúdez Urbina, coords., 2019; Casillas & Santini., 2009; Ceto, 2019; CGEIB, comp., 2004; Di Caudo, et al, coords. , 2016; Dietz & Mateos Cortés, 2019; Hernández Loeza, et al, coords., 2013; Hooker Blanford, 2018; Mandepora Chundary, 2016; Mato, 2016, 2019, 2021, 2022; Mato, coord., 2008, 2009, 2017, 2018, 2019; Mazabel Cuásquer, 2018; Palechor, 2017; Sarango, 2009; Schmelkes, 2008; Similox, 2019).

To advance towards the eradication of racism in Higher Education, it is not only necessary to differentiate between racism and its most visible forms of expression, 'racial discrimination' and 'racial segregation', as pointed out above. It is also imperative to refine the analysis of the broad and relatively imprecise set of problems that are often referred to by the term, 'structural racism'. In order to design and implement effective actions aimed at eradicating racism, it is essential to disaggregate this concept, not as a merely conceptual exercise, but as a purposeful one. However, as the first step in this endeavor, it is advisable to distinguish between the main factors of structural, systemic, and institutional racism. Although in practice these factors are not independent from each other, this analytical effort may contribute to envisioning better ways to fight racism.

Structural racism factors, in a restricted sense

Fighting racism in Higher Education demands responses to the challenges placed by certain social factors, whose roots lay beyond this field, but are accountable for specific forms of racism that affect its systems and institutions. We might name these 'structural racism factors, in a restricted sense' to mark a difference between them and the more comprehensive concept of 'structural racism'.

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and criteria for distinguishing between these different types of universities and provide numerous examples (Mato 2016, 2019; Mato, ed, 2008, 2018).

Examples of these factors are the historically accumulated disadvantages that stem from the dispossession of the territories of indigenous peoples that began during the European invasion and colonization of the continent, which came to be Euro-centrically named 'America'. This dispossession continued in the post-colonial republics, often through the action of military or paramilitary forces. Consequently, these peoples were deprived of their food sources and shelter and compelled to seek new forms of livelihood. In many cases, they were also forced to work in mines, mills, and estates in significantly disadvantaged conditions. Similar problems affected Afro-descendant communities who, after fleeing slavery, or when slavery ended, established territorial areas of subsistence (*quilombos, cumbés, or palenques*, among other denominations, in various countries) from which, in many cases, they were later expelled. With variations in form, these problems have continued to affect the region's communities of Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples up to the present day. Some economic policies and the businesses of agriculture, cattle ranching, oil, mining, urbanization, and tourism development are among the factors that continue to affect these peoples' traditional territories and ways of living.

Associated with the formerly mentioned factors, sanitation issues and unequal access to justice, health, housing, and education usually motivate the displacement of entire communities, or some of their members, towards urban centers. Their arrival and inclusion into these new contexts usually occurs under even more disadvantageous conditions than those suffered by other sectors affected by economic poverty. These additional disadvantages relate to the combination of a number of factors: their status as domestic migrants lacking market-value work qualifications relevant in their new places of residence; lack of sufficiently effective social support networks; cultural differences, and in many cases, linguistic differences. Because of the hegemonic usage of the expression 'vulnerable populations', it has to be stressed that, as the former brief account illustrates, they are not 'vulnerable populations' but

'wounded populations'. Therefore, they do not 'need help' but instead, deserve 'reparation'.

These complex historical processes have a range of consequences. In education, they can be seen in the illiteracy levels of Afro-descendants and indigenous peoples as well as in the fact that their incomplete primary or secondary education rates are frequently higher than those of other sectors of the population. In this sense, these problems generate inequality and exclusion and constitute 'structural causes' for the low participation rates of indigenous and Afro-descendant people among students, teaching bodies, authorities, and other workers in 'conventional' HEIs (see, for instance: Cervantes Anangonó & Tuaza Castro, 2021; Da Silva, M.N. 2021; Da Silva Ferreira, et al., 2020; Gomes do Nascimento, 2021; Mato, 2020; Mato, coord. 2020; Ocoró Loango & Mazabel, 2021; United Nations, 2005, 2010, 2014, 2019; Varela Huerta & Pech Polanco, 2021).

Little can be done directly, and immediately, by 'conventional' HEIs to reverse these problems. However, it is possible to contribute to change on a longer-term basis through the research these institutions carry out and the professional training they provide. All students must learn about these historical and contemporary processes and understand and appreciate the need to respond to them. It is necessary to dedicate research initiatives to the study of these problems and to design responses to them. It is also essential to work jointly with these peoples' communities to develop 'conventional' HEI social engagement programs to ensure their rights, and to strengthen the primary and secondary educational institutions that serve them. In the same vein, it is necessary to establish HEIs' facilities in localities close to their communities. Additionally, the creation of affirmative action programs is a way to improve access, training, and graduation of students from Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples' communities to 'conventional' HEIs, as well as to increase incorporation of teachers, officers, and other workers from these same peoples (Mato, 2020, 2022).

These diverse initiatives represent an appropriate response to the 'structural racism factors in a restricted sense' that affect the quality of conventional Higher Education, and jeopardize the educational rights of Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples even if they are insufficient to solve them. To advance to the point of solution demands a comprehensive response to systemic and institutional racism factors, as discussed in the following paragraphs.

Systemic racism factors

The systemic factors that ensure the naturalization and reproduction of racism are generally not overtly evident. The expression 'systemic racism factors' may help to highlight the significance of the norms, policies, and practices of each country's Higher Education system, in particular. For example, current regulations in all Higher Education systems in the region establish the need to hold a higher education degree to teach at any HEI, which might be considered a 'normal' requirement. The problem is that this type of regulation prevents 'wise persons' from indigenous or Afro-descendant peoples, who do not have such a degree, from teaching at a HEI. The paradox is that, despite not having a title, they may be the best equipped for a particular post or, even the only ones who can impart the specific knowledge required (Cervantes Anangonó & Tuaza Castro, 2021; Da Silva, M.N. 2021; Da Silva Ferreira, et al., 2020; Gomes do Nascimento, 2021; Mato, 2020; Mato, coord., 2020; Ocoró Loango & Mazabel, 2021; Varela Huerta & Pech Polanco, 2021). An example of this is the case of indigenous or Afro-descendant 'wise persons' who are the best-qualified specialists in the therapeutic uses of certain plant species, the management and improvement of some seeds and tubers, or the cures for certain illnesses. Even in the rare cases where these people are allowed to teach, under the regulations, they are not recognized and paid as teachers on equal terms with those with university degrees.

These provisions reflect the 'monocultural' nature of Higher Education systems, which scorns valuable knowledge that is not

academically certified. In doing so, they not only deprive HEIs of this knowledge but also reproduce forms of 'invisible' racism. They restrict the possibility of the best speakers of indigenous people's languages teaching their language at universities, or of being paid fairly when they are sometimes allowed to do so. These 'monocultural' and racist norms contrast with the approach of pharmaceutical and agro-industrial corporations', who actively search for these types of knowledge and dedicate efforts to obtain and patent them for their corporate benefit.

In response to this problematic situation, some governments have established intercultural HEIs, while some indigenous peoples' organizations have created their own HEIs. There are significant differences between these two kinds of universities, nonetheless to discuss them is beyond the remit of this chapter. However, they are well illustrated in several publications (See.: Baronnet & Bermúdez Urbina, coords., 2019; Casillas & Santini., 2009; Ceto, 2019;CGEIB, comp., 2004; Di Caudo, et al, coords. , 2016; Dietz & Mateos Cortés, 2019; Hernández Loeza, et al, coords., 2013; Hooker Blanford, 2018; Mandepora Chundary, 2016; Mato, 2016, 2019, 2021, 2022; Mato, coord., 2008, 2009, 2017, 2018, 2019; Mazabel Cuásquer, 2018; Palechor, 2017; Sarango, 2009; Schmelkes, 2008; Similox, 2019).

Institutional racism factors

'Systemic' and 'institutional racism factors' tend to be closely aligned, or work complementarily. At one or other, or both levels, they tend to inform regulations that confine the teaching spaces of many disciplines exclusively to classrooms and laboratories, ignoring valuable places outside of them. However, it is almost impossible to graduate in some disciplines without interning in off-campus settings. The fields of Agronomy and Ecology are among the best examples of this off-campus requirement. Practice-based learning processes are also vital in training health professionals, although in that case, the training is carried out almost exclusively in academically controlled spaces, such as hospitals. In certain medical specialties, efforts are made to complement academic and

hospital-based training with field experience. In some countries, those undertaking professional training to work in the 'social services' do placements in communities of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples. However, carrying out these activities in those settings does not necessarily mean they are free of racism. On the contrary, given the systemic and institutional norms that regulate the activities, they often reinforce it. To respond to these challenges, it is not enough to have initiatives at the level of departments, faculties, or institutions because their actions are subject to evaluation by quality evaluation and accreditation agencies. Instead, it is necessary to have appropriate systemic regulations and accreditation processes in place.

In the fields of most humanities and social science disciplines, it is less common to see training modalities outside of traditional classrooms, than it is in the professional training areas as discussed above. However, in some innovative universities, and in some particular disciplines, learning experiences in the field and collaborative work with Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples' communities are training approaches that have been gaining ground for several decades. Usually, these innovative forms of learning have been developed and implemented beyond the systemic regulations and institutional curricula. Unfortunately, most institutions do not recognize the value of these work modalities, because these field experiences are not validated by evaluation and accreditation agencies.

While 'institutional racism factors' are present in virtually all HEIs, they may differ from institution to institution, associated as they are with each institution's set of particular courses, study plans, and learning activities. Most HEIs´ courses do not include the particular professional training demanded by Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples' communities. This gap is particularly remarkable in HEIs located in regions where these communities have a significant demographic presence and an obvious training need. For instance, in most universities, professional training in Agronomics is almost exclusively oriented to serve the demands of large agricultural and cattle

ranching corporations. It rarely provides training opportunities in areas such as community or family agriculture, or small animal husbandry livestock. Moreover, in most HEIs in those regions, the worldviews, values, languages, knowledge systems, and learning styles of the Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples' communities of the territories do not make part of the curriculum of any of the courses. In fact, they are often scorned in teaching practice.

This institutional racist bias in professional training is especially concerning in the case of specific fields of study, such as health. In Latin America, most health professionals graduate without receiving teaching input on local Afro-descendant and indigenous communities, their therapeutic knowledge and practices, or the diseases endemic in their communities. This is quite worrisome, when we consider that, according to the most recent census data from Latin America, 8% of the population identify themselves as members of an indigenous people, while 21.5% identify as Afro-descendant. Similar gaps exist in the training most HEIs provide to those studying agronomics, law, economics, and other fields in which the differences between the hegemonic paradigms and the peoples' knowledge systems are highly problematic.

The 'institutional racism factors' described above, not only affect the quality of training received by students, they also serve to alienate students from Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples' communities, thus jeopardizing their ability to achieve academically. Numerous publications illustrate further how these factors and 'racial discrimination' practices significantly affect Afro-descendant and indigenous students' performance in most Latin American countries (See: Bedolla Mendoza, 2020; Calambas Pillimué & Tunubalá Yalanda, 2020; Castillo Guzmán, 2020; Cervantes Anangonó & Tuaza Castro, 2021; da Silva Ferreira et al., 2020; da Silva, M.N., 2021; Diniz, 2020; Gomes do Nascimento, 2021; Gómez Gallegos, 2018; Ivanoff et al 2020; Luciano & Amaral, 2021; Luiz Paiva, 2020; Mancinelli 2019; Mato 2020, 2022; Mato, coord., 2018, 2020; Ocoró Loango & da Silva, 2018; Ocoró Loango & Mazabel, 2021; Olaza, 2021;

Ossola 2013; Quintero, 2020; Rea Ángeles, 2018; Rebolledo Cortes, 2020; Ribeiro de Vargas & Bonin, 2020; Soto Sánchez y Berrio Palomo, 2020; Valdez et al, 2020; Varela Huerta & Pech Polanco, 2021; Velasco Cruz, 2018).

Final remarks

The concepts of democracy and racism are antithetical at their core. Racism is a crucial cause of the pervasive reproduction of inequities and inequalities in all contemporary societies. In Latin America, racism mainly affects persons and communities of African descent and indigenous peoples, where hegemonic social groups have legitimized their political and economic dominance over Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples, through racist public cultural and educational policies.

Higher Education systems and institutions have historically played a significant role in the institutionalization of racism, and they can play a role in eradicating it. HEIs educate and train professionals who play influential roles in every social field: including teachers; journalists; historians; sociologists; physicians, and other medical practitioners; and economists; to name just some. Moreover, they are also significant public opinion producers and citizenship education institutions. Eradicating racism in Higher Education is a prerequisite to eradicating racism throughout society.

The concept of 'structural racism' stresses the role that racism plays in the construction and reproduction of contemporary societies. However, the term is sometimes used in an absolutist sense by institutions to excuse a lack of effective intervention against racism in their specific case. Thus, it is necessary to contextualize and disaggregate the broad category of 'structural racism' to identify the concrete ways racism operates in each particular social space and institution, and to identify the ways in which it can be countered. In Higher Education, the idea is often understood as if racism were 'coming from outside' and therefore beyond the institution's intervention capacity. In this sense, it works as "an epistemological obstacle" (Bachelard,

1972 [1934]), an assumed truth that blocks further inquiry and, more worrisome, blocks any corrective action.

It is necessary to differentiate between the factors as defined in this chapter - the 'structural factors in a restricted sense', the 'systemic factors', and the 'institutional factors'. It is hoped that this analytical breakdown will contribute, in the first instance, to the conduct of empirical research to analyze the particular ways in which racism is reproduced and naturalized in Higher Education systems and institutions. Secondly, it is hoped that it will contribute to the design of effective ways to combat and eradicate it.

The design of such modes of intervention will require analysis, in a disaggregated way, of the social representations, norms, institutional practices, and other factors that continuously reproduce racism, and the social agents involved in these processes. The magnitude and complexity of the problem require that these interventions be directed beyond the academic sphere. They also require the active participation of Afro-descendant´s and indigenous people´s organizations and communities at all levels of research, design, and implementation of anti-racism interventions.

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7
TEACHING DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA

Mauricio Devoto

Within a general context of the weakening of the liberal democratic model, and given the special focus for several decades now, on the development of national and popular models in different Latin American countries, this chapter considers the close relationship of this topic with the citizenship culture and the type of civic and democratic education afforded to citizens. It introduces key issues to be considered when analyzing, devising and promoting public policies on democratic and citizen education in the region. This is the case of the context of extreme political schism models dividing society and the general state of anomie. Finally, and in order to cooperate with the promotion of democracy and citizenship education at a higher level, the plan is to work on the development of a functional theory of democratic citizenship supported by civic ethics with minimum standards of constitutional regulatory sources.

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present introductory ideas and facts related to democratic systems, citizenship education and civic engagement in Latin America in order to support the democratic mission of higher education. In it, I will analyze certain general characteristics of two democratic and citizenship antagonist models in the region: the national and popular model, and the liberal/catch-all democratic model. I will subsequently discuss "foolish anomie" (Nino 1992), or the 'state of anomie', a condition which is widespread amongst Latin American citizens, threatening the construction and strength of democratic systems. I will introduce the concept of 'citizen

ethics' (minimum civic ethics) as an ambitious alternative proposal for overcoming the schisms dividing societies in the region. I consider that the analysis and proposal that follows - which implies a significant degree of honesty, deconstruction, and joint civic construction - are essential to face any project promoting democracy. Finally, I will discuss the role of civic engagement, which should provide a substantial part of the democratic system but under one condition - which we, as citizens, are prepared to exercise our constitutional role: rights, but duties as well.

Context

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the liberal democratic system appeared to have come to stay. The strengthening of its essential principles, values and institutions became common currency in the countries of the Western world; its extension beyond those borders became the vision of a foreseen international order. The new generations started to consider democracy as the given political system - one with structured foundations, with contours and a maintenance system, which while lacking clarity and posing no interest, is sufficiently solid to provide and guarantee rights and enable private initiatives. It was a time that saw the emergence of new and extreme definitions, such as those referring to the end of history or the end of ideologies (Fukuyama 1992). However, circumstances of a diverse type conspired, to expose the logical unpredictability of cultural differences between the West and the East and to show the flaws in the "end of history" argument. Instead, it became clear that democracy was in a constant state of construction and evolution. The survival of the democratic system over other regimes demanded the commitment and participation of all those involved.

Now, a quarter of the way through the 21st century, democracy, for many, appears to be unsuccessful in accomplishing all it promised. Thus, it is common to hear, and read, warnings from authoritarian or populist regimes about different or new ways in which the democratic system is

attacked, weakened, or transformed from within. Democracy has proved to be, not just one model, but several variants or models. What was seen as a 'once and forever' system, was actually a contingent structure, with its success or failure (democratic quality), not being dependent on certain minimum common values, but on what the current model understood by democracy (Devoto 2015). In recent years, we have found much academic literature on such issues, nowadays also available to the public (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012; Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018). As such work demonstrates, Latin America offered - and continues to offer - a precious and, at the same time, endless source of emblematic cases: under the common umbrella of democracy.

Considering the Manichaean and simplistic division of models of democracy and types of citizenship that seems to scourge the region, an initial clarification would probably be useful. Democracy - like the republic and citizenship - does not exist in nature. A democrat is not born; a democrat is made. Democratic life can be acquired only through a correct political education. It is enough to read the Greek classics to give us an idea of the complexity involved in the building of citizenship at the dawn of democracy, and later, the importance of education in civic virtue for the organization of the Roman Republic. Democracy is not a permanent and irreversible state, but a goal, a purpose that is never fully realized, but is constantly being aimed for. In the words of Spanish moral philosopher, Rubio Carracedo (2007):

> *Democracy is the decisive conquest of humanity, but the social contract that supports it must be repeated in every generation. It is for such reason that the task of civic-democratic education is constant, that is to say, it must be repeated equally with each generation. Therefore, sensitivity to democratic values is not inherited; on the contrary, political naturalism - the drive for domination - is reborn with each new individual. Therefore, the task of*

democratic education needs to be endlessly restarted (Carracedo 2007)

Understanding that citizenship and its daily actions constitute an essential element of the political system leads me to link the democratic education that citizens receive in each country with the model of democracy, or pseudo-democracy, established (or imposed). Because ultimately, "…in a (democratic) republic, citizens *do not have* a political system, but *constitute* the political system (Rosler 2016).

Besides acknowledging that the problem has a global nature, each region presents, in turn, a series of common cultural issues that, to a greater or lesser extent, explain the future of their respective political systems. As regards Latin America, academic research and political criticism tend to minimize, or ignore, a characteristic that conditions all democratic construction: Latin American citizens are in a 'state of anomie' that is, a chronic tendency to breach the rules. This behavior or condition - which exists in all societies worldwide at some level – has a considerable role to play in explaining the schisms, contradictions and ironies that mark the future of democracy and the republican form, prevailing on a significant part of the countries of the region since the end of the 19th century. Furthermore, it explains the difficulty in adapting interesting theoretical models, such as adversarial agonist. Exceptionally, a small number of Latin American countries have managed to establish more balanced democratic systems and to escape Manichaean political schisms (Palermo 2012). However, the general condition complicates and blurs any planned project and public and private initiative.

The use of extreme models for this analysis does not imply that intermediate, or moderate, democratic alternatives have not existed in the region, especially when democratic systems were restored after the military regimes of the last decades of the 20th century. However, inefficiencies by governments, in addition to the particular characteristics of Latin American citizenship that I describe, caused, and continue to cause, a natural disregard for any modicum of moderate proposals, or common minimums, as

they are considered to be fragile, tepid, or irrelevant. This is also the case with regard to values and the disposition of character to be included in citizen ethical education: everything becomes more extreme, fanatical, violent, and deviating from the bonds of solidarity, in the quest for what is fair and what is for the minimum common good. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the way to achieve a fairer, peaceful, and inclusive society is through agreement on acceptable minimums, combined with citizen support for the agreed rules and values.

Democracy and citizenship: elements and models

Latin America is now part of the globalized world. In recent decades, however, its democratic model has started to develop specific features, which have attracted the attention of European and North American politicians and academics. Leaders of these new models have self-defined as national or multinational, and courted a populist vote. Their ascent to power has profoundly disrupted the liberal logic of constitutions, with their agenda being the weakening of controls on executive power, subjugation of the judicial system, indoctrination of the youth, co-optation of the legislative power, control of media and, finally, drafting of a new Constitution that would allow indefinite reelection. While this has generated deep admiration within elements of the electorate, it has also caused widespread concern among, and been rejected by, others.

Several Latin American constitutions that transcended the 20th century - the Argentine Constitution among them – were based on the US Constitution. In turn, institutions organized in the United States were clearly based on a specific philosophy, as summarized in The Federalist papers. That philosophy was liberal and elitist, that is to say, respectful of individual personal decisions while, at the same time being skeptical about the capability of citizens to work together. As Madison stated in El Federalista n.55, in collective assemblies "passion never ceases to snatch its scepter from reason" (Gargarella 2009). In order to analyze the characteristics of the democratic systems that have

emerged in Latin America and to understand the problems they have created, it is necessary to take account of the gradual dilution of republican democratic principles and values in the North American liberal tradition, and the influence exerted by several modern European and French ideas in recent decades. In the case of countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela, interaction with Spain was vital (Martínez Dalmau 2019). In the aforementioned text, Gargarella stated that:

> *If the organizations that nowadays distinguish many of our democracies reproduce the basis of the North American institutional structure, and such structure is the result of a series of assumptions related to the (in)capacity of individuals to act jointly and severally, what would occur with such organizations provided budgets were nowadays repudiated? (2009)*

The question was relevant, Gargarella continued, because the current public philosophy could represent many things, but it was clearly not identical (indeed, it is quite different) to the one prevailing in the founding years of constitutionalism.

The need to "Latin Americanize Europe" (Mouffe, 2012) was a phrase that began to be used in universities in France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and Spain shortly after the beginning of the 21st century. It represented the admiration, on the part of a group of the European academy, of the national and popular 'democratic' regimes established in Venezuela with Hugo Chávez, in Ecuador with Rafael Correa, in Bolivia with Evo Morales and in Argentina with Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. In line with Gargarella's quote, the second half of the 20th century saw a slow but steady shift in public philosophy, underpinned by intellectual theory. This was put into practice by several popular governments and partially incorporated in Latin American constitutional reforms but went unnoticed by much of the public in the regions. This, to the extent that, in Argentina, the ideas of Belgian political theorist, Chantal Mouffe, were presented as Argentinian by the curriculum of the subject entitled, 'Construction of Citizenship

at the High School Level' in the Province of Buenos Aires[10]. My intention, in mentioning this, is to emphasize the influence and impact that certain 'democratizing' European ideas have had on the traditional North American (liberal) ones in the redesign of Latin American democracy and its institutions. In fact, several countries in the region were used as a testing ground for those ideas. Further developed and put into practice, many of these ideas returned to Europe to be pursued by European politicians in their own countries. This was the case in Spain with the foundation and rise of left-wing populist political party, Podemos, as expressed in the words of its former leader, Pablo Iglesias. Speaking at a ceremony in 2018, at Buenos Aires' Metropolitan University for Education and Labour (Universidad Metropolitana para la Educación y el Trabajo [UMET[) where he was awarded an honorary doctorate, he said: "Thanks to Latin America for being the school in which we learned to think about politics," (Alcántara Sáez and Rivas Otero 2019).

In relation to constitutional law, the New Latin American Constitutionalism spread by various European jurists (among them, Martínez Dalmau 2021) provided advocacy and legal support to certain emblematic struggles of such regimes - rights of Indigenous peoples, for example. the form of constitution that evolved was the result of the constituent power, democratically legitimate, fully regulatory, having as its goal to materialize the will of the peoples, expressed in the use of their constituent power. The notion of the Constitution as a document limiting constitutional powers was overcome and progress was made towards the definition of constitution as a democratic formula where constitutional power expressed its will (Viciano Pastor and Martínez Dalmau 2011). European academics observed that,

[10] Diseño Curricular Construcción de Ciudadanía, Provincia de Buenos Aires, 1er a 3er año secundaria [Curriculum design, Construction of citizenship, Province of Buenos Aires, 1st to 3rd year of secondary school], 2007. Pages 108 and 109 http://servicios.abc.gov.ar/lainstitucion/organismos/consejogeneral/disenioscurriculares/documentosdescarga/secundariaciudadania.pdf

while there was some progress in the development of democratic constitutionalism in Europe, it was in Latin America that real progress in implementation had been made. This was due to social and political conditions existing in certain countries through fully democratic constituent assemblies, where the will of the people was expressed in constitutional texts.

Explaining the difference between the evolution of democratic processes of Europe and Latin America, Chantal Mouffe pointed out that, in Europe the liberal element of democracies had become absolutely dominant, while the democratic element, with regard to equality and popular sovereignty, had been subordinated and, in some cases, eliminated. In Europe, the question regarding the meaning of democracy always received the same answer: rule of law, respect for human rights and separation of powers; nobody mentioned popular sovereignty or equality anymore because it had become obsolete (Mouffe 2012). For Mouffe and other scholars (Clarke 2010), it was not just that the liberal tradition had become hegemonic, but that in Europe and the United States, a specific, neoliberal interpretation of that tradition had been imposed, that had left democracy without democratic sense. In short, in the north-western hemisphere, democracy was not just liberal; in fact, it was neoliberal, with almost no hint of democratic elements.

As regards those scholars who considered that democratic and liberal principles necessarily went together, Mouffe defended the thesis that there had always been a struggle between these two trends and that, depending on the time, one principle prevailed over the other. She maintained that, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the liberal element has prevailed over the democratic element, establishing itself as the basis of the 'given' democratic system, for subsequent generations. Mouffe argued, that faced with this vista, certain Latin American governments - indifferent to the European democratic tradition - justifiably questioned the accepted dominance of the liberal element and chose to place the democratic element as the primary element of

its democracy. While the liberal element was not eliminated, it was subordinated to the democratic one.

Fully focused on her adversarial agonistic theory, Mouffe did not notice a flaw in the Latin American implementation of the system: that the leader promoted, and the citizenry (or part of it) agreed to, setting aside, or eliminating the liberal element by operating beyond the institutions of liberal democracy and not observing the initial minimum agreements. If she had noticed, she should have recognized that her adversarial agonistic theory lacked substance and that she was promoting a typically antagonistic and violent regime. From the point of view of the democratic representative and republican forms adopted by the constitutions of the region in general, it was evident that certain practices, that defined national and popular models, did not satisfy or comply with the requirements established therein. However, for the political leaders of such regimes, the new balance did not affect the democratic or institutional quality, but instead, strengthened it (Devoto 2015). For her part, Chantal Mouffe argues that:

> *There is no legitimacy in claiming that this Western model should be accepted by the rest of the world. In the case of Latin America, one cannot say that the region does not form part of the West, but this does not mean that Latin America should accept the European model either. I believe we must pluralize the idea of the West, accept variations inside and talk about the West. Regarding the experience of new democracies in South America there is no rejection of the liberal tradition, but there is a different articulation between liberal and democratic traditions* (Mouffe 2012).

However, the model described above did not exclusively represent Latin American democracy. A different model existed in other countries and governments such as Brazil, Uruguay and, at the time, Chile, in which the liberal dimension of their democratic regimes had not been damaged. As observed by many scholars, in those cases liberalism, as well as republicanism (as different as they are from each other),

constitute dimensions without which the democratic nature of a political regime is inevitably eroded (Palermo 2012). In a democracy, popular sovereignty can never be understood as embodied or materialized in the will of a political body and/or a leader, as happens in the aforementioned Latin American cases. When this happens, the liberal and republican dimensions, as well as the democratic dimension itself, suffer irreparable damage. Popular sovereignty, on the other hand, has various fields of implementation, ranging from the electoral to different forms of political participation and institutional roles. Such institutions, in order to be open to popular participation, must be governed by strong liberal and republican dimensions, established in the constitutions.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the emergence of national and popular Latin American regimes at the end of the 20th century, and the beginning of the 21st cannot be attributed exclusively to the ideas of Gramsci, Ernesto Laclau, or Chantal Mouffe, or to the mere continuation of the movements of Juan Domingo Perón in Argentina (1946-55), Getulio Vargas (1930-45/1951-54) and João Goulart (1961-64) in Brazil, Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-40) in Mexico, Víctor Paz Estensoro (1952-56/1960-64) and Hernán Siles Suazo (1956-60) in Bolivia, and José María Velasco Ibarra (1934-35/1944-47/1952-56/1956-61/1968-72) in Ecuador. Reality has shown that the different democratic governments of a liberal republican form in Latin America have been unable to contain, or provide answers to, the various cultural and social demands arising since the last period of constitutional reforms (Gargarella 2015). The subsequent confusion between the 'liberal question' and liberalism tout court, has conspired against the possibility of reflecting upon the liberal question as part of a history that would deal in the long term with the formation of political culture in several Latin American countries (Roldán 2016). Making a great simplification, the result that marks the destiny of the region, essentially, consists in an extreme bipolar division between a "national and popular" model, which absorbs all progressive and leftist movements, and democratic republican governments

of a liberal basis - center, center-right, and in some countries, libertarian and right-wing - fiercely opposed without finding common ground.

If this is the democratic scenario, the citizenry are forced to participate within the schismatic milieu created. This creates a faction, on one side, militant and fanatical pseudo-citizens willing to fulfill the dream of a radical assembly-based democracy, disregarding the rules in pursuit of making 'a right out of every need'. On the other side are inhabitants who fail to transcend their individuality (put the focus on others) or to participate in the creation of a 'common public space' in which democratic life takes place. Eventually, this becomes a "democracy without citizens or citizens without attributes" (Camps 2010). Certainly, many Latin Americans do not feel represented by this fight of extremes. However, public silence and lack of interest contribute to the confusion.

Having said all this, I conclude with a fundamental clarification regarding the Belgian-Spanish democratizing theory that has had so much influence on the popular national regimes of Latin America. Upon implementing their own national and popular democratic systems, the leaders of the governments of Spain and Greece did not intend to abandon the institutionality that marked the liberal tradition (Haro León 2019).

State of Anomie

In his book, *A country outside the law* (*Un país al margen de la ley)*, the Argentine philosopher and jurist, Carlos S. Nino presented an extremely critical reconstruction of Argentine institutional life, and its legal, constitutional, and social-economic history. In summarizing the characteristic attitude of the Argentine citizenry, he resorted to the term 'dumb anomie' (anomia boba):

> *collective action is anomic, in the sense of 'silly' illegality of our concern here, if it is less efficient than any other that could occur in the same collective situation and in which a certain norm was observed. [...] Dumb anomie exists only*

> *when the collective action in question is characterized by non-observance of norms and there is at least one certain norm that would lead to a more efficient collective action in the same situation* (Nino 1992).

Two decades later, another Argentine philosopher, Osvaldo Guariglia, recalled Nino's work and the reality described therein:

> *A chaotic scenario is described as one in which laws are distorted or unknown, norms are proclaimed but not fulfilled, social obligations, such as the obligation to pay taxes, are evaded and transactions with the state are 'fixed' through bribes. Nino calls this situation dumb anomie, because it comes from a game in which everyone tries to take advantage and ends up in the worst possible scenario* (Guariglia 2014).

In relation to citizenry, I call it 'state of anomie', and it can be extended, to a greater or lesser extent, to Latin American citizenry in general[11].

When it comes to what is public and common to all- including the exercise of constitutional values such as justice, freedom, and peace - duties and responsibilities always seem to fall on others: politicians in general, public officials, legislators, magistrates, social communicators, entrepreneurs, people of power. But it affects everyone, to varying degrees. By inhabiting the same space, each person maintains their individuality by coupling and adapting to a public space co-constructed by others, just to survive. Thus, they feed, knowingly or not, the vicious circle that anomie itself generates. Governments of all

[11] Qué es la anomia y por qué la sociedad colombiana la padece? [What is anomie and why does Colombian society suffer from it?] by Professor Víctor Alberto Reyes Morris, School of Human Sciences of the National University of Colombia. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_XvywQ7aWA&ab_channel=UniversidadNacionaldeColombia%7C%40Televisi%C3%B3nUNAL

colors, public institutions, and citizens have all participated in the anomic process, and thus, we have reached the first quarter of the 21st century, without noticing too many changes in the situation described above. In general terms, the state of anomie is not exclusive to any democratic system or model, or indeed, region. Being a matter of degrees and not of absolutes, the challenge is to reduce the extent of our state of anomie.

Analysis of the promotion of democracy and its values in Latin America, requires knowledge of particularities such as those previously discussed. The same applies with regard to any analysis of democratic and civic education in Latin America. In a large portion of the countries of the region, democratic values, citizen willingness and the type of public civic education that is offered to inhabitants depends, to a large extent, on the model of democracy and the status of the citizenry within that democracy at a given political time (see Veugelers and de Groot 2019). In times of national and popular governments (with public institutions subject to the Executive and citizens educated to serve as militants for the regime) public education responds to the dictates and modalities of the government model This, in turn, means that the Education budget is allocated to programs and projects supported by, and supportive of, the Government. In this way, in recent years, public education and research have turned towards the vision and discourse of the national and popular model of democracy.

Citizenship as a key element of the democratic system. Functional theory of democratic citizenship: towards a civic ethic of minimums[12]

As I have stated above, the region, to a greater or lesser extent, is divided and impoverished by the struggle between extreme

[12] The idea of shared minimums regarding attitudinal or ethical issues and their significance for citizenship education has been developed theoretically by various philosophers and political scientists with various positions and perspectives in terms of the scope. Some of them restrict such minimums to the set of rights, duties and guarantees recognized by every State to individuals. According to these opinions

models of a political system that, under the name of democracy and/or republic, encompasses many forms. In times of Manichaean bipolar struggles, the majority of the citizenry veers towards extremes of thought and action while, at the same time, it is schooled to wait for the transformation of every need into a right by the State or the charismatic leader. The perception is that it is always 'others' who are responsible for negative occurrences and impacts, never them, the citizens, and justice is confused with the judicial system but not perceived as a multidimensional value (Devoto 2019). Such widespread anomie is not surprising in this scenario, particularly in the context in which it has evolved. Beyond this situation, however, millions of other people live and work daily in a different way. With few pedagogical tools or societal status, this part of the citizenry tries to participate in the public sphere, build a common space of peaceful coexistence with others, make decisions, and assume responsibilities without taking advantage of the common. However, this is not enough to contain or reverse medium and long-term consequences that authoritarian regimes produce on democratic systems.

Faced with this reality, I assert that, while the liberal-based constitutional democratic regulations of the region have

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(Savater 2014), this set of rights, duties and guarantees that constitute democratic citizenship would not be based on any predetermined cultural, ethnic, ideological, religious, or racial identity, but on our belonging as members of the constitutionally valid institution, which sets out the shared rules of the game based on which anyone may shape their own lives. Other conceptions are more comprehensive, delving into ethical, communicational, coexistence and dialogic principles and values, although they may also be inferred from the general regulations on human rights (Cortina 1986). Finally, other thinkers, starting from the basis that democracy needs players that it is incapable of creating today, state that civic competence implies the ability to confront a diversity of opinions and interests and to form a coherent picture of reality. Citizen training - political training - as we have already discussed in this same text, would not only be a cognitive ability but would also imply other dispositions of an emotional nature (Innerarity 2018; Ignatieff 2018).

provided the citizens with a series of tools, they have not been equipped with the means to use them, to the detriment of development of the liberal democratic model. The regulations contemplate the category of 'citizenship' as a substantial element of the democratic political system. Meanwhile, the analysis of each constitutional rule allows us to observe a civic ethic of common minimums, ultimately based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. For example, the Argentine Constitution confers on citizens a function of 'rights and duties' that must be exercised responsibly so that the political system as a whole can function reasonably (Devoto 2022).

The challenge we face is that the function of citizenship - its theory and its practice - is not developed or systematized, being largely ignored by politics, academia, and the judicial system. In addition, obviously, largely unknown by citizens themselves. If, as I stated earlier, in a democracy or republic, citizens do not *have* a political system, but rather *are* the political system, ignoring the scope of the constitutional function implies resiling from the daily, constant, permanent, and systematic development and regeneration of that democratic system as conferred by the Constitution. This ignorance and lack of active engagement creates a breeding ground for any type of autocratic government and populist practices. In addition, for us, in our capacity as citizens, means being party to limiting our own freedom.

In liberal-type Latin American republican democracies, the functions of the State are distributed among executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. Achieving compliance with public policies depends to a considerable extent on the delicate balance of power among these branches, and most importantly, on the independence of the Judiciary. In countries with a federal structure, the harmonized coexistence of state or provincial government bodies and institutions with those of the federal government, is required in order for the system to work as envisaged, with policies agreed and implemented for the public good. The rule of law and the

dynamics of institutions must control and prevent any decision-related excess, outburst, or capricious interpretation that the highest executive authority may attempt to exert on the Constitution. However, an essential actor is omitted from the scenario presented here, that being the citizen. They, regardless of their political or social predispositions, cannot be left out of the system, either by the direct action of another or by omission. Citizenship, as I have already stated, constitutes the political system.

In general, Latin American constitutions have established specific goals and have adopted and promoted the development and exercise of common civic principles and values, which constitute the foundations on which constituents agree to build citizenship and educate young people. Freedom, peace, and justice are three of the more common and important values in that process. Thus, for example, the Preamble of the Argentine Constitution presents, among its objectives, those of consolidating domestic peace, strengthening justice, and ensuring the benefits of freedom.

Beyond the particular concerns prevailing at the time when constitutions were originally approved, the choice made for a republican democratic model - and the institutions, values, and the manner of exercising them - implies that a concrete position has been adopted as to the fundamental elements of a citizen culture in a particular territory. The greater the public responsibility, the greater the obligation to understand, respect, and teach this democratic civic ethic, based on an agreed set of values.

As a fundamental element of their democratic political system, the Latin American citizenry should develop the necessary attributes to exercise the role - rights, but fundamentally duties - assigned by constitutions. Attributes, values, and disposition of character constitute a civic ethic that is not inherited, or acquired by osmosis: it requires education. As previously stated, the source of a culture or civic ethic of minimums can be found in the constitutions and other international regulations of constitutional hierarchy, but it has

not been developed from a political or academic perspective. This ethic, without education, is austere. It states minimums of justice and disposition of character required to meet constitutional goals. Whatever the model chosen to govern, there should be fundamental agreement around this. Acknowledging this agreement constitutes the starting point and the first duty falling on the role as a citizen. Disregarding this agreement, openly or covertly, whatever the justification or ethic of maxim intended to be asserted, not only prevents any subsequent agreement, but also implies constantly and permanently promoting anomie and reversion to a pre-modern and violent era of society.

Finally, as I have tried to show above, it is continuous and daily citizenship civic engagement constitutes that gives life to the democratic system.

Conclusion

To promote effective democratic and civic learning in higher education in Latin America, whether at regional and/or country level, I propose the design of a functional theory of democratic citizenship, based on common democratic and civic minimums. There are countries in the region, such as Uruguay, whose models of democracy and development of citizenship have characteristics that could provide a template for that design. The proposal is focused at a regional level and is based on the idea of a cosmopolitan citizenship (Cortina 2019, 2021). It is based on the concept of a common civic ethic across the region, notwithstanding the legislation of every country that provides for its own civic ethics.

The proposal is based on a series of common assumptions that are largely present in the regulatory systems of constitutional hierarchy in the countries of the region. These are: (1) Citizenship constitutes one of the fundamental elements of democratic political systems. As such, it implies the exercise of a function, from which rights and duties derive; (2) The development of an ethic of common civic minimums - values and dispositions - in the sense that is explained in this chapter;

(3) The daily actions of citizens (as in adherence, or not, to civic ethics, and compliance with rules and values) constitute the input that underpins the other components of the political system (Devoto 2020).

The proposed common civic ethic is consistent with certain aspects of the contemporary theories of republicanism, the values and general principles established by the Latin American Constitutions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, and other international regulations of constitutional hierarchy. It is based on the agreement of citizens with a common minimum civic and justice denominator that then allows for freedom of choice within the parameters agreed this in line with Kant's ethics of maxims.

In this regard, the more educated and strengthened the citizenry is in terms of a common public civic ethic based on democratic values, the more consolidated the constitutional political system will be in its ability to confront authoritarian governments and populist practices. As observed by Argentine political scientist, Natalio Botana:

> *From the first constitutions of the 19th century, so beautifully written, to the present ones, so generously open to the incorporation of a broad range of rights, our regimes have not yet developed a reasonable compromise between rights and obligations. The experience should not be ignored because the point is to move from written rights to instituted rights and from these to obligations assumed by citizens. There are three steps to move up or down. This is a huge challenge for a republican democracy* (Botana 2016).

Latin American democratic constitutional (liberal) systems and institutions can change, and may need to change, but they share a set of values and character dispositions that function as a common ground for a civic and pluralistic democratic life. Teaching and learning the basics of this civic ethic, in my view, is both a right and duty that is yet to be met and that constitutes

a significant debt in the path to a democratic citizenship culture. Citizen civic engagement, the daily exercise of the abovementioned set of values and character dispositions, will be decisive in constituting and sustaining the political democratic system we seek.

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8
HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORKS AND DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

David Julien and Romel Castaños

"To know that teaching is not transferring knowledge but creating the possibilities for its own production or construction."

Paulo Freire

The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE) share, among their objectives, the promotion of democratic values, in the same way that they seek to create a more just and democratic society, with greater access to higher education. A democratic society is inherently a society in which its members understand democratic values and practice critical thinking, which is why the teaching of these values must be fundamental to citizenship formation. A democratic society needs democratic institutions. In this context, since the great advance of globalization and interconnectivity within the international community, universities have emerged as essential actors in the construction of more democratic spaces and citizenship. Today, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) play a fundamental role in the fulfillment of the global challenges that have been set in international spaces. That role includes ensuring access to education and training in democratic values and critical thinking, and facilitating access to tools that allow citizens to be trained in the construction of a more democratic society.

At present, there continues to be a wide gap between the developed countries considered to be of the northern hemisphere, and the former colonized countries that are seen to be in development. This situation generates an asymmetry, not only in access to information, but also in access to higher education and democratic values. According to data from the

Center for Universal Education of the Brookings Institute, "The education levels of the adult workforce, often measured by average numbers of years of school, is in the developed countries nearly double that of their developing country peers" (2015). Educational attainment in this study was measured by years in educational institutions, with adults in the workforce in developed countries averaging 12 years of schooling, while in developing countries it averages 6.5 years.

While it is the case that this marginalization is more frequently found in developing countries, it continues to be a global phenomenon, even in developed countries. Marginalization in higher education relates mainly to access, or lack thereof, to international mobility. Such mobility is usually only accessible to socio-economically advantaged groups, and in particular areas, and aspects, of education. These include the area of research, which has little or no linkage with communities, and that of continuing education, where there is a lack of universal access to the internet (sometimes only available to managers of the higher education system). Another gap can be found in the lack of diversity and inclusion in the institutional leadership of the university sector. Here, a simple question must be answered: Is there a marginalization in higher education and, therefore, in access to democratic values? The simple answer is yes. This marginalization occurs at different levels in the areas of higher education mentioned above. The issue then is to define how this marginalization is maintained, how it is combated, and what specific actions are needed to combat it.

In the American continent, in particular, there has been an attempt to combat the democratic fragility of its institutions, and the continuing economic inequality that denies citizens access to higher education, and other developmental opportunities. Faced with these challenges HEIs have a fundamental role in democratizing education by making it accessible to all sectors of society.

> *By 2013, and after several years of sustained growth of the economies of the region, 28% of the population was poor (164*

> *million) and more than 11% (68 million) was indigent. This reality is related to inequality in income distribution and the dissimilar distribution of opportunities to access income-generating factors and social fluidity, such as education and knowledge, according to the socio-demographic characteristics of the population, i.e., racial ethnicity, place of urban or rural residence and gender* (ECLAC, 2013; Chiroleu, 2014).

Among the tasks that HEIs should focus on, is that of creating greater equity in the provision of access to higher education, as well as the implementation of inclusive institutional policies that tackle some of the problems in American societies. During a conference organized by UNESCO's International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) in 2020, some of the progress made on these issues was presented.

> *The enrollment rate in higher education between 2000 and 2018 increased from 19% to 38%. In the Latin American region, it went from 23% to 52%. However, between 2000 and 2018, the percentage growth of the gross enrollment rate among the poorest in the region was 5%, standing at just 10% in 2018; and, among the wealthiest, the growth was 22%, placing the rate at 77% in 2018* (2020).

In the context of this stark picture, we believe that one of the necessary actions for the democratization of higher education in the region lies in the decentralization of institutions, in order to encourage democratization and increase access to higher education, expanding HEI presence within regions and creating access for all communities. During the 2020 World Day for Access to Higher Education, Rodrigo Arim, Rector of the University of the Republic of Uruguay said:

> *Decentralization should be conceived as a strategy for the inclusion of students in higher education [...] We are a country and a university with a democratic vocation, so it seems fundamental to us to decentralize opportunities, to*

> *leave the big cities and offer opportunities in the interior of the country* (Arim, 2020).

This raises the question of why has decentralization taken a central role in education policy in the region? In the first instance, decentralization increases the capacity of such an educational institution to expand access, to reach the most marginalized communities that may be found in peripheral areas. The centralization of educational spaces is an obstacle for many people to access higher education. Decentralization is about HEIs reaching out to communities directly, and adapting their institutional policies and decision-making, based on the needs of each community.

> *Decentralization is a term used when responsibility/power is passed to local communities and schools. They can then make their own decisions about many aspects of policy and practice. In centralized systems, a central body may control finance, personnel and resources and also manage policy, curriculum and assessment (*Androniceanu and Ristea, 2014).

In university models, decision-making is usually centralized and homogeneous. Often, this is in order to save resources and function in a more 'optimal' way. However, if over years, these measures have failed: to meet recognized international objectives such as those contained in the Sustainable Development Goals; to contribute to equity of access to education for all social groups in the region; to connect meaningfully with local communities, then it is time to contemplate a new vision for decision making and managing higher education.

In Section 1B of their 2013 research '*Education and critical thinking for the construction of citizenship: an investment toward strengthening democracy in the Americas'*, Rosario Jaramillo and Gabriel Murillo, for the Department of Human Development and Education of the OAS, state, "…people must live democracy in their institutions in order to be able to be fully democratic, and to have a thorough understanding of the importance of the

common good" (2013). A frequent problem in HEIs with a centralized decision-making system is that, as access becomes more widely available and enrollment grows, it becomes more difficult to democratically serve the needs of the student body and the community. The maintenance of this system means that, even with a more diverse body of students and s range of different demands, the education system will remain top-down. In the centralized and bureaucratic environments, that large HEIs tend to be, it is rare to find efficient democratic models in operation. This indicates that decentralizing functions, campuses, and decision-making bodies is the only valid solution for the democratization of education. This would allow for more inclusive decision-making, tailored to the needs of each community. The democratization of education must be seen as fundamental to the economic, cultural, and democratic development of any society. It not only gives society access to educational spaces, but also encourages development of democratic spirit and values in theory and practice. In the words of Paulo Freire, it is "creating the possibilities for the construction and production" of education itself (1996).

This democratization process presents a number of internal challenges in terms of the institutional policies of each university. The implementation of decentralization will take resources and time, as well as necessitate a restructuring of institutional plans. It is evident that this has been one of the main reasons why HEIs have failed to take the necessary steps to combat the lack of democratization of education to date. The development of detailed plans, and the fostering of collaboration with communities and civil society are time consuming and require intense engagement on the part of the HEI, but they are essential to a successful democratization process. However, there are a variety of measures that can be implemented alongside the development period, including the adoption of unconventional plans that rely on new technologies and the creation of inter-institutional cooperation networks.

A clear example was some of the measures carried out in recent years. The COVID-19 pandemic shook traditional

institutional structures and drastically pushed for an application of new technologies. From this, the best use should be made of a series of models that enable continuing education that is accessible to all members of society. In this context, several educational institutions have expanded online models for specific courses or for complete subjects. This, in an international network of universities, such as the IOHE, can be of great benefit to the communities.

These initiatives brought with them a series of benefits in the short, medium, and long term. In the short term, they provided concrete alternatives to the traditional model in the face of the limitations brought about by the pandemic. In both the medium and long term, they have created the opportunity for the development of a direct internationalization and equitable democratization. This, in turn, promotes distance learning in foreign institutions, allowing for the expansion of the democratic, cultural, and educational panorama of student profiles, to include those who are low-income and/or engaged in part-time work as well as full-time students. It promotes the development of new institutional partnerships and the experience of incoming and outgoing mobility.

Such initiatives also bring personal and direct benefits to the students and the participating community, increasing intercultural awareness and global citizenship skills, broadening the network of contacts and opening up opportunities to learn other languages. For the most part these are essential skills for the creation of democratic values. In the IOHE we have implemented such measures under the Virtual Mobility Space in Higher Education (eMOVIES) which, in collaboration with HEIs, has generated a bank of courses provided by the consortium member institutions.

By betting on new, non-traditional modalities, this program allows each HEI to make a series of virtual courses available to member institutions and their constituents, based on the principles of mutual reciprocity, without any financial transactions between the participants. This provides huge benefits to students by creating the possibility for them to live

international experiences, and by encouraging intercultural awareness, critical thinking, and democratization. It provides those benefits, without the traditional financial burden, thus creating access to an international education for marginalized groups who could never have accessed these opportunities previously.

On the continent, in the post-colonial context, there is a need to generate more inclusive spaces, in conditions of equity. The reality is that in centralized and homogeneous models, such as HEIs, the power relations that were maintained in the past continue to be replicated and perpetuated, despite innovation and new technologies. The marginalization of education, social and economic marginalization, and the lack of representation of minorities in democratic institutions, are factors in the continuation of the discriminatory power dynamic. We must bet on cultural diversity, and interculturality, especially in a continent full of such diverse and pluricultural countries. This is one of the challenges presented in UNESCO's 'Regional Conference on Higher Education (CRES) 2018-2028 Action Plan':

> *The challenge is, not only to include in institutions of Higher Education women, persons with disabilities, members of indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples, and individuals from historically discriminated social groups, but to transform them so that they may be socially and culturally pertinent. These changes should assure the incorporation into institutions of Higher Education of the worldviews, values, knowledge, wisdom, linguistic systems, forms of learning, and modes of knowledge production of these peoples and social groups. It is essential to recognize and value the epistemologies, modes of learning, and institutional designs of indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples, rural communities, and other socio-culturally differentiated communities. All of this must be guaranteed by appropriate quality assurance policies and mechanisms, for which specific indicators must be used and the free and informed participation of representatives of these population*

> *groups must be encouraged. Education is not only a human right, but also a right of peoples. There is an important historical debt owed by Latin American and Caribbean States and societies to indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples* (CRES 2020)

Finally, the role of multilateral organizations, such as the OAS and the IOHE, is also to 'walk the talk', or demonstrate by their good practices, the implementation of these values with the valorization of leaders who carry a message of diversity and inclusion and represent traditionally marginalized groups. A striking example of this was the coordination work of IOHE member countries in the recent awarding of an honorary doctorate by a Mexican university (*Universidad Veracruzana*) to Roberta Jamieson, an indigenous Canadian woman who has pioneered higher education as a tool of social empowerment and equality between peoples. Similarly, the awarding of the Inter-American Prize, during the 2021 Congress of the Americas on International Education (CAIE), to Elicura Chihuailaf, a Mapuche poet from Chile, is an important step in the recognition of the indigenous worldview and its contribution to the advancement of knowledge.

The decentralization of HEIs has also led to the development of an agile democratization within them. They have a greater presence in the community, which facilitates access for marginalized groups in an equitable manner and facilitates the development of non-traditional models, and cooperation with various regional and international actors. Democratization has, in turn, led to more inclusive decision-making and the generation of institutional policies, which not only allow for growth of democratic and multicultural values, but also lead to development, based on diverse worldviews. We consider the measures taken as necessary steps towards the proposed objectives, in order to get closer to the society we long for. HEIs have a fundamental role to play in the creation of a just and equal society and, for this reason, we must continue to both push, and support, them in their efforts to change. Such efforts should always go hand in hand with inter-institutional

cooperation between HEIs themselves, and with international organizations, such as the OAS and the IOHE.

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9.
HIGHER EDUCATION, DEMOCRACY AND ENGAGEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

Roberto Escalante Semerena and Patricia Avila Muñoz

Democracy, citizenship, and Latin American universities

Democracy is understood as a form of free, rational, and responsible participation in the defense of the sovereignty and rights of the people. It is a system that allows the people, through legitimate participation mechanisms, to choose and make political decisions. It is a term that extends both to communities and to all kinds of organized groups, whose members have the right to participate in decision-making, with equality before the law. Democracy is a system that allows citizens to participate politically in public issues (Torres, 2006, cited by Alcántara and Marín, 2013). Freedom of opinion, assembly, and organization are also essential to the exercise of democracy.

The Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy defines citizenship as 'the group of citizens of a town or nation'. City, citizen, citizenship, requires a space for communication, a space for dialogue, which allows the construction and conformation of common rights and duties. This space for dialogue is what we can call society (Galindo, 2009). In addition, it is clear that society is transforming. The citizen of today is not the same as the citizen of the past. He (she) is changing, based on his (her) development and the communities with which he/she) relates. Being a citizen implies, recognizing oneself and being recognized as part of a community, able to assume rights and duties, with the peculiarities of the new society in which one lives. Community is built based on processes of relationship, subordination, and communication. Citizenship implies an identity conceived as part of a living community, with a democratic culture, rights and obligations, a sense of the common good and fraternity. Citizens are defined by the relationships they establish among themselves, concern for

others, and friendship amongst them. Citizenship calls for social integration, awareness of belonging to a city, but also to a national State and to a community, connected by culture and history. It is one of the dimensions of democracy. It is said that a person is a citizen when they can be attributed the rights in which they are accredited as such (Alcántara-Santuario and Marín-Fuentes, 2013).

When we speak of education and democracy, it necessarily leads to reflecting and discussing equality of conditions and access, which are not necessarily guaranteed by rules of balance or formal justice. There are also issues of quality and content, as well as access guarantees offered by the State, to be considered. The topic also encompasses other elements such as the role of education in the formation of citizenship, values, the exercise of power, social participation in school management, and forms of government (Rodríguez, 2001).

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) contribute directly to the formation of citizenship in a number of ways. They adopt democracy (whether representative or direct) as a form of governance, and the participation of the community is promoted in the election of its representatives, who are elected by various regulated and transparent procedures It is a democratic system, with representation of communities as well as internal groups. HEIs create university programs and projects in response to the demands of the university itself or those formulated by the community.

University autonomy is a fundamental principle of the Universities of the region; their legitimacy is backed by their work, knowledge, and the preservation of culture. The exercise of their autonomy allows them to fulfill their functions of teaching, research, and extension. It also allows them to respond directly and appropriately to the demands of their community and wider society. More broadly, it allows them to promote values and attitudes for the exercise of democracy and citizenship, thus contributing to the removal of inequalities and injustices in the region. Although the scope of university autonomy is different in every national system, and the way in

which these institutions are internally organized to govern themselves varies, it is clear that university regulations, and higher education in general, is the result of a broad and pluralist debate. For Maclntyre:

> *Training for democracy does not simply consist of teaching what is correct in each case in a material way, but rather, learning to think for oneself about the problems and situations of society within the framework of constitutional and legal possibilities, as well as pluralistic respect for the opinions of others. Ultimately, it is about developing the ability to think for themselves in dialogue, debate, and deliberation with others* (2007, cited by Rojas, et.al. 2020).

That the student becomes a responsible citizen in a democratic society, who seeks to improve the economic, social, and cultural living conditions of the population should be one of the purposes of education (Silva, et. Al. 2020)

Rueda (2011) points out that universities provide, among other things, a space where both the critical investigation of prevailing ideas and the judgment of new ideas for their intellectual merits can be free of any repression, thus promoting critical citizenship and political virtuousness. To achieve this, they offer forums for the exchange of ideas for analysis, discussion, and the preparation of proposals.

HEIs are obviously a university community. They bring together a variety of groups of intellectuals who, despite their differences, share a series of ethical standards. For example, the commitment to academic freedom and free research, with the maintenance of high standards of intellectual work, the protection of academic objectives from external influences that may unduly compromise them, and the safeguarding of the rights and legitimate interests of professors and students, among other matters (Rueda, 2011).

We are speaking here of dialogical communication processes and, for these to exist, interaction is necessary; a constant negotiation of shared meanings between the participants which

implies horizontality between those who communicate. It is an intentional process of exchange to bring knowledge closer to the achievement of significant learning, where the pedagogical relationship becomes a shared learning situation. In doing this, they build the educational fact by transforming reality (Avila, 2022). In this framework of democracy and university education, spaces must be created for the student to develop their cognitive and communication skills around the values, principles, rights, and procedures established in the democratic constitution (Silva, et. Al. 2020). HEIs must utilize this framework so that their students truly understand what a democracy is and what is required for it to function properly.

The social responsibility of universities as an obligation to democracy

University social responsibility is:

> *An ethical quality management policy of the university that seeks to align with the university mission, its values and social engagement, through the achievement of institutional consistency, transparency and dialogic participation of the entire university community (authorities, students, teachers, administrators), with the multiple social actors interested in good university performance, for the effective transformation of society towards the solution of its problems of exclusion, inequity and sustainability* (Vallaeys, 2006, cited by Vallaeys and Álvarez 2019).

Democracy must promote an 'ethical intelligence', understood as the ability to make ethical decisions when faced with moral challenges or dilemmas. One way that HEIs can contribute to democratic development is by using participatory mechanisms to stimulate the critical contribution of those at all university levels, to influence attitudes and open paths to the construction of a vocabulary that values and promotes the university's social commitment. This is what is meant by University Social Responsibility (RSU in Spanish). It is a concept which sees the

involvement of the entire organization and is aimed at the formation of socially responsible citizens. In the Latin American context, it has the potential to contribute to the development of citizenship and to promote models of sustainable development, through the establishment of social responsibility programs and engagement with, and education and training of, citizens.
Social responsibility promotes dialogue and consensus among all stakeholders in the social field. Dialogue, according to the 'dialectic of Socrates', is the engine of thought, and not a simple conversation to achieve it. It is necessary to carefully listen to the other side and, from what has been heard, explore possibilities, discover alternatives, recognize other perspectives, and submit ideas to logic, verifying their internal consistency. In this way, not only is the understanding of proposed ideas achieved, but also the generation of new ideas and new solutions to problems (Avila, 2016).

Social responsibility is considered an ethical quality management policy for HEIs. It is a strategy that benefits both the university itself and the environment of which it is a part, and that reinforces its role as a social agent. It concerns their role in social, economic, environmental, and cultural development – whether in relation to people or the environment – and the impact of their actions in those areas. In one way or another, it has always been seen as an essential part of the HEI mission.

Stojnic (2022) presents two ways of approaching problems from a USR perspective. The first refers to "training citizens capable of exercising their profession with a sense of responsibility" so that their academic training will provide them with the understanding that their role as professionals will contribute to a dignified, inclusive, and democratic society. The second approach recognizes universities as places that influence the formation of the ethical-citizen judgment of their students in the construction of a democratic system. The student acquires knowledge appropriate to their academic field, while being trained as an informed and responsible citizen within the society in which they will function in their professional career (Ayala, 2011). Stojnic's pedagogical proposals provide the basis for

bringing the disciplinary fields of the various areas of specialized professional training closer to social reality, oriented to the development of capacities to commit, listen and get involved, think critically and empathically, as well as worrying about the well-being of everyone around them (Arango et.al. 2014; Martí, et.al. 2014, cited by Stojnic, 2022).

Vallaeys (2007) provides some direction for HEIs as he points to a number of high-level specific social responsibility strategies that they should undertake:

1) Integrated participation of internal and external interest groups in the University's program of work;

2) The introduction of project-based learning and problem based learning into curricula, interdisciplinary research, extension, and teaching methods, with a view to providing solutions to pertinent societal problems;

3) Regular self-examination and self-diagnosis within the institution, using appropriate measurement tools and being accountable to stakeholders.

In 2015, a study was carried out within the framework of the *Latin American Seminar on Social Innovation and University Management: Towards a New University Social Responsibility*.[13] It analyzed the perceptions of USR by members of university communities (Vallaeys and Álvarez-Rodríguez, 2019). In the first instance, it outlined the five definitions of USR that were proposed to the communities of the participating institutions: 1) solidarity with the vulnerable (philanthropy), 2) impact management, 3) participation of interest groups, 4) sustainable human development policies and 5) excellence in classification (international rankings). Those definitions, which focused on participation in the development and management of university impacts, were the ones selected by most participants, both of which have implications for curriculum development and

[13] This study was organized by the Directorate of Social Innovation of the CAF Development Bank of Latin America and the Mexican Observatory of University Social Responsibility (OMERSU), under the auspices of the Association of Universities of Latin America and the Caribbean (UDUAL). 17 universities from five countries participated.

research. Following on from the research, a new definition/concept of USR was proposed:

> *University Social Responsibility is the responsibility of the university for the social and environmental impacts it generates, through an ethical and efficient management of its administrative processes and academic functions. This is in order to participate together with the other actors in their territory of influence in promoting fair and sustainable human development* (Vallaeys and Álvarez-Rodríguez, 2019).

This new definition had implications for human and professional training (academic purpose) and for the construction of new knowledge (research purpose) (Ayala, 2011). They had implications, in particular, for the academic content that teachers transmit to their students, and for how they, and their students, understand and interpret the world in an ethical manner, according to their discipline and social role.
Most countries have University Social Responsibility as a state policy, which implies that Higher Education Institutions must be committed, not only to provide good academic professional training, but also to contribute to the creation of responsible professionals, sensitive to the problems of others, committed to the development of their country, and with the social inclusion of the most vulnerable individuals at heart. The implementation of this commitment helps develop enthusiastic and creative people in the articulation of their profession and in the promotion of the participatory development in their community.

However, much remains to be done. HEIs, as social institutions, must commit themselves to the furthering of democratic citizenship of society and USR has an important role to play in that collective democratic success. A socially responsible university makes knowledge available to society so that democracy can exist. As Vallaeys and Álvarez-Rodríguez point out,

> *The recognition of the social and pedagogical role of the university, as a catalyst for knowledge about systemic impacts in the global era, constitutes, what we call, University Social Responsibility (USR) as a comprehensive and transversal management of the impacts of higher education on society* (2022).

Challenges for higher education institutions in Latin America

When discussing the issues pertinent to the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, one looks to those that are common to them, among which are educational backwardness, scarcity of resources, cultural diversity, population dispersion, lack of equity and quality in services, and the lack of relationship between preparation-employment-standard of living. The issues in these areas are many and complex, but, in recent years, there have been some improvements, specifically in the area of education.

A report prepared by CONADU (2013) indicates that in the 1990s, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean carried out educational reforms prompted by international credit organizations and concentrated sectors of the economy. This led to a number of initiatives, including the creation of new regulatory frameworks and evaluation and accreditation bodies, expansion of the educational offer, and establishment of forms of relationship between higher education and the productive sector.

In higher education, there is evident progress, but it is uneven. For example, there are converging trends given that changes have been taking place at a global level. Various Latin American countries began to develop indicators associated with the evaluation and accreditation processes of their programs with quality criteria for the certification of programs developed in HEIs in general, including of USR programs. Institutions have been created to carry out research, and enrollment has grown considerably. UNESCO (2015) points out that accelerated access to higher education caused a significant growth of HEIs in the

region. However, as a result of this there is a surplus of graduates emerging in certain disciplines, who are unable to access the labor market. These specific inequities, and other inequalities, have moved HEIs further along the path of University Social Responsibility (USR).

Martí and Licandro (2018) point out that the increased access to higher education does not necessarily mean that the higher education system is better equipped to face the enormous social challenges that exist in the region. However, numerous networks and academic associations have emerged for the establishment of transnational programs, promoting student mobility, resulting in the internationalization of educational programs. These trends have been reinforced by the impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the development of virtual education modalities that have promoted the development of new educational programs in diverse areas of knowledge with an interdisciplinary base that modify the conformation curriculum and the offer of careers and qualifications.

HEIs have a privileged role in helping countries build democratic processes through content and teaching methods, a process that is built day-by-day in university settings. The challenge is to provide education and training that is value based and that develops the skills and intellectual capacity necessary to face the future. All of this is done in a framework of mutual respect, which contributes to the support and development of society and the reduction of inequalities (González, 2021).

Further to this, the use of media and virtual communication and teaching methods, allows greater access to recognized and validated systematized and curricularly organized information and targeted education. Due to their content, structure, teaching, and institutional support, they become relevant as a social component where HEIs can offer quality higher education to a broader cohort within society. In this area, inter-institution, inter-region and inter-country schemes have been promoted which increase access and connectivity within, and among,

countries. These levels of co-operation on educational development require significant public funds and the support of funding agencies.

The impact of Covid-19 on the democratization of Higher Education

The pandemic caused by the SAR-Cov-2 (Covid 19) virus impacted on educational institutions and, consequently, the training, research, and social and cultural development activities. It brought about sudden change in all spheres and education, at all levels, had to adapt to the new circumstances. There was a transition from face-to-face, lecture hall type university education, to non-face-to-face modalities, mediated by learning and knowledge technologies. The health crisis revealed the institutional needs for infrastructure and forced a rethink of how to carry out the transformation and implementation of teaching towards a new general teaching culture and practice. Teachers had to leave the traditional classroom to become users of technological tools that were entirely foreign to them, in order to teach and interact with their students, albeit remotely. This, while also endeavoring to engage with students with regard to the pressures of confinement and the other implications of the pandemic.

In one way or another, and with varying levels of success, all HEIs managed to carry out virtual teaching, despite unequal prior preparation and without greatly diminishing results, a factor which was not seen as entirely positive (Arocena, 2021). Within the educational system, democracy implies equal opportunities in accessing education. At one level, remote education was presented, and seen as, an extraordinary opportunity to demonstrate the possibilities and benefits that could be offered through purposely designed distance learning programs. However, the necessary speed of the transition meant that the HEIs, with programs already designed for a face-to-face modality, were not in a position to convert those programs to effective distance learning models at the speed required, making it difficult to assess the success of the model as an access route.

University campuses were, by and large, deserted, with the students' learning environment becoming their home or rented accommodation. The concept of increased access as a result of technology is somewhat undermined by the fact that many, many students do not have unfettered access to the technology, in the first place. Many did not have a computer, others did not have internet connection and others again had to share devices with other members of their household. Although it is true that the introduction of technologies in education generates transformative practices, it cannot drive the change and equity envisaged if they are scarce, or access is limited. It is also unarguable that those already in positions of economic, social, and educational disadvantage are most likely the people who will have difficulty accessing technology. Thus, the gap between socioeconomic sectors widened, rather than narrowed, exacerbating the consequences this has for countries (Smelkes, 2020). While the current generation of students are tech savvy and heavily engaged with social media, regardless of economic status, the fact is that this is mostly through the medium of the mobile phone, which is a completely inadequate tool for remote learning.

Distance learning and virtual education have a lot to offer and have the capacity to enhance learning experiences. There are things that can be done at a distance that cannot be achieved face-to-face but, at the same time, it has limitations as described above. It also makes it difficult for teachers to take account of the interests, talents, cultural backgrounds and language issues of their students. The face-to-face scenario, on the other hand, allows for enrichment among all, as well as for informal engagement before and after and, even during, classes, which is an integral part of the learning experience (Smelkes, 2020).

Finally, it must be considered that, during the pandemic, higher education had a very important role to play, in that medicine, science, and technology became central to the investigation of the virus, the identification of socio-health prevention strategies, the development of vaccines and the

production of healthcare supplies, all examples of University Social Responsibility in action (Arocena, 2021).

There is an ongoing debate about the role of technology in higher education. Experience and knowledge show that universities were created fundamentally for social interaction and knowledge creation. The challenge is how to incorporate technology to achieve greater results for the benefit of the university community and society. It is one that is still to be resolved.

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PART II: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

This section will explore the diverse experiences across Latin America and the Caribbean in terms of higher education's civic engagement theory and practice. We aim to illustrate in this section of the book the very different modalities that these experiences take, but also their common thread. A rich tapestry emerges based on autochthonous philosophical and policy approaches that deserve greater international attention.

María Catalina Nosiglia and María Rosa Tapia open this section with a review of *Civic Engagement through Educational Social Practices at the University of Buenos Aires (Argentina*), a large public university with a long and diverse history of social engagement that has gone through different phases, mirroring the history the country has lived through. Much can be learnt from this rich case study.

Then, Marcelo Knobel and Fernando Hashimoto examine *University Extension and Civic Engagement in Brazilian Universities,* a country with a large and diverse higher education system. It is also one where the extension mission has been quite prominent in recent decades, particularly since the democratization process that began in the 1980s. Much change can still be expected.

This is followed by a chapter on *Creating Linkages and Social and Technological Innovation for a Sustainable Territory: SmartLand-UTPL (Ecuador)* by UTPL Rector, Santiago Acosta Aide that emphasizes the dominant role that the regional development question has in Latin America, and the role that higher education can play in promoting social and economic sustainability in its region.

Víctor Martínez Ruiz and Claudia Lucía Mora Motta, for their part, consider the issue of *Social Responsibility in Higher Education: Forja, A Curricular Experience* at the Pontifical Xaverian University (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana) in Cali, Colombia. The university has focused on curriculum reform as a means to deliver on its social mission, which it sees as a key responsibility.

Natacha Pino Acuña, Rector of the University of Aysén in the south of Chile, provides an overview of the importance of territorial engagement at a regional university, which was set up in response to mobilizations by the local indigenous peoples of the region. *University of Aysén (Chile): From Social Demand to Engaged Territories* describes how the new university leadership now reciprocates that commitment to the role of higher education and has created an extremely valuable lesson for the co-creation of civic engagement in higher education.

Pablo Ayala Enriquez, head of civic engagement at the University of Monterrey (Tecnológico de Monterrey) in Mexico, contributes a chapter on the longstanding effort to engage with society at that important university. *Ethical and Civic Education through Social Service in the New Educational Model at Tecnológico de Monterrey* describes a recent experience of that strategic reorientation and the lessons we might learn from it.

Finally, Glenn A. Bowen Executive Director of the Center for Community Service Initiatives and Director of the Quality Enhancement Plan at Barry University in the US takes up the theme of *Civic Engagement in Caribbean Higher Education: Practices and Possibilities for Advancing Democracy*. We learn of the diversity of experience across the Anglophone Caribbean and the potential for expansion of community engagement initiatives.

10
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH EDUCATIONAL SOCIAL PRACTICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BUENOS AIRES (ARGENTINA)

María Catalina Nosiglia and María Rosa Tapia

Introduction

The integration of the academic research and extension functions is one of the fundamental approaches to achieving the integral education of university students and the promotion of their civic engagement.

This chapter analyses the Social Educational Practices (SEPs) that are carried out in the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) in Argentina which constitute learning and service actions, as they promote the articulation of curricular contents with society's needs and demands. The SEPs are seen as an efficient tool for students to develop civic abilities and values, to acquire diverse worldviews and to reach a reflexive attitude towards reality by participating in social life in new and varied ways.

University of Buenos Aires

Born in times of revolutionary and independence contestation, the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) has played a leading role in each of the transcendental moments in the history of Argentina, as it engaged in social engagement from an early stage. The University was set up in August 1821. It was the second university to be established in the present national territory and it became a state university in 1881. It is a public and free university, and its mission is to contribute to the development of culture through humanistic studies, scientific and technological research and artistic creation, paying particular attention to national issues by means of teaching, research and community 'extension'.

The UBA is characterized as a macro-university, due to its size in terms of students, teaching and non-teaching staff,

academic units, research institutes and hospitals. It is highly rated for its high-quality academic offering, which is internationally renowned. The University is composed of 13 faculties that offer more than 100 undergraduate degree courses and 550 graduate courses. It has six pre-university schools, six teaching hospitals and more than 60 research institutes. Figures from 2019 indicate that 319,000 undergraduate and graduate students attended the University, with a further 21,000 who pursued post-graduate degrees. According to data from the Secretariat of University Policies' statistical yearbook, it had an academic workforce of 22,800 university teachers and 13,600 non-teaching staff in 2019.

The social function of the University

The social function was incorporated into the statutes of the UBA for the first time in 1918 as a result of the Argentinian University reform act of that year, which set the basis for the organization of Latin American universities. The University Reform Movement (UFM) (Movimiento de la Reforma Universitaria), a student led movement, was central to the introduction of the reform act and the changes it brought about. The document *Foundations for University Reform*, presented by the Argentine University Federation in Córdoba in June 1918, highlights principles linked to the openness and democratization of the university and its social orientation through extension actions in every public university. The 1918 reform act led directly to the democratization of university governance, the expansion of middle class access to university, academic renewal, and the configuration of a university model with a strong social commitment.

Since then, the UBA has had a long history of university social engagement and seeks to make its social function a reality by putting the knowledge it produces and teaches at the service of society. The present statutes of UBA includes a chapter on the social function of the university (Chapter III). Article 69 of the Statute states: "the University maintains intimate relations of solidarity with the society it is part of". Additionally, it

emphasizes that it is an instrument of social improvement, at the service of the nation and the ideals of humanity.

University extension as a substantial role of the UBA

University extension is linked to the formation of citizenship, which implies the projection of the university beyond its walls as it affirms the citizenship status of the student, the professional, the scientist and the teacher (Kandel 2016). According to Kandel, this idea picks up on the interpretation offered by the reformist movement in Córdoba. In the case of UBA, in order to prioritize social engagement and to manage extension policies, it moved towards the creation of specialized management units.

Its first move was to establish a Department of University Extension (DUE), under the Rectorate, by Resolution of the interim Rector of the UBA, No 73/56. This was very much in keeping with the extension model of the reform university of the 1950s and 1960s. Silvia Brusilovsky explains that this approach sought to articulate extension activities with teaching and research functions through interdisciplinary work, involving the participation of different chairs and students that focused on the problems of the popular sectors (Brusilovsky, 2000). In 1956, the Extension Program of the UBA established the Centre for Integrated Community Development (CDI, Centro de Desarrollo Integral) in Isla Maciel, a working-class neighborhood located in the Greater Buenos Aires (GBA) that borders the capital city. It organized interdisciplinary groups of scholars and students to work together with residents, focused on education of young people and adults, while also providing training in areas of work and health[14].

With the restoration of democracy in Argentina, the policies of openness in the UBA gained new momentum. In 1984, the management of the social function was prioritized through the creation of a Secretariat of University Extension and Student

[14] See video "Maciel, la otra orilla", available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJR_DCbl5yk

Welfare, under the authority of the Rectorate. The purpose of the unit is to assist the rector in all matters related to the activities that contribute to the interaction of the university senate with the rest of the social sectors. Since then, the different faculties have also created their own management units, dedicated to the development of university extension, as expressed by former Secretary of University Extension, Martín Marcos:

> *Since the normalization of the university in 1994, a series of experiences have been carried out in different areas of the university (...). From the university extension, the university has conducted significant transfer actions towards the social environment: cultural production and dissemination, sports, job training, teacher updating, social action, health prevention, institutional diffusion and a wide range of extracurricular education* (Marcos, 1993: pp13,14).

Another important milestone in the institutional life of the UBA took place in 1995 when the Higher Council approved the Reform Program of the University of Buenos Aires. At that time, changes were implemented to the different substantive functions. Under the process, it was seen that university extension needed greater articulation in both teaching and research, in line with the debates related to the curricular processes of extensionist practices. The objective was to strengthen the integral formation of university students through the balanced articulation of the three substantive functions of the university*:*

> *…to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge in the classroom through teaching and the discovery and verification of new knowledge through research, [we] should add significant learning or experiences associated with the active participation of students and teachers in real problem situations that put into play the social role of the university* (Vedia, 2020).

It was recognized that there was a need to create a program of 'community social service practices', and to incorporate them as a compulsory activity, formally included in the curricula. While the initiative was not actually implemented in the 1990s, it was recovered in 2010, with the creation of the Social Educational Practices.

The Social Educational Practices (SEPs) and the installation of solidarity service-learning as an institutional policy

The Social Educational Practices Program (SEPs), created by the UBA's Superior Council through Resolution (CS) No. 520/10, seeks to articulate, promote, and develop the UBA's solid tradition in curricular social practices, developed in different academic units. Through the SEP, the UBA seeks to make its social function a reality by placing the knowledge it produces and teaches at the service of society, enabling it to foster collaboration between the university and the community. The SEPs "are an effective tool for students to develop the skills and values of citizenship, acquire diverse world views and reach a reflective stance towards reality, through participation in social life in new and varied ways" (Res_CS_520-10). They are pedagogical proposals that value both the acquisition of knowledge and the application of it in the social field. They facilitate collaboration and integration of research, teaching, and extension.

The integration of university extension activities into the curriculum and their articulation within teaching and research present possibilities for the creation of external spaces for meaningful learning and situated knowledge. It allows for learning based on real problems, with the aim of offering concrete solutions and promoting the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes by motivating students to investigate and to get involved in those 'service-learning' processes.

María Nieves Tapia emphasizes that service learning is a solidarity practice that involves the key participation of

students, which aims to meet the real needs of a community. This presupposes institutional planning that integrates solidarity practices with the university curriculum (2006). Puig and Palos (2006) define service learning as an educational proposal that combines learning and community service processes in a single, well-articulated project, in which participants learn while they work to satisfy the real needs of the environment. In the same way, Monike Gezuraga notes that service-learning programs are neither university volunteering policies nor isolated solidarity practices, but they require combining educational and social functions in a synergetic way. (Gezuraga, 2017) Miquel Martínez defines service-learning proposals as:

> *…proposals that should be placed within the framework of a university formative model that attempts to combine academic learning and training for an active citizenship in real time. Therefore, they are proposals that should be integrated into the set of changes oriented towards a new university model that, in addition to seeking more quality, incorporates among its dimensions the exercise of social responsibility (...) That is, a university model that, in addition to being concerned with quality, orients its training model and its teaching, research and knowledge transfer activity towards achieving more social inclusion, towards the training of graduates who act from perspectives oriented towards achieving the common good and a more just and democratic society* (Martínez, 2008:16).

Thus, the distinctive characteristic of service learning within the Social Educational Practices is its articulation within the curricular contents, which has a dual impact, both pedagogical and social. SEPs can be seen as an effective tool for students to develop the skills and values of citizenship, to acquire diverse worldviews and to reach a reflexive attitude towards reality by participating in social life in new and various ways.

Placing solidarity service-learning in institutional management and in times of crisis

An SEP framework includes three components:

- A formative component, which implies the development of skills mediated through teaching processes;
- A social component, insofar as it is a practice that is developed in external-academic spaces and is aimed at society; and
- An intervention component, insofar as it involves the development of strategies with the objective of providing a service to the community in which the institution is inserted.

In order for the UBA to implement the SEP, it was necessary to coordinate between the Extension Secretariat, which reports to the Rectorate, and the Academic Secretariat. The Extension Secretariat is responsible for the link with the community through projects under the UBANEX Program, which is charged with designing, promoting, stimulating, and strengthening the link between the University and society. The Academic Secretariat plays an important role in that it advises the different academic units regarding the inclusion of SEP in the curricula, the training of teachers related to the promotion of service learning, and the evaluation of the relevance and quality of the proposals that are submitted for approval to the University's Superior Council.

There are three specific resolutions that focus on the application and integration of SEPs. Resolution (CS) No. 520/10 establishes that SEP projects must be directed by teaching teams formed by teachers and assistants, with a duration of 42 hours, and must be voluntary in nature. Resolution (CS) No. 3653/11 determines the objectives, the forms of academic integration, the requirements the projects must fulfil, and provides for the creation of the Integrated System of Social Educational Practices Projects (ISSEPP), which will catalogue the list of all the SEP projects produced at the University. Resolution (CS) No. 172/14 established that "as from the 2017 academic year, the Social Educational Practices will be mandatory and will be a

requirement for obtaining a diploma for all students entering the University from this cycle onwards". This last Resolution also states, "the academic departments have requested the formation of spaces to train the teaching teams in both formative and didactic aspects".

The UBA works continuously to promote the institutionalization of SEP at the university by providing technical assistance to the different academic departments for the design and systematization of proposals that can accredit it. In this way, it seeks to offer a variety of projects so that students can meet the necessary requirements for graduation. Beginning in 2018, systematic training was provided to the teaching teams in order to promote the exchange between teachers from different faculties to share and reflect upon their practices, both academic and outreach, with a view to establishing a common theoretical and conceptual framework. This led to the creation of a historical trajectory, a geolocation map, and a digital repository of all the activities related to the social educational practices already accomplished. Projects were catalogued according to the thematic area they addressed, the population served, and the geographical context in which they took place. Despite disparate implementation practices across the different academic departments, these initial trainings paved the way for the gradual institutionalization of SEP at UBA.

The SEP in action

Each academic department, in terms of courses, regularity, attendance, promotion and evaluation, regulates the SEPs. Given the diversity of the degrees the University offers and their distinct disciplinary logistics, a range of different modalities of insertion of SEP into the curriculum was established. Below are five examples of specific projects and the different approaches taken:

a) As part of the contents to be addressed in field work or similar spaces, if there are foundations to support its affinity with the exercise of social practices.

The project 'Rights and Access to Water in Neighborhoods of Esteban Echeverría' of the Faculty of Agronomy (RESCS-2019-438-E-UBA-REC) addresses the social problems of accessing drinking water in neighborhoods of the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires (AMBA).

In the initial stage, students and teachers of the faculty team up with the residents and organizations of the neighborhoods involved, to survey the local problems related to access and consumption of water. Subsequently, samples are taken to analyze microbiological and physicochemical conditions in the faculty premises. Sampling is planned according to the topographic and hydrogeological characteristics of the basins. In this way, students and teachers apply their curricular knowledge to make an integral analysis of the situation while the results of the laboratory studies allow them to make a diagnosis of the case. Degrees such as Agronomy and Environmental Sciences provide technical and theoretical training on water quality and pollution in their curricula, but there are few opportunities to gain practical experience of dealing directly with socio-environmental problems.

The results of this initial study will serve as inputs to meetings with the families and the neighborhood delegates to jointly consider the water quality analysis, available treatments, and technologies or remediations, appropriate for the area. Additionally, potential precautions can be considered in terms of the different uses of the water. Further to this, the engagement with the community is intended to raise awareness about the right to drinking water and its quality, and also to encourage neighboring communities to participate in collective organizational processes around water rights.

The implementation of this SEP will bring together students from a number of different disciplines. These include Agronomy and Environmental Sciences as mentioned above, but also Chemistry and Microbiology knowledge will be required for the analysis of the water samples while Hydrology will be needed to carry out the study of the characteristics of the basin.

b) As part of proposals developed by different teams made up of chairs, departments and institutes of the UBA.

The project of the Faculty of Pharmacy and Biochemistry, entitled 'Detection of cardiovascular risk factors and diabetes in vulnerable populations' (RESCS-2019-2137-E-UBA-REC) is located in vulnerable neighborhoods in the south of Buenos Aires. It has been running since 2009. The aim of the project is to promotes healthy lifestyles which, especially if acquired from an early age, help to reduce the likelihood of chronic illness later. It also aims to strengthen the participation of Biochemistry students in social outreach activities.

In addressing the remit of the project, the SEP team takes a number of approaches, including: listening to the people's health demands; raising awareness about cardiovascular risk factors; providing information; performing interventions such as anamnesis; taking anthropometric measurements and blood sampling to determine the lipid and hydrocarbon profile; and taking hair samples to measure cortisol levels.

With regard to the role of the students in the project, exchange and training meetings are held jointly with peer students from other health-related degrees. They are trained in a number of skill areas, including patient communication and analytical tasks. They evaluate results which are delivered in a personalized way, they encourage periodic controls where required and they make referrals to health professionals or health centers when deemed appropriate. The activities are carried out in coordination with neighborhood entities and community meal centers, as well as with schools and parishes. Generally, the members of the communities targeted by the project are unemployed, or informally employed and, therefore, outside of the social security system and without access to regular health check-ups.

c) As part of a relevant UBANEX extension project.

A decade after its approval, university extension gained new impetus with the creation of the subsidy program, UBANEX, in 2004, by means of Resolution No. 3445 of the Superior Council.

This program grants economic subsidies to teaching chairs to develop extension projects which include the participation of students. Since its creation, more than 500 projects designed to strengthen the link between the University and society have been financed. The UBANEX Program was awarded third place in the 2022 McJannet Prize for Global Citizenship, granted by the Talloires Network of Committed Universities.[15]

An example of the many projects supported by the UBANEX Program is 'The intensive dental care program for rural communities in the Province of Misiones', which is carried out in the town of Montecarlo by the Faculty of Dentistry. The project, which focuses on oral health, targets primary and secondary school students living in rural and marginal urban areas. It places a strong emphasis on health promotion and education, and on encouraging the population to achieve healthy behaviors. An initial overview of dental health is established by determining the characteristics of the following: geographic location, climate, type of housing, sources of work, diet, hygiene habits, clothing, beliefs. The results show a high level of poor dental health among the following: members of large families, temporary workers without social security, people with a low-protein diet and people with poor hygiene habits, resulting directly from precariousness of housing and economic conditions.

The execution of the project involves an annual program involving both the faculty's premises and direct clinical actions in the field, involving a mobile dental unit with its own equipment. Around 1000 schoolchildren are seen annually, with individual consultations including a strong preventative component, appropriate clinical intervention and a quantitative and qualitative post-intervention evaluation. The local population participates actively in the project - in the city of

[15] Talloires Network of Engaged Universities - The UBANEX Program is the third-place prize winner of the 2022 MacJannet Prize for Global Citizenship.
https://talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu/about-the-macjannet-prize/2022-macjannet-prize-winners/ubanex/

Montecarlo it takes responsibility for providing lodging, internal mobility logistics, coordination of food distribution and selection and authorization of the schoolchildren.

d) As part of the activities developed through agreements with public institutions and civil society organizations.

The objective of the SEP project 'Community construction of urban flood maps' (RESCS-2021-47-E-UBA-REC) is the construction of community maps of urban floods to contribute to awareness raising of flood risk management in different localities, and on the benefits of participatory work. The project is led by the Faculty of Exact and Natural Sciences (FCEN) and is targeted at primary and secondary schools, tertiary educational institutions, and families. Working through schools facilitates participatory work for the benefit of the neighborhood population and, in many localities, it is educational establishments that act as evacuation centers when events like flooding occur.

This project has built on the experience gained in the research/extension project 'Anticipating the Flood'[16] and has been underway since 2013. A program of gradual and sustained work since then has meant that several schools are now involved, and the reach of the project is increasing. In October 2017, a collaboration agreement was signed between the FCEN and the Municipality of La Matanza and the faculty now has many collaborative partners within the region including local Civil Defense, the Secretariat of Science and Technology, and neighborhood associations. It also works closely with the operational agencies that provide hydro meteorological information, the National Meteorological Service, the National Water Institute, the National Geographic Institute, and the Naval Hydrography Service.

With this background information, the SEP is adapted to a process of co-production of knowledge. This process includes

[16] The project's website is: *Anticipating the flood*, available at http://anticipandolacrecida.cima.fcen.uba.ar/

the production of students' autonomous work, together with a series of meetings with local actors, as well as discussion and reflection with FCEN professors. The combination of autonomous work and group meetings enables students to systematize the information gathered and to contribute to the collective construction of knowledge. Likewise, the interaction with researchers and experts from other institutions enables SEP students to understand, in a more comprehensive manner, the problem of urban flooding and the strategies needed to reduce its impact.

Because of the intensive process outlined, the students, in collaboration with others, will be in a position to co-produce urban flood maps, which will be useful, not only for the local communities (school, school families, etc.) but also for the scientific community. These maps will also form the basis for the communication and dissemination of the project results to the community.

e) As part of volunteer projects of public organizations.

The Covid 19 pandemic had a profound effect on UBA as it had on HEIs across the world. In Argentina, the National Government declared a program of Preventive and Compulsory Social Isolation (ASPO) on March 19, 2020[17]. In the context of this national lockdown, Argentine universities developed different policies, within the framework of their autonomy, to sustain the pedagogical continuity.

The UBA led the way in the search for solutions to alleviate the health crisis, to cope with its consequences, and to provide the state and its citizens with the benefits of its scientific and technological capacity. The University made available its extensive network of university hospitals to the national and provincial authorities, which helped extend health coverage for the population and also provided centers for relevant clinical research. The UBA developed and led university volunteer programs to undertake essential tasks to support services and

[17] DNU Nº 297-20

communities. Through the 'UBA in Action Program', and the volunteering program of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, more than 7,000 students from a broad range of UBA degree courses joined teams coordinated by professors and researchers. These teams worked across a range of medical and social campaigns, such as the promotion of flu vaccination for the population at risk; follow-up of COVID patients isolated in their homes; dental care and prevention; psychological care service; food for vulnerable groups; accounting advice; and legal support for victims of domestic violence, gender violence and denial of access to health care.

All these initiatives had to be developed and implemented over a short period in order to meet the variety of needs that were emerging at speed. For reasons both of speed and difficulty of direct association, on-line courses were organized for the COVID volunteers to prepare them and also to allow then to share their experiences, describe their learning, and understand the transition from Volunteering to Solidarity Learning and Service.

Concluding thoughts

To conclude, we wish to reflect on two specific aspects of the social commitment of the UBA. The first is that, as happened during the process of the University Reform of 1918, it was the university's students who mobilized to meet society's urgent needs during the pandemic. We would argue that they were able to rise to that challenge due to the strong social commitment engendered in them as students of a public and free university. Active participation in Social Educational Practices enables students:

- To develop skills, civic values, and visions of society, developing a reflective and critical position towards reality by participating in social life in new and varied ways.
- To engage in meaningful learning, based on experience that generates innovative and socially relevant research,

building professionals with greater capacity to respond to the challenges of life.

The second reflection is that, in a world where the problems of inequality within, and between, countries are greater than ever, it is essential to highlight the importance of including in the university curriculum social practices that promote the value of solidarity as an ethical principle in the training of professionals, as established in the statute of UBA. The need for such inclusion is particularly crucial at this point, since, as Francois Dubet (2015) warns, there has been a decline in the principle of solidarity in our societies. He observes:

> *The fact that we are convinced that we are equal by right leads to a demand for justice and equity, because, in fact, the principle of equality must be adapted to the extreme diversity of men and their living conditions. However, this conviction is not enough when it comes to implementing policies to reduce social inequalities. For the principle of equality to become a desire for social equality, it must be associated with a feeling of solidarity and fraternity; equality commits us because individuals have something in common and similar; because they are connected; because they have a common destiny and because private happiness depends on public happiness. When these feelings are weakened, inequalities deepen, despite indignations* (Dubet 2015).

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11
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN BRAZILIAN UNIVERSITIES

Marcelo Knobel and Fernando Hashimoto

Universities do not exist in a bubble

Universities are institutions whose origin dates back to the Middle Ages. If they survived over time and remain relevant to this day, it is because they have been able to reinvent themselves and adapt to the different realities of each epoch. A requirement that the 21st century has imposed on universities is that they engage with society and build relationships with the various groups that compose it. In today's world there is definitely no place for ivory towers within the demands that emerge in the surroundings. In fact, it is already possible to notice a greater consonance between the longings of society and the way universities operate. Proof of this is the revision that many institutions have made to their systems of entry. These revisions have taken steps towards social inclusion and affirmative actions and include policy changes in relation to student success and reduction of drop-out rates. This is driven by the growing interest in obtaining a higher-level qualification by social groups that, until a few years ago, did not even consider stepping in a university classroom. The changes, however, need to go even further. The social dimension needs to be incorporated, in a transversal way, into the three areas of activity of universities – teaching, research, and extension – without which they run the risk of losing their leadership position in the formation of people and in the production and dissemination of knowledge. Making such changes is a task that requires discussion and planning.

Universities can respond several ways creatively and dynamically to the current demands of society. The debate is focused on strategic aspects such as accelerating innovation and globalization; changes in demographics and wealth distribution; the preparation of young people and adults for a more complex and unpredictable labor market; technological advances in

digitization, artificial intelligence, and biotechnology; among others. These transformations involve immense challenges for each university and require the configuration of international strategies in the face of the complexity of the 21st century, so that institutions can not only adapt, but also lead change and play a preponderant role in building a better future. For example, the challenge of training qualified human resource professionals for a constantly changing labor market is always under discussion. How to do this knowing that many of the professions of the future have not yet been created? At a minimum, the path involves the education of ethical citizens, full and solid bases to accompany the rapid changes of an increasingly connected and globalized world.

In this context, what is the contribution of universities to social and territorial development? Universities reflect the deep socioeconomic, regional, and ethnic inequalities in society, but they alone cannot eliminate them, and nor are they solely responsible. While they alone are not capable of solving the deep inequalities present in our countries, they can – and should – be an important part of the search for solutions, acting as agents of transformation of the economic and social system. To do this, they need to strengthen connections with a range of sectors, including, but not only, the media, private initiatives, the political class, non-governmental organizations, and other public institutions.

It is important that the formation of the members of the university community is being continuously updated to meet the demands of society itself, in order to promote the education of full citizens, capable of facing the challenges of a dynamic labor market. Universities also need to take account of sustainable development goals in their strategic planning, especially in the context of a policy of social cooperation and its integral role in the formation of students. This strategic vision must include elements such as access, equity, diversity, excellence, internationalization, and innovative and entrepreneurial spirit. To achieve these formation objectives, it is essential to seek new ideas and good practices, and to have

the flexibility to adapt in the context of social and regional development.

Many characteristics can be considered when we discuss the societal engagement of universities, probably the most important one being that of 'university extension' which is at the core of Brazilian universities civic engagement. In fact, it is a characteristic of university engagement across the whole Latin American context [with some important regional differences] (Bernasconi 2008). In the sections to follow we will: discuss the complex definition of this term; explore the historical development of such engagement in the higher education scenario in Brazil; present some examples of good practice; and consider future challenges.

The so-called 'university extension' in the Brazilian context

It is important to note that there is no unified understanding of the meaning of the term 'extension' in the higher education sector, contrary to what happens with research, for example. Across countries and regions, both the specific nomenclature and the meaning can be used to convey a wide variety of concepts, including outreach, extension, civic mission, civic engagement, social engagement, third mission, among others (each with its own definitions and limits)

Several dialogue initiatives among universities across different countries were started up in the 1980s and 1990s. Their aim was to observe extension initiatives and to create metrics to assess the activity and economic impact of each university within both its neighborhood and its region (Rosli and Rossi 2016; Molas Gallart and Castro Martínez 2007). Emerging from those initiatives was the publication of the *Iberoamerican Handbook of Indicators of Connection Between Universities and their Socioeconomic Surroundings* (*Manual Iberoamericano de Indicadores de Vinculación de la Universidad´ con el Entorno Socioeconómico* – Valencia Handbook 2017). The Handbook was developed by the Iberoamerican Observatory of Science, Technology and Society from the Iberoamerican States Organization (Observatorio Iberoamericano de la Ciencia, la Tecnología y la Sociedad -

OCTS) and by the Iberoamerican network of Science and Technology (Red Iberoamericana de Indicadores de Ciencia y Tecnología - RICYT). It was also supported by the UK's Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), which surveyed and analyzed the interactions among universities, corporations and communities, with regard to the marketing of new technologies, professional capacitation and 'productive' interaction with the different societal stakeholders (Higher Education - Business and Community Interaction Survey for UK higher education institutions 2007).

In Brazil, after extensive debates, a sort of consensus has emerged regarding the definition of university extension:

> *University extension, under the constitutional principle of inseparability between teaching, research and extension, is an interdisciplinary, educative, cultural, scientific and political process that promotes the transformative interaction between the university and other society sectors* (FORPROEX, 2012, p. 15).

It is worth mentioning that most universities in Brazil now have a vice-president for extension (*pró-reitor de extensão*), supported by a dedicated team, to coordinate all the projects and activities of this fundamental sector. In many cases, the extension sector is strongly connected to culture, and in fewer cases, to innovation and entrepreneurship. In fact, even though innovation programs can be characterized as extension activities, in many Universities specific bodies were created to coordinate such activities and programs.

The strengthening of extension within Brazilian universities over the past forty years has generated a series of extension projects and initiatives that are seen as benchmarks in Brazil and in Latin America more widely. Such initiatives have seen Brazilian universities: massively participate in both the formulation and support of public policies in the federal, state, and municipal spheres; provide third-party services to help

public and private institutions; help to transform the power of continuing education.

While the consolidation of a unified understanding of the extension concept in the Brazilian higher education sector is still a work in progress, there has been a long history of debates and developments around the concept that are largely unknown. In the next section we will describe this historical process, in order to shed light on some specific characteristics of 'university extension' in Brazil.

Brief history and particularities of university extension in Brazil

The extemporaneous process that is observed in university extension in Brazil is mirrored in the very late foundation of universities in the country. Despite the interesting pioneer work done by the so-called 'Free University of São Paulo', created in 1911 to deliver open courses to the public, Brazil's first higher education institutions (HEIs) date from the 1920s.

The Brazilian universities were created following the Humboldtian model of higher education, which purports the integration of the arts and sciences with research to achieve both comprehensive general learning and cultural knowledge. However, the development of the higher education sector across Latin America more widely was quite heterogeneous. For example, the National University of Cordoba, in Argentina, was founded in 1613; two centuries later, it was the creed of the movement known as 'Reform of Cordoba' that, in 1918, had, as one of its main ideas, the repositioning of university extension to become the propulsive center of the university (Manoni 2017; Mora et al. 2018).

Despite the provision for university 'extension' in Brazil, in fact it did not represent a dialogical engagement with society. Even the Statute of the Brazilian University of 1931 (Brazilian Federal Decree 19851 -11/04/1931) is unclear in its proposal of extension activity beyond traditional courses and dissemination of ideas. Following on from the military coup of 1964, and under the National Security Law, there was a strong move towards

university reform in 1968. This involved the complete dismantling of the research-teaching-extension triad with the elimination of extension from the very concept of a university, relegating it to a minor role as an activity within the functions of the university (see Schwartzman 1988).

The first document that proposed the elevation and greater integration of the concept of university extension was the University Extension Work Plan (Plano de Trabalho da Extensão Universitária) of 1975, formulated by the Ministry of Education. This plan established some key points, such as: a) change/expansion of the public served by extensionist actions, to include organizations, other institutions and the general public; b) establishment of the teaching-research-extension relationship; c) institution of the university-society dialogical relationship, through exchanges between academic knowledge and popular knowledge (as opposed to the authoritarianism in practice at that point); d) expansion of the list of extension activities, to include courses, services, cultural dissemination, communication of results (Nogueira, 2005).

The following decade saw the return of democracy and the publication of the new Brazilian Federal Constitution in 1988 (Brazilian Federal Constitution 1988). It consolidated the fundamental role of extension when it stated that, "universities enjoy didactic-scientific, administrative, financial and patrimonial management autonomy and will obey the principle of inseparability between teaching, research and extension" (Brazilian Federal Constitution 1988; Article 207). Although now provided with legal status, there remained a significant gap between the concept and the practice as it was carried out in the everyday life of Brazilian universities. There was an evident absence of effective regulation of the extension, and it was to address this gap that the National Forum of Pro-Rectors of Extension of Brazilian Public Universities (FORPROEX) was created in 1978. It assumed a leading role in the discussions and implementation of the extension policies of HEIs across the country. Subsequently, the FORPROEX National Extension Plan 1998 (Plano Nacional de Extensão) became the self-regulatory

document of extension activities in Brazilian HEIs (Brazilian National Extension Plan 1998). The Plan, with its clear definition of extension and its series of directions for university extension actions, was seen as the go to handbook on 'extension' by many Brazilian universities.

The work of the Forum continued into the 21st century, with the publication of the National Education Plan (2014-2024), which ratifies the universalization of extension, maintaining 10% of curricular obligation and guiding its integration in extension programs and projects. The Plan proposes the further development of extension as a real formative factor within Brazilian university programs, allowing all undergraduate students to undergo an extension integrative experience.

Current challenges of University Extension in Brazil

Metrics and evaluation

The self-regulation of extension activities in Brazilian HEIs differed from the type of regulation that applied in other areas of university activity, such as learning and research, which were regulated by federal and state regulatory bodies. It called for the establishment of new unified metrics and evaluation processes across the complex Brazilian higher education scenario. However, the multiplicity of views and definitions of university extension among the HEIs hindered the establishment of common evaluation parameters. A working group created by FORPROEX, conducted a study over a number of years across the HEIs in an attempt to establish agreed metrics. The results of this study are now being tested in some HEIs (Maximiano Junior *et al*. 2017). The preliminary results of this initiative look promising, but it is difficult to assess yet the overall impact and the possibilities for broad application. Another interesting and positive move is that that some funding agencies, similarly to their European and American counterparts, have expanded their funding criteria to encompass broader societal research and discussion and dissemination of work in the area of extension. For example, the research agency of the State of São Paulo (FAPESP) recently supported and promoted a discussion

about the social impact of research that culminated in a publication of 2019 (Marcovitch 2019).

Valorization and promotion of extension actions

It is common to hear it said on our campuses that "extension is everything that is not research or teaching". Most of the teaching staff across faculties of Brazilian HEIs, especially the oldest, did not experience the full potential of extension actions in their university formation. There continues to be a lack of clarity around the principle of inseparability between research, teaching and extension. Many staff and faculty members still see extension activity as just more work to be added to the already heavy academic workload, as opposed to as an integrated action as advocated by the extension principle.

The inclusion of extension within the activities of teachers, employees, and students in Brazilian HEIs is still at a low level, a fact that is clear from activity reports and online platforms that record academic activities in the country. The institutional promotion of extension actions is also very low. In the federal public system, for example, extension does not feature as a priority in the distribution of the budget for universities. Until recently, the only source of financial support at the federal level for extension actions was through an open call to a small, dedicated fund. At state level, the levels of promotion and support for extension actions varies quite a lot. For example, in the case of HEIs in the state of São Paulo (USP, UNESP and UNICAMP), there is quite a consolidated structure and several calls to support extension activities. Even still, the level of resources provided is limited, particularly when compared to the support for teaching and research. A general feature of extension activities supported is that they tend to be specific short-term projects involving small numbers of students. There are few institutional programs established, and even these that are, have a limited participation of students. For, example, in UNICAMP, there are projects that involve students from different areas of the university (such as nursing, medicine and arts) working in settlement fields in the peripheral region of the

city of Campinas. However, this rich experience has a limited number of student participants (less than 5% of those in the schools), and there is a lack of engagement from most of the faculty.

Similar to the lack of dissemination on extension activity at national level, extension actions at HEI level receive low internal and external dissemination. It is difficult to access data on projects and extension programs previously carried out by the HEI, which is an issue when trying to engage community and interdisciplinary participation in future extension actions. When analyzing regional and national extension meetings and conferences, it is clear that there is a lack of solid scientific research published and that, instead, published materials on the topic of university extension consist largely of reports of actions developed, with just a small number tackling the subject conceptually. There are a small few specialist Brazilian journals which focus on extension, one bine UNICAMP's *International Journal of Outreach and Community Engagement* which was launched in 2018 (see https://econtents.bc.unicamp.br/inpec/index.php/ijoce/issue/view/833).

Curricularization of extension

The so-called 'curricularization of extension', included in strategy 12.7 of the National Education Plan 2014-2024 (CNE 2018) established that the curricula of undergraduate courses must have a minimum of 10% of extension actions within total hours of activities of its programs. It also specifies that it is not enough to include unrelated and free activities, but that the pedagogical basis of the courses must include the integration of extension into teaching, and research, where possible. The objective of the Plan is to establish an understanding of university extension as a primary component in the formation of students in their various academic specificities, to ultimately create global and conscious citizens. The inclusion of this goal in the national strategy is a significant milestone and one that should lead to change within the HEI landscape by providing all students with the opportunity to experience extension

actions during their college years. Moreover, it should lead to greater institutional involvement of teachers and staff in extension programs and projects, as well as to real internal transformation within the universities due to the inevitable dialogue that these actions promote between university and society. Although this conceptual change should lead to progress in extension actions across HEIs, there is still a risk that it will not be fully integrated into a three-way process of teaching, research, and extension as required. Unfortunately, it is common to see situations where extension activities are led by faculty members who do not have any scientific knowledge or developed sense of the activity. An example of such a disassociation would be a capoeira or yoga class being given by a faculty member of the physics department. In the cultural field, in particular, there is a clear disassociation between the agent and his or her main academic practice.

Final Considerations

In this chapter, we have presented the evolution of the consolidation of 'university extension' in Brazilian universities. As can be seen, the process has been long and difficult, and there are yet many challenges to overcome. However, despite the hurdles, we believe that extension activities in Brazilian HEIs (as well as in those of many other Latin-American countries) are well advanced compared to other regions of the world. In fact, increasingly, universities see extension activities as a social responsibility and as an inherent part of their academic culture, thus promoting one of the biggest changes in the academic environment in recent years. The continuing challenge for extension and its advocates is around its ability to break the duality relationship of teaching and research to create a three-way relationship of teaching, research, and extension, thus establishing the conditions for the development of true citizenship across faculty, staff, and students. More and more, extension is perceived as one of the fundamental university purposes that, together with teaching and research, enables

HEIs to fulfill their responsibility to the economic and social development of the region they serve.

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12
UNIVERSITY OF AYSÉN (CHILE): FROM SOCIAL DEMAND TO ENGAGED TERRITORIES

Natacha Pino Acuña

Introduction

Through this historical account, I will report on the origin of the University of Aysén, which was established as a response to, and a result of, a citizen's movement and a demand deeply felt by the entire community of the Aysén region of Chile. I have since then worked with them to move towards the engaged university we all aspire to and are now building together.

In 2012, there was a historic mobilization of citizens in the Aysén region - *Your problem is my problem* - which called for, and subsequently led to, the improvement of the living conditions of those who lived in what was one of the most isolated regions of the country. For more than 45 days, the inhabitants of the region made a series of demands to the regional and national authorities, including seeking a state university that would allow access to higher education for the sons and daughters of Aysén.

On June 17, 2012, in the city of Coyhaique, President Bachelet began the process of creating the state university of Aysén, with the signing of a bill that granted powers to the executive to initiate the process. More than 30 citizen meetings were held throughout the territory from Melinka and Lago Verde in the north, to Villa O'Higgins and Tortel in the south. At these meetings, men and women generously shared their dreams, visions, and aspirations for this long-awaited project. On August 7, 2015, with the publication of Law 20.842, the University of Aysén was established and began operating.

Achieving its mission

In its mission statement, the University of Aysén declares itself a state and autonomous institution of higher education that

contributes to national development, with special emphasis on the Aysén region of Patagonia, through the comprehensive training of professionals, research, creation and innovation and links with the environment. At the same time, the University projects itself as an inclusive university community, which contributes to the generation of knowledge and public good, necessary for regional and national development. The University hopes to be recognized as an innovative institution in teaching, research and connection with the environment, making a relevant and significant contribution to the environment in which it participates.

Arising from this historical context and institutional definition, the question then for a university such as Aysén is, "how to promote the democratic mission of higher education with a particular focus on the participation of the local community". The answer to this question involves the presence of five essential requirements. They are: having a high degree of legitimacy; building trust in the community at all levels; designing and co-building relevant solutions; ensuring informed decision making; and creating consultative and participatory processes.

A high degree of legitimacy, while understanding that its nature may vary according to the characteristics of each university or higher education system (Bernasconi and Clasing, 2015) and that the way of acting institutionally must correspond with appropriate socially constructed norms, values, beliefs, and definitions (Cruz Suárez, 2012)

Building trust in the community at all levels involves establishing relationships with the immediate environment and key actors for in the pursuit of academic function. These relations must be direct, transparent, and collaborative, in order to allow the co-construction of the university project, and to deliver a rapid and efficient response to the different requirements.

The design and co-building of solutions relevant to the territory in which the University is located is essential. For this, it is important to identify and recognize the regional context,

both historical and socio-demographic, in addition to developing the capacity and the necessary mechanisms and instruments to establish co-construction processes.

Informed decision-making occurs in two ways. Firstly, there is decision-making by the University, informed by the actions of the community, taking into account the context and the data that supports the proposed actions, information that provides the necessary scientific and methodological validity and rigor. Secondly, is the decision making of the territorial actors, regional and local governments, public organizations, and social actors. They look to the university, regional and state, to provide the necessary relevant information to support their decision-making processes.

Finally, commitment to **consultative and participatory processes** allow for the design and adoption of mechanisms for discussion and reflection on the topics of interest both within the university community and with the actors of the local community and region. An example of such a mechanism is the Territorial Social Councils.

Model of linkage with the environment

The presence and application of these five variables have been very useful when configuring the Aysén region's VcM model (also called the Territorial Management Model), which is derived from the university's environmental linkage policy This applies particularly to the functioning of the Territorial Social Council as a co-creation space, where the University communicates with the territories of the region, through the representatives of civil society.

The environmental linkage policy guides the university's institutional work in the generation of bonds of trust and the development of deep, reciprocal relationships that favorably influence the community, the environment, and the institution itself. The policy defines the link with the environment as:

> *... the development of actions, projects, and programs that, with a high academic content, articulates the actions with*

the territory and its communities. This link will have a bidirectional element; it will seek collaboration and co-creation with the actors of the territory, which will become opportunities for growth and reciprocal learning, in all its mission functions. It will look for permanent feedback with the actors of the media that contributes to ensure the institutional quality in the fulfilment of its functions

It is important to identify and recognize the contribution of the link with the environment to academic work. In terms of teaching, it involves strengthening the comprehensive training of students, enriching its quality and relevance through interaction with the territories, facilitating feedback on training, and improving the overall curricular and teaching-learning processes. With regard to research, the link with actors in the environment contributes to the relevance of research projects selected as well as to communication, alliances, and actions. It also allows for the transfer and dissemination of knowledge, including knowledge about problems and challenges that may emerge, at regional, territorial or interest group level. The link with actors in the environment also facilitates the creation and dissemination of artistic and cultural activities that contribute to improving quality of life and human development.

Governance of the Territorial Management model

The VcM model defines areas of action, key actors from the internal and external environment, and the desired impacts of the actions, projects and programs promoted by the university through teaching and research. It requires horizontal interaction with the territorial environment and its prioritized needs, with the aim of contributing to the social and productive development of the region, based on bi-directionality and territorial relevance.

Figure 1 below demonstrates the governance model linking the University of Aysén with the environment. The fields of action are identified on the right - public sector, private sector, and civil society. On the left are the collaborating university

personnel - academics, students, and other staff. The creative space is a meeting and articulation point between the internal environment (Institutional Missions), made up of academics, students, officials, collegiate members and union organizations; and the external environment (society-territory), where the diversity of agents from the productive, public, academic and civil society world is recognized. This meeting allows for the design and implementation of a whole range of linking initiatives, undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, research, cultural extension and academic extension, all of which is conditioned by the internal and external environment of the University.

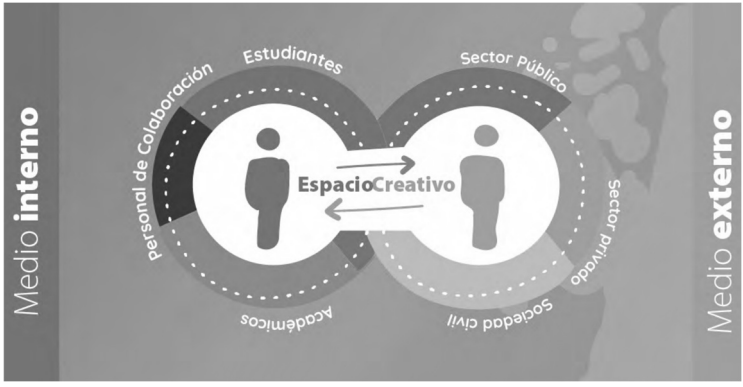

Figure 1: Governance model linking with the University of Aysén environment. Source: *Elaboración propia UAysén*

The Coordination Committee represents the internal environment for Linkage with the Environment, which connects the Linkage Directorate with both the Academic and Research Directorates and the Academic Departments. These internal structures facilitate the planning and execution of the actions of linkage with the environment, as defined in the policy.

The external environment, as defined in the VcM model, is represented by the Social Council, which is a consultative body, made up of 65 representatives of civil society and chaired by the director. Its objectives are defined as follows:

...to keep the Rector of the University informed in relation to the needs and effective problems of the region, as well as with respect to its main development plans, and in turn, to contribute to the regional community being actively linked with the various lines of work generated by the University, recognizing the potential for development and progress that it can offer.

Following on from the definition of objectives, it is then necessary to identify strategies to meet these objectives. The territorial management strategy of the VcM model operates through the Social Innovation Laboratory (LIS) that links with the environment to provide appropriate methodological support to activate the creative spaces necessary to address the identified territorial challenges. These challenges are local and can present in the form of problems or of opportunities. They are problematized and short-, medium-, or long-term solutions are devised, usually in cooperation with the community, and usually open to adaptation as required along the way.

The Social Council itself has a mechanism for the proposal, prioritization, and analysis of initiatives for presentation to the director. The proposed initiatives fall into three categories – program, project, and activity. A program initiative is seen as an organized, coherent, and integrated set of activities, services or processes expressed in a set of interrelated projects. A project consists of a set of specific interrelated activities that are carried out in order to produce particular goods or services to address identified needs or to solve problems. An activity initiative is one that contains a sequential action, directed at achieving an identified goal.

Implementation of the model

Currently, the University of Aysén is executing the project to implement its Territorial Management Model, with the aim of connecting teaching and research in the pilot territories Litoral Norte Aysén, Aysén Queulat, and Glaciares Province. This involves the deployment, execution, and monitoring of the VcM

Territorial Management Model, thus strengthening the University-Territory links. The project is led by three professional Territorial Managers, who contribute to the management, articulation, and visibility of the University in the pilot territories. Among its main functions are: development, design, execution, monitoring and evaluation of activities and initiatives that enable the operationalization of the territorial management model; gathering of information; systematization; socio-territorial analysis and generation of process and/or results reports (Territorial Challenges Bank); installation, development and sustainment of the Territorial Social Councils to drive the project; and the creation, installation and monitoring of specific committees or technical groups linking the University and the territorial actors, in coordination with the University's Territorial Management Unit.

For the environmental linkage policy, and its various implementation bodies to be truly effective, it is necessary for the university to strengthen these new ways of relating to, and within, the territory. It requires the development and maintenance of relationships that create the environment for the social fabric to flourish, identify, and support relevant research and training. This involves expanding, not only geographically, but also in terms of vision in order to take on new challenges and respond to them appropriately, using both the university's own capacities and those of the other actors present in the territory, and beyond.

Conclusion

The challenges and opportunities that now arise for the University of Aysén regarding social bonding and civic commitment have to do with the implementation of the Territorial Management Model and learning to work under its different logic. It is now possible for each academic discipline to make environmental links, but this comes with a requirement to ensure territorial relevance, to take account of regional and contextual variables and to carry out studies that allow informed decisions. They need to work closely with the external

community in identifying the needs that can realistically be met by the capacities already existing in the university or beyond. If appropriate. This could involve working with the networks of universities to which Aysén belongs, such as the state universities or the regional universities. A further challenge arises in the area of research and relating to dissemination and applicability of regionally based research. It is the aim of the University's mission to conduct research that respond to real problems at local, regional and, even, national levels, which leads to real scientific development in the Aysén region. However, it is also important that the learning from this have a broader applicability to the rest of the world. The final challenge concerns the implementation of training that contributes to the development of local capacities. This involves members of the local community having the opportunity to work together with students, graduates, and staff of the university. In this way, they can energize this territory and begin to create a form of educational access that has not existed previously. This in turn leads to greater social mobility and a better quality of life. All this is possible if we together build a better university, a quality university.

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13
CREATING LINKAGES AND SOCIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE TERRITORY: SMARTLAND-UTPL (ECUADOR)

Santiago Acosta Aide

Introduction

The social mission of Latin American universities, from the era of its origins during the Reform of Córdoba (1918), which was expressed as the "third pillar" of university functions, has been expanded in recent decades through the incorporation of new guidelines. This essentially involves a redefinition of the idea behind 'university extension', and even the coining of new concepts. During its long trajectory, university extension has frequently led to both engagement and voluntary activities (Tapia 2021). Notwithstanding this, it has not achieved the required levels of formalization and management in teaching and research functions (Fresán 2006).

In this chapter, we propose to offer a series of reflections on the social mission of universities that has underpinned the mission of Ecuador's Private Technical University of Loja (Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja, UTPL) as the means to elaborate on the initiative called 'SmartLand UTPL'. This initiative integrates university linkage activities through an initiative that aims to provide added value to the social environment. It promotes the generation of knowledge through the monitoring of national territory and for the intelligent and sustainable management of resources that ultimately contribute to socially innovative solutions for human needs.

From cities to territories

Those Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Latin America, with a long history of university extension activities, have had a clearly defined role in terms of 'social projection'. However, an

underestimated number of universities outside of these have, at the same time, achieved positive developments in this regard. It is undeniable that many human beings live in societies in which they cannot fully understand themselves outside their own social relationships. Nonetheless, most societies do not exist in a vacuum, but are instead established within a specific space.

According to the World Bank, 56% of the world's population reside in cities and see the city as their normal habitat. Furthermore, it is likely that cities will continue to attract more people. Consequently, urban problems largely absorb the efforts of university researchers and policy makers. However, when it comes to thinking about the relationship between society and the environment, a city is not the most appropriate reference point. Firstly, it is important that the rural population not be excluded from the university's projected vision. Secondly, the factors that make up a human being's habitat apply, whether urban or rural. These factors include climate, economic issues, culture, food, landscape, and natural resources. Thus, we suggest that the term best used to encapsulate society in its physical environment is 'territory'. Not only is the rural and urban population included within this definition, but it also takes account of the human, social, geographical, and economic variables as well. Therefore, we hold that the linkage efforts of a university should consider society within the framework of a 'territory'.

From extension to linkages

Although we do not intend to approach this subject matter through a critical analysis of terminology, it must be noted that words and terms often suffer from overuse and misinterpretation. In this regard, the term 'university extension' has been widely used in different contexts, which has led to it being associated with a more limited focus - namely that of culture. Thus, in many contexts, it has come to be primarily understood as a means of disseminating cultural values, or as an activity that has very little impact on society as a whole (Ruiz, 2006). While some see the concept underlying cultural

dissemination as one designed to address social problems, it is frequently perceived as mere *desideratum* or simply well-intentioned rhetoric (Tünnermann 1978). The most radical criticism of the concept of university extension was made by Brazilian pedagogue, Paulo Freire who saw university extension as an unequal relationship of superiority of the university over its inferior beneficiaries. This can create a view of university extension as something both manipulative and insidious within a particular context (Tünnermann 1978).

It seems, therefore, preferable to propose the use of the term 'linkages' as an alternative to 'extension'. In Ecuador, the Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES, 2010) recognizes linkages with society as a substantive function of the university in conjunction with the teaching and research functions. We consider that the term 'linkages with society' reflects more appropriately the type of cooperation that is sought by the university in its relationships with society and within a given territory.

By creating cooperative links, as the term implies, the university can facilitate the generation of an inter-institutional fabric that contributes to social cohesion. In turn, that cohesive society is one in which collaborative work networks can be produced, where bonds of trust and mutual dependence can be fostered, and where inter-institutional dialogue and discussion with social actors creates a platform for the joint work of the university and society. In this scenario, it is understood that the university is not the owner of culture and knowledge; that instead there are different cultures represented, and that knowledge is generated in conjunction with the other key actors of society that share the same territory.

However, it is not just about creating linkages per se, which can easily lead to disaggregated and marginal activities, as has happened with traditional university extension. Rather, it is about establishing meaningful linkages that provide a value proposition for the territory with which they are made. This involves the inclusion of training efforts in the university's linking activities, the linking of its students with the proposal

and, importantly, the linking of its research activities that, as far as possible (without compromising quality), are geared towards meeting the needs of the territory. These multi-faceted linkages serve to ensure the relevance of the research activity to the environment.

Once these university linkages are created and understood within the perspective of systematic cooperation, that is, as an additional and essential function of the university, a true commitment to institutional action is required where human, material, and economic resources are invested. The linkages, and the commitments around them, mean that they go beyond the concept of mere social responsibility, though, undoubtedly, they are also an expression of university responsibility in the face of social challenges. However, as should now be clear, it is not a question of merely alleviating unfavorable impacts, but rather of setting in motion positive *dynamisms* in society to promote the sustainable development of a given territory.

Transitioning from inert governance to social innovation

University extension has largely led to an unevenness in the relationships between universities themselves and in the universities relationships with society. Through it, the university provides services that it considers beneficial to disadvantaged social sectors, but under a relief logic. The consequences of such an approach has been the rise of paternalistic attitudes and university inertia, compounded by the risk of increased dependency within the targeted sectors. In order to guard against, and to overcome, such inertia, universities must be innovative institutions in their management processes, in their educational endeavors, in their relationships with the corporate world, and especially in their relationship with society itself. Social innovation is the necessary response to the challenge of providing linkages with society based on value proposals that promote cooperation and collaboration, and which are rooted in a social commitment within a territory.

Arguably, social innovation has emerged within the field of development as an alternative to more productive approaches, i.e., in the quest for greater inclusion and prominence of social agents that possess a bottom-up approach and an entrepreneurial perspective (Fernández et al. 2012). The concept of social innovation clearly differs from business innovation, the latter being driven by profit maximization. It is defined by Multan as follows: "Innovative services and activities that are motivated by the objective of satisfying a social need, that are developed and disseminated predominantly through organizations, and whose main purpose is social" (cited by Fernandez 2012: 1087). Thus, social innovation involves significant cooperation and the making of citizens and social organizations the key protagonists of initiatives and experiences within their territory. In this way, the empowerment of citizens and organizations is achieved; frequently giving rise to mutually realized further innovative forms of social entrepreneurship. As universities engage in more linkage initiatives with sectors across the society, they assume the position of effective agents of progress through participatory projects. (Fernández et al. 2012).

From cultural development to more sustainable development

As previously stated, university extension has traditionally been aimed at enhancing the cultural development of society (Tünnermann 1978). No doubt, intercultural dialogue must be a constitutive element of the processes of bonding with society, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, where diverse cultures have co-existed for centuries. However, a broader spectrum of action is required, particularly in the face of the current environmental emergency that humanity is experiencing, which is putting the future survival of the planet at risk. As has been stated as far back as 2014:

> *Our civilization is in a 'process of collision with the natural world, as the 'Warning to Humanity from the Scientific Community' tells us (which was defended in 1992 by more*

> *than 1,500 scientists, including 103 Nobel Prize laureates). Moreover, recent information about the collision of societies and its environmental consequences, along with its level of severity on countries is overwhelming. As a result, warnings about the urgency for change are mounting. The United Nations, for example, has been warning us for more than three decades* (Bermejo 2014: 11).

When we view cultural development beyond the scope of its normal confines, we see that universities are as committed as other organizations within society to working, both alone and collaboratively, to engage in research and in other initiatives, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as set forth in the 2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda. They are already engaged in work that addresses the three core dimensions - economic, social, and environmental - of sustainable development.

Indeed, the 2030 Agenda, with its 17 goals and 169 targets, offers universities a unique framework for action for their outreach activities by enabling them to focus on particular sectors of the agenda and to target their outreach efforts accordingly. The framework of university linkage, with its strong focus on collaboration across sectors of society, can be applied to addressing the overarching objectives of sustainable development. Indeed, the relevance and institutional sustainability of universities depend on them taking a lead in this regard.

From knowledge transfer to the social distribution of knowledge

Times change, and in the same way, social and cultural transformations take place. Many such changes are driven by the emergence of new digital technologies. Our knowledge society is increasingly connected through the digitization of professions and various human activities, particularly scientific activities that are generating knowledge that now includes an enormous amount of additional data to that which was

previously produced. Data mining and Artificial Intelligence (AI) enable us to utilize such data, leading to the creation of new knowledge, thus aiding decision-making processes. It is clear that technology is enormously advantageous to the institutions that utilize it as well as to society more generally.

Higher education also benefits from the advance of technology with universities undergoing a digital transformation that facilitates greater levels of pertinence and sustainability. In addition, the digital transformation of territorial management makes it possible for HEIs to transition from a mere 'transfer of knowledge' to a more equitable 'social distribution of knowledge'. Increased access of citizens to information via the Internet creates greater opportunities for the dissemination of data on a specific territory to the people of that territory. While the universities may still simply transfer their knowledge and technology, that transfer is enhanced and broadened through the use of technology, thus facilitating a more equitable social distribution by means of digital platforms. When the distribution of knowledge about a territory is incorporated into the linkage strategy of a university, innovative opportunities are created that involve applying that knowledge to address local challenges.

In addition, technology facilitates the development of meaningful relationships between the global and the local, fostering the circulation of knowledge between the two (Grau et al. 2017). Global solutions can be applied to local challenges and vice versa - the local solution can be taken from a single geographical area and adapted to address the global problem. This generation, transfer, circulation, and application of knowledge through intelligent data management is a key element for universities in their role as knowledge organizations.

In the context of all of these factors, universities are in a pivotal position to help to configure smart and sustainable territories. This requires transition from a 'university extension' model, rooted in cultural development, to one that establishes linkage with the territory, involving methodologies of social

innovation, sustainable development, social distribution of knowledge, and the constitution of intelligent and sustainable territories. Such university linkages can enhance the relevance of academic efforts and their contribution to society.

The UTPL SmartLand Initiative: Creating solid linkages with society to achieve an intelligent and sustainable territory

The SmartLand initiative of UTPL is a value proposal for the territory that is viewed within the framework of university linkages. While the proposal is currently in its initial phase, it has already provided tangible results in various fields: it links the university, society, knowledge, technology, and territory with sustainability. Within the framework, the university is linked to society through collaborative activities and projects, applied research programs, volunteer activities and the monitoring of a gamut of variables and indicators. Through these activities data is generated, which is later transformed into usable information and knowledge about the territory itself. Thus, a knowledge ecosystem can be created, where activities are carried out and decisions made based on the semantic interoperability of data. The ultimate goal is to enhance the well-being of citizens of the territory and its economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

This initiative is especially relevant for territories that are considered 'hotspots', i.e., areas that have a high level of biodiversity and which include a large number of endemic species, or whose conservation is seriously under threat (Myers et al. 2000). Ecuador is considered one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, but its biodiversity is being threatened, particularly in the southern region (Tapia-Armijos et al. 2015). This is the geographic territory where the UTPL campus is located; it primarily consists of the provinces of El Oro, Loja, and Zamora-Chinchipe. The sustainability of highly biodiverse territories requires the interaction of key actors in the areas of research, innovation, digital technology, social commitment, and public policy. Our smart city and territorial projects do not have as their central purpose a physical space, but rather a focus

on citizens; what they are proposing is to highlight the smart management of the interactions between both people and the territory (Acosta et al. 2017).

1.1. A territory-based value proposal for well-being and sustainability

Conceptually, university linkages have often been viewed as the 'poor relation' of university functions with regard to teaching and research and have been completely divorced from the university's main activities. SmartLand-UTPL aims to make university linkages at UTPL both a strategic area in which the university can create a positive impact on society, and one which can generate dynamics that foster the development of the territory in a range of fields in line with the UN's sustainable development objectives. This creates a synergy between the integration and the variety of activities that are carried out. In this way, the linkage is not disaggregated, or seen as dispersed and isolated, but rather contributes to a common purpose.

The number of university areas and departments that have contributed to it can demonstrate the strategic and inclusive nature of SmartLand-UTPL as a framework for creating university linkages. This includes academic departments, degree programs, research groups, and the vast network of university observatories and UNESCO professorships. The range of internal actors within the integrating framework of SmartLand UTPL provides a strong basis for developing linkage activities, and likewise ensures that what we place at the service of society is not seen as incoherent, but rather as proposals of deep institutional value.

1.2. The University observatories, the UNESCO chairs, and the professional training of UTPL students

In the various collaboration and volunteering activities that are being carried out by the university, involving both students and teachers, we have developed what could be termed 'living classrooms for experiential learning'. Here it is important to highlight the work that has been performed by the numerous

university observatories and by the UNESCO Chairs that the University holds.

UTPL has fifteen observatories with which we carry out joint activities and focus on a number of specific thematic fields: territory, climate, communication, socio-environmental conflicts, road safety, culture, mental health and drugs, tourism, business, information society and telecommunications, political agenda, earthquakes, geological risks, health, and innovation in technical and technological training. These observatories collect information, create dialogue processes between society and academia, support social innovation projects, and carry out joint actions in the production of knowledge, all contributing to the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the territory.

The dynamics of the environment are observed and analyzed in order to provide useful technical information and data. This is subsequently collated, compiled, and analyzed to produce reports, bulletins, thematic maps, infographics, and other resources that can contribute to an informed decision-making process by all key public actors. This, in turn leads to the identification of future opportunities and facilitation of public policies, contributing to an intelligent and sustainable management of the territory itself.

A number of the observatories, such as those used in climate and road safety, utilize a network of sensors that facilitate the monitoring and measurement of different variables that are considered pertinent to territorial planning, safety, risk management, and even the improvement of efficiency within the production sector. The information acquired through these sensor networks is then sent to the processing centers by means of the Internet or a radio frequency signal, depending on the system that has been implemented. The data is subsequently integrated, processed, and sent to the digital platform centers, from where the indicators and information are automatically distributed.

Below are a number of examples of activities related to the observatories that give a general idea of their contribution to the

territory. Firstly, with the help of traffic sensors, the Road Safety Observatory has helped the public sector to make key decisions about investment needs for roads within the Province of Loja. In addition, it facilitates the collation of data on road accidents in the city of Loja with the aim of identifying danger zones and proposing solutions to traffic problems.

The tourism and culture observatories have carried out, what is termed, 'occupancy monitoring', in partnership with the hotel sector and the Ecuadorian Ministry of Tourism. This has been done in addition to other work such as surveying tourist numbers during Loja's Performing Arts Festival (one of the most important events of its kind in the region) and recommending actions for improvement to the local municipalities and City Authorities. Meanwhile, the Territorial Observatory has provided high-precision maps to help firefighters identify and fight fires in areas that are normally difficult to access.

With the support of the hydrographic basin research group, the Climate Observatory works with its network of sensors to forecast floods in the urban streams of the city of Loja in real-time. The Observatory of Socio-Environmental Conflicts monitors economic, cultural, and socio-environmental conflicts that arise from the activities of metallurgical extraction projects (gold and copper) in territories of high biodiversity in southern Ecuador, thus providing an early warning system. Because of this collective work of professors and students through the observatories, several cooperation agreements have been signed with organizations and communities in the university's sphere of influence.

The university has also incorporated its UNESCO Chairs into the linkage initiatives. UTPL holds three UNESCO Chairs: 1) Culture and Education for Peace; 2) Sustainable Development; and 3) Ethics and Society in Higher Education. The UTPL UNESCO Chairs are spaces where teaching and research are fully integrated, where professors and students participate equally, and where cooperation networks have been created with universities, political decision-makers, and civil society, all aligned with the UN sustainable development objectives. The

Chair of Culture and Education for Peace, for example, has involved the networking of professors and students with other organizations on a marginal neighborhood targeted project entitled: 'A model of sustainable human development for the strengthening of the educational, digital, and entrepreneurial environment'. Under this project, multiple linkage activities have been carried out, including the following: 1) The Promotion of Co-existence and a Culture of Peace in Local Neighborhoods; 2) The Preparation of Resources for Home-schooling; 3) Entrepreneurship Proposals for (Young) Mothers; and 4) Digital Skills Training for (Young) Mothers.

*1.3. **An ecosystem of data and knowledge about the territory***

SmartLand-UTPL proposes, from the point of view of knowledge management and data governance, the creation of an environment that gathers knowledge about the territory and related human relationships and then makes it available to society, thereby facilitating open access. This involves the creation of a technological infrastructure that integrates the data and the information produced in various fields of human activities within the chosen territory.

An important part of the information about the territory stems from the linking activities of the University itself, and from the statistical reports from the observatories. With this information and data, probabilistic scenarios, and virtual plans of the territory are designed with the aim of understanding its dynamics, problems, management, and decision-making. All these synergistic relationships result in the empowerment of human capacities and in the improvement of living conditions (Acosta et al. 2017).

From a technological point of view, SmartLand-UTPL seeks to address the challenges of integrating data from different information systems so that they can be utilized interoperably for effective and intelligent management of the territory and to overcome the difficulties of fragmented information caused by information silos. The incorporation of semantic web methods and linked data technology are critical to the creation of an

interoperable semantic data ecosystem. In order to measure the progress of the territory towards environmental, social, and economic sustainability, it is essential to establish specific impact indicators that can be utilized with the information systems. Through these processes, SmartLand-UTPL harnesses the required technological support for the continuity, access, and scalability of the initiative (Piedra and Suárez, 2018).

The SmartLand-UTPL initiative faces many complex technological challenges, among them: (1) heterogeneity in the representation of data, the different levels of scale and granularity of data, and in the diversity of the models of data representation; (2) the variety of data management systems; (3) the need to process huge volumes of data; (4) the role that semantic contexts play in interpreting the data; (5) data quality issues, access, veracity, and protection and misuse of data. (Piedra and Suárez, 2018)

There are other challenges that SmartLand also has had to face, which have more to do with the governance of data and the information that is produced by our researchers. These raise questions, such as what part of the knowledge can be shared with the public prior to publication, or how the intellectual property of researchers can be guaranteed during the knowledge generation phase of the research.

The production of knowledge is not something which arises randomly or that is exclusively borne within the trusted confines of the interoperability of data and information. Rather, it exists within the confines of the management of strategic (*top-down*) and operational (*bottom-up*) knowledge that facilitates the transformation of data into information, knowledge, actions, skills, and continual improvement. At SmartLand-UTPL, this knowledge management is currently being fueled by the work of research groups that align their plans with the UN sustainable development objectives, linked to the territory in question. There are twelve SmartLand initiative packages, which are comprised of research projects that aim to add value to the territorial and social indicators (Piedra and Suárez 2018). These involve the research and collaborative efforts of university

professors and students, the key actors responsible for implementing the social innovation methodologies. They generate original, or adapted, collaboration experiences that blend the borders between the executing parties and the beneficiaries, so that all the participants can become actors of human and social development, and the challenges of the integral sustainability of the territory can be met.

The linkage activities that contribute to SmartLand-UTPL are very varied. Below are just a few examples of some of them which give an indication of the breadth of the work that has been carried out to date: (1.) UTPL professors and students of the School for Water Studies are engaged in an initiative involving the restoration of hydrographic sources, as well as the improvement of water for agro-industrial use. In doing this, they operate together with owners and communities. (2.) UTPL is part of the Provincial Coffee Producing Syndicate, which is comprised of various public and private entities. Here the university professors carry out organizational strengthening processes and improvements in the coffee production chain. A diagnosis of the situational state of six coffee associations has already been conducted. In addition, research has been carried out regarding the propagation of coffee seedlings in the nursery operational facility so as to improve the conditions of sustainable coffee production in the *campo*. There is now a plan to create a School for Coffee Production and a Coffee Growing Observatory. (3.) UTPL economics experts study social and economic phenomena in the national territory such as poverty, migration, employment, SMEs, and territorial inequality. In addition, there is a plan to create a Regional Economics Laboratory. (4.) University experts in bio-commerce are currently working with the Shuar indigenous communities from the Amazon jungle, to improve organizational strengthening, land management, and the consolidation of productive development proposals. (5.) Research work has been carried out, in collaboration with German partners, to characterize the peripheral urban sectors of the city of Loja and with a view to creating an urban green areas system. With the municipality,

work is currently underway for the 2030 Sustainable Loja Project, which is a tool for the discussion and preparation of territorial agendas. For these linkage activities described here, as well as many others, *Times Higher Education* has recognized UTPL as No.1 in Ecuador in terms of its impact ranking for June 2022.

Conclusion

Establishing university linkages requires university leaders to have a shared understanding of what it means and to agree upon its strategic importance. Universities of excellence are not only those that reach high levels of scientific pertinence through research and teaching. University excellence is also possible in other fields, such as outreach, where universities can still maintain commitment to high quality research and teaching, while creating relationships beyond the institution and developing outreach activities geared towards the needs of society, both locally and globally.

At UTPL, the university linkage process has engaged with society at territorial level and within the actual context in which human interactions take place. In order for university cooperation with society to be effective and to overcome the inevitable issues around voluntarism, dispersion, and informality, we have proposed the following strategic transitions: (a) from the city to the territory, (b) from extension to linkages, (c) from cultural development to sustainable development, (d) from knowledge transfer to the social distribution of knowledge, and (e) from data to knowledge.

These transitions, with the perspective of achieving strategic institutional linkages, have led to, what is now, the SmartLand-UTPL Initiative, which seeks to deliver a value proposition for the territory and for the well-being of the population, in the context of a sustainability agenda. The initiative is directly linked to the UN's sustainable development goals for 2030, is based on social innovation processes, and the usage of an interconnected data platform with semantic architecture that will contribute to the creation of an ecosystem of data and

knowledge about the territory. In this way, we aim to link society, territory, technology, and knowledge, to achieve better sustainable development and improved well-being for our citizens. Although the project is still in its preliminary stages, it has already shown great potential to develop linkages that can enrich society and the university community itself.

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14
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: FORJA, A CURRICULAR EXPERIENCE (COLOMBIA)

Víctor Martínez Ruiz and Claudia Lucía Mora Motta

The social aspect of universities

Universities have a social function that legitimizes their genesis and development. They owe their existence to a society that entrusts them with the ability to produce and manage knowledge, and train new generations, capable of invigorating the different spheres of personal and collective life. Universities exist in an indissoluble symbiosis with society, insofar as they are born from within it and give back to it, in a permanent cycle of reflection and transformation. If one considers the above true, two interesting avenues of thought arise: Why is it necessary to discuss the social responsibility of universities? In addition, how can we understand the different ways of carrying out that responsibility?

The first thing to clarify is that there are different ways to comprehend the interaction with the term 'social' in the context of universities; from the broadest sense in which the professions are found, to a narrower sense referring to the sphere of encounter with the excluded in society. Institutions of higher education satisfy the demand or expectation of society to fulfil its needs through qualified roles, and engage in permanent reflection about new pedagogical possibilities that guarantee the best options for development. Parallel to that, universities are situated in a context, they are social actors, and they interact with a diversity of people and institutions. They represent a role of citizenship, based on universal values that promotes peaceful coexistence and the common good. Likewise, universities participate in a reality replete with social differences, where they raise questions about better living conditions for all members of

society, and seek particular ways to help the most vulnerable in their quest for a dignified life.

Although all universities can relate to the 'social', based on the understanding established above, it is noteworthy that there are multiple ways to enact it, many styles of being a university. In principle, each university has an institutional horizon ingrained in identity elements expressed in its mission, vision, institutional educational project and planning and it has the specific means (infrastructure, teachers, etc.) by which to achieve its purpose that is its pedagogical proposal.

Notwithstanding, the 'social' is not only a condition linked to the university's own institutional nature and to an identity situated in a certain context, it also necessarily occurs in an institutional culture that brings it alive, in an educational community that shares a world view, adopts common values and criteria to make decisions, and that expresses the 'social' in a particular way. This comes about through a personal transformation of the members of the educational community who adopt a way of being a human and a citizen.

In the case of Colombia's Pontifical Xavierian University (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana), this way of being is marked by Ignatian charisma, which also entails the Christian being living the faith in a necessary relationship with others in specific historical contexts. This particular way of proceeding is the focus point of this chapter that sets out to explain why the Jesuits integrate social responsibility in their mission, and particularly their quest for dignity for the poorest and most vulnerable members of society. The chapter discusses social responsibility from the perspective of the Javeriana identity in the first section, and then presents the Javeriana Educational Program for Social Change and Peace (*Programa de Formación Javeriana para el Cambio Social y la Paz*), FORJA. In the final section, it presents some considerations, or lessons, that readers may consider useful.

Javeriana identity and social responsibility

The Pontifical Xavierian University was founded in 1623 in Bogotá, with a second campus opened in Cali in 1970. Although the universities and schools of the Society of Jesus were not in its apostolic horizon upon its foundation in 1540, very soon the first Jesuits became aware of the potential of this apostolic instrument as a privileged means for the "salvation of souls", as expressed at the time. The work with the less fortunate, and with those in prisons and hospitals, was complemented by the academic apostolate for "the greater glory of God and the common good" (Formula of the Institute, 1540, n.1).

Since its inception, the mission of the Society of Jesus has been marked by commitment to both faith and justice, expressed in several ways. It is based on a philosophy of a single mission, inspired by the Ignatian experience of understanding all reality as an act of continuous creation by God in which everyone is called upon to be contemplative in action. It is a spirituality that springs forth from history and that comprehends daily and social dynamics as a permanent task of reconciliation (Martínez Ruiz, 2019). The commitment to this mission, through the intellectual apostolate promoted by the Society of Jesus, is evidenced in the current 2022-2025 planning of the Pontifical Xavierian University, Cali, which is named 'A Transformative University'. This planning declares as its higher purpose to "inspire and contribute to the transformation of human beings, communities and territories to forge the region, the country and the world we dream of" (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2022). In what follows, we explain the imprint of social responsibility contained in the full name of the Pontifical Xavierian University, a commitment often summarized in the maxim of 'educating the best for the world'.

The denomination of 'Pontifical' highlights the university's affiliation to the Catholic Church and its supreme authority, the Pope. However, beyond the legal and ecclesiastic connotations, this adjective refers to Jesus and his proclamation of the Kingdom of God (Lc 4, 43) as an invitation to seek the said Kingdom and all its justice as the highest value (Mt 6, 33), to be

compassionate (Lc 6, 36-38) and to live together in solidarity in such a spirit (I Co 12, 13). Therefore, social responsibility is anchored in the institutional DNA in terms of the experience of faith. Far from the notions of confessionalism or proselytism, the intention is to recognize the apostolic nature of work that seeks to embody, and promote, a way of being in the world with a transcendent meaning, a way that prioritizes the dignity of all people and, particularly, of the poorest.

The university assumes an intellectual apostolate, that is, it takes on the challenge of contributing to the construction of the Kingdom of God through the production and management of knowledge. The sciences and professions are grounded in the common good through particular tasks that have repercussions on the well-being of thousands of people. In addition to providing access to comprehensive education, it seeks to educate modern Samaritans, who are sensitive about situations that threaten the dignity of those who are marginalized and who are capable of putting their intellectual and technical capacities at the service of society as a whole. "For those with academic and intellectual knowledge, the challenge is not only to alleviate the consequences of injustice with their service, but also to provide a social analysis and a theological reflection of its causes" (Modras, 2012, p. 301) and furthermore, to “recommend proposals that generate significant improvements for disadvantaged people” (Promotio Iustitiae, p.15).

The Catholic Church, an institution that seeks to preserve and share the experience of the Resuscitated Jesus, understands that it does not exist for itself, but for "the whole of human society" (Modras, 2012, p. 301). The social magisterium, expressed in its various encyclicals, highlights the importance of building societies that are respectful of life in general and warns of the contextual threats in which believers are challenged to make their faith visible through social responsibility. In the most recent encyclical, Fratelli Tutti, Pope Francis, points out the following about social friendship:

> *It implies the search for a reunion with the most impoverished and vulnerable sectors. Peace «is not only the absence of war, but also tireless commitment... to specifically recognize, guarantee and rebuild the so often forgotten or ignored dignity of our brothers, so that they can feel they are the principal protagonists of the destiny of their nation»* (Pope Francis, 2019, no.233).

Hence, the pontifical institutional character is embedded within the challenge of being a bridge that connects human beings with God, and human beings with each other to build more just societies through projects and academic processes.

A second aspect of the institutional identity rests on its academic nature, which is expressed in the statutes, in the principles and values, and in the policies that structure and operationalize it. As an institution, the university owes its existence to society and must be accountable to it; they are intimately linked, "A university exists for society and, in that sense, belongs to it: it is a social good rather than a private one" (Remolina, 1998, p.1).

In addition, its commitment implies public action and an understanding of its role in building a better society. As a result, the epistemological knowledge of the institution's faculties must be aligned with the ordering of a social whole that seeks the common good, which sometimes implies leaving the classroom, to come into real contact with the needs and capacities of communities, "It is about going, always from the academy, beyond the generic, to address the most urgent and concrete problems of our environment, both within and outside the university" (Remolina, 1998, p.8). Having said that, the university's commitment to society is that of knowledge management and not social activism, like that of an NGO or a political party:

> *The academic and political contribution of the university must lead, not only to diagnoses, analyses and projects, but also to guidance about how to carry out said projects. This constitutes a truly qualitative step: it is a step from*

> *representation and thought to the stage of action* (Remolina, 1998, p.5).

The social responsibility of the Pontifical Xavierian University shares common ground with that of other higher education institutions and other organizations, which act as citizens with public responsibility, attending to social demands and offering alternatives for the human and social development of society. For the Society of Jesus, the university goes beyond the mere training of professionals for the jobs market; it is an instrument of social transformation, which, through discernment, must find the best way to organize itself to offer concrete alternatives for humanization.

Francisco Javier, patron of the Pontifical Xavierian University, materialized his social responsibility as a missionary until he died on the coast of China. He followed a spirituality, shared with Ignatius of Loyola, which seeks to give the greatest glory to God through service as an expression of love. The Javeriana stamp, the third aspect of the university's identity, represents the adoption of a way of being in the world; living a Christian perspective based on the founding experience of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises; and wanting to maintain synchronization with the spirit that has sustained the Society of Jesus until today.

The integration of faith, social transformation, and intellectual training is possible, due to a spirituality anchored in history that understands the importance of listening to the context and that proposes listening to oneself beforehand in order to identify any potential noise that blocks this approach to reality. Such a spirituality proposes the ordering of one's own life and clarifying the truly important, before making any decision and commencing any undertaking. It offers discernment tools and identifies the difficulties of the path. It is a spirituality that integrates a way of proceeding with a life that is in union with God, society, and nature, inviting us to be contemplative in action. This spirituality has a face, brought to life in the educational community and open to the universal

community. “Personal involvement in innocent suffering, in the injustice that others suffer, is the catalyst for solidarity that opens the way to intellectual inquiry and moral reflection” (Kolvenbach, 2000b, 304 cited in Promotio Iustitiae, p.22)

In other words, social responsibility of the Javeriana kind is born from the vital core of people before reaching the social. It implies an active mystique, having a deep experience that guides, harmonizes, and accompanies any proposal of transformation. “Prayer discernment should be our habitual way of approaching reality, when we want to transform it” (General Congregation 36, 2017, Decree 1. n.37). In this sense, the university needs “a pedagogical approach that implies the relevance of the educational proposal and comprehensive training of the person in solidarity, in which direct experience, together with reflection and critical analysis, succeed in transforming the perspective of life, the professional exercise and the sense of collective construction, where the poor find a dignified place” (Mora Motta, C 2022, p. 87).

The Jesuits, in their most recent General Congregations, have ratified their missionary commitment to the least favored in society with the maxim: the "service of faith and promotion of justice" as promulgated in General Congregation 32 (1975), thus updating the founding formula of the Society of Jesus. This commitment has been confirmed in subsequent General Congregations and guides the work of universities and all Jesuit endeavors. Social responsibility with the less fortunate “requires an intellectual contribution in order to elucidate in depth the various mechanisms and interconnections of current problems" (General Congregation 35, 2008, Dec. 3, n. 28). The binomial faith-justice is indissoluble; it invites us to review the structures that dehumanize, and to share life and friendship with the poor; it points out that this commitment involves other religions and cultures with which it is necessary to dialogue in order to undertake common projects; it recognizes the need to work with secular men and women, brothers in solidarity; and it proposes the understanding of justice as an act of reconciliation with God, with others and with creation. “This reconciliation is always the

work of justice […] although we speak of three forms of reconciliation, in reality the three are a single action of God, interrelated and inseparable" (General Congregation 36, 2017, Dec. 1, No. 21).

In the last forty years, technological developments, the context of economic globalization, environmental awareness, and the consolidation of a model of sustainable development have marked the importance of caring for our planet and the urgency of finding strategies that safeguard all expression of life and the future of humanity. Faced with this reality, social challenges are increasingly linked to environmental challenges. The Universal Apostolic Preferences (2019) of the Society of Jesus are vital guidelines promulgated by the current superior of the Jesuits, Arturo Sosa S.J., for all apostolic works, including those of universities:

> *…show the path to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment; walk together with the poor, the rejected of the world, those violated in their dignity in a mission of reconciliation and justice; accompany young people in creating a hopeful future; and collaborate in the care of the Common Home* (Jesuits, 2019, p. 1).

These preferences also specify the social responsibility of the Pontifical Xavierian University since it accompanies young people, and the entire educational community, in the construction of a more humane and caring society, as a requisite to achieving a transcendent meaning of life. This invitation to action and transformation is carried out in personal and community discernment about reality as a response to an experience of faith, in permanent conversion, and in the awareness that God works through the hands of his collaborators.

Social responsibility in the Pontifical Xavierian University is possible thanks to specific people in the educational community who believe in it, dynamize it, and communicate it through programs, projects, and initiatives. Although the institutional documents express the involvement of the university with the

environment, and its sense of responsibility with the territories with which it is related, the role of directors and teachers is essential. This is because they understand the importance of the educational mission in training individuals and groups in the quest for a better society.

The core of education is found in the teacher-student relationship, and this becomes evident in the FORJA strategy. The participating teachers, moved by the institutional mission of promoting love, justice, peace, solidarity, and respect, inspire in their students a longing for a better world. These values make it possible for social responsibility not to transform into activism. In this sense, it is important to examine the defining characteristics of FORJA. The next section will outline its most important features.

FORJA: a curricular experience

"...you learn a lot, since you are not only receiving theory, but that information has to be implemented in individual work within groups to produce results for the community partner" (Biology student 2019).

Given the context of social responsibility in the Pontifical Xavierian University, FORJA emerges as a strategic educational program within undergraduate programs. The strategy is articulated through the curriculum, with subjects designed to contribute to the solution of local and regional problems within a perspective of collaborative work in the medium and long term. As such, the program enhances disciplinary training, the development of critical thinking and social responsibility in the perspective of a being, who is competent, aware, compassionate, and committed to others (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2015).

FORJA uses methodologies of service learning and collaborative design, which imply a pedagogy of experiential learning, and which integrate community work with the development of the academic program. Thus, students manage to generate opportunities for the exchange of knowledge

between communities and academia, transforming their vision as citizens and professionals.

FORJA was endorsed in 2017 by the Academic Council of the university to respond to the strategic objectives of Social Responsibility and Human and Academic Excellence. The intention was to strengthen the social responsibility of students alongside enhancing the development of competencies in the areas of self-awareness, critical thinking and the management of initiatives or projects. In addition, FORJA recognizes and integrates teacher initiatives that articulate teaching with local problems.

In this way, progress is made in the definition of FORJA through the identification of its epistemological foundations, such as critical pedagogy, education for peace, and service learning. In other words, this perspective of university work is conceptualized on the basis of the creation of learning strategies that help students broaden their perspectives to achieve greater understanding of the social context, transform their paradigms to advance in the construction of social relationship models that respect diversity, become critical of reality, and be capable of exercising leadership for advocacy in their community (Mora Motta, C. and Vargas Morales, J., 2020).

Similarly, FORJA promotes action, based on the participatory and creative processes that it weaves with different social actors with whom it works. It enables theory and practice to be clearly situated in specific realities and learning in order to be significant. In this manner the academy and community life meet to nurture each other (Mora Motta, C. and Vargas Morales, J., 2020).

The development of the FORJA initiative consisted of three phases:

1. Implementation, 2017-2021

The implementation of the program implied advancement in the following:

Creation of the FORJA office under the jurisdiction of the Academic Vice-President, with a team in charge of guaranteeing

the application of the pedagogical and operative conditions of the program.

Teacher training in service-learning methodology and adjustment of the syllabi of subjects within the core of the academic programs.

Creation of a community of practice among teachers in the first instance, with subsequent participation of community partners.

Definition and implementation of service-learning projects in conjunction with community partners.

Assessment of student learning based on the three defined variables: self-awareness, strengthening of critical thinking, and project management.

Identification of key moments in the development of the subject to achieve situated and significant learning: awareness, contextualization, community of practice, reflection, evaluation, and opportunities for the exchange of knowledge between teachers and the community.

2. Adjustment for the pandemic, 2020-2021

The confinement, due to the global pandemic, was characterized by the development of digital skills, creativity, and the desire to maintain contact among students, teachers, and community partners. The production of educational material, by students from various academic programs, was significant in terms of the connection it maintained and strengthened with the community partners. Furthermore, this connection was articulated using WhatsApp, Facebook, and cell phones, modes of contact that were new for the community partners because of their socio-economic context.

The year 2021 brought about other possibilities for meeting and developing processes that had begun during the period of remote work. Such is the case with the public exhibition of 'Rural Murals', a collaborative project, developed by the students and teachers of the Design of Visual Communication program with teachers and students of rural schools in Cali.

It is noteworthy that, in the time of crisis due to the pandemic and the country's social conflicts, the articulation of work between the community and the academy continued to be a particular way of executing the university's institutional educational project, with FORJA being one of its articulating strategies.

3. Institutionalization, 2022

At this stage, all undergraduate academic programs are linked in some way to FORJA. The dynamic role played by the teachers and institutional support have been definitive in achieving this.

This new stage marks the challenge for the University of achieving greater articulations between its substantive functions: teaching, research, and service. Currently, FORJA's strengths lie in the functions of teaching and service, within a curricular perspective. The aspect of research, perceived as the social appropriation of knowledge to involve citizens in the processes of its generation, circulation, and use, needs further development.

In summary, to date some qualitative results of the program are evident: Firstly, in the Pontifical Xavierian University of Cali, FORJA represents a differential in the educational proposal, which is being made a reality. This is thanks to the commitment of institutional authorities and teachers, who have assumed the risk and the additional work of leaving the classroom to bring students closer to social reality, through a methodology in which learning generates social good. The teachers linked to the program manifest a particular mystique, in that, in addition to educating in disciplinary competence and citizenship, they assume a role that aims at a comprehensive training of their students.

Secondly, it is an accomplishment that more and more subjects have adjusted their syllabi, based on a project with defined objectives and scope. In this way, activity-specific learning and teaching is replaced by project work of greater impact and responsibility, with both the academy and the community participating in its execution. Likewise, the

continuity of the processes that have been established with the communities reflects the appreciation of their knowledge, narratives, stories, and traditions, evidence of the dialogue of knowledge between the academy and the community partners (Cuenca Morales, J. and Mora Motta, C., 2021)

Thirdly, a route has been defined for the evaluation of student learning that allows the teacher to relate the competences of the social dimension, its indicators of achievement and its articulation, with reflection as a strategy of the service-learning methodology. In addition, progress has been made in defining the impact assessment of the flow of work with the different community partners.

Finally, in April 2020, FORJA obtained the Honorable Mention of the Mc Janeth Award for Global Citizenship, which is promoted by the international association, Red Talloires. The award recognizes the civic engagement initiatives of higher education institutions worldwide, and promotes respect for mutual learning between higher education institutions and communities.

Lessons from the experience

Reflecting on the social responsibility of the university in terms of the implementation of FORJA allows us to share the following lessons:

1. Recognition of the teacher as a key actor in the process of pedagogical transformation in this type of experience takes place both in the classroom and in the territories. Hence, the strategy of forming a community of practice favors the exchange of experiences, training, and the establishment of links.

2. Student leadership in their own educational process and their desire to transform themselves and structures of injustice in the simple act of preparing for an authentic encounter with the other guided by the principle of love and service.

3. ***Building relationships with community partners*** and recognizing that the needs of society outweigh the actions of universities and of any academic program that wants to address

its problems. For this reason, it is important to manage expectations with permanent and close communication. One cannot lose sight of the fact that the nature of the university revolves around knowledge management and the education of young generations of professionals. However, the capacity for institutional influence to support other social processes, from the various levels of the institution's social responsibility, must also be recognized.

4. ***Knowledge management***, understood as the process of reflection, analysis, comparison, and dissemination of the experiences that are achieved in the encounters among teachers, students, community partners and the community in general. The route of publications, systematization of experiences, audio-visual production and interventions in academic and civic scenarios facilitate this process, promote exchange, and allow for the articulation of professional networks within the different themes that are addressed.

5. Institutional support in terms of: clear orientation to achieve pedagogical strategies that align the academy with the realities of the context; recognition of the time necessary to work with the communities; creation of an office dedicated to boosting the implementation of the program; and sufficient economic resources to support mobility, laboratories, equipment and physical infrastructure, among others.

6. *Epistemological differentiation* recognizes that the way in which different disciplines approach society and specific communities is unique, and this must be taken into account to qualify the impact of the social action sought. The professionals of each discipline have a particular way of seeing the world, of understanding it, and relating to it, as well as a way of approaching people, the social and the interrelationships, with different fields of knowledge. Therefore, it is important to offer differentiated tools to the teachers of different faculties, so that the professional attention to the needs respects the human and social processes, and the technical components are complemented with other aspects that benefit their durability.

*7. **Social training based on ethics**.* The training of new professionals, in the style of the Pontifical Xavierian University, implies a *conscious*, *committed,* and *competent* professional response, appropriate for the solution of real problems. However, this in itself, is insufficient without training in values capable of: confronting needs; touching the core of motivation and meaning; overcoming the technical to perceive its performance as a relational construction; and being durable. Ethics does not only refer to a fair price, or honesty in the development of a project, but to the decision to act as a citizen choosing to offer one's best performance in the construction of the common good.

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15
ETHICAL AND CIVIC EDUCATION THROUGH SOCIAL SERVICE IN NEW EDUCATIONAL MODEL AT TECNOLÓGICO DE MONTERREY, MEXICO

Pablo Ayala Enriquez

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the main reasons behind Tecnológico de Monterrey's decision to redesign its educational model, with the introduction of a social service model, Tec21, in 2019. The first section describes 'the silent crisis' that began to affect universities during the last decade of the 20th century and its impact on the overall development of university students. It goes on to analyze some determining factors in the development of learning competencies associated with ethical and civil behavior in the university context and the way these competencies can contribute to the growth of an active moral agency. The conditions that enable the development of civic engagement and professionalism are described, followed by a section on the motivations that led Tecnológico de Monterrey to reconsider its educational model. The design of the model is described in the next section that outlines the background, the scope, the characteristics of the model's six education units, and some quantitative data on its outcomes to date. The chapter closes with some conclusions that are more provisional than definitive, considering that we are still in the relatively early stages of Tec21.

The silent crisis in universities

As of the last decade of the 20th century, universities have speeded up the removal of curricula and subjects associated with the humanities and the arts, "seen by state policy-makers as useless frills at a time when nations must cut away all useless things in order to stay competitive in the global market, [and

therefore] the humanities and the arts are rapidly losing their place in curricula, not to mention in the minds and hearts of parents and children" (Nussbaum, 2010: 20).

However, in addition to narrowing down the study opportunities for those who feel an affinity with this disciplinary corpus, its reduction has also had a negative impact on the humanistic dimension of science, specifically with regard to the nurturing of "the imaginative, creative aspect, and the aspect of rigorous critical thought" (Nussbaum, 2010: 20). The simplistic linking by many countries of university curricula to economic success has served to create a similar perspective in the minds and hearts of many students, and their parents, who have turned to the pursuit of "short-term profit by the cultivation of the useful and highly applied skills suited to profit-making" (Nussbaum, 2010: 20). Although it may not seem objectionable, in essence, that the progress of countries is so closely tied into the drive for, and continuous improvement of, technical and scientific education, it is a concern that:

> *Other abilities, equally crucial, are at risk of getting lost in the competitive flurry, abilities crucial to the health of any democracy internally, and to the creation of a decent world culture capable of constructively addressing the world's most pressing problems. These abilities are associated with the humanities and the arts; the ability to think critically; the ability to transcend local loyalties and to approach world problems as a `citizen of the world´; and, finally, the ability to imagine sympathetically the predicament of another person* (Nussbaum, 2010: 25).

While fully aware of the need for a strong economy, we must not forget that business innovation "is nurtured by the arts and humanities to promote a climate of responsible and watchful stewardship and a culture of creative innovation" (Nussbaum, 2010: 30). What this makes clear is that the abilities required to achieve economic prosperity are the same abilities required for

acting as a good citizen. The question is, is it possible to develop both through university education?

The university's role in developing civic and ethical competencies

Can we actually develop civic and ethical competencies through university education? There is an array of possible issues to tackle: straight prejudice, opinions that deny or relativize the complexity of educating for citizenship, the multiple risks that moralization entails; the covert psychologism of a series of educational strategies of systemic ethical paradigms; or the implicit ideologization that brings about the cultivation of a 'civic spirit' that conceals nationalist approaches that encourage conceptions and attitudes that result in xenophobia. Just as it happens in practically all areas associated with the moral life of individuals and peoples, in the arena of civic and ethic education there is not one truth only, but rather many of them. However, which one should we bet on?

Beyond any suspicion associated with a method to be promoted by universities, the truth is that when the gears of selective disengagement (Bandura, 1999) and the adaptative preferences of a society (Elster, 1988) are combined with other social matters of a structural nature - poverty, violence, unemployment, etc., passive moral agency (Bandura, 1999, 2002, 2016) may deteriorate and turn into another social phenomenon, civic detachment, that becomes apparent when a society can function without requiring the citizens' to have a determining role (Camps, 2010).

This is all by way of saying that, in addition to addressing the strategic initiatives that will help universities to attain their institutional missions, universities must also respond to the set of expectations that a society has in them. Living in a society shaped by diversity – where everyone has the same rights to think, feel, and express themselves as they see fit – entails an obligation to abide by minimum civic values that make it possible to coexist within it (Cortina, 2014, 2021). Thus, when the educational strategies of universities stem from near-reality

models, a 'simple class of civic education' may play a highly relevant role in educating citizens. This is because, as stated by Barbara Jacoby, "Higher education is being demanded to renew its historical commitment to its public purposes. […] In the last two or three decades, the main experts in higher education, together with their more honest critics, have been urging universities to take over leadership in the task of reorienting our global society in the light of increasing human problems and needs" (Jacoby, 2009: 1). In this reorientation, ethic education and civic empowerment play a key role, as we will see below.

Effectiveness of citizenship education

According to Victoria Camps and Salvador Giner (2014), education for citizenship contributes to the development of a set of human interaction behaviors, without which coexistence as a society would be extremely difficult or, in some cases, impossible. Thus, for more than 20 years, a considerable number of universities have fostered: 'civic engagement' through their academic disciplines and departments; the development of programs involving 'service-learning'; activities with donee organizations; the incubation of social initiatives funded by businesses; and some other actions intended for the improvement of society. The most committed ones seek to include in their curricula, transversal themes, and even complete courses, geared towards awakening civic engagement among their students (Ronan, 2011).

However, Ronan observes that, over the past few years it seems that the universities pioneering this field are going through a period of drought, or stagnation. He puts this down to two reasons: 1. The 'citizenization' of the students has not been exponential because the promotion of citizenship turns out to be an 'extra' task, dependent on the good will of a small number of faculty members, rather than being the core of an institutionalized program at the university-level; 2. the presence of suspicion and mistrust of the relationship between civic engagement and 'student politicization'.

Ironically, as Derek Barker points out, "students see civic engagement as an alternative to politics" (Barker, 2011: iii), an educational effect that, in Ronan's words, could be understood as the influence of the 'civic spectrum'. When applied to the field of university education, it materializes in three dimensions: a) the *head*, where moral judgment and deliberation are developed; b) the *heart*, which is the ability to relate to others; c) the *hands*, which represent action (Ronan, 2011: 5).

So, how does a society benefit from the influence of the 'civic spectrum'? Briefly, it turns off the mechanisms that trigger passive moral agency (Bandura, 1999, 2002) and civil detachment (Camps, 2010). This results in a more autonomous, proactive and coordinated student community that is able to identify, approach, address, and find solutions to, common human problems.

Towards a new educational model

In 2014, David Garza, President of Tecnológico de Monterrey, reported on a substantial piece of research carried out by the university:

> *A core team went on to conduct an extensive benchmarking exercise. They visited 34 top universities around the world including Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Oxford and found very interesting initiatives. However, they were most inspired by some institutions that were innovating such as Singapore University of Technology and Design, which was doing breakthrough challenges. Technion Israel Institute of Technology had a strong connection between business and the university and an interesting approach to research, and University of Melbourne in Australia had a flexible degree-earning trajectory. These consultations allowed the team to analyze trends and identify interesting innovations and best practices* (IFC, 2019: 6).

This field research was supported by a literature review, and both of these fed into the 'National Faculty Meeting', held in mid-2015, which presented, "the broad strokes of the new educational model and explained that it would be an incremental transition over several years. The initiative would not be like the reform of the 1990's which was more top down and required a rapid response" (IFC, 2019: 10). Four pillars would support it: challenge-based learning; flexibility; memorable university experience; and inspiring professors. The new design allowed for the ideation and deployment of:

> *A series of transition initiatives and began with a week-long pilot called `i Week´ (`i´ standing for innovation) and later scaled it up to `i Semester´ […] The first pilot ran 1,600 projects concurrently. `i Week´ required the entire institution, students, and faculty to mobilize at the same time. All regular academic activity was suspended, as students picked from a variety of challenges that were designed by faculty from different disciplines and implemented in partnership with outside companies, NGOs, and governments* (IFC, 2019: 11).

This institutional effort - known as Tec21 - resulted in a new educational model, "focused on the relationship among students, their environment and professors, where students develop personal and professional abilities and competencies by solving challenges associated with actual problems and demonstrate their knowledge through various learning evidence" (Olivares, et al, 2021: 12). Being a Challenge-Based-Learning model, it intentionally "exposes students to situations of uncertainty and, in some cases, failure tolerance in order to develop their resilience" (Membrillo-Hernandez, et al, 2018 :138).
In this sense, as Silvia Olivares states,

> *The emphasis on the importance of the presence of challenges seeks to ensure the development of leaders, which implies*

> *training them to accept the inevitability of change and use it as leverage, rather than as a limiting factor. Furthermore, the presence of challenges promotes the education of individuals with emotional intelligence and self-management of knowledge to develop self-confidence, motivation, empathy, and social skills, among others* (Olivares, et al, 2021: 34-35).

Considered from the Tec21 perspective, 'a learning challenge' is a living experience designed to expose students to an attractive, challenging situation in their environment (Tecnológico de Monterrey, 2018:11). It encourages students to acquire learnings more complex than those they do may have acquired through traditional methods, particularly the most ethereal dimension of the institutional vision: the human sense.

Cultivating the human senses in the Tec21 model

The theoretical perspective for the design of the processes to teach and learn ethics and citizenship and to develop the human sense in students was informed by a number of considerations. As Augusto Hortal observes, the challenge of teaching professional ethics in colleges and universities lies in "offering true reflexive and critical ethics about the knowledge and work of professionals, as it attempts to guide professional behaviors in connection with current ethical thinking, establishing an interdisciplinary dialogue with specialized knowledge on which the practice of each profession is based" (Hortal, 2005: 35). Adopting that perspective, the professional ethics that we adopt in the new educational model should be: 'intersubjective, interdisciplinary, responsive, open to feelings, and, in short, committed to a conduct that gives moral sense to professional work'.

To that end, it will be necessary to break away from an 'intimist discourse' that speaks of the need to cultivate 'good consciences', and to adopt one with a critical approach to the repertoire of competencies required from good professionals; one that appeals to the principles by which the practice of any

profession must abide and clearly sets out the legal rights and duties associated with it.

In this context, the development of professional responsibility must revolve around the public purpose that makes it socially legitimate. This implies that, throughout university education, the *internal goods* of a profession will be the connection between the expectations of a professional in the making, and the legitimate social demands that give meaning to the very existence of the profession (MacIntyre, 2001; Hortal, 2002). This emphasis will develop future professionals who are able to work in diverse contexts and address wide-ranging problems. This will, in turn, create opportunities to develop relationships that foster a constructive encounter with others, leading to collaborative, creative work in the communities served (Boyte, 2010, 2011).

The development of a responsible and morally autonomous professional cannot be contingent upon the learnings acquired in ethics and citizenship courses alone. It is imperative to understand the figure of a professional as a moral agent in themselves, capable of setting in motion a series of self-referenced mechanisms and processes that influence and condition actions through self-organization, self-reflection, self-regulation, and proactivity in order to have a positive impact on the social context (Bandura, 1999, 2002).

The development of *human sense* in the new educational model – specifically, in the social service model – occurs through four progressive-recursive phases, as illustrated in the figure above. The first phase involves the cultivation of *moral sensitivity*, which is essential to develop the learning sub-competencies of ethical recognition, empathy, and compassion. The second phase focuses on the development of *autonomous moral judgment,* required to recognize, analyze, and address ethical controversies and dilemmas according to ethical principles of a universalist nature. This allows students to overcome any conventionalism stemming from a local morality in which they build and express their value judgments. The third phase is *motivation-action*, which is an effective way to deactivate some of the mechanisms that trigger passive moral agency, and to turn on mechanisms that foster learning sub-competencies associated with civic engagement and civic professionalism. The fourth phase is that of *transformation*, whereby students discover the internal changes that have taken place within them through their experience of the previous phases. It also enables them to recognize the social impact of the learning courses and experiences, provided by the various education units, in which they participated. The design of the Tecnológico de Monterrey new curricular framework revolves around these four dimensions, providing for the development of competencies and abilities within the graduates, leading them to conduct themselves in an ethical, responsible, engaged, and solidary manner, that is, with *human sense.*

As well as being geared towards the development of an *active moral agency*, as already stated, the four phases also have a broader remit, which is to encourage interdependence, cooperation, and reciprocity within all members of society, especially those in a position of vulnerability.

Developing ethical and civic competencies in the new curricular design

The competency of ethical and civic engagement "implements projects geared towards the transformation of the environment

and the common good with ethic conscience and social responsibility" (Tapia, 2019, 47), which, in turn, leads to four sub-competencies associated with the phases described above. These are *Recognition and Empathy; Ethical Reasoning; Integrity; and Civic Engagement for Social Transformation* (Tec21, 2020). This set of sub-competencies is developed through various institutional avenues and programs, namely: volunteer work, student groups, academic integrity, ethics courses, and social service – this final sub-competency went through a deep redesign to appropriately respond to the demands of the Tec21 educational model.

In Mexico, social service is mandatory, that is, all students in Mexican universities must provide proof of having completed 480 hours over a term no shorter than six months and no longer than two years to the agency where social service is rendered. In accordance with the Regulating Law for Constitutional Article 5 applicable to the practice of professions in Mexico City, any college or university student: "…as well as professionals under 60 years of age, or those who are not impaired by a serious condition, whether or not practicing [their profession], must provide social service as per the terms of this law [with social service being understood as temporary paid work performed by professionals and students in the interest of society and the State" (Regulating Law, 2018, 9).

Three aspects of the Regulating Law were key to the design of Tecnológico de Monterrey's new social service model, hereinafter, SST21. These were: activities must be carried out in the framework of professional training and in the best interest of society; social service is mandatory and must be rendered throughout professional education; and an agency external to the university must provide proof of social service hours completed. Thus, what could be seen – from the dryness of a legal framework – as yet another one of the many regulatory conditions that govern education in Mexico, turned out to be a golden opportunity for the new design, especially with regard to its didactic dimension.

There was a recognition that the country's social needs could become an endless source of learning challenges if the Tec21 educational model focused "on the relationship of students with the environment and their professor, where students develop personal and professional competencies by solving challenges associated with actual problems and demonstrate their knowledge through various learning evidence" (Olivares, et al, 2020: 13). Students, working together with civil society organizations - which are considered as education partners in the context of the educational model - would have the opportunity to develop disciplinary competencies and realize both the notion of *human sense,* as contained in the institutional vision, and the *internal goods* that guide and legitimize the practice of their profession within society (MacIntyre, 2001; Hortal, 2002).

The SST21 model comprised of six educational units that start at the curricular phase of exploration, continue with the phase of focus, and end in the phase of specialization. Depending on the professional program in question, these units are distributed across eight, nine, or ten semesters. Each educational unit has different objectives and scope with some focusing on the development of moral sensitivity, others on the development of moral judgment, and others on the development of skills to turn off mechanisms that trigger passive moral judgment. The actual units are:

1. ***Social Service Induction Week***: This takes place between the first and fourth semesters, at weeks 6 and 12. Throughout this unit's 40 hours (accredited as social service hours), the coordinating professor trains students to use the 'SlowU methodology', so that they are able to co-design proposals, draft projects, and prototypes to respond to the needs identified by the education partners.
2. ***Tec Week with Human Sense***: It takes place between the fourth and seventh semesters, at weeks 6 and 12 and comprises 40 hours (accredited). Activities are focused on ways to recognize human dignity, develop a philanthropic

spirit, fight hunger, practice a profession with integrity, and respond to the present climate emergency.

3. ***Block with Human Sense***: This takes place between the third and seventh semesters and is organized in 5-, 10-, or 15-week units, translating into 60, 120 or 200 hours respectively (again accredited as social service hours). Activities focus on generating projects to solve problems identified by the education partner, and in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda. In addition to modules with disciplinary content, this block has an applied ethics module associated with the work and activities of professional careers.
4. ***Social Immersion***: This educational unit takes place in the third semester during intensive periods (Winter/Summer), with 120 accredited hours over three weeks. It emphasizes the development of sub-competencies pertaining to moral sensitivity, through a longer contact period with the community served by the education partner.
5. ***Solidary Project***: This unit may be taken from the second semester once the students have completed the induction week - which is a pre-requisite for all units. It lasts 80 and 120 hours in regular semesters, but up to 200 hours can be accredited if the activities scheduled take place during intensive periods in the winter or summer.
6. ***Concentrations with Human Sense***: As part of the specialization phase of the curricular design of some degree programs, this one semester long education unit is a professional development one, that emphasizes applied ethics. In this case, the set of problems forming the backbone of the learning challenge require application of the disciplinary competencies and sub-competencies, grouped in ethical and civic engagement.

The following figure illustrates the layout of the SST21 education units in the curricular map:

Design criteria and outcomes of the deployment of education units

While the design of the didactic sequences of the education units in the SST21 model varies, all units have the same starting point, which is the learning purposes. These encompass the ethic and civic engagement sub-competencies that will be developed, the set of problems to be approached in the framework of the UN 2030 Agenda, the learning contents to be addressed in and out of the classroom, and the scope of any solutions proposed.

The didactic sequence in ***Induction Week*** starts with the professor's outline of the scope and educational purposes of the week - human dignity, zero hunger, climate emergency, etc., followed by a listening session with a civil society organization (the education partner). Thereafter, students begin writing a field diary, keeping record of discoveries and learnings pertaining to the set of problems explained by the education partner. This will allow them to work as a team to map any variables and design solution prototypes. Proposals are delivered to the civil society organization and are incorporated into the platform of social initiatives (to date this comprises more than 12,500 social initiatives).

The ***Tec Week with Human Sense*** is slightly different to the induction week, in that it starts with an analysis of problems

explained by the education partner. This is followed by a period for students to delve into understanding those problems, on an individual basis. Thereafter, a *collaboratory* is held for students to co-design a solution prototype for the set of problems in question. At the end of the unit, student teams make a presentation of their proposed solution to the education partner, who evaluates their proposal jointly with the professor who is coordinating the week.

The didactic sequence of ***Block with Human Sense*** starts with the outlining of the learning objectives contained in the syllabus or curriculum of the education unit. These are then linked to the ethical sub-competency to be developed and the disciplinary learning modules are identified. The unit involves an applied-ethics module that enables the students to consider the problems involved in the challenge from the perspective of professional ethics and active moral agency. It is expected that students apply some of the tools acquired from 'SlowU', alongside other methodologies, in their response to the ethical controversies and dilemmas that may arise from the challenge. This sequence ends with an evidential evaluation of the sub-competencies by the students.

The design of ***Social Immersion*** again starts by identifying the learning objective to connect it to the social problems identified by the education partner. Working with the 'SlowU' methodology, the students spend the first week working on *ideation*; in the second week they work on *production* and *application* of the prototype; in the third week they prepare the *documentation* of their experience and the *organization* and *communication* of results that will be used to evaluate the civil society on which they worked.

Since the Tec21 model was first implemented in 2019, the design, the deployment of education units, the development of ethical and disciplinary sub-competencies, the accreditation of social service hours, and the success of these approaches to social problems have grown, one term after another. The table below illustrates this growth:

Unidad de Formación de Servicio Social	Año	Grupos	Estudiantes inscritos	Docentes	Organización Socio formadora (OSF)	Horas de Servicio Social
Semana TEC inducción al SS	2020	586	11,567	306	306	521,798
	2021	506	15,268	355	404	606,439
	2022	610	19,088	383	293	515,740
Inmersión social sin créditos académicos	2020	24	740	24	19	88,800
	2021	50	1,192	50	50	142,690
	2022	29	590	29	29	75,110
Inmersión social con créditos académicos	2020					
	2021	4	75	4	4	9,000
	2022	18	280	18	17	21,940
Semana TEC con SH	2020					
	2021	170	4,760	167	143	190,400
	2022	375	11,569	232	151	292,360
Bloques con SH	2020	30	733	23	13	37,170
	2021	408	8,385	322	264	853,090
	2022	571	12,300	431	202	611,310
Proyecto solidario	2020	215	2,366	33	157	223,170
	2021	1,352	24,061	231	1,001	2,102,005
	2022	2,884	42,027	217	1,356	2,367,796
Concentración con SH	2020					
	2021					
	2022	4	53	4	2	6,200

Fuente: Elaboración propia con información proveniente del departamento de Escolar y la plataforma de servicio social.

Conclusions

Tecnológico de Monterrey's educational model is anchored in the curricular design of Tec21, with a didactic and experiential scaffolding to systematically develop the set of learning sub-competencies associated with ethic and civic engagement. The diversity of problems affecting hundreds of civil society organizations day in and day out, in their struggle to attain the goals set forth in the UN 2030 Agenda, is taken as a starting point that allows us to assume that our students are capable of putting personal talent and professional excellence to the service of others.

However, it is still too early to determine the impact of SST21 on the graduates of Tecnológico de Monterrey. While we have made considerable progress, we have a long way to go. We are still largely ignorant of the precise social impact of the students' actions in each education unit and the effects of said actions on the dynamics of, and relationships with, the education partners from the communities they serve. Added to the lack of knowledge of the social impact, is an inability to overcome the influences of various mechanisms that trigger passive moral agency. This applies both in the case of civil society organizations with which we work, and in the case of many

faculty members who have felt curtailed by a stubborn reality that is resistant to change.

Notwithstanding the above, the first steps have now been taken.

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16
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN CARIBBEAN HIGHER EDUCATION: PRACTICES AND POSSIBILITIES FOR ADVANCING DEMOCRACY

Glenn A. Bowen

Civic engagement is gradually coming into its own as a component of higher education in the Caribbean. Influenced largely by trends in the United States, Caribbean colleges and universities are increasingly embracing civic engagement as a mission-related priority and as a complement to pedagogy. Across the region, approaches to civic engagement are generally like those in the United States. So far, however, only a few Caribbean higher education institutions have developed robust programs.

This chapter describes current civic engagement practices among institutions of higher education in the Caribbean and considers the possibilities for contributing to the advancement of democracy. The chapter begins with an overview of the regional context for civic engagement and then describes approaches to engagement adopted by colleges and universities. Next, the chapter examines evidence of civic engagement in Caribbean higher education drawn from recent research. That is followed by a look at the purpose of civic engagement in relation to the democratic mission of higher education. Finally, as part of an expanded agenda for civic engagement, the chapter offers several recommendations regarding higher education's role in furthering democracy in the region.

Regional Context for Civic Engagement

In this chapter, *Caribbean* means the island states and dependent territories in the Caribbean Sea together with the mainland countries of Belize, French Guiana, Guyana, and Suriname. The focus of the chapter, however, is on the Commonwealth Caribbean, also known as the English-speaking Caribbean.

Commonwealth Caribbean countries gained independence between the 1960s and the 1980s and hold sovereignty in determining their national education policy agendas (Boisselle 2014). These countries are among the member states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), a grouping of 20 countries—15 member states and five associate members—with a total population of approximately 16 million. The members states are Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The associate members are Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

Created as an intergovernmental organization in July 1973, CARICOM is the oldest surviving integration movement in the developing world and is the driving force for regional integration. All CARICOM countries are relatively small, but they comprise a diverse regional community as reflected in its geography and population, culture, and levels of economic and social development.

Burgeoning interest in civic engagement became evident at a time when Caribbean countries began working feverishly to strengthen the regional integration movement in response to the demands of globalization. The economic integration pursued was seen not only as a regional development strategy but also as a strategy for survival (Bowen 2013). Over the years, CARICOM has implemented initiatives to promote economic and social development. The initiatives were designed to respond to significant social and economic problems such as high poverty rates, unemployment, and income inequality as well as the region's vulnerability to external forces (including natural disasters, currency exchange rate fluctuations, and changes in global commodity prices).

Acknowledging the vital role that civil society could play in regional development, CARICOM specified democratic practices and effective citizen participation as elements of good governance (CARICOM Secretariat 2014). As a Caribbean

researcher (Tewarie 1998) indicated earlier, civic engagement could serve as a mechanism for encouraging citizen participation in decision making; for fostering social, ecological, and economic development; and for promoting democratic institutions in the region.

Region's Higher Education Sector

The Commonwealth Caribbean is home to more than 90 tertiary institutions, many with a reputation for excellence and demonstrable impact. The oldest and most reputable is the University of the West Indies (UWI), a fully regional institution founded in 1948. The UWI has campuses in Jamaica (at Mona), Trinidad and Tobago (at St. Augustine), Barbados (at Cave Hill), and Antigua and Barbuda (at Five Islands). Additionally, the UWI Open Campus operates virtually and at 42 physical sites serving 17 English-speaking Caribbean countries.

In recent years, the region's higher education sector has expanded considerably, thanks to the establishment of additional government-supported and private universities and the signing of articulation agreements with mainly U.S.-based institutions. For example, the University of the Southern Caribbean and Northern Caribbean University are affiliated with Andrews University in Michigan, USA, and the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean (UCC) is registered with the University Council of Jamaica.

Tertiary education institutions in the CARICOM subregion often acknowledge that they are expected to be active participants in regional development. In fact, some colleges and universities in CARICOM countries were founded with a mandate to participate in regional development. The College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago, for example, was established (in October 2000) to contribute to national and regional development as well as the development of civil society (COSTAATT n.d.). For its part, the UWI has sought to "become the driving force in assisting with the fulfilment of the economic, social, educational and other critical

developmental needs of the region" (University of the West Indies 2012: 36).

Most higher education institutions in the region have articulated a commitment of service to the community and have offered opportunities for students to practice civic engagement. What follows is a summary of approaches to civic engagement, which precedes an examination of evidence of such engagement by Caribbean colleges and universities.

Approaches to Civic Engagement

Civic engagement has become a feature of higher education in various regions of the world. Also called *university–community engagement* (or *community engagement* for short), civic engagement is practiced extensively in the USA, where colleges and universities treat it as an innovative and effective educational strategy and as an enhancement of faculty members' traditional tripartite functions: teaching, research, and service (Bowen 2013; Jacoby 2014).

Common approaches to civic/community engagement are teaching (essentially providing practical education for democratic citizenship), service, the sharing of university resources with the community, public dialogue, and engaged research. A commitment to civic engagement is usually articulated in mission statements, reflected in strategic plans, exemplified in curricula, and supported by resource allocations. The mission statement provides a framework within which the institution's strategies are formulated. Therefore, developing or revising the mission statement and strategic plan with engagement as a component is perhaps the strongest indicator of institutional commitment, which naturally leads to the pursuit of engagement as an institutionalized strategy (Bowen 2013).

Neither innovation nor good practice stops at regional or national borders. It has therefore come as no surprise that civic engagement has become commonplace in higher education institutions all over the world. Caribbean colleges and universities have taken their cue from U.S. institutions that have

made university–community engagement an institutional priority.

Civic engagement practices include community service (volunteerism), service-learning, community-based research, engaged scholarship, advocacy, and public dialogue. It is necessary to define or explain *service-learning*, *engaged scholarship*, *advocacy*, and *public dialogue*.

Service-learning is the pedagogy that integrates relevant community service with course work and critical reflection to enrich the learning experience, foster social responsibility and civic engagement, and strengthen communities. Students get direct experience in addressing social issues and in applying analytical skills and ethical judgment to real-life problems faced by communities (Bowen and Burton 2011).

Engaged scholarship refers to scholarship that integrates research and service, rigorously applying academic expertise to consequential problems affecting society (Boyer 1996). Further, engaged scholarship reflects a socially responsive scholarly agenda—one that integrates community issues with academically relevant goals.

Civic engagement practitioners view *advocacy* as a process by which to argue in favor of a community-related cause, idea, or policy and seek active support from others. A distinct form of civic engagement, advocacy is often seen as a precursor or complement to direct action or civic activism. Groups and organizations use advocacy to address such issues as civil rights, education, health care, the environment, and the criminal justice system. They champion causes and seek to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems (Bowen et al. 2017).

Public dialogue involves exchanges of ideas and face-to-face discussions of issues that affect the community. The Association of Commonwealth Universities recommended that such exchanges take place between researchers and practitioners (ACU 2001). Community-engaged institutions typically play a visible and effective role in bringing together stakeholders from all sectors of the community and facilitating dialogue around

important public issues (Hollander et al. 2002). Indeed, public dialogue can shape "socially robust knowledge" (ACU 2001: 38). In American higher education, public dialogue is sometimes enhanced by deliberation (known as *deliberative dialogue*). Employing deliberative pedagogy, trained facilitators assist students in building democratic participation skills (Shaffer et al. 2017). The same process could also help students develop civic agency, the capacity to work collaboratively with various stakeholders to create common ground and address common challenges in the community.

Evidence of Civic Engagement in Caribbean Higher Education

Throughout the Caribbean, as part of their express commitment to community outreach, many institutions have provided opportunities for students to learn and demonstrate civic responsibility. As Gazzola (2021) noted, part of the mission of higher education institutions in the region is outreach aimed at creating social and cultural impact.

Civic responsibility is one of its core values of the region's foremost university, the UWI. In its strategic plan for 2012–2017, the university stated that it would "stimulate personal and social awareness that will promote commitment to service the needs of all our stakeholders in the region" (University of the West Indies 2012: 23). One of its strategic objectives was to "execute identifiable priority projects using staff and students from the UWI region-wide for community engagement" (36).

A cross-national assessment of civic engagement in Caribbean higher education found that an increasing number of institutions were embracing engagement as a strategy for interacting with their surrounding communities (Bowen 2013). As in other regions, engagement by universities in the Caribbean is manifested mostly in volunteer service through which students "give back" to local communities. On a few campuses, a service-learning program was beginning to take shape.

Community Service

Volunteer work or community service has been the entry point to engagement for students in the region's colleges and universities. At most institutions, occasional or regular community service involvement is facilitated mainly by student organizations. Students usually provide support to "less-fortunate" community members, make donations to schools, and help to organize community events. They also provide disaster relief, promote youth entrepreneurship, and assist with local development projects.

Take St. Georges University in Grenada, for instance. Its student organizations participate regularly in community service projects. The St. George's University Nursing Student Association regularly implements community outreach projects that address healthcare issues; and the Education Conservation Outreach raises public awareness about issues affecting marine and terrestrial ecosystems through local school competitions and presentations. Student organizations also serve the Grenadian community by providing care to children in orphanages, organizing an outreach program benefiting farmers, and assisting local sports teams.

Community service is part of the core mandate of the University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech) and one of the pillars of its mission. The Department of Community Service at UTech manages the community service program, which requires that each student provide 40 hours of service at a not-for-profit institution or state agency. The department also coordinates outreach activities designed to meet some of the needs of local communities.

Service-Learning

Service-learning was identified as a component of programs of education for sustainable development in the region (Down 2011). Still, only a few Caribbean tertiary institutions have embedded civic/community engagement in their academic programs and offer academic credit for service-learning.

At the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science, and Technology (NIHERST) was assigned the coordinating role for a service-learning initiative in 2007. NIHERST did exemplary work in its first year, drawing up a comprehensive list of community needs and identifying potential service-learning projects linked to specific academic areas. In the second year of the initiative, the NIHERST-based service-learning secretariat prepared academic staff and launched a pilot project at UTT, which led to a service-learning requirement for graduation (Bowen 2013).

"Supporting Communities Through Engagement and Volunteerism" is a well-conceived course offered by the UWI Open Campus. The course gives students the opportunity to grow academically and civically through a 30-hour service-learning experience. Students meet real needs in the community by applying knowledge from the course and reflect on their experiences in an online journal.

At UWI St. Augustine, the Community Engagement and Service Learning Section encourages more than volunteering. It challenges and supports students to participate in community service, service-learning, and community-based research in a way that they will be molded as active citizens who contribute to community development. Students are also given the opportunity to participate in the annual International Service-Learning Symposium, which attracts participants from North American universities.

Educational administration is one of the programs of study that incorporated service-learning at the UWI. As part of a course in that program, undergraduates were required to identify and address a problem in an underserved community. Students have, for example, refurbished health clinics in inner-city areas, set up libraries in schools, and installed water tanks on school compounds (Bowen and Burton 2011). A major civic engagement/service-learning project was a community health initiative that resulted in the removal of lead pollution in one community. A project of that magnitude exemplified a carefully

coordinated approach to tackling a pressing problem in a community by connecting it to an academic program.

Currently, service-learning as a co-curricular venture is linked to a more-comprehensive civic engagement program for students at UWI Mona. The program aims to develop in students "a greater sense of appreciation for social responsibility" (University of the West Indies n.d.).

On the UWI's Cave Hill campus, the fledgling service-learning program was viewed as a "linchpin of community building and economic prosperity," which would "make a positive impact on the quality of life in the Caribbean" ("All about Helping Others" 2006, as cited in Bowen 2013: 77). Since then, UWI Cave Hill has emphasized students' civic responsibility through community engagement. Meanwhile, the UWI Mona School of Business and Management—whose core values include civic responsibility—has approached civic engagement as a means of linking civic responsibility goals to teaching and learning and to community well-being.

At the University of Belize, the service-learning program has advanced the institutional commitment to fostering students' moral and ethical development. Managed by the Student Affairs Department, the program allows students from all academic areas to use their time and skillsets for the betterment of their communities and the larger society. Previously, the university developed a program in response to a national government requirement that public scholarship recipients complete 120 hours of community service prior to graduation.

Community-Based Research and Engaged Scholarship

The UWI's 2007–2012 strategic plan called for "research initiatives with appropriate support to analyze selected economic, social and environmental issues and provide decision makers with a sound basis for public policy or community responses" (University of the West Indies 2008: 39). Over the years, university faculty members and students have conducted research projects to address pertinent issues.

As noted above, UWI St. Augustine students are challenged to engage in community-based research and thus contribute to community development. However, specific community-based research projects were not identified in this inquiry.

Advocacy and Public Dialogue

Although effective engagement-related advocacy remains nascent in Caribbean universities, notable efforts have been demonstrated in health, environmental, and social development projects organized by a student organization at UWI St. Augustine.

Regarding public dialogue, a review of publications gave little indication of public dialogue between institutions and the citizenry. Most of the dialogue with universities seemed limited to governments and private sector officials.

Overall, Caribbean institutions have achieved modest success in civic engagement. The most common indicator of engagement is student volunteerism together with the institutional support given to students, often through student organizations. There was little evidence of civic engagement as a curricular strategy (i.e., service-learning).

Expanded Agenda for Civic Engagement

Based on a previous study, a civic engagement agenda for Caribbean higher education called for strategic planning, resource allocations, coordination of engagement initiatives, participation by community stakeholders, and curriculum integration as elements of institutionalized engagement (Bowen 2013). The need for professional development as well as rewards (incentives and recognition) for faculty members was also identified. The same items remain on the agenda today.

It is important to note that, in various regions of the world, traditional university–community interactions were situated in outreach and service, "reflecting a unidirectional and paternalistic approach" (Bowen 2013; 74). *Engagement* is a more-inclusive concept and embodies a collaborative approach to serving communities and meeting development needs. Effective

engagement is characterized by reciprocal relationships and is grounded in genuine partnerships between institutions and the communities in which they reside (Jacoby 2014).

Institutionalizing engagement requires the participation of not only student development and academic administrators but faculty members as well. Faculty members often need special incentives to participate fully in time-consuming community-based work. Adjusting their workloads as well as providing rewards to faculty members has been recommended so that their work with the community is recognized and supported (Hollander et al. 2002; Jacoby 2014).

Institutionalizing civic work in higher education also requires going beyond dependence on student volunteers to connecting this work with curricula and connecting communities with both teaching and faculty research. Furthermore, as with any major undertaking, engagement requires substantial resource commitments.

Making civic engagement a curricular strategy is essential to sustaining it. When engagement goals inform and influence the curriculum, students are brought into the process of making the resources of the institution available to the community in a sustainable manner. Service-learning can foster the development of civic knowledge (e.g., familiarity with community-building methods) and civic skills (e.g., critical thinking and conflict resolution). Students should be empowered to move beyond mere charitable acts to social change initiatives (e.g., advocacy campaigns) through which they can address the root causes of social problems.

One area of civic engagement that appears neglected in Caribbean higher education is citizen participation in democracy. In proposing an expanded agenda for civic engagement, the remainder of this chapter deals with the purpose of civic engagement in relation to the democratic mission of higher education and offers related recommendations.

Civic Engagement and Higher Education's Democratic Mission

The core mission of higher education institutions, particularly universities, is teaching and learning, research, and service. Aligned with it is the institution's "public mission" (Papadimitriou 2020: 1), or public purpose, which is pursued through civic engagement. To fulfill their public mission, universities collaborate with community entities and in the process demonstrate civic/social responsibility. UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) has long emphasized the social responsibility of higher education institutions. Through their core mission, institutions should "promote critical thinking and active citizenship" and "contribute to the education of ethical citizens committed to … *the values of democracy*" (UNESCO 2010: 2, emphasis added). Higher education institutions' public mission, then, is inextricably bound up with their democratic mission.

Widespread concern about challenges to the public purpose of higher education has been raised in recent years. The challenges have come in the form of the commodification of higher education with its emphasis on market-oriented principles (Shaffer et al. 2017). Colleges and universities have become a marketplace that treats education like a commodity, student applicants like consumers, and faculty members like vendors.

Meanwhile, the role of higher education in maintaining American democracy came into sharp focus because the nation again failed to get a good report card based on the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) Democracy Index (Ma 2018). The United States has remained a "flawed democracy" since 2016, when it was first downgraded from a "full democracy," as scored on the U.K.-based Economist Group's index (Economist Intelligence Unit 2022).

The Democracy Index is based on 60 indicators grouped in five categories: electoral process and pluralism, functioning of government, political participation, political culture, and civil liberties. According to the EIU, flawed democracies have free

and fair elections—with probably some issues such as infringements on media freedom—and respect basic civil liberties. However, there are governance problems and low levels of political participation (Economist Intelligence Unit 2022). The lower categories of the index are "hybrid regimes" and "authoritarian regimes."

Furthermore, of late, the United States has been experiencing a "new crisis in democracy" (Flores and Rogers 2019: 1). The country is divided along partisan lines on various issues; democratic institutions have come under attack; efforts to prohibit peaceful protests have increased; citizens have expressed cynicism and distrust of government; restrictions have been placed on voter registration and participation. It was because of the significant erosion of trust in government and elected officials that the United States was placed on the second lower tier of democracies. Moreover, the January 6, 2021, assault on the U.S. Capitol—and on American democracy—created an inflection point for higher education in this country.

Prior to the insurrection, institutional leaders in the United States had drawn attention to the urgency of recommitting higher education to the public good (e.g., Cantor 2020). The insurrection led to a national call to action in making college students' civic learning and democratic engagement an educational priority and a means of strengthening democracy. Numerous higher education institutions responded to the call by instituting strategies and programs to foster civic engagement and democratic renewal.

Even though the impact of the strategies and programs are yet to be determined, it is clear that neglect of the democratic mission of higher education is bad for democracy itself. After all, democracy can only be strengthened through active citizenship, and higher education has the capacity to nurture engaged citizens. In this regard, education for citizenship is a fundamental part of the public purpose of the university.

Regarding the Caribbean, the state of democracy in the region demands urgent attention from higher education institutions. Among the 24 countries in the larger Latin America

and the Caribbean region that were evaluated on the Democracy Index, none made the "full democracy" list. Four countries (Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago) were classified as "flawed democracies" and one (Haiti) as an "authoritarian regime" (Economist Intelligence Unit 2022).

Problems of governance and low levels of participation in political systems and processes are plaguing Caribbean countries. These are long-standing issues that have seemingly been ignored across the region. In *Education and Development: Policy Imperatives for Jamaica and the Caribbean*, Thompson (2020) examined impediments to development—specifically crime, the decline in social activism, weak institutional processes and leadership, and public mistrust. He concluded that improvements in the quality of education, and access to it, would help contain crime, inspire social activism, strengthen institutional processes and leadership, and ultimately restore public trust.

Although the democracy picture is much more positive for CARICOM counties (Haiti being the outlier) than countries elsewhere in the greater region, the need for responsiveness by the subregion's higher education institutions is evident. It is time to shine the spotlight on the counties' systems and processes of governance with a view to preparing today's students to do their part in promoting democratic reform and renewal. The social activism to which Thompson (2020) referred is usually a manifestation of active citizenship, which can be cultivated through sustained civic engagement grounded in education for democracy. As the American philosopher-educator John Dewey famously said, "Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife."

Recommendations and Concluding Thoughts

Civic engagement has taken root in Caribbean higher education; however, its growth has been somewhat slow. Whereas civic engagement has become an integral part of the student experience, mainly as community service, curriculum-based engagement (i.e., service-learning) is far from prevalent. In those

institutions where service-learning programs have been created, most are co-curricular offerings for students. Also, community-based research and engaged scholarship are not common practices in the region's institutions.

Clearly, much work remains if civic engagement is to flourish as an institutional practice. Colleges and universities are still challenged to pursue an agenda for civic engagement that includes sound strategic planning of initiatives and requisite resources to institutionalize and maintain effective practices. Now, the possibility that civic engagement could enhance education and contribute to the advancement of democracy looms large.

Based on the foregoing discussion, here are several simple recommendations regarding what Caribbean institutions of higher education can do to support and advance democracy:

- Articulate, for all stakeholders, the public purpose or democratic mission of higher education.
- Incorporate civic education into course-based and co-curricular service-learning programs.
- Foster the development of students' democratic participation skills and civic agency specifically through deliberative pedagogy and participation in public forums.
- Facilitate critical inquiry into social and economic issues through community-based (participatory) research.
- Encourage the creation of student organizations as a venue in which students can practice engagement in democratic processes while learning to preserve democratic traditions and ideals.
- Organize student visits to municipal chambers and the state legislature to observe political processes.

Although democratic engagement has a political orientation, faculty (academic staff) members are advised to take a nonpartisan approach to their work. Thus, they can avoid accusations of political indoctrination and the like.

In the final analysis, education for democracy is expected to help fulfill the democratic purpose of higher education, preparing students to lead lives of engaged citizenship in a

diverse, democratic society. Ultimately equipped with the knowledge, competencies, and disposition necessary for democratic engagement, today's students could become tomorrow's leaders—responsible and responsive architects of the democratic renewal that the citizens of many Caribbean countries clearly crave.

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ISBN 978-1-908689-45-0
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