Taking Tilly south: durable inequalities, democratic contestation, and citizenship in the Southern Metropolis

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Abstract Drawing on Charles Tilly's work on inequality, democracy and cities, we explore the local level dynamics of democratization across urban settings in India, South Africa, and Brazil. In all three cases, democratic institutions are consolidated, but there is tremendous variation in the quality of the democratic relationship between cities and their citizens. We follow Tilly's focus on citizenship as the key element in democratization and argue that explaining variance across our three cases calls for analyzing patterns of inequality through the kind of relational lens used by Tilly and recognizing that patterns of contestation are shaped by shifting political relationships between the nation and the city. We conclude that Tilly's theoretical frame is nicely sustained by the comparative analysis of cases very different from those that stimulated his original formulations.

The global trajectory of twenty-first century social and political transformation is being forged in the megalopolis of the Global South. These massive urban concatenations showcase the most durable and disturbing forms of contemporary inequality. They are also homes to the most vibrant and promising forms of democratic contestation, sites for the construction of citizenship. Drawing on Charles Tilly's work on inequality, democracy, and cities, we explore the local level dynamics of democratization across urban settings in India, South Africa, and Brazil. In all three cases, democratic institutions are consolidated, but there is tremendous variation in the quality of the democratic relationship between cities and their

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citizens. We argue that explaining this variance calls for analyzing patterns of inequality through a relational lens and recognizing that patterns of contestation are shaped by shifting political relationship between the nation and the city. Deciphering the political contradictions of the Southern Metropolis is a challenge to contemporary social science and a new opportunity to bring the theoretical insights of Charles Tilly to bear.

Tilly's work on cities focused primarily on their historical dynamics, mostly in the global North. In this article we "take Tilly South," applying his theoretical analysis of how inequality and democracy evolve and interact to shed light on the contemporary Southern Metropolis. We use the conceptual framework offered by Tilly's work on inequality and democratization, noting the key differences that separate Tilly's "relational" analysis of inequality from competing views, and testing the usefulness of the framework by embarking on condensed comparative analysis of three national arenas: Brazil, India, and South Africa. By focusing on three cases with roughly similar commitments to democratic rules at the national level, we are able to focus analytical attention on cross-national political variations at the metropolitan level. Before engaging the empirical cases, we map the theoretical terrain in three stages: first, a brief reminder of why the Southern Metropolis is such a crucial site for the examination of inequality and citizenship; then a review of Tilly's relational perspective on inequality; and finally a summary of his argument as to why citizenship is the key element in democratization.

Our comparisons reinforce three general programmatic propositions that are worth flagging in advance: 1) Tilly's "relational" approach to inequality is a much more theoretically satisfying and heuristically effective lens for looking at inequality at the urban level as well as at the national level than competing perspectives. 2) Tilly's vision of citizenship, which focuses on the quality of the relation between individuals and the state should be expanded to include relations with the local state at the municipal level. 3) Tilly's (2010) heuristic strategy of focusing on the shifting power relations between cities and nation states is validated in the Global South.

The contradictory centrality of the Southern Metropolis

Through much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, cities changed within parameters set by their political insertion into national polities and economies. The erosion of traditional forms of sovereign political control by the nation state, the transnationalization of economic activity, and the shift to a service based economy have all increased the political centrality of the city, reversing the centuries long historical trends toward the increasing subordination of urban politics to national state apparatuses (Tilly 2010). These same processes have generated new patterns of social formation and political representation that have fundamentally transformed the relationship of cities to their citizens.

The transformation of urban politics and governance is particularly contradictory in the Global South. On the one hand, new patterns of social exclusion, the acceleration of the informalization of work and public services, pervasive illegalities and sharpened income differentials have created, to borrow from Appadurai (2002), "citizens without cities." On the other hand, democratization, new social movements,

and the expansion of transnational networks and participatory repertoires have brought new actors, new political practices, and new models for claiming rights to the city.

The theoretical importance of these contradictory political processes is reinforced by the burgeoning magnitude of the sheer demographic and economic weight of the Southern Metropolis in the twenty-first century world. As of the turn of the millennium, 18 of the 21 metropolises with populations of over 10 million were in the Global South. By 2020, rural populations will be shrinking in both North and South and urban populations in the North will be growing at a slow rate. Virtually all of the world's population growth will take place within the Southern Metropolis (see United Nations 2006). The twenty-first century "social question" is the question of the Southern Metropolis.

The political economic and social centrality of the Southern Metropolis makes the old issue of the effects of scale on the dynamics of citizenship even more unavoidable. Citizenship is always geographically multi-scalar. Citizens are made not only at the national level through constitutions and elections, but also in their day-to-day engagements with the local state, which increasingly means engagement with the political apparatus of the Southern Metropolis. While developed primarily by exploring the historical evolution of inequality at the national level, Tilly's relational view of inequality is a particularly apt theoretical tool for looking at multi-scalar citizenship.

Tilly's relational view of inequality

Tilly argues that durable inequalities are a central organizing feature of all societies. He links the discussion of inequality to democracy by showing how significant moves in the direction of democratization are inextricably linked to a reduction in the political significance of durable inequalities. In *Durable Inequality* (1998) Tilly makes the case that social inequalities are relational and rooted in power asymmetries. He argues that most forms of inequality are organized around binary or hierarchically bounded categories such as male/female, black/white, or, in the case of hierarchical inequalities, class and caste.

Building on Weber's conception of social closure and combining it with Marx's concern with how social relations are asymmetrically structured, Tilly argues that mechanisms of closure and exclusion are mobilized and routinized through the use of categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, or class. Categorical inequality is built on relations. Bounded categories result in durable inequality when relations across the boundary produce exploitation between categories or hoarding of resources within the dominant category. This point deserves emphasis because most analyses of inequality continue to focus on individuals and the various assets they possess. A relational perspective directs attention to how categorical inequalities *work*.

Durable inequalities persist because socially constructed categories do the work necessary to keep them in place. Dominant groups have an interest in reproducing their privileges and do so through an "economy of practices" (Bourdieu 1984) that includes the whole range of cultural, social, and economic practices that enforce the boundaries of the privileged and ensure ongoing exclusion. This would include not

only reproducing caste, class, race, and gender differences through routinized practices of networking, socializing, consuming, and sharing information, but also instrumentalizing institutions and governance in general to serve those interests. The weapons of the powerful—to invert James Scott's famous metaphor—represent a vast repertoire of techniques (material and discursive) to reproduce inequality.

Tilly's relational view stands in contrast to two competing visions of the origins of inequality, both of which are highly influential, one in policy circles and the other among critical intellectuals. The "residualist" view, influential in policy circles, sees inequality as a by-product of imperfect markets, bad policies, irrationalities, or hatreds—in sum, various historical legacies that can be removed through good policy, more complete markets, or changes in attitudes.[1] For Tilly, in contrast, inequality flows from the structure of political relations between exploiters and exploited, "hoarders of opportunity" and those excluded from opportunity, not from "failures" of markets or public administrations that can be corrected simply by more intelligent policy intervention. In the relational view, better policy or more enlightened attitudes are unlikely to change inequality until the question of power is addressed.

At the same time, however, Tilly's relational view of inequality leaves far more space for agency than what might be called "structuralist" etiologies of inequality, popular among critical intellectuals. Structuralists see inequality as driven by a combination of inexorable shifts in the structure of global production managed and exacerbated by the equally irresistible global political apparatus of neo-liberal capitalism. Mike Davis's dystopian *Planet of the Slums* (2006) offers an evocative illustration. For Davis, the global shrinking of manufacturing employment, driven by labor saving technologies combined with the bifurcation of the service sector between a small financial/symbolic analyst elite and a mass of poorly remunerated jobs in personal services and petty commerce, has transformed a growing share of the urban population into "surplus," relegated to "informal" work with incomes insufficient to pay for urban housing or services. Standard forms of political agency are impotent in the face of such structural shifts.

Other variations on the structuralist vision of urban inequality focus more on the ability of global capitalism to sustain itself politically irrespective of economic reversals. No longer content to mobilize resources and secure market share, global capitalism has now thoroughly penetrated the social and the political, with such creativity that "it must be acknowledged that neoliberalism has demonstrated a capacity variously to spawn, absorb, appropriate, or morph with a range of local institutional (re)forms in ways that speak to its creatively destructive character" (Peck and Tickell 2002, p. 397).

Structuralist perspectives are ill-adapted to explaining variations in trajectories of political change among countries that share immersion in the global capitalist

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[1] As Kaplinsky (2005, p. 49) has argued, the traditional World Bank view that poverty is a result of limited participation in the global economy is a classic residualist view. Tilly explicitly contrasted his relational view to the existing literature's narrow focus on the attributes or attitudes of individuals or groups that assumes there are "self-sustaining essences" at work rather than relational dynamics (1998:16–19). It is noteworthy that in its World Development Report on *Equity and Development,* the World Bank (2006, p. 21) embraced a relational view of inequality and even cites.

political economy. While they give full play to the political implications of the contradictions of capitalism, these theorists appear to see those contradictions as inviting their own solutions. All adjustments—governance, social programs, reforms, safety nets, etc.—are seen as creative ways of managing crisis tendencies. Subaltern political agency disappears as a possibility. Local variations in democratization and citizenship appear almost irrelevant to combating the brutal inequalities of the Southern Metropolis.

Tilly's perspective on democracy and citizenship

Tilly's relational view of inequality avoids the overestimation of possibilities for agency that is inherent in the residualist view but nonetheless focuses attention on possibilities for contesting the political hegemony of the powerful. Analyzing democracy and citizenship is an integral part of the relational analysis of inequality. Democracy is central in part because it allows subalterns to contest control of the state apparatus. Since the apparatus of the state is a key weapon in the inequality-producing arsenal of the powerful, denying elites control over this weapon and turning it on them instead is central to any struggle against inequality. Transformation of the role of the state is at the heart of democratization and the citizenship that goes with it.

For Tilly the measure of democracy is the actual character of citizenship—that is, the *relation* between a subject and the state. Tilly makes this argument in two steps. First, he places the type or nature of a subject's relation to government at the center of his definition: democracy means the "formation of a regime featuring relatively broad, equal, categorical, binding consultation and protection" (Tilly 2004, p. 128). He then links this conception of democracy to a definition of citizenship:

> Citizenship consists, in this context, of mutual rights and obligations binding governmental agents to whole categories of people who are subject to the government's authority, those categories being defined chiefly or exclusively by relations to the government *rather than by reference to particular connections with rulers or to membership in categories based on imputed durable traits such race, ethnicity, gender, or religion.* It institutionalizes regular, categorical relations between subjects and their governments (Tilly, 2004, p.128, italics added).

Tilly elaborates the conditions of this democratic relationship as follows: no one is excluded (breadth); subjects have to be equal in terms of their relations with government (equality); the government must answer to regular binding public consultations (binding consultation); subjects, especially minorities, are protected from arbitrary state action (protection). He emphasizes the relativity of his definition by noting that no democracy actually lives up to this definition and that democratization should be viewed as a move "*toward* greater categorical regularity, breadth, equality, binding consultation, and protection, and de-democratization consists of moves *away* from them" (Tilly, 2004, p. 128, italics in original).

We can then sum up the relationship between democracy and inequality through the concept of citizenship. Democratization is best understood as an expansion in the

quality of citizenship, which is about the institutionalized quality of a subject's relation to government and its authority, which in turn exists in inverse proportion to the degree to which a subject's relations to government are mediated by categorical inequalities. As innocuous as this definition of democratization may seem, it is tantamount to disempowering elites, which explains why efforts at democratization meet with such resistance, and the history of "reform" is littered with examples of failed land reforms and subverted decentralization initiatives.

Just as importantly, this conceptualization of democratization gives pride of place to social movements. Indeed, if there is any theme that ran through all of Tilly's work it was his insistence that contentious politics—that is, the politics of challengers confronting elites—is the engine of social change. And while Tilly recognized that not all social movements are democratic, often making demands in the name of particularized conceptions of "the people," they nonetheless have democratizing effects: "*Social movements assert popular sovereignty* ... the stress on popular consent fundamentally challenges divine right to kingship, traditional inheritance of rule, warlord control and aristocratic predominance. Even in systems of representative government … social movements pose a crucial question: do sovereignty and its accumulated wisdom lie in the legislature or in the people it claims to represent?" (Tilly, 2004, p. 13). This, as we shall see, is why even as transitions to democracy have become the norm in much of the South, democratization as Tilly defines it is so highly contested in the Southern Metropolis.

Taking Tilly to the Southern Metropolis

The Southern Metropolis is the most important arena of the global struggle for "greater categorical regularity, breadth, equality, binding consultation, and protection." Recent reversals in the historical trend toward privileging the nation state as the site of citizenship have helped refocus thinking on the city as a site for the construction of citizenship. So have recent shifts in the scholarship on democracy. Margaret Somers's (1993) conception of citizenship as an "instituted process" resonates with Tilly's definition of democratization as any move "toward greater categorical regularity, breadth, equality, binding consultation, and protection …" Focusing on the metropolitan level, Fernandes (2007) has revived Lefebvre's classic concept of "rights to the city." Fernandes conceptualizes the right to the city as both a "right to habitation" with "right to participation" defining it as "the right of all urban dwellers to collectively enjoy the benefits, cultural plurality, social diversity, economic advantages and opportunities of urban life, as well as to actively participate in urban management" (Fernandes 2007, p. 217).

The struggle for an "instituted process of citizenship" that secures the less privileged majority's "rights to the city" is epitomized by the current politics of the Southern metropolis. "The right to the city" in the Southern metropolis is made precarious for most urban dwellers precisely as a function of the categorical inequalities that Tilly emphasizes. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that urban struggles for citizenship are ubiquitous in the Global South. From internal migrants demanding to be treated as citizens in the urban export powerhouses of Southeast China (Lee 2007) to the green tide of protesters that recently swarmed the streets of

Teheran (Bayat 2009), the dwellers of the Southern Metropolis are demanding the right to have rights. The extent to which urban struggles for democratization share memes and even organizational structures is striking, but as these two examples indicate, variation is as important as commonality.

The three cases we have chosen as vehicles to take Tilly South share key features. Unlike China and Iran, Brazil, India, and South Africa are all national polities in which electoral democracy is thoroughly institutionalized. In addition, all have long traditions of democratization struggles at the local level. While they vary in the success of their insertion, all three are solidly bound to the neo-liberal capitalist world economy. They are all regional economic powers with acknowledged global weight, both politically and economically, telling cases for anyone trying to project the future of the Global South.

Their commonalities make them telling cases, but it is the variation among our three cases that gives us theoretical leverage on the dynamics of citizenship. In both urban India and urban South Africa, the momentum of democratization appears to have foundered on the rocky shoals of entrenched privilege. Brazil stands in contrast. With no obvious advantages over the other two in terms of traditions of citizenship or the institutionalization of democratic forms of governance, it offers grounds for cautious optimism. By looking more closely at the contrasting relations between national political structures and local political ecologies in these three cases and their consequences for the contours of urban citizenship, we hope to move forward Tilly's preoccupation with nation state-city relations and his determination to illuminate the connections between expanding citizenship and reducing inequality.

Citizens without a city in India: the clientelistic gullies of Mumbai

Comparative analyses of democracy often set the pervasive fragility of democratic institutions in poor countries against India's remarkable ability to sustain competitive electoral democracy over the more than half a century since its independence. India's democratic norms and institutions are, indeed, impressive. Nonetheless, as has often been observed, the democratic thrust of the Indian constitution never embraced the operation of the state at the local level.[2] At the local level, top down bureaucratic rule prevailed in formal administration and clientelism built around categorical inequalities of caste, community, and class was the primary foundation for the construction of political power.

The possibility of building a democratic metropolis in India is further complicated by the fact that Indian cities have limited sovereign rights and almost no autonomous sources of revenue. Lacking the legal and fiscal foundations necessary for the construction of democratic institutions at the municipal level, Indian cities have fallen prey to factional politics organized primarily at the provincial state level. Consequently, democratic practices of citizenship are hard to sustain in the Indian metropolis, despite the fact that national rules of citizenship formally apply.

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[2] Constitutional amendments in 1992 did give village and municipal governments new formal powers, but political and bureaucratic resistance at the provincial state level has blocked effective devolution of power.

No one has more powerfully captured this fundamental tension—the gap between the form and the practice of democracy—than Arjun Appadurai's (2002) description of the urban poor of Mumbai as "citizens without a city". As Indians, they are citizens, with constitutional rights of association, speech, and due process and, of course, the right to vote and to hold their rulers accountable. But even if they are legally constituted as citizens and do indeed vote, they have limited opportunities to use their citizenship because the city in India is not a sovereign entity and because their relations to governmental officials at the city level are intermediations governed by categorical inequalities.

At first glance, the recent history of Mumbai would seem to vindicate the structuralists' focus on the destructive effects of global capitalism. In a relatively short period of time, Mumbai has become a critical node in the flow of global financial capital. The shift from Fordism to flexible accumulation that structuralists emphasize has been especially marked. Once home to a thriving textile industry dominated by powerful unions, Mumbai has experienced rapid de-industrialization in favor of finance and service sector growth,[3] a dramatic peripheralization and informalization of the remnants of its manufacturing economy, and increased spatial and social inequality.[4]

Yet, if one were to rely solely on a structural story one would miss many of the political dynamics that are re-configuring citizenship in Mumbai. Polarization and social exclusion are as much products of India's domestic political and social structures as they are of global forces. While the contours of inequality in Mumbai are obviously structured by market forces, they are also organized through a whole range of categorical inequalities of gender, caste, community, and ethnicity (including a complex layering of immigrant groups from different states) that overlap with, but do not simply reflect class differences. Access to a whole range of resources, including housing and services, jobs and state rents, is organized through these categorical inequalities (Zérah 2008).

The particularly powerful role of intersecting categorical inequalities in undermining citizenship is compounded by the fact that, as with all Indian cities, Mumbai enjoys only the most limited governance authority and autonomy. Despite its centrality to the process of accumulation, the city itself has limited fiscal resources and in global terms an especially paltry capital budget (Sekhar and Bidarkar 1999). Although the city has control over some municipal functions, many critical sectors, including economic policy, housing, land policy, rail transport, and slum redevelopment are the purview of the state and New Delhi. Across almost every sector, from sewage to transport and public health, the level and quality of public goods and social services—which was low to begin with—has fallen further behind the pace of social and economic transformation.

The incapacity of the local state is a direct outgrowth of the pattern of nation-state formation. Nation-building in India was led by a Congress Party that enjoyed great

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[3] The share of manufacturing in Greater Mumbai's economy was reduced from 42% in 1980 to 23.5% in 1994 (Whitehead and More 2007, p. 2428).

[4] No single statistic captures the contradiction between the use and exchange value of the city's land than the finding that the average residential rent is 140 percent of per capita income (Whitehead and More 2007, p. 2428).

moral authority but was organizationally very weak. To sustain itself, the Congress famously aligned with provincial state-based strongmen, giving states significant power in India's federal system. But the power of these strongmen and their local political machines came at the expense of local governments, including economically powerful cities such as Mumbai. Cities in India have served more as sources of rents and votebanks for state-level politicians, than as bases of power in their own right.[5]

Although the secular Congress has a strong presence in Maharashtra, the city has been dominated by the Shiv Sena, a nativist party whose dominance in the city has been built around a noxious mix of martial nativism, muscular tactics (including close ties with organized crime), a highly sophisticated system of patronage and Hindutva-aligned xenophobic communalism, including orchestrating large scale anti-Muslim riots. This resurgence of what many loosely call identity politics has less to do, as Tilly would be quick to remind us, with cultural affinities than with putting categorical inequalities to work.

The Indian urban citizen engages the local state as a client or as a member of a group, not as a rights-bearing citizen. Engagement is predicated on exchanges and loyalties, not rights. The logic of these exchanges is democratically perverse because it either privileges—and in the process reifies—primary identities or powerful lobbies, or is predicated on clientelistic relations that compromise political autonomy. Mumbai's poor suffer from the double exclusion of a particularly hierarchical social order and a highly skewed distribution of political power, reducing them, in Appardurai's phrase, to citizens without a city.

Given that inequality is generated by the exercise of political power, movement toward greater inequality is likely to depend on building new sources of political power, which in turn will certainly depend on expanding the practices of metropolitan citizenship. The prospects for urban democratization are not quite as bleak as they might appear. Two examples from Mumbai of small spaces being carved out by local movements with global connections point to the possibilities of a new politics of citizenship.

Arjun Appardurai documents an urban activist movement in Mumbai in which slumdwellers, working both with local and global NGOs not only overcame the manifold fragmentations and dependencies described above to organize themselves effectively, but also "appropriated significant parts of the means of governance" and successfully made some concrete demands on the city (Appadurai 2002, p. 24). Liza Weinstein (2009) documents the case of the redevelopment of one of Mumbai's largest slums (Dharavi) in which a motley collection of state reformers, NGOs, and neighborhood associations were able to subject the project to important participatory controls. More broadly, Zérah argues that recent elite-dominated planning proposals that envision a market-friendly "World Class City" are being countered by a social movement that encompasses the organized poor, NGOs and various middle class segments (Zérah 2008, p. 1931).

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[5] It is this inter-level distribution of political power that had has derailed the effective implementation of the decentralization reforms introduced through constitutional amendment in 1992.

These cases demonstrate that even in a context of such extreme deprivation and power asymmetries as Mumbai, the urban poor still retain a capacity to organize and to press demands on the local state, and in the case of Dharavi, even hold powerful developers and international financiers at bay. These movements directly confronted power through the quintessential movement strategies of forging complex alliances (including inter-class coalitions), engaging the public sphere through a politics of conscience, carefully constructing local bases of support, and when necessary, using what political influence they had to pressure politicians or the state. They built creative organizational partnerships with various constituencies in local civil society and leveraged opportunities created by globalization.[6]

For much of the post-Independence period, urban politics in India have been dominated by clientelistic politics, middle class hegemony, and extra-local power. Accelerated urban transformation and clear signs of increased popular mobilization leave little doubt however that the urban political space is becoming more contested (Chatterjee 2004). Whether or not democratization movements in Mumbai or other Indian cities can move the urban political regime in the direction of "broad, equal, categorical, binding consultation and protection" remains an open question. But movements for urban inclusion are increasingly tenacious, sometimes winning surprising victories, and appear likely to be a persistent force in shaping the political ecology of the southern metropolis. The same proposition applies even more clearly to South African cities.

South Africa: state power versus metropolitan democratization

For Tilly, as for most observers of the Global South, South Africa's transition from the White dominated apartheid regime to a democratically elected government controlled by a radical, programmatic party in 1994 represented a signal example of how durable inequality might be undermined. In *Durable Inequalities* (1998, p. 228), he says,

> . . . that shift in political power will most likely cause some equalization in wealth, income and education, health, housing and living conditions across what had been one of the world's starkest division of categorical inequality.

Fifteen years after the fall of apartheid, it is clear that while citizenship has been fundamentally expanded in relation to the national polity, the practices of citizenship are woefully lagging at the metropolitan level. Correspondingly, as Tilly would predict, structures of privilege remain in place and the production of inequality continues unabated. Most ironically, the centralized and centralizing dominance of the African National Congress (ANC) has become one of the principal impediments to further expansion of citizenship at the level of the city.

In contrast to Indian cities, South Africa's major metropolises inherited municipal structures that, in comparative terms, enjoy significant governance capacities and

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[6] Appadurai argues that global networks of NGOs and social movements, and global discourses of human rights and democratization, "has provided a huge boost to local democratic formations" (Appadurai 2002, p. 25).

fiscal autonomy, especially in the three megacities of Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban. It is even possible to talk of a local developmental state (van Donk et al. 2008). The democratic character of that state is another matter. South African citizens continue to enjoy important constitutional protections as well as the power of binding consultation that comes with elections. But, if we examine post-transition South African cities in light of Tilly's definition of democratization—as movement toward "a regime featuring relatively broad, equal, categorical, binding consultation and protection"—then the conclusion is that South Africa is at best in a holding pattern, but may actually be experiencing de-democratization.

When it to came to power in 1994 on the strength of a broad-based movement that had deep roots in community structures (most notably the township civics), the ANC officially embraced a vision of transformation that emphasized the mobilization of citizens through a range of participatory institutions. But a much more commandist and centralizing logic soon prevailed, and in the name of efficiency and more rapid delivery, the ANC quickly managerialized and insulated decision-making processes, all but excluding civil society organizations. The government in Pretoria has come to see the local state more as in instrument of delivery than a forum for democratization. A series of institutional reforms combined with tight political control over local elected officials have produced metropolitan governments that are increasingly technocratic and centralized (van Donk et al. 2008). A wide range of participatory institutions such as community development forums have been dismantled or hollowed-out, mass-based civil society organizations such as township civics have been marginalized or coopted, and municipal governance has been centralized into Unicity structures that have entrenched a bureaucratic and corporatist vision of urban governance (Beall et al. 2002). The privatization or out-sourcing of many government functions and increased reliance on consultants has virtually crowded out community structures.

In South Africa, as in Mumbai, the exclusionary economic logic of contemporary global capitalism unquestionably reinforces inequality, just as the structuralists argue. The rapid opening-up of the economy that followed the ANC's embrace of market liberalization in 1996 decimated labor intensive sectors such as textiles, and other sectors such as mining have experienced significant job loss as capital has increased investment in labor-displacing technologies. The wage gap between the formal and informal sector has risen dramatically and unemployment has grown (Seekings and Nattrass 2005). But, again as in the case of Mumbai, the structuralist analysis misses much of the action.

The categorical inequalities of apartheid, deeply inscribed as they are into the socio-spatial hierarchy of the city, continue to do their work, dramatically limiting the social and economic opportunities of the black urban poor. Despite massive interventions by the state in service provisioning and public housing, the spatial hierarchy of the apartheid city remains intact (though transformed by the upward mobility of a small African bourgeoisie favored by state policies) and access to education, health services, transport, and formal housing remain massively skewed (Schensul and Heller (Forthcoming). Legacies, change and transformation in the post-apartheid City: Towards an urban sociological cartography. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*; van Donk et al. 2008). One example underscores the point: unemployment in African townships in Durban in 2001—

nearly 20 years after most racial barriers to mobility and employment were removed in South Africa—was still 59.6% compared to 7.8% in predominantly white areas (Schensul and Heller, forthcoming). Again, inequality is actively being produced, as the relational perspective would lead us to expect.

Even more clearly than Mumbai, South Africa gives us reason to reject the residualist approach. Residualist visions in which more technocratically efficient policies are the solution to inequality are easily melded with efforts to defend political power from threats from below. Rather than providing solutions, the insulation of the local state from civil pressure seems to have compounded the already stark problems of urban inequality, while increasing political volatility. But, from the perspective of a relational theory of inequality, this same political volatility also holds the promise of positive change.

The prospect of social movements playing a transformative role in re-shaping the Southern Metropolis is much easier to imagine in South Africa than in India. Tilly always emphasized the cumulative strength gained from past historical experiences of social movements. In the process of mobilization, movements develop repertoires of contention, including mobilization networks, organizational capacity, symbolic and normative resources, and strategic knowledge. Such repertoires in South Africa are especially powerful, and while they were necessarily demobilized with the transition to democracy, they appear to be reasserting themselves.

Over the past 4–5 years, the rumblings of citizen discontent and localized protests have become much more public. As the full disciplinary impact of neo-liberal cost-recovery measures have been increasingly felt, contentious politics have become more widespread and have taken more open and confrontational forms. In Johannesburg, the Anti-Privatization Forum, a city-wide coalition of unions, civics, and anti-liberalization groups, has organized a number of highly publicized protest actions.[7] Across all of South Africa's cities, informal and formal acts of "decommodification" including illegal reconnections and anti-eviction campaigns have become widespread (Bond 2004; Desai 2002). Beginning in 2004 there was a veritable explosion of local protests with the Minister for Provincial and Local Government reporting that 90% of the poorest municipalities experienced protests and the Minister for Safety and Security putting the number of protests in 2004/2005 at almost 6,000 (Atkinson 2007, p. 57).

Overall, there is increasing evidence that after more than a decade of democracy dominated by a single party and marked by demobilization, social movements, in particular in the form of community-based movements, have become increasingly proactive.[8] Most notably, as Desai concludes, these movements of what he calls "the Poors" "have come to constitute the most relevant post-1994 social forces from the point of view of challenging the prevailing political economy. The community movements have challenged the very boundaries of what for a short while after the demise of the apartheid state was seen exclusively as 'politics'" (Desai 2003, p. 25-26).

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[7] Most spectacular was a march at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development that outdrew the ANC-sponsored march of "official" civil society organizations four times.
[8] See in particular the series of papers produced by the "Globalisation, Marginalisation and New Social Movements in Post Apartheid South Africa" project sponsored by the Centre for Civil Society and the School of Development Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal. http://www.nu.ac.za/ccs/default.asp?5,56

Despite the very different historical paths of the evolution of democratic institutions in South Africa and India, movement toward metropolitan democratization would seem to depend on the urban disprivileged in both countries. The other theme that unites the two cases is even more critical to the theorization of citizenship. The construction of citizenship in both cases depends as much or more on the relation between national political institutions and the metropolis as it does on the relation between the state and individual citizens.

In both cases, the metropolis as a political space is disempowered and this in turn undercuts the ability of the poor to exercise their "rights to the city." The result is not, however, an increase in the effective power of the national state apparatus but its inability to exercise "infrastructural power"[9] in the urban heartlands of the national economy and the state's increased reliance on political bosses whose interests lie in capitalizing on inequality and building their own private power.

More surprising than the convergence of these two apparently dissimilar cases is Brazil's apparent divergence from both of them in the direction of democratization, despite equally powerful inegalitarian pressures from the global capitalism and a political tradition steeped in exclusion and denial of citizenship rights.

Brazil: decentralization and local democratization

In Brazil, one of the most decentralized countries in Latin America, decentralization has long been in the service of preserving privilege and preventing democratization. State and local governments were dominated by local oligarchies whose primary political agenda was building clientelistic networks that would make their economic privilege and political control unassailable. Nonetheless, in recent decades Brazil's tradition of decentralization has turned out to contain other, contradictory possibilities.

Beginning in the late 1970s, movements against military rule and the exclusionary capitalist development that it promoted became increasingly proactive in Brazil. These movements bore key similarities to the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. In Brazil, however, it was much clearer that real democratization would require more than simply re-taking the citadel of the state. These new movements demanded not only political reforms, but also accountability and improved governance, mobilizing behind the slogan "the right to have rights." Local organizations of the urban poor and pro-democracy fractions of the middle class formed common blocks and scaled-up into powerful national movements demanding housing, public transportation, and health care as social rights. The Workers' Party, (Partido dos Trabalhadores or PT), projected itself as a vehicle for translating civil society demands into party platforms, with a commitment to democratizing state institutions (Keck 1992). In debates over the new constitution beginning in 1986, urban social movements successfully made demands for more accountable forms of city governance, calling for decentralization and citizen participation in the running of city affairs as a basic right of citizenship (Holston 2008). There is now wide

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[9] A la Michael Mann (1986).

agreement that Brazilian municipalities are the most autonomous and most resourced in Latin America (Baiocchi 2006).

The most significant participatory reforms came in the form of the various sectoral councils (health, transport, education, environment) that were mandated by the constitution and are essentially neo-corporatist deliberative arenas with significant binding authority. Reforms have also consisted of innovative programs in which some form of civil society participation was institutionalized in areas as varied as municipal planning, environmental regulation and housing programs (Baiocchi 2006). These include participatory budgeting (PB), a process that involves direct involvement of citizens at the neighborhood and city level in shaping the city's capital budget in over 400 Brazilian cities. Finally, in 2001 the Brazilian government passed new legislation—the *Estatuto da Cidade* (City Statute), which not only "incorporates the language and concepts developed by the urban social movements and various local administrations since the 1970s," but requires that all urban policies be subject to popular participation and "introduces a series of innovative legal instruments that allow local administrations to enforce the 'social function'" (Caldeira and Holston 2005, pp. 405–406).

Three recent studies illustrate the significance of these reforms to "instituting citizenship" at the municipal level. First, a paired-city study of 8 Brazilian municipalities found that PB not only significantly democratized the traditional elite-driven budgetary process, but that it markedly increased the access of civil society organizations (CSOs) to the decision-making process (Baiocchi et al. 2008). Second, Holston's (2008) long-term ethnographic study of the struggles of workers on the vast periphery of Sao Paulo showed how prosaic localized struggles to secure titles to their land and to demand social services merged into the broader stream of the democracy movement to become highly politicized struggles for citizenship. Finally, Houtzager et al. (2007) measured the degree and quality of associational engagement with the local state using original survey data from Sao Paulo, Mexico City, and New Delhi, and found that only residents of Sao Paulo act as citizens. In contrast to Delhi, where the urban poor depend entirely on political patrons to make demands, and Mexico City, where urban residents have resorted to self-provisioning, a majority of residents of Sao Paulo seek redress by directly engaging city authorities. In general, CSOs and citizens in Brazil have direct access to local government and in many cities play an active role in shaping public policy.

The greater ability of social movements to engage the state and push urban governance in the direction of democratization is crucial to the dynamics of citizenship in Brazil, but the role of the national state remains fundamental to reducing inequality. The national state was instrumental in opening up and institutionalizing new participatory spaces. It has also directly attacked inequality, as in the case of Bolsa Familia program, one of the most successful redistributive programs in the world. While this program is implemented through local governments, it could not exist without capacity and political will at the national level. The apparently symbiotic relation in which movement in the direction of democratization at the local level seems to go together with increased capacity of the national government to deliver inequality-reducing policy interventions, stands in contrast to the relation between the nation and the city in both India and South Africa

Conclusion: democratization and citizenship through an urban lens

Comparative analysis of the politics of the Southern Metropolis vindicates Tilly's theoretical perspectives in multiple ways and points toward promising possibilities for building on them. Tilly's relational theory of the production of inequality clearly dominates the structuralist and residualist alternatives. Our comparative forays in the Southern Metropolis also confirm the wisdom of Tilly's instinct that the shifting political relationship between the nation and the city must play a central role in the analysis of citizenship. The Southern Metropolis turns out to be a particularly fruitful arena for looking at the citizenship consequences of variant patterns of state-city political interaction.

Structuralist theories that attribute the extreme inequalities that plague the Southern metropolis to the exclusionary intrusions of the global capitalist political economy are not wrong, but they are seriously incomplete. The lack of sufficient numbers of decently remunerative jobs has a devastating effect on the dwellers of the Southern metropolis. Patterns and levels of inequality are nonetheless politically produced and their contours depend on local political ecologies of privilege and categorically defined inequality, which are in turn products of specific social and political trajectories. The general capitalist dynamics that are the focus of structuralist analysis are indeed a powerfully important shared background against which the politics of privilege play out, but reducing the analysis to this shared background misses most of the action.

Structuralists not only miss the politics of privilege, they also miss the politics of resistance. None of our cases is a "revolutionary situation." The privileged are firmly ensconced in all three countries. They are likely to go on producing inequality. Movement toward democratization will be an uphill fight, subject to reversals and backsliding for the foreseeable future. Yet, the Southern Metropolis is shaped in all three countries by democratizing movements of impressive vibrancy and persistence that continue to challenge the production of inequality.

Residualist theories may also contribute something to the analysis of inequality in the Southern Metropolis but they miss the central political dynamics almost completely. Even more seriously, a residualist focus misreads the connection between politics and policy, seducing policy makers into relying on technocratic fixes and tempting them to suppress the very political movements that a relational perspective leads us to believe are essential to unseating established political ecologies of privilege.

If our conclusions with regard to the superiority of Tilly's relational perspective are straightforward, our analysis with regard to the dynamics of state-city interactions is more suggestive than definitive. Our comparative analysis confirms our initial proposition that democratization driven primarily by the nation state is no longer sufficient to ensure citizenship as accepted practice and as a vehicle for the reduction of inequality, but once beyond that starting point our conclusions are more tentative.

The Global South is not devolving back to city-states nor has citizenship become primarily a global affair. Formal institutionalization of national rules consistent with "broad, equal, categorical, binding consultation and protection" is still the sine qua non of citizenship, but our analysis has bracketed this background condition, much

in the same way that it brackets the context of global political economy that is emphasized by the structuralists. By choosing cases in which formal rules at the national level support democratization, we have highlighted the importance of variations in urban practice and politics and the ways in which the interaction of states and cities shape these practices and politics.

India, South Africa, and Brazil each have their own distinctive patterns of state-city interaction and, consequently their own distinctive patterns of urban citizenship. At the local level, Indians have few, if any at all, points of meaningful interface with the state, and, to the extent local government does play a role, the mode of intermediation is exclusively through party-based patronage. In South Africa, local government and local democracy matters, but the dominance of the ANC and its embrace of increasingly technocratic modes of government have all but ruled out any form of participation. In Brazil, old tropes of decentralization have been transformed and harnessed to an agenda of urban democratization by movements from below.

While struggles for citizenship in Brazil are often frustrated and their eventual outcome must be considered uncertain, the way in which local political contestation and the continued efforts by the national state to reduce categorical inequalities has supported the expansion of citizenship distinguishes Brazil from India and South Africa. Brazil's unusual combination of political decentralization and continuing national support for "broad, equal, categorical, binding consultation and protection" has given the disprivileged of Brazil's cities unusual leverage in their pursuit of citizenship rights. In other words, the relationship between the state and civic actors has to some degree evolved institutionally in the direction of more synergistic patterns of engagement.

Contrasting patterns of democratization in the Southern Metropolis are associated with different degrees of effectiveness in the exercise of state power, both locally and nationally, but not in the way that conventional wisdom might lead us to expect. Our comparisons suggest an affinity between the nation state's willingness to support the relative political autonomy of the metropolis and democratization of urban governance. The development of this counter-intuitive synergistic relationship characterizes the Brazilian case. South Africa illustrates the converse possibility: the effort to exert tight control over the metropolis and its residents may well be contributing to the undermining of the capacity of the nation state. Similarly in India, the long-standing determination of the Centre and the States to retain bureaucratic control over the metropolis has severely limited the capacity for local democratic governance. These are, of course, only tentative propositions, but they are certainly worth pursuing and confronting with more comparative evidence.

"Taking Tilly South" has paid valuable intellectual dividends. Tilly's theoretical framework has been sustained by the comparative analysis of cases very different from those that stimulated his original formulations, exactly the kind of confirmation that every theorist hopes for. Perhaps more important, using Tilly's preoccupation with the evolution of state-city relations as a lens for scrutinizing the Southern metropolis has generated a set of unproved but heuristically promising propositions about the relationships among state-city relations, democratization, and state capacity, vindicating Tilly in a different, more forward looking way.

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