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# Colombia: social capital, social movements and sustainable development in Cauca

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**M**odern development theorists have repeatedly argued that the associative networks constructed by civil society influence countries' economic growth processes by correcting aspects such as failures of the market and of democratic governance resulting from the operation of public policies. In the case of a region such as the Department of Cauca, situated in the south-west of Colombia, a profusion of social movements and collective action has not been matched by good economic results, by comparison with what has been achieved elsewhere in the country with similar or lower levels of social organization. The present paper sets out to specify the categories involved in this phenomenon in the light of the region's cultural peculiarities, which make it a crucial case study for understanding the effects of mass movements on Latin American development.

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# I

## Introduction

Over the past 15 years, the developing world and Latin America in particular have experimented with a wide range of policy and reform styles in the effort to speed up economic growth, reduce poverty and maintain democratic governance. To achieve these objectives, most countries acted almost as one in adopting the policies comprising the so-called “Washington Consensus”, whose recommendations included matters like the defence of property rights, macroeconomic stability, support for the free market and trade integration (Hausmann, Rodrik and Velasco, 2006). The results were not entirely encouraging, but nor were those of the former statist model of inward-looking growth, at least when set against the goal of catching up with the societies of Europe and North America.

Although packages of measures were often driven by the same approaches, the scope and quality of public policies were not uniform. Consequently, there is a question that repeatedly comes up in research in this field: why have some countries or regions managed to adapt their policies quickly to changing external circumstances, or innovate when policies are unsuccessful, while others have reacted slowly and with great difficulty, or kept unworkable measures in place for long periods?

In any event, the experience of the 1990s made it clear that the complexity of development required a new attitude towards crucial elements such as economic growth that took account of links to political stability and institutional solidity, which are given much of their significance by the existence of a civil society that actively concerns itself with the defence of the public sphere. Indeed, multilateral organizations have expressed the view that the performance of institutions has major implications for the countries of the South. Because of this, since the mid-1990s organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

(Alonso, 2007) have adopted the “good governance” approach as a strategy emphasizing the importance of political participation, a leading role for civil society organizations that are able to make their voices heard and the role of the State in promoting human and not just economic development (DNP, 1995).

However, research into the determinants of good governance, i.e., the phenomenon whereby symbiotic relationships are generated between the State, society and the market, has been giving increasing prominence to the concept of “social capital” as a catalyst for public and private efforts to promote well-being, which for many people has meant displaying attitudes of collective collaboration that provide the basis for the trust needed to invigorate economic transactions and ensure the viability of the institutional order (Fukuyama, 2004). Fertile though the concept is, however, with its virtually limitless variety of applications, there is still no consensus as to its theoretical meaning or methodological importance. Nonetheless, a minimum of agreement on this point is essential to give meaning to economic research and examine some of the elements that explain the sources of endemic distortion in markets and prevent resources from being used optimally to achieve well-being, the result being the kind of major regional differences we see in the development of the Department of Cauca.

This department in the south-west of Colombia is one of the country’s poorest. In 2000, Cauca was economically worse off than any of the country’s other 24 departments other than Chocó, with 77.2% of its population below the poverty line and 39.7% below the indigence line. The situation was much the same in 2005 when, according to the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), 33.6% of the department’s population was below the indigence line and 46.4% of households had unmet basic needs, compared with a national average of 27.6%. The provision of public services in Cauca (drinking water and sewage) is well below the national average (56.3% compared to 65.3% nationally). There is also an ongoing armed conflict and violence right up and down the region, this being mainly the work of outlawed armed groups exploiting the inaccessibility and intricate geography of the department.

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About 21% of the inhabitants of Cauca are indigenous, with 84.5% of them living in reservations; there are 84 reservations covering a surface area of 519,850 hectares, equivalent to 17.7% of the departmental total (DNP, 2007). These reservations were originally created by the Spanish to protect the indigenous people, who governed themselves under an independent political authority called the *cabildo*. The land on these reservations is owned in common by the group inhabiting it, which holds formal title. This structure of land ownership, together with the maintenance of native languages and cultural traditions and the protection of communal territory, limits the scope for carrying out impersonal transactions, trading property rights or increasing market size and perpetuates the old institutional structure of government and ways of doing politics, generating a closed group effect or “embeddedness” in the sense used by Granovetter (1985) which stifles the dynamic of production.<sup>1</sup>

In the historical development of the Department of Cauca, the dominance of extractive industries has proved an obstacle to progress towards a republican way of life and the benefits of new political institutions. This was to become the main formal cause of the disadvantaged economic situation of Cauca, whose origins go back to the colonial era. The administrative and political structure of Cauca was clearly shaped by the colonial relationship that linked the newly conquered territories to the Spanish Crown. This relationship of dependency meant that the colonized peoples were deprived of the ability to take decisions about their own lives, territory, beliefs and culture. The Spanish Crown created hierarchical structures of government that sought to protect their own interests and formed networks of patronage which were confined to the geographical areas where their writ ran and whose purpose was to control and dominate the workforce (slaves) and land.

“Cauca introduced a particular variant of the exercise of State power that was aristocratic, religious and racist in character and that, within historical memory, has produced particular characteristics in the exercise of dominion. Until the late nineteenth century the capital, Popayán, was home to a number of the leading families in the Colombian slave trade,

most of whose victims were black. It was there too that the most concentrated racism against black and indigenous people was found, and the consequences can be seen to this day” (Jaramillo, 2007, p. 4). But the colonial inheritance did leave room for the institutions of the indigenous inhabitants, the group that has been perhaps most vehement in resisting exclusion and the concentration of power in the hands of those who have taken on the mantle of the old *encomenderos*. Paradoxically, the current indigenous institutional structure is based on the reservation and the *cabildo*, concepts introduced by the Spanish during the colonial period, but resignified and appropriated by the indigenous peoples (Caviedes, 2001) when they saw the opportunity to generate in them a political authority that would provide recognition and validation for their special ethnic characteristics.

Episodes of rent-seeking behaviour during the colonial period not only show the ineffectiveness of the government machinery and legal framework when it came to creating a system posited on the clear specification of property rights (over resources such as labour and land), but reveal a tradition under which the law was used whenever convenient to exercise exclusionary power, and not as a set of rules facilitating interaction. This issue has obviously been a constant in the evolution of Latin America, as shown by Naritomi, Soares and Assunção (2007) for the case of Brazil and De Soto (2001) for that of Peru. Thus, a description of the Colombian situation that focuses on the dynamics generated in the Department of Cauca not only reaffirms the need to strengthen economic and political institutions but calls into question the effectiveness of social movements when it comes to creating social capital capable of providing public goods and generating development.

A strong civil society, which has been a feature of some episodes of Cauca regional history, with social movements led by indigenous groups, would allow efficiency, growth and legitimacy to be combined, while at the same time banishing the conflict of values in the modern State (late capitalism), torn as it is between promoting efficiency, encouraging private activity and achieving legitimacy with strategies for welfare that constrain the “invisible hand”.

The problem so far has been that despite the kind of social cohesion evinced by its indigenous movements, the links enjoyed by its political elites at the centre of national decision-making (Bogotá) and the existence of certain comparative advantages associated with the availability of natural resources,

<sup>1</sup> These approaches to politics are clearly reflected in the actions of the Indigenous Social Alliance political party that entered the Colombian Congress after the new national constitution came into effect.

Cauca does not have a privileged position in regional and national development, and nor has it improved the living conditions of its inhabitants. There seems to be something going on with the cooperation networks of civil society that suggests the existence of a collective infrastructure torn between forces capable of generating synergies in development policy formulation and implementation and others that are more hidebound and suspicious of progress.

In view of all this, we shall first embark upon a theoretical and methodological discussion about

the functionality of social capital as a factor in our understanding of the dynamic of regional development. We shall then proceed to a case analysis of the history of popular movements in the Department of Cauca, pointing out the strengths or weaknesses of associative action. Thirdly, we shall relate the social structure derived from the colonial period to the current development conditions of the municipalities in the department, before lastly giving a general overview of the work of civil society organizations in the mid-2000s.

## II

### Social capital in the development fabric: a theoretical introspection

Social capital really does have the capacity to give a productive application to the associative resources embodied in the different social networks to which the members of a group have access, but it entails the complexity of linking individual interests to that of the collectivity. The early analyses of social capital that have now become the classics of the subject referred to the importance of personal relationships when examining economic systems. This is true of the treatment given to the subject by Coleman (1990) from a structuralist perspective, Bourdieu (1980) from a culturalist perspective and Granovetter (1985) from an institutionalist perspective. However, it is in Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti (1993) that we find the acknowledgement of a valid relationship between social capital and economic development, and its ability to bring about change in conditions of welfare, in *Making Democracy Work*; it would later be recognized by multilateral agencies such as the World Bank as a vital instrument in development policy.

Social capital can be understood as the characteristics of life in society—social networks, rules and trust—that enable participants to act more effectively in association to achieve shared goals (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993, p. 167). This set of characteristics expands the range of opportunities available to people in a community, thus increasing the benefits of associative participation. Furthermore, a study carried out in Italy showed that social capital was capable of changing and developing over time, evidently meaning that a

region's development level could change if its social capital were altered from outside.

Nonetheless, the proliferation of studies on the subject and the complexity consequently involved in engaging conceptually and methodologically with this intangible resource as contexts change have led to a growth of interest in the different forms social capital assumes, ranging from individual capital, embodied in dyadic contracts (i.e., contracts between two people, with egocentred networks), to group social capital in the form of stable teamwork with a leader who organizes and is recognized by his or her peers. What we are interested in is external social capital, characterized by the construction of community working relationships in the form of a “partnership” between State and non-State actors in a region, and between regions, as a result of which different resources are linked together to improve the adaptive efficiency of the economic structure and forge agreement on social coordination mechanisms.

In this way, the role of networks becomes an essential precursor of governance and economic stability.<sup>2</sup> But how can we calculate an asset that is evidently intangible, when public information is limited, there are geographical barriers to connectivity

<sup>2</sup> Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba (1992) developed a very detailed classification of the steps involved in the ascent to political development and its correlation with economic development, arguing that the final step in modernization was the existence of a participatory and proactive citizen body attuned to civic culture.

and political agitation has been systematic? Does it even make sense to discuss this topic in microlocal contexts that are preponderantly rural and have little human capital —this being largely confined to the urban societies of the country's north? And again, what is the point of doing so if we start by assuming a society like that of Cauca, all but fractured by the confrontation between powerful landowning local

political elites and the leadership of emerging groups such as communities of indigenous people, campesinos and Afrodescendants?

Undoubtedly, the best way to answer these questions is to draw some distinctions regarding the role of recent collective actions in Cauca in determining social capital in the face of the changing development model of the late twentieth century.

### III

## Some background on the history of popular movements

Given the explanatory potential of social capital as a factor needed to invigorate economic transactions and underpin the institutional order, there has been a tendency to argue that it exists in those places where collective agitation has led to a proliferation of social movements (Ruiz, 2004; Villar, 2003). Indeed, if we are to believe some of the political and economic development literature (Ray, 1998; Valles, 2000; Blomstrom and Hettne, 1990), Cauca society today is in a stage of economic and political modernization insofar as the characteristics of these kinds of collective action, generally associated with advanced nations, evince developments such as an upsurge of post-materialist demands, i.e., of those requirements in society, based on symbolic values and the need for esteem, recognition and self-realization, associated with access to a range of (formerly imperceptible) goods such as ethnic, racial or sexual identity (see table 1).

Indeed, it could be said that the dynamic of social movements in the Department of Cauca since the second half of the last century confirms the existence of this social asset. However, theories about these characteristics do not accord with the classic definitions of social capital (Coleman, 2001; Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993; Bourdieu, 2001; Dasgupta, 2004), which associate it at first sight with the strengthening of collective networks leading to economic progress, institutional respect and human capital formation.

But then, what are the characteristics of the collective action of civil society organizations in the Department of Cauca that are capable of generating social capital? Is there any relationship between the social mobilization of the 1990s and the generation of social capital?

One promising way into the subject is to create a theoretical matrix to explain the relationships between social movements and social capital in Latin America and thereby reach an understanding of the department's dynamic.<sup>3</sup>

It is thus worth beginning by defining "collective action". It is the phenomenon (Galvis, 2005) that aims to preserve or modify the position and interests of each group in society. Indeed, such action is often coordinated among a number of individuals in the same group who share the same position and the same plans and organize themselves on a fairly centralized basis. The matter does not end there, however, as the nature of their motives differs.

Some authors (Valles, 2000; Mariñez, 2001) have tried to reduce theories about the subject to a basic classification by dividing them into "rational" and "non-rational" approaches. Thus, the former are linked to the development of the main current of economics (neoclassical), in which human behaviour is interpreted as being guided by an instrumental rationality that weighs the benefits of undertaking common action against the costs. Examples of this tendency include the theory of public choice set forth

<sup>3</sup> Social capital has been present in sociology for decades: Bourdieu (1980) and Coleman (1990) were already using the term in the 1980s, while Granovetter (1985) spoke of strong ties and weak ties and North (1990) developed his theory of institutions with contents very similar to what is now known as social capital. However, it was Putnam who placed it at the centre of the academic debate in the 1990s when exploring the role of civil society in determining disequilibria in regional development. In Latin America, the term is used in connection with ideas about forms of community development or partnership (Ruiz, 2004; Villar, 2003; ECLAC, 2007).

TABLE 1

## Evolution of collective demands

Type of social demand	General goals	Specific goals
Materialist values (physical needs)	Security	- Strong armed forces - Anti-crime efforts - Maintenance of order
	Subsistence	- Economic growth - Employment - Inflation
Post-materialist values (social needs and self-realization)	- Aesthetic satisfaction	- Urban quality and landscape
	- Intellectual knowledge	- Ecological balance - Freedom of expression
	- Identity - Self-esteem	- Recognition - Community cooperation

Source: prepared by the authors on the basis of J. Valles, *Ciencia política: una introducción*, Barcelona, Ariel, 2000, and R. Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977.

by James Buchanan and Gordon Tulluck (1993) and the resource mobilization theory of Mancur Olson (1982). The second group, meanwhile, includes theories whose motives of action are based on logics much closer to the political sphere, as they encompass aspects such as socialization in early life (influence of culture, the family, etc.) as determinants of human actions rather than the cold decision-making of *homo economicus*. This group encompasses some neoinstitutionalist and culturalist theories.<sup>4</sup>

Taking Olson's analysis, collective action is the outcome of the roles of groups and organizations that act as structures developed to protect the interests of their members.<sup>5</sup> However, Olson does not relinquish the idea that there are selfish individual interests involved in the building of organizations, since this appears in principle to be an innate and ahistorical characteristic that does not clash with collective action, with rational, calculating actors seeking to improve their position by acting as part of a whole. In other words, the group is a common means to a particular end, and is not formed with a view to what others want. Although there may be some degree of common ground in the nature of human groupings, however, the author distinguishes between large and small groups. He thus

emphasizes that the pursuit of collective goods is a characteristic of large groups or organizations only and that the behaviour of individuals within these groups is analogous to behaviour under conditions of perfect competition, in the sense that the decision as to whether or not to participate in the group will have only a nugatory effect on its outcome.<sup>6</sup>

In this analysis, furthermore, the creation of large groups is determined by the transition from primitive societies with a low level of occupational specialization (and little consensus) to modern ones where work becomes more complex and the survival of the collectivity depends on the ability to join forces and coordinate movements.

This type of approach is open to a number of criticisms, however. Perhaps the most important one, where its application to the context is concerned, is that it treats social and political relationships as deriving from a teleological, evolutionist dynamic

<sup>4</sup> Functionalist sociology (Ritzer, 1993) recognizes collective action as an immediate response to State action constituting a kind of non-rational reaction.

<sup>5</sup> It follows that if this is not their goal, individual interests will be safeguarded by individual actions.

<sup>6</sup> In keeping with economic tradition, Olson notes that the incentives to organize are not just economic; there are also social incentives that have to do with social acceptance and position, but that are individual and not collective goods. He adds that rational individuals do not participate in large groups unless they are coerced or encouraged by the prospect of some benefit. He recognizes, however, that the effectiveness of collective action may be jeopardized by "free-riding", i.e., the presence of people who are in a position to benefit from the action of the group's other members and do so without incurring the costs of participation.

In small groups, the situation is different. The share of the collective good enjoyed by each member of the group is significant and the actions of one can affect others' level of provision.

that presupposes burgeoning organizational vigour stimulated by high economic growth. Needless to say, a conclusion like this is reminiscent of the famous Kuznetz curve, as the early stages of economic growth entail high and rising levels of inequality and deficient organization, mitigated as improving living conditions give rise to a new style of leadership in which civil society organizes in the interests of renewed growth, improving income distribution in a context of diminishing State interventionism and some shift away from primary activities as a source of employment.

We should add that, according to this Westernizing vision, the atavistic ties of the extended family are an impediment to the “coming of age” discussed by Kant, preventing the consolidation of individuals who are independent and free to enter into contracts involving other individuals and organizations in situations that are symbolically different to those of their personal background. In poor countries with discontinuous growth, however, it would seem that a different analytical perspective is to be adopted.

Potentially, “non-rational” approaches (political logics) banish instrumentalist calculation, so that collective actions are guided by different considerations, including the quest for identity. Thus, what could be seen under an Olsonian perspective as a means becomes, in the approach of Touraine (1978), an end in itself. The point would rather seem to be to observe whom individuals come up against once mobilized and how they can then differentiate themselves, rather than the material ends they might attain.

Touraine (1978) expands his viewpoint by using three models to recreate the nature of social movements in Latin America: internal social conflicts, nationalism and Marxist-Leninist revolutionary action. With this approach, social movements are seen as the outcome, firstly, of protests at deficiencies in quality of life (housing, jobs, food security, public services, etc.) involving non-separation of the private and public spaces;<sup>7</sup> secondly, of far more general demands involving aspects such as the defence of public education and wages; and thirdly, of identity struggles for economic and political autonomy and of class confrontation, all of which come very close to the goals of guerrilla groups.

In Touraine (1978), social movements have the potential to transform the life of society by transcending the defence of individual interests and affirming their specific ability to intervene in the formation of general policies and those aimed at defending the social body.

From this perspective, however, the prototypical organization supporting collection action does not seem to be one with strong and abiding organizational structures. Furthermore, it would seem that there is not much likelihood of an active civil society that promotes social capital being created in Latin America, not least because collective action is subordinated to institutions whose traditional political socialization norms ultimately mean that the course of collective action depends on the activities of the State, with this dependency thwarting their capacity for autonomy. Consequently, the very idea of the Kantian “coming of age” prevailing in liberal discourse, which assumes the existence of positive social capital, comes up against the cultural relativism that explains the individual as being subordinated to traditional institutions confined to the private realm; so that the vital spaces of social interaction cannot grow beyond what the family sphere permits.<sup>8</sup>

Consequently, the scope for extending social interaction, with acceptance of the risk inherent in new contracts, is limited, something that is explained on the symbolic level by the influence of the filial relationships of the *hacienda* in the public sphere. Thus, derived political subcultures like patronage and *caciquismo* (the dominance of local party bosses) have moulded the administration of the State, and in one way or another social movements end up under its wing, while the political elites (oligarchies) formed during the wars of independence developed mechanisms of social control which they perfected by exercising government until they could expertly control the pace of events. A characterization that accords with this type of approach, setting out from attributes such as the stability of their organizational structure, their pattern of discourse and their field of action, allows us to say that what Cauca has seen in recent times (the last two decades of the twentieth

<sup>7</sup> In the Greek tradition, basic needs of an economic character are met in the private sphere. The public sphere, meanwhile, is where politics is carried on, collective interests are discussed and individuals are recognized as equals in debate.

<sup>8</sup> In Putnam (2000), it is possible to distinguish between positive and negative social capital. The former generates civic virtues consistent with the expansion of the public space and the strengthening of social networks that give rise to formal institutions and economic progress, while the latter is conducive to the formation of closed circles that breed conspiracies and crime networks.

century) has been the consolidation of types of organization associated with the social movement category (Valles, 2000), where the conjunctions of interests and their permanence over time are far weaker than in other types of organization such as interest groups and traditional political parties (see table 2).<sup>9</sup>

These are organizations (clubs, associations, etc.) of varying sizes that may eventually form networks and mobilize when the occasion arises. They do not

<sup>9</sup> An important characteristic of pressure groups is that they are recognized as voluntary associations whose main objective is to influence the political process by defending positions which affect the interests of a particular section of the community (wage workers, businesses, etc.). They pursue particular political objectives, but without aspiring to a general project of government (Galvis, 2005). Needless to say, the longer tradition of political parties and the academic attention paid to them does not necessarily mean that greater clarity can be assumed.

constitute a single organization and nor do they have an explicit programme of action, but they originate in a rejection of institutional channels and conventional ways of expressing preferences. Accordingly, they engage in actions that range from mass sit-ins to direct action with some degree of violence, to civil resistance that involves breaking the law.<sup>10</sup> It is also worth emphasizing that social movements combine a twofold logic in their goals and strategies (Valles, 2000, p. 341). First, they set themselves up as instruments of participation within the political process and, second, they aim to achieve practical results from this activity by forcing themselves to make contact with the established power or confronting it for the purpose of negotiating and reaching agreements.

<sup>10</sup> In all cases, very close attention tends to be paid to the media repercussions and the effects on public opinion.

TABLE 2

#### Ideal typology of collective actors

Criterion	Type		
	Social movements	Interest groups	Political parties
Degree of structuring	Variable	Strong, stable	Strong, stable
Discourse	Cross-cutting	Sectoral	Universal
Preferred field of action	Social, non-conventional	Institutional, social	Institutional

Source: J. Valles, *Ciencia política: una introducción*, Barcelona, Ariel, 2000.

## IV

### The history of mass action in Cauca from 1990 to 2004

In Colombia, the creation of the Cauca Indigenous Regional Council (CRIC) and the National Association of Rural Users (ANUC), in 1970 and the late 1960s respectively, exemplifies the importance of mass action in the concert of regional development.<sup>11</sup> But

<sup>11</sup> It is important to stress that the new forms of action, which replaced the old class struggle, made use of media representations like those seen in the case of the Zapatista Army for National Liberation (EZLN) in Mexico and those that accompanied the Social Forum in Brazil. Furthermore, changes of this type favoured the growth

does the fact that events of this type have taken place in the Department of Cauca imply the existence of

of antiglobalization movements, which are advocates for global justice and equity as well as making ethnic and cultural demands. Examples include the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST) in Brazil, the *piqueteros* (members of the unemployed workers' movement) in Argentina and coca growers in Bolivia. The groups leading action of this type have been formed of indigenous people, workers, landless campesinos and small producers who have fallen victim to the international competition that arose with the new market development model.



social capital, as set forth by theory and evidence in Colombia and internationally?

Throughout its history, the Department of Cauca has seen a series of collective actions, most of them associated with the guerrilla insurgency, which then took a remarkable turn in the 1990s.<sup>12</sup> In view of these and other demonstrations, Cauca has been identified (Cuéllar, 2000) as the greatest repository of this resource in Colombia.

This process became manifest with the first mobilization in 1987, although some municipalities had already experienced activity between 1980 and 1985, examples being Santa Rosa, Bolívar and small towns such as El Rosal (San Sebastián), which decided to produce a “diagnosis” or list of urgent needs (Jaramillo, 2003), giving rise to the stoppage in Bolívar in December 1985 and the one in Sucre in May 1986. But it was the 1987 march that set the area irreversibly on the road to a social movement of extraordinary proportions. Its demands centred on the need to complete the highway to Santa Rosa and improve the section already built, although the list also included other needs requiring resolution.

It was then that the Pan-American Highway began to be identified as an effective symbol of struggle (Jaramillo, 2003; Tocancipá, 2004), once institutional channels had been exhausted and it had been shown that the ground rules imposed by the regime left no room for negotiations in government offices or bureaus but only in the spaces where forces came into conflict. The bulk of the marchers were from Santa Rosa and San

Sebastián; the outcome was that they attained some of their objectives but also, among other things, that they created new associative resources not necessarily derived from guerrilla action.<sup>13</sup>

The penultimate decade of the twentieth century saw a kind of inflation where popular mobilization was concerned (see figure 1), coinciding with the introduction of the first generation of economic reforms following the shock unleashed by the external debt crisis of the 1980s. Halfway through the period, efforts were made to calm this as one presidential mandate gave way to another.

The culmination of the Government of César Gaviria, who had increased the pace of economic reform, contrasted with that of Ernesto Samper, who tried to check the impetus of his predecessor's measures, giving the State a somewhat more forceful role in social investment.

However, the increasing difficulties of governance resulting from corruption scandals and the penetration of the political arena by drug traffickers seems to have corroded the legitimacy of institutions yet further, so much so that collective protest actions were able to continue and even increase, as could clearly be seen by the end of the decade's second four-year term of office. However, expectations of a ceasefire and the failed effort to reach a peace agreement with FARC, which subsequently escalated its guerrilla and paramilitary activities, seem to have facilitated further implementation of the development model prevailing since the beginning of the decade. This meant a consolidation of the conservative ideological hegemony that was carried over from the Government of Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002) to that of Álvaro Uribe (2002-2006) and has been extended with the re-election of the latter.

Institutional weakness seems to be borne out by the mathematical progression in the frequency of mobilizations from 1993 until 1999. Following the First Regional Civic Stoppage of the Colombian Massif between 20 and 26 August 1991 (see table 3), nine municipalities joined the struggle and a far wider array of demands was established.

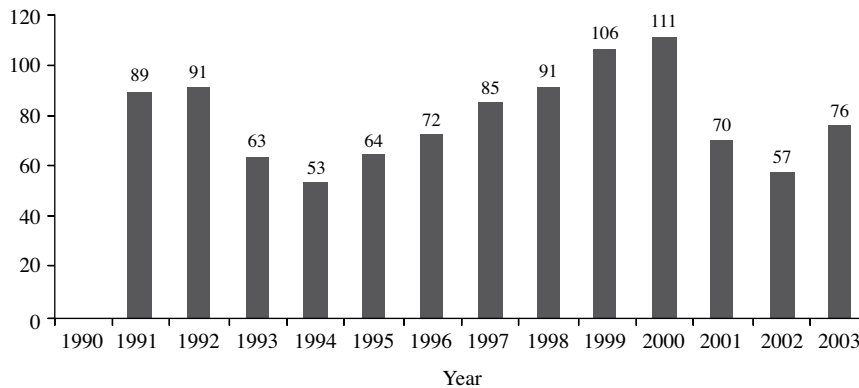
<sup>12</sup> Perhaps one of the first visible manifestations of the belligerency of the department arose in the 1910s with the indigenous uprising headed by someone who would become a leader of mythical proportions, Manuel Quintín Lame (Jaramillo, 2003). Lame set his ethnic group against the hegemonically dominant values, turning it into a force to be reckoned with in power relationships. Later, his name would be used by a guerrilla faction that was most active in the 1980s.

It also became a focal point of armed confrontation as a result of the consolidation of the guerrilla insurgency experienced by the country from the late 1940s onward, which was given a further impetus by the Cuban revolution —so much so that the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN), the People's Liberation Army (EPL), the Comando Pedro León Arboleda, the Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT), the 19 of April Movement (M-19), the Jaime Bateman Cayón guerrilla group and the Quintín Lame, to name some of the major ones, had or still have a presence in the territory.

<sup>13</sup> The action only got as far as Guachicón and was named after it, as the negotiators preferred to restrain its advance towards the central highway.

FIGURE 1

## Number of collective actions in the Department of Cauca, 1990-2002



Source: J. Agredo and L. Flórez, "Hacia una caracterización de las acciones colectivas en el Departamento del Cauca (1990-2002)", degree thesis, Popayán, University of Cauca, 2005.

TABLE 3

## Record of collective actions in the Department of Cauca

Year	Number of actions	Mobilization index Base: 1990 = 100.0
1990	89	100.0
1991	91	102.2
1992	63	70.8
1993	53	59.6
1994	64	71.9
1995	72	80.9
1996	85	95.5
1997	91	102.2
1998	106	119.1
1999	111	124.7
2000	70	78.7
2001	57	64.0
2002	76	85.4
Total	1 028	

Source: authors' calculations based on information from J. Agredo and L. Flórez, "Hacia una caracterización de las acciones colectivas en el Departamento del Cauca (1990-2002)", degree thesis, Popayán, University of Cauca, 2005.

In fact, 30,000 campesinos reached the Pan-American Highway, at the Rosas site, but the clamour of collective action began to die down, for after six months of preparation and after succeeding in negotiating with most central government officials, the resources of the initiative collapsed. However, mobilizations were to continue on a lesser scale before picking up again in 1994. This period must have served to strengthen the arguments and instruments of the

struggle against formal channels for conveying social demands. Four main elements linking the theoretical discussion to the statistical evidence should thus be emphasized:

- i) The consolidation of secure identity moorings within the organization, reinforced by the construction of an external enemy beyond the wider (national and regional) society and its homogenizing development project.
- ii) The strengthening of the movement as a space of social recognition and the opportunity to construct and give vitality to the idea of territory and region.
- iii) The validation of confrontation strategies to deal with public policy-making and implementation processes.
- iv) The variable structuring of the movement (campesinos, indigenous people and Afrodescendants), but with a refinement of the discourse that is evident in the defence of regional coverage and symbolism, even with a minimal prioritization of the solutions being sought.

And indeed, the very scale of the movement suggests a fairly advanced internal process. Jaramillo (2003, p. 23) has the following to say about this:

*"The 1991 mobilization was quite remarkable. It showed a capacity for organization and mobilization that already pointed the way to its future actions. It was an action, indeed, that must be regarded not merely as such but as the outcome of an earlier effort to organize civil sectors in the countryside, teachers*

*and political activities from the municipalities directly integrated into the geographical area of the Colombian Massif. The pressure it applied led to an inevitable acceptance of it as an interlocutor by the State, allowing it to negotiate satisfactorily. An important lesson here, however, was that its ignorance of the internal management and work of State institutions meant that most of what it negotiated had already been budgeted for by the government of the day.”*

Thus it was that, on 31 March 1991, the Committee for the Integration of the Colombian Massif (CIMA) was brought into being with the intention of progressing with four basic tasks: (i) fostering local and regional integration, (ii) holding the first cultural congress of the Massif, (iii) bringing out the regional newspaper and (iv) holding the first regional civic stoppage in the municipalities of the Colombian Massif.

In 1996, protest struggles briefly took a different path (Agredo and Flórez, 2005); the method used was not mass mobilization, but rather negotiations that included the Departments of Cauca, Huila and Nariño.

The idea of the region as a recognized entity gathered force thanks to efforts such as the Environmental and Agricultural Development Plan for the Colombian Massif and Southern Cauca, the comprehensive and sustainable production plan, the social harmony plan and the science and technology plan. This led to agreements on projects that were supposed to be implemented during 1996, 1997 and 1998. At the same time, geographical coverage was widened with the inclusion of other municipalities that had not participated in the first mobilization, but that were close to the area of influence of those municipalities that had.

However, the effervescence of the mobilization seemed to die down into a period of lethargy. Three things might explain what happened. First, the members of the organizations considered that the response of the State had met their expectations, and a phase of cooptation or collaboration with the latter began, something that is astonishing considering the far from distinguished position of the department as the country's second-poorest. Another possibility is that the vigour of the anti-guerrilla struggle waged by Uribe's Government and the proliferation of paramilitary groups discouraged mass mobilization and made organizations decide not to participate in events such as the seizure of the Pan-American Highway, for fear of being treated like insurgent

factions by the police. This kind of thing cannot be ruled out, as paramilitary activity surged amidst talk of institutional order and restoring the State's monopoly of force, with the consequent repression of many expressions of social protest. Third, it may have happened that ties of integration within the overall organization weakened to such an extent that only organizations like CIMA and the Movement of Indigenous Authorities of Colombia (AICO) came out adequately strengthened, whereupon they sought to keep out organizations seen as free riders.

Thus, having rid themselves of bodies that benefited from the struggle with a minimum of effort, the more committed organizations moved on to new forms and methods of action, with the consolidation of national and international networks allowing them to create far stronger underpinnings of social capital embodying a more proactive, independent attitude towards the administration of power. However, a hypothesis like this would mean accepting with Olson (1982) that it is more centralized and less deliberative (horizontal) organizational structures that subsequently create the bonds of trust which are the hallmarks of social capital.<sup>14</sup> It also appears to have been accepted that their members should adopt a more instrumental stance to achieve their objectives. Perhaps as a result, collective actions became less and less spontaneous, with 84% of them resulting from more elaborate forms of organization during the period (see table 4).

All this would mean rejecting the Putnamian interpretation that identifies success in creating positive social capital with the existence of decentralized horizontal organizations, which indigenous organizers appear to be drawn to, if the call for greater participation and the rejection of the institutional channels for processing demands required by the verticality of public policymaking are anything to go by.<sup>15</sup>

Indigenous mobilization as such averaged just under four actions a year. The main motives of these actions were land recovery and the dishonouring of agreements.

<sup>14</sup> In this analysis, the organizations traditionally considered to be vertical are basically unions, political parties and religious organizations.

<sup>15</sup> According to Cuéllar (2000a), Olson sees horizontal organizations as a potential obstacle to economic growth if they turn into interest groups in pursuit of preferential treatment that imposes disproportionate costs on society, i.e., when they are created on a basis of solidarity to conspire against the public good or restrict individual freedom or enterprise. Coleman (1990), finds that group “closure”, social norms that produce an effect of “externality” and the prospect of obtaining individual benefits in both vertical and horizontal organizations act as drivers of progress.

TABLE 4

## The indigenous movement

Year	Actions	Issue	Forms of action	Duration (days)	Principal outcomes	Presence of violence
1990						
1991	3	Land	Marches	One day	No agreement	No
1992	4	Government policies	Marches	One day	No agreement	No
1993	1	Government policies	Marches	One day	No agreement	No
1994	2	Housing	Sit-ins	One day	No agreement	No
1995	3	Government policies	Marches	One day	No agreement	No
1996	5	Land	Sit-ins	1 to 8 days	Written agreements	No
1997	2	Government policies	Marches	One day	No agreement	No
1998	5	Government policies	Sit-ins	One day	Written agreements	No
1999	6	Dishonouring of agreement	Blockades and roadblocks	2 to 8 days	Written agreements	No
2000	3	Dishonouring of agreement	Marches	One day	No agreement	No
2001	4	Dishonouring of agreement	Blockades and roadblocks	One day	No agreement	No
2002	6	Dishonouring of agreement	Blockades and roadblocks	One day	No agreement	No
<i>Total</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>Dishonouring of agreement</i>				

Source: J. Agredo and L. Flórez, "Hacia una caracterización de las acciones colectivas en el Departamento del Cauca (1990-2002)", degree thesis, Popayán, University of Cauca, 2005.

However, from 1997 to 2001, as increasing stress was laid on macroeconomic adjustment measures and the recovery of the coercive powers of the State (supported by illegal armies), the trend rose above the average, peaking at six a year. Thus, if collective actions were refined going into the negotiating phase, the forms and methods employed throughout the 1990s were not abandoned. This confirms that while joint struggles declined, indigenous people were able to maintain the form if not the pace of action (marches and roadblocks). Thus it seems they remained as the immediate objectives of ethnic recognition, contact and dialogue, taking advantage of the fact that the symbol of the external enemy had already been created and needed to be kept in view: the homogenizing economic model (Montoya, 2006) and the wider society separating them from the land. Meanwhile, their demands were practically reduced to two (land and compliance with agreements) and progress was made in consolidating cooperative associations to this end (see figure 2).

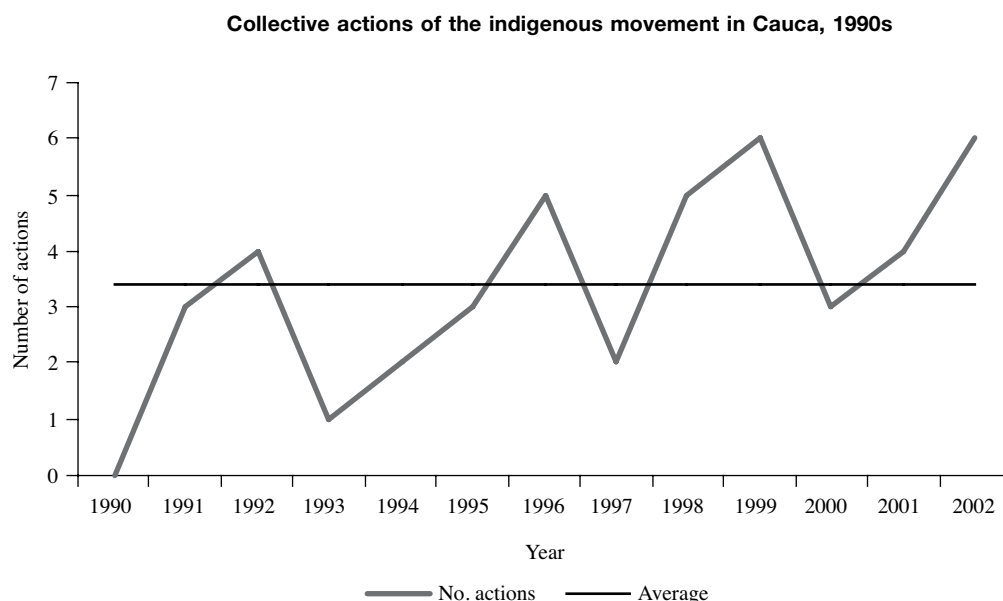
Campeños meanwhile, having formerly allied themselves with the aboriginal inhabitants, now tended to distance themselves, partly because the greater media access of the regional elites, attuned to the philosophy of the political model propounded by the Government of President Uribe, gave currency to the idea that an agrarian counter-reform engineered by indigenous

groups was gaining ground dangerously, the argument being that in their eagerness to recover land the latter would seize it not just from the old estate owners but from small proprietors too, and that the threat from the new "landlords" would have to be met by legitimate State violence in defence of private property. Again, the ethnic syncretism of the campesinos, most of whom are of mixed race, displays cultural differences from indigenous people, involving different ways of understanding the market and economy and of placing the interests of the community above those of the individual. They differ even in their symbolic relationship with the land itself.

The whole of the foregoing analysis contrasts with the theory supported by international evidence and with Colombian studies like those of María Mercedes Cuéllar (2000). That author, who measures social capital by the frequency of participation in horizontal organizations, argues that in Colombia:<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> In a similar study, Sudarsky (1999) questions methodologies of this type, as he regards civic participation as just one dimension of social capital. He argues that factors such as institutional trust, political cohesiveness and control of the State and of hierarchies by society are elements that Putnam disregards and Cuéllar also overlooks. He adds that vertical linkage produces greater social capital and that activities associated with the communications media are related to social capital, but trust in them is dependent on a second factor he calls "faith in unvalidated information sources".

FIGURE 2



Source: J. Agredo and L. Flórez, “Hacia una caracterización de las acciones colectivas en el Departamento del Cauca (1990-2002)”, degree thesis, Popayán, University of Cauca, 2005.

“...The highest indices of associative activity are found, in this order, in the Departments of Cauca, Risaralda, Cundinamarca, the Capital District, Santander and Boyacá. Conversely, they are lowest in Guajira, Sucre, Quindío, Meta, Bolívar, Tolima, Caldas and Atlántico” (2000b, p. 28).

Nonetheless, the socio-economic conditions of the department and the dynamic of social mobilization evince major distortions. First, this type of analysis does not tie the idea of collective action to the generation of networks of cooperation between organizations, which we shall address later on. Second, the social capital concept transcends the social movement category, since while social mobilization efforts generated high levels of organizational concentration and linkage in the early years of the decade, they fell off at the end of the decade without any confirmation as yet that greater participation in associative bodies was instrumental in reducing poverty. It should be added that all social capital embodies a social movement, but not every social movement turns into social capital. What seems to have been achieved is the strengthening of indigenous organizations, but without any evidence that the process of identity agglutination served to consolidate cooperation networks within the civil society of the region.

Third, the strength of collective action has not served to bring civil society closer to the State either; the effect has rather been to consolidate indigenous and campesino identities around the rejection of institutional channels, with the effect that public policy outcomes have been generated through strategies of confrontation rather than cooperation. Nor has it been permitted by the conservative (integrationist) project, immersed as it has been in the planning of national and regional development, despite the formal spread of participation. Fourth, there is no symbiotic relationship between the action of social movements, social capital and income levels (Cuéllar, 2000). The most depressed sectors and places are those with the most collective actions. Fifth, the relationship between social movements, social capital and human capital does not prove significant, given that indigenous movements, which do not have the highest levels of schooling, have been the most consistent and persistent in their collective actions. This shows that formal education does not revitalize this relationship and that other types of knowledge may give a better idea of what is meant by a strong organization. Sixth, economic growth is neither a cause nor a consequence of social capital in the department, but it can be related to mobilization, while rejection of the impact of market orthodoxy has succeeded in generating regionally recognized actions.

Although it is not possible to positively affirm the symbiotic relationship between social capital and social mobilization (action of movements), it is safe to say that they are the seeds of what this resource could represent for the region. Ultimately, the indigenous movement and the resulting mobilizations were the

great beneficiaries of this whole period. They have thus turned into an “organized social movement”, but it does not follow from this that social capital exists, at least as understood by classic authors such as Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti (1993) or Coleman (1990).

## V

### The reliance on history in determining social capital

It has not been possible to demonstrate the relationship between cultural factors and long-term economic performance clearly, owing to the endogeneity of the first variable (Durlauf and Fafchamps, 2005). However, many authors see culture as affecting the development of political and economic institutions, which are the fundamental cause of comparative differences in development levels.

The use of microanalysis to identify the underlying dynamic in a region is a simple tool, but one that has great explanatory potential when the municipality is taken as the unit of analysis and the basis of local development. We shall show the extent to which development levels in the different municipalities of Cauca converged in the period from 1951 to 2005, bearing in mind characteristics such as the presence of indigenous culture or institutions of colonial origin.

Beta (or absolute) convergence takes place when poorer countries/regions or localities grow faster than wealthier ones. Sigma (or conditional) convergence takes place when the variance of per capita income among a group of countries/regions or localities tends to fall over time, until the poorest catch up with the wealthiest in per capita terms (Rey and Montouri, 1998). Because there is no system of regional accounts, however, population growth was used as a proxy for economic growth, following the Tiboutina hypothesis that people emigrate from areas with lower levels of efficiency and social welfare to those that are better placed in terms of progress and the provision of public goods to take advantage of the greater availability of well-being and growth there, with the result that populations in the latter rise.

Six ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions were run to estimate the following models:

$$(1) \quad g = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * LnPop_0 + \varepsilon$$

$$(2) \quad g = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * LnPop_0 + \beta_2 * Indigen + \varepsilon$$

$$(3) \quad g = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * LnPop_0 + \beta_2 * Dummcol + \varepsilon$$

$$(4) \quad g = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * LnPop_0 + \beta_2 * Indigen + \beta_3 * Dummcol + \varepsilon$$

$$(5) \quad g = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * LnPop_0 + \beta_2 * Indigen + \beta_3 * Dummcol + \beta_4 * Estates + \varepsilon$$

$$(6) \quad g = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * LnPop_0 + \beta_2 * Indigen + \beta_3 * Dummcol + \beta_4 * Estates + \beta_5 * DisPop + \varepsilon$$

where:

$g$  is the population growth rate in the 1951-2005 period.

$LnPop_0$  is the natural logarithm of the population in the starting year (1951).

$Indigen$  is the indigenous population per municipality in 1998.

$Dummcol$  is a dummy variable used as a proxy for colonial origins, taking the value 1 if the municipality was founded in the sixteenth or seventeenth century and 0 if the municipality was founded in the eighteenth, nineteenth or twentieth century.

$Estates$  is the number of landed estates per capita in the municipality in 2002.

$DisPop$  is the geographical distance in kilometres from each municipality to Popayán.

Model (1) shows the traditional beta convergence hypothesis, while the rest seek to capture the impact

of colonial history on the development of the municipalities of Cauca. In particular, *Indigen*, *Dumocol* and *Estates* are intended to reflect the colonial heritage on the theory that municipalities that were founded during the colonial period, with greater land concentration or a larger indigenous population or both, possess a greater colonial legacy that is capable of affecting their development. *DisPop* aims to measure the impact of geography on municipal development, since Popayán is not just the capital of the Department of Cauca but is also on the Pan-American Highway, the main trunk road linking Cauca to the north and south of the country; it is possible that the further from Popayán a place is, the lower its level of economic activity.

The results of the analysis in figure 3 show that, for the period being studied, the correlation between the rate of population growth in the Department of Cauca between 1951 and 2005 and the natural logarithm of population size in 1951 (start of the period) tended to decline, indicating the presence of beta convergence, as is also shown by the estimated coefficient of correlation ( $-0.66$ ). This process can be explained by migration between municipalities and accords with the results of Bonet and Meisel (1999), where Cauca is described as converging.

The results of the OLS estimations for the models formulated are presented in table 5. On the whole, the models do not have large specification biases.

Of the models regressed, the one with the best fit was model 6. The estates, distance from Popayán

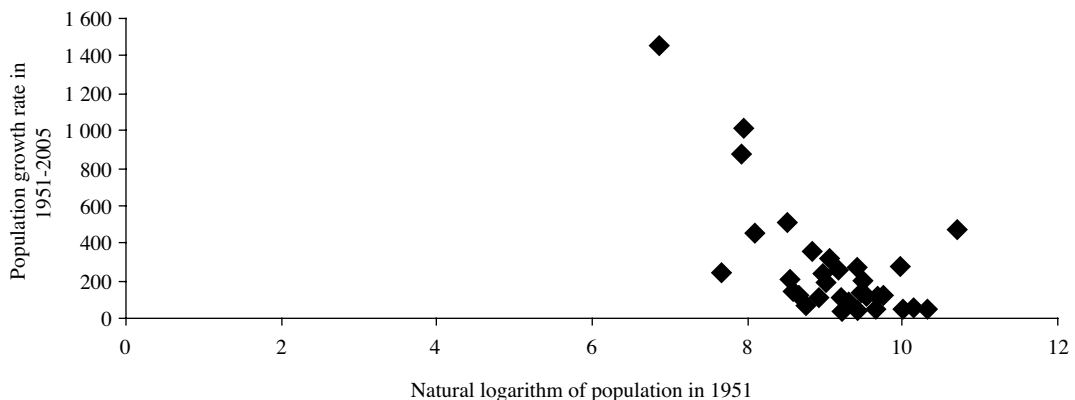
and population growth rate in 1951 variables had negative signs, meaning that the smaller the number of landed estates per capita in the municipality, the shorter the distance from Popayán and the lower the growth rate in 1951, the more the municipality will develop. The colonial period variable proved to be of low significance in regressions 3, 4 and 5, showing that the fact of a municipality having been founded during the colonial period has no bearing on its level of development. This relationship changes when distance from Popayán is introduced in model 6, where it becomes significant at 10%. Lastly, for a municipality to have a larger indigenous population proved to be a significant variable that positively affected development.

The average population growth rate of the municipalities in the Department of Cauca during the different intercensal periods reveals a clear reduction in dynamism, as it declined from 84.64% in the 1951-1964 period to 4.55% in 1993-2005 (see table 6). It would seem that until the 1960s the Department of Cauca presented a convergent inter-regional dynamic, understood as the need for faster growth to attain the growth levels of more developed municipalities.<sup>17</sup> Since then, disparities seem to have increased.

<sup>17</sup> This result agrees with that of Bonet and Meisel (1999), showing convergence for Colombia between 1960 and 1990 but total divergence from 1990 onward.

FIGURE 3

Department of Cauca: beta convergence in population dynamics, 1951-2005



Source: authors' calculations based on information from the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), population censuses.

TABLE 5

**Development and institutions in Cauca**  
(Beta population convergence)

Variable <sup>a</sup>	Ln PGR <sub>1951-2005</sub> (1)	Ln PGR <sub>1951-2005</sub> (2)	Ln PGR <sub>1951-2005</sub> (3)	Ln PGR <sub>1951-2005</sub> (4)	Ln PGR <sub>1951-2005</sub> (5)	Ln PGR <sub>1951-2005</sub> (6)
Ln PGR <sub>1951</sub>	-256.0391 (51.44315) <sup>b</sup>	-185.1979 (52.35486) <sup>b</sup>	-270.5674 (54.14719) <sup>b</sup>	-201.2122 (52.29970) <sup>b</sup>	-200.9329 (51.82363) <sup>b</sup>	-208.6150 (51.51182) <sup>b</sup>
Indigenous population		0.017280 (0.005982)		0.017058 (0.005856) <sup>b</sup>	0.015642 (0.005914) <sup>b</sup>	0.014117 (0.005956)
Colonial period			-0.283179 (0.318740)	120.9314 (84.59463)	134.4677 (76.56500)	140.8214 (75.76432)
Estates					-0.303728 (0.245084)	-0.382603 (0.249414)
Distance from Popayán						-0.367358 (0.280693)
Constant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of observations	33	33	33	33	33	33
F statistic <sup>c</sup>	24.77180 (0.000023)	19.49182 (0.000004)	12.69638 (0.000101)	14.34427 (0.000006)	11.34093 (0.000013)	9.646287 (0.000023)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.444164	0.565114	0.458413	0.597406	0.618340	0.641107

Source: authors' calculations based on information from the Agustín Codazzi Geographical Institute (IGAC) and the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), population censuses.

N.B.: Ln PGR<sub>1951-2005</sub>: Natural logarithm of the population growth rate between 1951 and 2005.

Ln PGR<sub>1951</sub>: Natural logarithm of the population growth rate in 1951.

<sup>a</sup> The figures in parentheses below the regression coefficients are standard deviations.

<sup>b</sup> The variable is significant at 5%.

<sup>c</sup> P value in parentheses.

TABLE 6

**Municipalities in Cauca: intercensal change in population growth rates**

Municipality	PGR 1951-1964	PGR 1964-1973	PGR 1973-1985	PGR 1985-1993	PGR 1993-2005
Deviation: standard	105.9756685	25.33207284	28.35564532	39.50692188	23.3905385
mean	84.64455714	16.94496384	12.44300049	38.04881357	8.363971579
median	46.96828358	18.10022928	9.213949929	30.86376812	6.375710574
Variation coefficient	1.252008069	1.494961752	2.27884306	1.038322044	2.796582733

Source: authors' calculations based on information from the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), population censuses.



The dispersion in population growth rates by municipality in the department bears out this hypothesis, as an increase in the dispersion of growth is observed for the 1964-2005 period compared to the same analysis for 1954-2005, whose coefficient of variation is greater.

The results also show (see table 6) that the decade from 1954 to 1964 was historically decisive for the compression of the population dynamic in Cauca and its development. During this period, the department experienced one of the most convergent episodes in its

history, which coincided precisely with the agrarian reform process.

In summary, the statistics from the Department of Cauca show that the municipalities with the largest indigenous populations have experienced a higher rate of population growth. Furthermore, municipalities founded during the colonial period have better development prospects than those founded since independence if they are closer to the departmental capital, which shows the influence of colonial relationships with hierarchies close to the centre.

## VI

### Associative networks and density: elements of public trust

Since not all associativity embodies social capital, but there is no social capital without associativity, it is necessary to identify the precursors of this asset besides those already examined and establish their repercussions in terms of the coordination of demands, consolidation of networks and growth of trust.

A first step is to ascertain the extent of associative density. Thus, the number of civil society organizations in relation to the total population is a vital indicator if these are the pillars on which networks generating cooperation and trust are being built. It should be noted that these claims are based on a qualitative analysis model applied by surveying civil society organizations registered with the Chamber of Commerce and the Cauca Governor's Office up to 2006. Of the 3,951 organizations registered with these two bodies, it was only possible to confirm that 2,035 were active. About 300 units were then surveyed, the informant in most cases being the legal representative or someone of managerial level.<sup>18</sup>

The information thus obtained yielded a regional picture in which a central zone was home to the greatest number of organizations and saw a large number of social protest movements, built however upon the axis of departmental governance on the basis of relationships of patronage that did not generate a high level of

economic activity. Next comes a northern subregion that displays high levels of associative participation and density and the greatest economic dynamism, but that paradoxically functions as an enclave which, strikingly, has a relatively low distributive impact and which furthermore displays a high level of conflict and violence, both in the towns (particularly towards the border with the neighbouring Department of Valle del Cauca) and in the countryside, with struggles over land to the north-east. Then there is a southern subregion, with a recent upsurge of associative groupings seeking to improve their economic prospects on the basis of a campesino production structure. There is an eastern region with manifest problems of connectivity, where the social base is predominantly indigenous and social activity is oriented towards the recovery of identity and the voicing of social demands in the face of State neglect. Lastly, there is a western region located on the Pacific seaboard, also poorly connected, where the bulk of inhabitants are black and the main economic activity is subsistence farming, although it has recently been colonized by industrial crops such as palm, introduced by a sizeable advance guard of businesses from the Andean region (coffee industry), existing side by side with illegal crops. It presents a low level of associative activity and is in thrall to patronage networks, mingled with a paramilitary presence that has displaced the former dominance of guerrillas (see figure 4).

Thus, with connectivity inhibited by the rugged terrain and path dependency exacerbated by the

<sup>18</sup> Respondents were chosen by simple random sampling. Because of the difficulties of connectivity and the difficult terrain, the interviews were carried out by telephone.

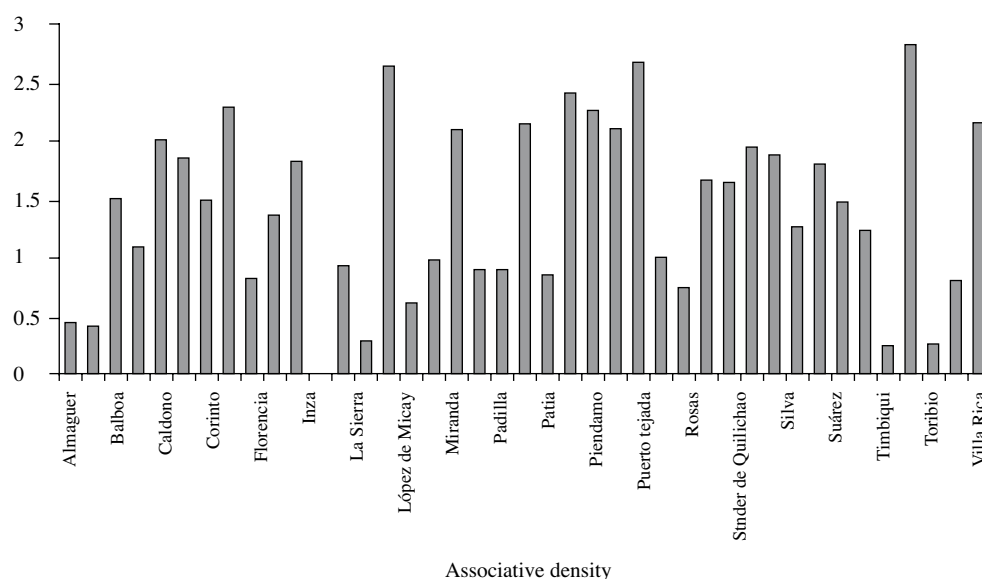
hegemony of patronage networks, governance is weak and the conditions are not conducive to the kind of political legitimacy needed for the coordination of demands and collective action. Consequently, subregional divisions seem to threaten secessionist pressures, particularly in the northern region of Cauca, which has the greatest organizational density, followed by the Massif region (see table 7), both of which are regions characterized by a large presence

of ethnic, and particularly indigenous, groups. Civil society and social capital seem to be equally deficient as long-term resources for promoting sustainable growth together with improved income distribution and good governance.

Because patronage networks operate as a centrifugal force dispersing subregional interests, the competitiveness of production structures is undermined in the absence of the contribution from

FIGURE 4

**Associative density in Cauca (municipal)**  
(Per thousand people)



Source: authors' calculations based on survey results.

TABLE 7

**Subregional density in Cauca<sup>a</sup>**

Subregion	Total number of inhabitants in subregion	Organizations subtotal	Organizations as percentage of regional total (per 1,000 inhabitants)	Subregional density
North	363 992	526	25.85	1.45
South	216 689	241	11.84	1.11
Centre	465 032	234	11.50	0.50
Bota Caucana	76 219	88	4.32	1.15
Massif	65 068	90	4.42	1.38
Pacific	154 236	114	5.60	0.74
East	76 219	88	4.32	1.15

Source: authors' calculations.

<sup>a</sup> Subregional density shows the number of social organizations per 1,000 inhabitants in the different subregions of the Department of Cauca.

an empowered civil society capable of supplementing and legitimizing the action of the State. Since what is at issue is a set of personal relationships operating as an extension of mutual assistance networks, it could easily be argued that this fits within the conceptual framework of social capital described in earlier sections of this paper, but it is a vertical, asymmetrical form of “individual social capital” growing from the east and promoted by indigenous groups as a form of “inward” social capital. Both seem to create a mixture of disjointedness and conflict, of the zero sum game type. However, there needs to be a closer examination of the way networks are created around programmes

and projects to gain a better idea of the outlook for social capital in the department.

The results to some extent bear out the predictions of observations about path dependency and the shift in the tendency of mobilizations in the 1990s. Table 8 reveals weak external social capital, with over 75% of organizations acting privately; if we recall the rent-seeking mechanisms employed since the heyday of the *hacienda* system and the nature of the mining industry, what is being reproduced, it seems, is the creation of organizations to act as rent seekers.

Looking at the lifespan of organizations (see figure 5), we can establish that a bare 10% of them

TABLE 8

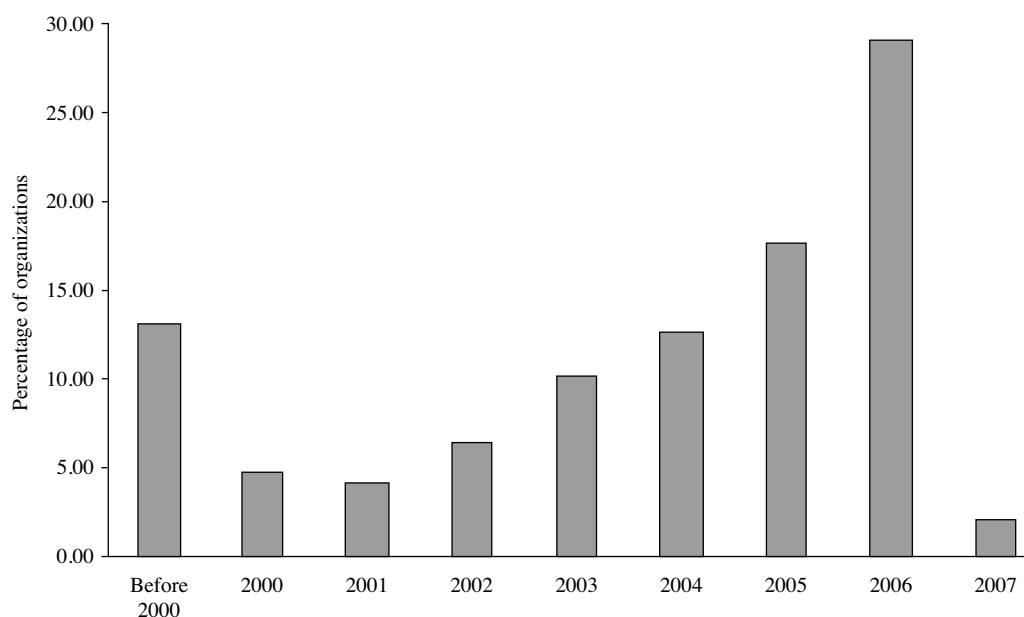
**Linkages with community activities, institutions or projects**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	No	220	75.1	75.1	75.1
	State institutions	49	16.7	16.7	91.8
	Social institutions	24	8.2	8.2	100.0
	<i>Total</i>	<i>293</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	

Source: authors' calculations.

FIGURE 5

**Frequency with which social and civil organizations are created in Cauca, 2007**  
(Percentages)



Source: prepared by the authors.

have been in existence for more than six years, meaning that most have had very little time to mature and establish the links needed to increase their production of collective goods. Furthermore, the few projects that are implemented as extensions of collaboration networks operate under the tutelage of the State, which narrows the scope for expanding the public sphere. Naturally enough, given the development levels of the department, most organizations pursue objectives associated with primary activities (agriculture, stockbreeding, mining) and some others, examples being the promotion of housing schemes and ethnic recognition, even though most projects are coordinated with State activities (see table 9).

Just 22.5% of organizations are involved in accountability mechanisms. Furthermore, only about 6.5% have at some time employed a popular participation mechanism like those provided for in the country's constitution to defend some public interest cause, although almost 53% have received instruction

or training in the matter. Despite everything, within organizations a majority (83.6%) declare that they trust the members of the group. This may be due to the marked homogeneity of membership, confirming the filial nature of these bodies (see table 10).

What is ultimately surprising, however, is that when asked whether they would be willing to part with 50% of the organization's assets in the interests of undertaking a major project of public interest, most informants (62.1%) said they would (see table 11).

This question was of very particular interest, as it gave an indication of how far trust extended beyond the members of an organization. Considering how poorly resourced most organizations are, lacking even an office or a web page (about 80% of organizations), it is surprising that the bulk of them should have been willing to carry out such an act of altruism, because sound economic logic indicates that, as revenues and assets increase, so does the marginal utility for the public good of displaying greater generosity towards

TABLE 9

**Cauca: participation in accountability mechanisms**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	No	227.0	77.5	77.5	77.5
	Yes	66.0	22.5	22.5	100.0
	<i>Total</i>	<i>293</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	

Source: authors' calculations.

TABLE 10

**Cauca: trust among members**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	No	48.0	16.4	16.4	16.4
	Yes	245.0	83.6	83.6	100.0
	<i>Total</i>	<i>293.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	

Source: authors' calculations.

TABLE 11

**Cauca: willingness to relinquish 50% of assets**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	No	111.0	37.9	37.9	37.9
	Yes	182.0	62.1	62.1	100.0
	<i>Total</i>	<i>293.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	

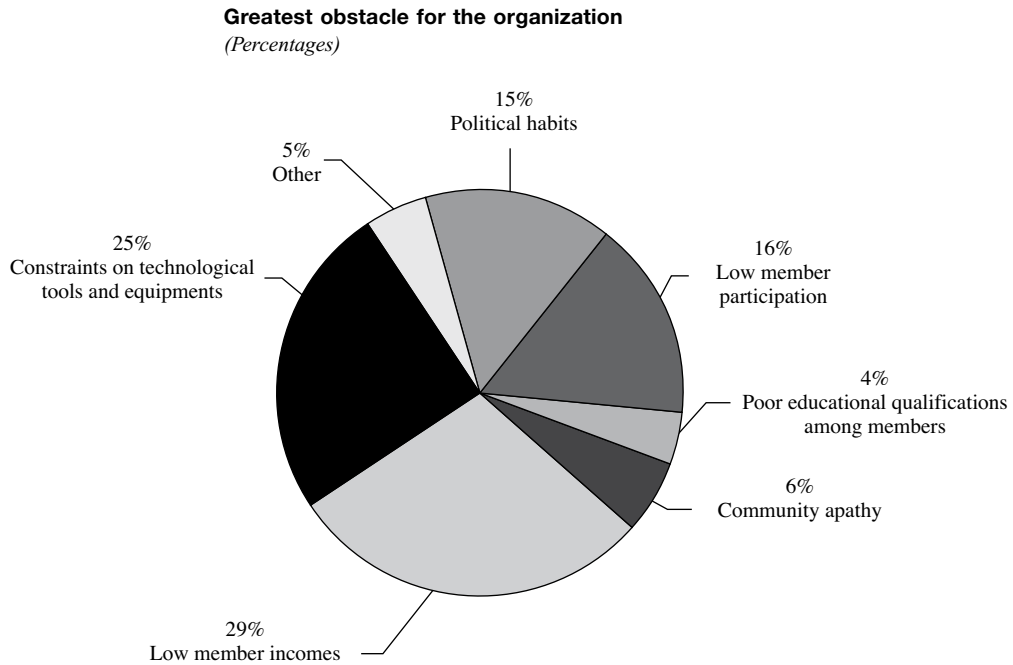
Source: authors' calculations.

the community, so that having few resources ought to produce the opposite effect. On the basis of this finding, we can say that not all is gloom, as we have the explicit expression of genuine intentions to generate Putnam-style “civic republicanism”, the problem being that the informal ground rules exogenously determine outcomes that are undesirable from the social coordination standpoint. This is precisely

what we see in the obstacles to their operations that organizations identify (see figure 6).

As figure 6 shows, after low incomes (29%) it is political habits and low levels of participation that trammel the scope for achieving a higher level of positive social capital, something that would translate into trust and economic well-being in the Department of Cauca.

FIGURE 6



Source: authors' calculations.

## VII

### Conclusions

Social capital is becoming the missing link with the potential to change the concept of development and promote new forms of representation that generate circles of productivity in particular sociocultural environments. Its dynamic makes it possible to produce strong associative ties that can provide a basis for sustainable growth. Nonetheless, its application in research involves a degree of complexity, as seen in

the tension between the individual and collective levels of human behaviour.

In the case of Cauca, the diversity of organizational dynamics or social learning has given rise to groupings that act in competition or combination with other, traditional ones (parties or interest groups), forming social movements that have strong organizational structures but retain the same practices of affirming

group demands that do not necessarily represent social capital in a broad sense.

On this subject, it is important to stress that the relationship between collective actions and social capital is permeated exogenously by geographical factors and by the endogeneity inherent in institutional (historical) factors. This comes through in the divergence of economic performance. Nor is there sufficient evidence about the explicit link between the development of social mobilization and the generation of this kind of capital, given that the former derives from a desire for ethnic recognition and demands upon the State, while civil society organizations can rather be seen as appendages of the latter and not necessarily its opponents, which ties them in with the patronage practices bequeathed by colonial institutions. Where the two do coincide is in their lack of staying power over time and their limited ability to generate associative networks that transcend filial ties.

Meanwhile, indigenous communities (which to all appearances are the strongest group when it comes to mobilizations and protests) have generated mechanisms for reinforcing contracts by way of punishment and reputation that are fully functional within the ethnic groups concerned but wholly dysfunctional when it comes to strengthening the dynamic of intercourse with the rest of society. We are not unaware that the social relationships embodied in these groups have social capital characteristics; we conclude, however,

that social relationships of this type are not conducive to development (at least, not without the intervention of non-local actors), political best practices and an improved role for the public administration.

In the Department of Cauca, in fact, social organization is only really strong when applied to the construction of identity, and not when it comes to securing local public goods and better living conditions for the region, which are unquestionably key objectives for social capital. Although the right of civil society to self-determination requires obedience to the liberal principles of the rule of law, which are closely related to cultural diversity conjoined with the concept of citizenship, it cannot be at the cost of diminishing the population's quality of life, although it may well banish the hegemonic discourses resulting in underdevelopment.

Lastly, the dichotomy between the structural determinism deriving from path dependence and the capacity of public policies for transformation and change is a key implication that we would wish readers to bear in mind in their analysis. The discussion that has arisen around the exogeneity or endogeneity of the determinants of economic progress means there is an important role for the State in long-term socio-economic organization, as well as for other political and social actors that are important in today's world, without jeopardizing the relative independence of civil society.

(Original: Spanish)

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