

Social Networks, Professional Reconversion and Participation in Environmental Protection Councils and Bodies in Rio Grande do Sulⁱ

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Redes Sociais, Reconversão Profissional e Participação em Conselhos e Instâncias de Proteção Ambiental no Rio Grande do Sul

RESUMO: Esse artigo analisa as modalidades de recursos sociais que respaldam o ingresso e as intervenções dos dirigentes de associações ambientalistas em comitês e conselhos estaduais de proteção ambiental. A participação regular em instâncias formais de proteção ambiental tem sido apresentada pela literatura como um dos ingredientes principais da atual tendência de institucionalização e de profissionalização do ativismo ambientalista. A análise das modalidades de inserção dos dirigentes ambientalistas em diversas redes de organizações e de "movimentos sociais" e dos padrões de reconversão profissional através da defesa ambiental demonstrou que suas intervenções estão fundadas em concepções e práticas políticas que resultam de padrões diversificados de uso da formação escolar e universitária como instrumento de politização para a atuação profissional em diferentes esferas de atividade. Essa diversificação das bases e das modalidades de exercício profissional das lideranças ocasionou o aumento considerável da quantidade de associações e, principalmente, dos confrontos e divisões entre as principais organizações. Desse modo, é uma estrutura de relações segmentada, ainda que fortemente concentrada em algumas associações, que constitui o padrão de articulação e de intervenção das organizações ambientalistas nas instâncias formais de proteção ambiental.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: Redes Sociais; Engajamento; Profissionalização; Participação; Institucionalização

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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes the types of social resources that support the entrance and the interventions of environmentalist leaderships in state environmental protection committees. Regular participation in formal environmental protection bodies has been presented in the literature as one of the main ingredients of the current trend of the institutionalization and professionalization of environmental activism. The analysis of the forms of insertion of environmentalist leaderships in diverse networks of organizations and 'social movements' and of the standards of professional reconversion through environmental defense shows that its interventions are based on political practices and concepts that result from the diversification of the use of school and university education as an instrument of politicalization for professional activities in different spheres of activity. This diversification of the base and forms of professional activities of leaders caused a considerable increase in the number of associations and, more importantly, in confrontations and divisions among the main organizations. Therefore, it

is a structure of segmented relations, although it is strongly concentrated in some associations, that constitutes the pattern of articulation and intervention of environmentalist organizations in environmental protection bodies.

KEYWORDS: Social Networks; Commitment; Professionalization; Participation; Institutionalization

Introduction

Studies of environmentalism have highlighted that one of the principal transformations that occurred in the area from the end of the 1980s onwards was a general tendency towards the institutionalization of associative actions in order to regularize access to formal processes and spaces of public policy production, as well as the professionalization of members and activities. According to these approaches, the creation of formal environmental protection bodies (governmental agencies, councils, committees and entities concerned with articulating with environmental NGOs) was one of the principal factors that contributed to the institutionalization process of the environmental movement's interventions and activities, since this resulted in the regularization of their access to the formal processes and spaces of environmental management policy production, as well as the intensification of the use of expertise as the principal resource for activist intervention. As a result the activist resources required for the participation of environmental NGOs in these entities and for their public interventions have come to be essentially based on the recruitment of activists with a high level of technical and scientific education and the use of expertise acquired through university education and professional experience. Despite differences in approaches, this type of description of environmentalism predominates in the international literature (Ollitrault 2001; Anquentin 2002; Gallet 2002; Rootes 1999). Furthermore, it should also be noted that this does not appear to be a characteristic exclusive to the environmental movement, as it can also be found in the human rights and humanitarian areas (Agrikoliansky 2002; Siméant & Dauvin 2002), and in union activism (Matonti & Poupeau 2004; Wagner 2004), amongst other areas.

In the Brazilian case, similar to what has been observed in other countries, the institutionalization and professionalization of environmentalism has also been presented as one of the predominant traits in the investigations and analyses produced by the most important research groups in the environmental area (Alonso & Costa, 2002a, 2002b). This is the case of research that emphasizes the significant diffusion and institutionalization of the environmental question in different organizations and social sectors (Viola, 1992), as well as research that more specifically emphasizes the intensification of the professionalization process of environmental organizations and the hiring of specialists as a way to legitimate their activities and public interventions (Loureiro & Pacheco, 1995). In relation to the problem of creating mechanisms and institutions for participation in the formulation

and implementation of environmental policies, the preponderant role of expertise as an instrument for imposing and legitimating decisions has been emphasized. As a result it has been stressed that the routinization and institutionalization of procedures and the concentration of decision making processes in the hands of a few specialists who have the required technical, legal and scientific knowledge, are the principal factors responsible for the non-incorporation of 'democratic and egalitarian participation' in the processes of formulating and implementing environmental policy (Carneiro 2005; Paraíso 2005; Zhouri, Laschefsky and Paiva 2005; Leite Lopes 2006).

This paper is concerned with this question, specifically the relations between the institutionalization of environmental activism and the dynamics of participation in formal environmental protection bodies. The starting point is research dealing with relations between the social conditions and logics of engagement and activism in environmental causes and the ways NGO activists entered and participated in formal bodies concerned with the preparation and implementation of environmental policies (Spanou 1991; Lascoumes 1994; Anquentin 2002; Gallet 2002; Sawicki 2002). It begins with the principle that participation and the means of intervention in these bodies result from 'multiple social investments' and from the previous or simultaneous participation of activists in a diversified set of 'social activities' (Collovald 2002; Coradini 2002; Lechien 2002). Therefore, the approach adopted seeks to take into account two main aspects: on the one hand, concepts of society and politics which sustain participation in environmental causes and interventions of activists in formal environmental protection bodies and their connections with the social resources they accumulate during their activist careers; and on the other, the dynamics of the configuration of formal environmental protection bodies and the modes of intervention of activists in state committees and councils and in bodies that articulate with environmental NGOs. This involves calling attention to the relations between the dynamics of participation and intervention in these bodies and the social logics and conditions that lead council members (in this NGO representatives) to defend environmental causes.

The material used as the source of information came from an in-depth investigation of the conditions and social logics of engagement in environmental causes and participation in councils, committees and state level entities concerned with the articulation of the ecological movement in Rio Grande do Sul between 1970 and 2005 (Oliveira, 2005). This research included 50 biographical interviews with activists from the main environmental NGOs in the state. These activists became involved with the NGOs at different times during the period in question, which allowed the characterization and comparison of distinct activist generations. This material was complemented by ethnographic observations of these activists in a series of events linked to environmental causes (meetings of associations, seminars and congresses, environmental protection committees and councils, etc.). The methodological procedures used concentrated on investigating the family, school,

occupations and activism trajectories which led them to environmentalism, the examination of the meanings and modes of use of education associated with their activities and the analysis of the various spheres and social networks that contributed to the acquisition and reconversion of resources that provided the foundations for their activist practices and concepts. The material obtained from these procedures led to the identification of different career patterns that led to professional activities in the 'environmental area' during the period in question.

This evidence showed first that environmental protection councils and committees constitute a privileged *locus* for confrontations and alliances related to the discussion and implementation of environmental policies, projects and programs (Loureiro & Pacheco 1995). However, the interventions of activists in these spaces are based on political concepts and practices that result in various types of insertions and political connections with organizations and 'social movements' developed during their education, professional and political careers. The proliferation of councils and committees and the greater concentration of associative interventions in formal environmental protection spaces occur based on the dynamics of the configuration of environmentalism in Brazil, characterized by the simultaneous insertion of activists in various networks of organizations and social movements and by differentiated patterns of reconversion of university education and professional experience through participation in environmental organizations. The central idea is that participation in environmental causes in this situation constitutes a form of the reconversion of education and professional training for use in different spheres of activity in such a way that the interventions of environmental leaders in councils, committees and entities for articulation with the ecological movement are directly interconnected with their simultaneous insertions in various types of organizations and social movements and differentiated levels of articulation in the local, national and international spheres.

Among the principal consequences of this configuration of environmentalism are the diversification of the forms of professional environmental activities and the greater differentiation of this type of activism, as well as the great dispersal and pulverization of associative action in public environmental management policy production processes. As a result whilst the environmental movement has been taken to be one of the principal examples in which the professionalization of activists is associated with the recruitment of activists with university education and the use of technical skills as one of the principal activist resources in associative interventionsⁱⁱ, the form in which this occurred in distinct national situations is quite diversified. Comparative analyses of the ways and processes by which the environmental struggle has been constituted in different countries and epochs has shown that the forms and degrees through which associations have access to formal participation spaces are always related to national political contexts and to particular configuration processes of environmental mobilization in each case (Rootes 1999)ⁱⁱⁱ. For this reason

professionalization cannot be considered as a one-way street, since new groups have emerged, whose organizational dynamics are based on networks and not on formal organizations, there is always a mix between professionalized forms of organization and non-conventional forms of action (Carmin 1999) and the meanings and uses attributed to education and professional training within the activist sphere are very diversified.

Similarly, it has also been noted that the configuration dynamics of environmentalism in Brazil indicate that the process of institutionalization of participation in environmental causes is not characterized by the imposition of expertise as the principal requirement for environmental policy formulation and implementation processes. To the contrary, the use of school and university education is always associated with the connections of activists with multiple networks of organizations and social movements, while it is these connections on which the perspectives and development of their professional activities and their interventions in formal environmental protection bodies are based. Therefore, instead of facing a situation involving the replacement of 'benevolent' and 'voluntary' activism with a strongly 'technical' and 'professionalized' one (Sainteny 1999, 2000; Ollitrault 2001), one of the recurring traits in the environmental cause institutionalization process in the case in question has been the strengthening of relations between the various networks of organizations and social movements in which environmental leaders and their interventions in the formal bodies of the production of environmental management policies are inserted. On the other hand, and linked to this, it has also been noted that the proliferation of environmental protection councils and committees has been associated with the diversification and differentiation of environmental activism. This means that associative interventions in these bodies have been characterized by a high level of fragmentation and segmentation, while the number of organizations that systematically take part in the spheres of articulation of environmental NGOs is very small. Even though the councils and committees are the privileged locus of alliances and confrontations in the formulation and implementation of environmental policies, the public interventions of NGOs are based on the connections of their activists with the multiple networks that lead them to occupy positions in various spheres of activity, in such a way that their interventions in environmental protection committees and councils are based on heterogeneous objectives and ideological references, since these are circumstantially referred to their networks of relations with political parties and various organizations and social movements.

Environmental Activism as an Activist and Professional Commitment

To the contrary of situations in which competence and authority to speak in the name of a cause supposes a 'distancing of the subject in relation to the object' (Memmi 1992), one of the recurring traits of engagement in environmental causes in the different activist generations considered is that this distancing is seen with suspicion and is even treated with scorn. Activists from

environmental organizations constantly criticize professionals and ‘neutral researchers’ and demand that the university and ‘scientific knowledge’ should be ‘committed to’ and responsible ‘towards society’. These demands arose at various times during the research: during interviews, in meetings and even during informal conversations. In these situations they constantly demand that researchers should be committed to the environmental cause and display a certain lack of belief in the representation of the researcher as an ‘observer’. As a result access to material, permission to participate in various meetings and events, as well as availability to ‘give interviews’ occur in the middle of ‘jokes’ and ‘demands’ about the relevance of the research to the movement and the importance of obtaining a ‘return’ from the research ‘for society’ in contrast with the posture, which they see as being very common in ‘academia’, of the ‘neutral researcher’ who is ‘irresponsible’ and ‘uncommitted’ to ‘reality’ and to the movement and who treats them only as ‘guinea pigs to test their theories’.

Examples of this are meetings of associations in which participants asked the researcher’s opinion about certain subjects being dealt within the meetings, situations in which the researcher was publically asked if he did not intend to get involved with any ‘group’ after the completion of the research, or the informal conversations with activists before and after meetings and get-togethers about the progress of the research. One example of this is a number of discussions with one of the coordinators of *Associação Democrática Feminina Gaúcha – Amigos da Terra* (ADFG-AT – Gaucho Democratic Women’s Association – Friends of the Earth) at different times during the research. At a lunch meeting of the *Assembléia Permanente das Entidades de Defesa do Meio Ambiente do Rio Grande do Sul* (APEDEMA/RS – Permanent Assembly of Environmental Defense Organizations of Rio Grande do Sul), an umbrella body of state environmental organizations, this coordinator demanded a form of ‘activism’ from the researcher, calling on him to “make a commitment to the movement and to give specific contributions when requested”, citing as an example a professor of geography in the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul who established this type of relationship with her ‘organization’. A few months later, during another meeting with representatives of state NGOs in the State Environmental Council (CONSEMA), she approached the researcher to tell him that after her interview she had realized that she knew very little about her father’s family, because since she had had much more contact with her maternal grandmother she knew most about her mother’s family. For this reason when she had recently been in Florianópolis she had decided to find out more about her father’s family through conversations, as well as by looking at videos and slides of his. She finished by saying that she had been anxious to tell the researcher what had happened because it showed how much the type of interviews he carried out ‘influenced’ the ‘lives’ of people in a practical way by making them think. After this she asked the researcher again about his engagement. Finally, this type of demand also appeared during the interviews themselves. An exemplary situation of this was an interview with an activist from *União Protetora do Ambiente Natural* (UPAN – Union

for the Protection of the Natural Environment) during which the interviewer was asked: “I don’t know what you think of our statutes?” And then shortly afterwards it was jokingly added: “Well! You are impersonal! You only listen”.

This demand for an ‘education’ committed to social and political causes was also one of the main items in respondents’ reports of their school and university education. Most of them described school in a negative form, for various reasons including: its lack of ‘practical utility’, that school ‘gave them little’, that they had to ‘discover almost everything alone’, etc. In contrast with this, in their description of their education itineraries what was frequently highlighted was the importance of their participation in various types of organizations and social movements to understand the usefulness of school and university education in the exercise of their professional activities. According to them, it was only through engagement and participation in various types of organizations and social movements (student unions, political party organizations, MST, scouting groups, religious organizations, ecologist associations, etc.) that they managed to ‘understand university’ and the course they had chosen, and that they acquired the knowledge and skills they used in their profession. An exemplary case of the subordination of school and university education to student and political party activism is one of the directors of *Centro de Estudos Ambientais* (CEA – Center of Environmental Studies). When she started studying physical education she realized that university ‘was the same as school’ and it was only through student activism, later articulated by joining the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT – Workers Party), that she managed to ‘properly study’ and ‘understand what went on there’.

It is a reproduction of school. There are athletes who are the best students. [...] Then, there are the bad, who don’t know anything and I include myself among the latter, who stay there, excluded from the physical education course. It is ridiculous. The same as school. I was shocked. [...] And you are excluded from the entire university. Then in the second year, towards the end, two colleagues of mine got involved in the student movement [...] Well, it was great because I was able to see the university... Bah, for me everything was the faculty student union. It was what saved university for me, otherwise it would have been awful. Because I discovered there how to see university in a very different way. My actions were very different... I managed to understand what was going on there. It was through the movement. (Interview).

These forms of presentation of ‘personal stories’ show that one of the principal motivations for getting involved in environmentalism is the idea that the acquisition of university education, technical skills and ties with professional activities cannot be separated from the capacity to integrate this type of knowledge and ‘ideologies and political practices’, in such a way that without this ‘commitment’ or ‘articulation’ with ‘reality’ and ‘practice’, school and the education have no value. For this reason, in contrast with the ‘limitations’ found in ‘formal education’, they emphasize

the great importance in their professional and educational trajectories of a diversified set of 'experiences', forms of 'sociability', engagements and activism, showing that it was 'outside school' and 'university' that the value and usefulness of their professional education were established. For these leaders technical training and education are only useful if they are associated with 'practice', the 'experience' of having participated in 'reality' and more specifically in political organizations and social movements. It is based on this that they evaluate the usefulness of school and university education and present 'school' as something that did not contribute much to their professional experience (Oliveira 2005).

Some studies have emphasized that the underlying political rationality in environmental discourses is related to a type of 'bio-politics of the living being', aimed at expanding the power of 'science', 'techniques' and 'experts' in the management of problems and political choices through production and government, not only those of 'individuals' and 'populations', but also of the 'living being' (Lascoumes 1994). As argued by Hannigan (1995: 103) science is currently one of the main creators of environmental requirements, so much so that it is hard to find an 'environmental problem that does not originate from a body of scientific investigation': "Acid rain, the loss of bio-diversity, global warming, the destruction of the ozone layer, desertification and dioxin poisoning are examples of problems that begin with a set of scientific observations." In the same way, albeit with a very different approach, Seguin (1996) emphasizes that scientific discourse exercises an important political function via the circulation, population and pre-definition of conflicts and political struggles, in such a way that we frequently find ourselves in situations in which it is very difficult to isolate conflicts and political struggles that are not intimately linked to science.

Contemporary society allows less and less 'a great division' between, on the one hand, science aimed at nature and, on the other hand, politics aimed human beings. This growing confusion is clearly shown by considering that test-tube babies, the greenhouse effect, acid rain, genetic manipulations, the destruction of the ozone layer, and nuclear energy are not solely political objects, but are primarily objects created by science. Thus, the Amazon forest has existed for five hundred years, but 'biodiversity' is very recent and arises out of scientific discourse (Seguin 1996: 188).

Returning to the discourse and motivation of the interviewees, we can see that the meanings they attribute to their participation in environmental causes seems to initially present us with another type of 'political culture' in relation to adhesion to a 'similar concept of social formation' (Pécaut 1990). Even though in this case what is in question is a wide-ranging 'reality', such as 'nature', 'life', or 'civilization', we are still dealing nevertheless with a particular type of 'commitment': among educated and intellectualized groups in Brazil there is a widespread belief that 'professionals' have the duty to assume a 'commitment to reality' and their role as 'citizens' and

‘political actors’, since there is no ‘reality’ that is not ‘totally political’ or that can escape from the ‘political sphere’ (Pécaut 1990). This is different from what has generally been observed in relation to ‘ecological ideology’ in other national situations. In Germany, for example, environmentalist discourse is characterized by its ‘confrontational and moralizing’ character, due to the failure of traditional elites and the ascension of confrontational actors from the middle classes and from a ‘secularized Protestantism’, in such a way that ‘moralization’ constitutes the fundamental principal of the dominant comprehension of nature (Eder 2000). In the French discourse about environmental problems what predominates is a ‘technocratic grasp of reality’, due to the weight of elites from ‘main schools’ and resulting in the understanding of nature as ‘an object of technocratic domination’ (Lascoumes 1994).

In the case in question, rather than the imposition of expertise and techniques, the definitions underlying respondents’ activist interventions were based on activist concepts of professional education in the sense that they arose out of the capacity to submit school and university education to engagement and to political participation in various types of organizations and social movements. For this reason, irrespective of the type of university education acquired (physical education, biology, geology, law, social sciences, journalism, etc.), it is this activism in relation to education and professional activities that constituted the basic tone of interviewee reports and which delimited their perspectives of insertion and the occupation of positions in the professional market (Oliveira 2007a). Therefore, it can be said that for this group of leaders engagement and political participation constitute one of the principal ingredients in their professional activities and education and it is not something that is simply ‘complementary’ or ‘additional’ to their work and occupations. Participation in environmentalism is always presented as a form of extension or ‘natural’ prolonging of their education and professional experience, and should be characterized, in the words of the interviewees themselves, as an ‘area of professional activity’ and not as an external activity to the performance of their professional occupations.

It is based on these concepts that environmental defense activities are conceived as a form of political intervention, since they always result from a commitment to ‘reality’ and the ‘practical’, and more specifically from the use of school and university education as an instrument of politicization in different social spheres. Activists’ work in the environmental area is based on a perspective that it is constituted above all by the capacity to submit school and university education to political engagement in various types of organizations and social movements. It can thus be said that environmental engagement constitutes a form of ‘rupture’ with ‘simple’ professional activities and the reactivation of dispositions that allow the ‘limits of the professional to be extrapolated’. However, even terms such as ‘rupture’, ‘elevation’, ‘extrapolation’, etc., seem to be inadequate to comprehend what is in play in this type of activism, since they seem to presuppose a minimum type of separation

between profession and activism, when in the situation question what is actually involved is 'fusion' and 'indistinction', because for the activists, when minimally dissociated from 'practice', professions imply a type of 'limitation' and 'reduction'. In this case it seems to us to be more relevant to understand engagement and activism in defense of the environment as a form of extending or prolonging their education and the exercise of their professional activities.

These concepts are not original or exclusive to environmentalism, they are related to the configuration of the educational and professional space in Brazil (Conniff 2006; Love & Barickman 2006; Pécaut 1990), while at the same time they constitute one of the principal ingredients of other forms of activism (Coradini 2002). They are the basis of the idea present in different professional universes that engagement constitutes a way of extrapolating the 'limits of the profession', allowing the association of their education and professional activities with 'general culture' and 'humanism' (Coradini 1998) and in this way 'rise above the simple exercise of their profession' (Dezalay & Garth 2002). This involves a situation in which the meaning and value of 'profession' always implies a 'commitment' to a 'reality' that is 'totally political' in such a way that education and professional activities do not exist separately from the capacity or competence to 'commit' education and technical training to 'reality' and 'practice', or in this case to 'nature' and 'life'. This is why engagement, more than signifying 'rising above the profession', always constitutes a form of professional achievement and of not becoming distant from 'reality'.

These definitions of the role and usefulness of education and professional training require great care in the use of approaches that characterize environmentalism according to the predominance of 'expertise' acquired through education and professional activities as the principal type of resources and instruments on which activist interventions are based. In the case in question the overlapping of engagement professional activities is not simply the result of the imposition of expertise as the principal type of activist resources, nor of 'professional dilettantism' (Siméant 2001; Siméant & Dauvin 2003). Rather it occurs in a situation where it is the primacy of 'practice' and 'reality' that have a greater weight in the definition of the meanings and uses attributed to both 'engagement' and 'profession'. Similarly, the defense of the environment is conceived as a sphere for the reconversion of various connections and resources for professional activities in different activity spheres. However, even though individuals sharing a similar conception of education are involved, there are very different forms of articulating school and university education with environmental activism. To learn how these definitions combine with the diversity of conditions and social insertions of the interviewees, we have to return to the social logics that underlie the trajectories that led them into engagement and to remaining active in defense of the causes they believe in. It is in the intersections between educational, professional and activist itineraries that we can comprehend how this type of activism emerges. One of the alternatives found in the literature on activism and political participation

on how dispositions, situations and engagement processes are articulated is examining the types of activist careers connected to participation in a determined cause. One of the principal starting points in the distinguishing of the different sequences in the process of constituting arrangements that lead to participation in causes is the reformulation of the notion of 'career' linked to 'interactionist' approaches. As highlighted by Agrikoliansky (2002), the relevance of the concept of 'career' in the analysis of activism,

primarily considers human actions as *processes*, i.e., as activities that are developed over time and which have their own dynamics, instead of considering them simply as the reflex of inflexible social norms, roles and structural constraints (Agrikoliansky 2002: 144).

The analysis of the types of careers that lead to professional activity in organizations and environmental protection bodies constitutes an important tool for revealing the multiplicity of resources and their respective connections that allow the reconversion of education into professional competences in the 'environmental area'. This procedure allows the inclusion of certain questions related to the comprehension of various sequences of socialization processes which lead to effective participation in organizations, social movements and environmental protection bodies, as well as their interconnections with practical contexts, dispositions and situations experienced by actors (Siméant & Dauvin 2002). It, thus, contributes to understanding professional activities in organizations and environmental protection bodies as the result of 'multiple social investments'. It leads us to examine the dispositions associated with individual actions as a consequence of the intersection between the processes of socialization connected to their conditions of origin and family trajectories and which result from the experiences and the various interactional contexts interlinked to the 'biography' of the activists. The forms of participation and intervention of activists in these bodies can be related to the multiplicity of spheres and social networks associated with their engagement and their prior or simultaneous participation in a diversified set of activities, organizations and social movements. It can be noted that the multiplicity of activists' social and political connections, associated with activist concepts of education, constitute the principal ingredients of the configuration of environmental defense as an activism involving the reconversion of different types of school and university education for the occupation of 'professional' functions and positions in various spheres of activity: in political parties, in public administration and in state bureaucracy, in advisory and consultancy positions in the 'environmental area', in universities and research centers, working inside the 'profession' in subjects connected to the exercise of certain professional categories (journalism, law, biology, etc.), and in the performance of paid functions as 'employees' and 'specialists' in NGOs (Oliveira 2005).

The comparison between differentiated standards of activist careers that led activists to

engagement and to participation in environmental protection bodies between 1970-2004 allows us to perceive specificities and certain modifications related to the forms of the definition and use of university education in activism and the respective resources and social connections that underlie this. One of the principal components of this change is related to the greater intensification and diversification of forms of connecting the defense of the environment to education and professional activities in different social spheres. In relation to the diversity of social spheres associated with participation in environmental causes and the social and political connections on which this is based, certain regularities can be identified in the social conditions and logics that lead to this type of professional activity through the description of some of the principal career patterns of environmentalists. One of the principal divisions that can be established in relation to the group in question is between career patterns that basically count on resources and connections resulting from the family of origin and those in which the dynamics of professional reconversion are based on the connections established through intense activism in various student organizations, political parties and social movements. Without intending to take into account the entire variety of patterns in the reconversion of education into professional skills, these examples allow us to illustrate certain principal characteristics in the modifications that have occurred in the use of education in this domain.

Professional Notability, Multiple Activism and Retributions of Environmental Participation

Looking at the configuration of the social and political forces that led the environmental mobilizations at the beginning of the 1970s, it can first of all be noted that elevated social origin appears as one of the principal characteristics of recruitment to and selection for leadership positions in environmental organizations and participation in environmental protection bodies. The large majority of the activists who founded the first associations and who played an important role in the creation of the most important formal environmental protection bodies were children of large traders, ranchers, judges and professionals such as lawyers and engineers, and army officers with university educations. As well defined by one of these leaders, they were individuals who had 'everything that a good social background can give', 'good schools', and university education. Their families 'lived in the same social environment' and many of them knew each other before joining the environmental cause due to these common social experiences because they went to the same clubs, had longstanding friendships and lived in the same areas. The fact that these were leaders recruited from families with elevated social positions and connected to the elites of the 'authoritarian regime', was one of the conditions that allowed the reduction of the costs that participation in political mobilization could incur for individuals in this period (Urban 2001). The social position of origin of the 'founding' environmentalists was one of the factors that allowed their engagement to the extent that it placed their individuals in a set of situations and experiences that contributed to the formation of certain

dispositions linked to participation in the defense of environmental causes at that time. Blood and friendship ties with the universe of political, religious, military and business elites was one of the principal ingredients of the family socialization of these leaders and was one of the factors in political dispositions that led them to the defense of environmental causes^{iv}. Moreover, foreign origins of the family group, travel and frequent contacts with organizations and people in other countries were at the core of their cosmopolitanism and their propensity to adhere to political and ideological questions that crossed beyond national frontiers and divisions^v. Added to this was the fact that the types of engagement that preceded their joining the environmental cause consisted of going to clubs and cultural events, nature groups and welfare organizations. This is markedly different from what has been observed in relation to the emergence of the environmental movement in Europe and the US, where the social composition of the principal organizations was basically composed of individual from the so-called middle classes, with a high level of education and connected to the May 1968 student movements or to left wing political organizations (Spanou 1991; Ollitrault 1996; Sainteny 2000).

These aspects are one of the causes of a pattern of participation in environmentalism that is essentially based on cultural and political baggage inherited from the family group of origin and which results in a conception of political participation based on relations established through the family sphere. This involves 'particularist' and 'aristocratic' concepts of politics (Coradini 1998), based on 'gifts' and 'personal opinions' resulting from their elevated social condition (Bourdieu 1979). It is, therefore, not the forms of participation that presuppose the acquisition of activist resources by joining or previously having taken part in political organizations, political parties or social movements. When this occurs the activist resources acquired through participation in environmental associations represent an 'extra purpose' that allows them 'maximize other rare goods' that these leaders possess (Gaxie & Offerlé 1985: 111). This leads to concepts and practices that are related to their activities in the 'environmental area', the sphere of 'ethics', 'philosophy' and 'moral values'. However, associated with the political and cultural baggage arising out of their elevated social origin, these leaders could also count on their 'reputation' and connections established through professional activities, in such a way that engagement with and adhesion to environmentalism functions as way of reorienting their activities and their own professional work. In some cases this professional redefinition constitutes a form of returning to certain aspirations discarded during their professional and educational itineraries. Nevertheless, one of the predominant characteristics of this group is the articulation of the cultural baggage acquired through the family of origin with a certain 'fame' and prestige connected to education and professional activities as an instrument of intervention in different environmental protection bodies.

An exemplary case of this career pattern characterized by the reconversion of 'professional' notability to the exercise of representation functions on behalf of environmental

organizations in formal environmental protection bodies is the activist career of a retired professor from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, former president of the Rio Grande do Sul Association for the Protection of the Natural Environment (*Associação Gaúcha de Proteção ao Ambiente Natural* - AGAPAN). He is the son of a leader of the Jewish community in Porto Alegre who led the international refugee committee during the Second World War. His adherence to the environmental cause occurred in 1971 when he was 45 years of age and had entered into crisis 'with chemistry', breaking with its 'jingoistic' perspective which believed that chemistry would change the world for the better. According to the professor he joined AGAPAN as a result of his 'desire to work with citizenship' and as a 'retribution to society' which had 'paid for his studies' and 'education' through public university: "I did not just want to write and carry out laboratory work. I wanted to contribute in some way and saw that people did not have knowledge" (Bones & Hasse 2002: 157). At the same time, this decision was based on a progressive disagreement: on the one hand were political and intellectual aspirations that emerged within familial socialization and in the informal networks of neighbors and friendships, which awoke his interest for painting, literature, philosophy and for the professions of writing and acting; and, on the other hand, his educational and professional trajectory, which led him to a degree in engineering and to working in the chemical area. His occupational trajectory was also marked by conflict over the possibility of balancing distinct occupations: his work as a technical specialist in the Technical Police Institute of Rio Grande do Sul, which had been created by his uncle and his career as a 'professor' and a 'researcher' in UFRGS which began through contact with a secondary school friend who invited him to work in the university, where he worked for three years as a researcher, then as a teaching assistant, a monitor and later as an assistant professor. He joined AGAPAN at a time when he found himself at what he called 'a crossroads' in terms of professional occupation, since he had to abandon one of the two positions. By joining the environmental cause and entering AGAPAN he found a way of articulating his experience as an 'expert', a 'chemist', a 'researcher' and a professor, putting into practice the aspiration acquired within his family to 'work for citizenship.' It was the reputation he acquired as a professor of chemistry in UFRGS that formed the basis for his interventions as an AGAPAN representative in various environmental protection bodies: as a 'scientific advisor' on the national commission for the formulation of agro-toxins laws, as a member of the CONSEMA council from the moment it was created, providing 'technical opinions' and 'scientific data' about the various questions involved in the environmental struggle. In parallel to this activism, he participated almost every year in chemistry and genetics conferences presenting and publishing papers in both the 'scientific' and 'environmental' spheres. This is a case in which participation in the environmental movement constituted a form of reconverting his education and his positions as a chemistry professor for into positions on commissions, councils and governmental organizations dealing with environmental protection. It was

based on his high level of political and cultural baggage and on his prior exercising of the profession of 'chemical engineer' and 'professor of UFRGS' that he carried out his activist interventions for which he is recognized, so much so that he is designated as 'the laboratory man', the 'geneticist', the 'chemical man', and the 'professor.'

Since the middle of the 1980s there has been a great diversification in how education and professional experience are used as an instrument of politicization in different spheres of activity, which is related to changes that have occurred both in the actual dynamics of activism and in political participation and in the space of education and professional activities. Among the factors that led to this the most important are certain changes in political and ideological changes in the 1980s. This is the case of the opening of spaces of political participation resulting from the 're-democratization process' which resulted in the intensification of the 'multiple activist phenomenon' in such a way that the network of leaderships of different organizations and social movements became extremely interlinked (Mische 1997). In second place were changes in the educational and professional development space. More specifically this involved the expansion and diversification of third level education, which allowed the expansion of the instrumental uses of education and professional development aimed at politicization and articulation with different spheres of activity through insertion and prior and/or simultaneous activism in various types of organizations and social movements (Coradini 2002). Finally, there were certain transformations of the social bases and the dynamics of becoming involved in environmental activism. It can be noted that in the 1980s a change occurred from activism with leaders with elevated social origins whose interventions were based on cultural and political baggage inherited from, or built upon, the family of origin, to patterns of activity that resulted from the entrance of persons with lower and more heterogeneous social origins, whose principal resource base was the connections established on the basis of family, education and professional itineraries with various political parties, organizations and social movements (Oliveira 2005).

A career pattern of an environmentalist that exemplifies these modifications in a contrasting manner with the former is that of one of the principal coordinators of the Environmental Studies Center (*Centro de Estudos Ambientais* - CEA). She is 33 and comes from the rural part of Santa Vitória do Palmar. Her father was a farm foreman in the rural part of the municipality and her mother made pastries at home for her children to sell in the schools they studied in. Due to the death of her father when she was 12 her family moved to the city. Although her parents did not finish primary school, all their seven children completed secondary school and entered university, in part because of study grants her mother got in religious schools. Even though she had participated in a civic center during primary school and in Catholic youth groups, it was the influence of her brothers and sisters in creating a branch of the PT, in which she also participated, which led her to play a greater role in the

student union in the university where she was studying to become a teacher. When she left Santa Vitória do Palmar to study physical education in the Federal University of Pelotas she was already a PT sympathizer, although she had not joined the party yet. During her university education she began to actively participate in the student movement: she first joined the students union for the physical education faculty through two friends who were already taking part in this and afterwards in the directorate of the students union for the whole university, also taking part in the articulation of physical education in the national executive. It was through this activism that she established links of friendships and affection with some members of the CEA who also active in the DCE and the PT in the same 'faction' as her. The simultaneous intensification of activism in the association and in the PT influenced the redirecting of her professional career, since it led her to resign from the school where she was working because she was too occupied with activities linked to the organization and because she had to constantly miss school to travel due to councils, meetings of organizations, NGO forums, etc., since for her 'it was more prudent' to miss school than the activities she had assumed as coordinator of CEA. Between 1996 and 2005 she participated intensely in formal environmental protection bodies and forums: as the coordinator and representative of CEA, a member of the National Environmental Council (Conselho Nacional de Meio Ambiente - CONAMA), coordinator of APEDEMA/RS, the Brazilian NGO Forum and social movements linked to the environment and development. This trajectory supports concepts of participation in the environmental movement that are based on political party principles, in the sense that the latter created a sphere for various types of activism and environmental actions specific to the activist sphere that had to be associated with other types of organizations and social movements, especially political party organization. Associated with this activity she did a masters in environmental education in FURG, where a friend of the 'organization' had entered the previous year. It was based on the connections established with this friend, who was the dean of a private university in Pelotas, that she became part of the teaching staff of this university, and in addition to teaching also became the undergraduate coordinator of physical education.

The modification of the types of resources and connections that support the uses of university education as an activist resource in different environmental protection bodies and their greater overlapping with the simultaneous insertion of activists in various organizations and social movements, occurred simultaneously with significant transformations in environmentalist organizational and ideological structures. The emergence of a series of internal conflicts and ideological, political and organizational conflicts can be observed among the principal environmentalist organizations, as well as a greater difficulty in the creation of formal structures that could allow greater articulation and a minimum demarcation of institutional, political and ideological frontiers in the set of environmental defense organizations. One of the aspects that contributed to this

was the modification of a situation in which mobilization was based on the proximity of social, familial and political ties among activists, changing to a situation with heterogeneous actors whose activities were based on activist resources and concepts resulting from their simultaneous insertions in various organizations and social movements (Oliveira 2007b). In this way the form of expansion of environmental associations was characterized by a proliferation of organizations and by the pulverization and fragmentation of their interventions in environmental protection bodies. This can be more clearly seen by examining the dynamics of the constitution and functioning of formal environmental protection bodies, as well as activists forms of intervention in these situations.

Proliferation of Sector Based Participation and Modes of Intervention in Councils and Formal Environmental Protection Bodies

Elevated social origin and close ties with political and ruling elites are one of the most relevant traits for understanding the organizational structures that characterized environmentalist interventions in the 1970s, since instead of being based on the formalization of means of access to institutional channels, they strongly depended on informal relations established among ‘pioneering’ environmentalists and governing elites. The leadership of the principal existing associations maintain close ties of kinship, proximity, friendship and affection, which were reinforced by the close proximity of their social, political and cultural conditions. As a result, these entities initially carried out actions that were closely linked, jointly participating in various struggles. Furthermore, the expansion process of environmentalist associationalism was initially influenced and controlled by AGAPAN, so much so that the first associations functioned as ‘branches’ of the former. The greater diversification and heterogeneity of organizations and the social characteristics of their activists caused an accelerated growth of these groups during the 1980s, hindering the articulations of the directives to be adopted by this diversified set of associations and activists. This triggered an ‘autonomization’ process of these associations, while new articulation structures emerged among them.

In 1984 the *Encontros Estaduais de Entidades Ecológicas* (EEEE - State Meetings of Ecological Entities) were started. These were designed to be the ‘maximum consultative and decision making body of the *Movimento Ecológico Gaúcho*’ (MEG - Rio Grande do Sul Ecological Movement) and a space to establish the directives and formal procedures for the affiliation of ‘ecological entities’. The aim of these meetings was to annually prepare and evaluate directives for MEG’s actions, as well as to allow the articulation of ‘ecological entities’ in the state. During the XI EEEE in Novo Hamburgo, the *Assembléia Permanente de Entidades em Defesa do Meio Ambiente do Rio Grande do Sul* (APEDEMA/RS - Permanent Assembly of Environmental Defense Entities of Rio Grande do Sul) was created to assist the articulation and ‘representation’ of ‘ecological entities’. The creation of APEDEMA was also aided by international financing foundations aimed at the ‘professionalization of

the movement' and its greater nationwide articulation. The international bodies included the Francisco Foundation which received support from NOVIB, a non-governmental cooperation organization from the Netherlands, the Damien Foundation from San Francisco in the US, Bilance a non-governmental cooperation organization based in the Netherlands and Both Ends, a Dutch organization that supports environmental NGOs. However, bitter regional divisions, associated with the variety of political and ideological connections of its activists, prevented the creation of something resembling a national federation of environmental organizations. Not even at a regional level did the articulation of environmental associationalism result in the creation of environmentalist representative bodies organized in the form of a state federation. In addition, EEEE and APEDEMA/RS meetings were pervaded by bitter conflicts about their role and function in the articulation of environmentalist organizations, as well as their institutional, political and ideological frontiers. These conflicts were based on the different prior and simultaneous connections of activists with social movements and, more especially, political party organizations.

Illustrative examples of these conflicts and their relations with the multiple connections of activists and their respective associations are debates and confrontations that occurred during EEEE and APEDEMA/RS meetings about the representation and articulation function of associationalism and relations with other types of organizations and social movements. In general terms, these confrontations involved two principal forms of definition of and collective intervention in environmental questions, which correspond to determined type of insertions of their principal leaders in other social organizations and especially their connections with the PT. On the one hand were associations whose activists were members of the PT holding positions of trust (*cargos de confiança* - CC's) in municipal and state administration of the party, or were its representatives in the legislature. On the other hand, were those organizations whose activists were sympathizers of different factions in the PT, who worked on election campaigns for PT candidates, but even when they have positions in PT administration did not hold leadership positions or 'follow a career' in the party or 'broke' with it due to the positions they held.

In the presentation and debate about the 'guiding principles' of the XXIV EEEE, held in the city of Caxias do Sul, these disagreements were initially related to the understanding of what a 'guiding principles' was, what it should contain and what its function was. On the one hand, activists who held positions in the PT or in administrations connected to the party, argued that the 'guiding principles' should contain the points of agreement or 'consensus' formulated during the meeting and should function as a type of 'program' which should 'prioritize a determined theme' so that it would be possible to 'propose specific strategies'. Therefore, for these activists the fact that the 'guiding principles' dealt with a very wide variety of questions was problematic. One of the principal defenders of this argument, who at that time was responsible for the Environmental Quality Department

(*Secretaria de Qualidade Ambiental - SQA*) of the municipal administration of Pelotas, prepared a 'list of questions' contained in the 'guiding principles' listing nine different issues which he argued could have been contained in a specific 'guiding principles'. On the other hand were activists who defended the 'guiding principles' as a type of 'recipient' of various types of questions present in the 'ecological movement' which served 'just' to 'create controversy', arguing that the 'guiding principles are not to close, but rather to open.' As a result the large number of issues present in the 'guiding principles' only 'reflects the current state of the environmental struggle' and the various aspects it involves. Participants from other groups present at the meetings only watched, when they did not leave the room, which created a certain type of 'emptying'. Among the various issues debated, those that were most controversial and got the greatest attention were about the relation between 'political party and ecological policy', between 'voluntary work' and 'professionalization' as forms of action and the 'objectives and character of APEDEMA' as the representative body of MEG. In the discussion of each of these issues positions followed the same dividing line established in relation to the 'guiding principles'. In other words, the activists who defended a more 'programmatic' perspective for the 'guiding principles' were those who were less restrictive regarding the 'professionalization' of organizations, political party connections and those who argued that APEDEMA should adopt an 'organizational representation' posture. On the other hand, the group who advocated the idea that the 'guiding principles' should be something more 'controversial' than just a 'program' also positioned themselves more favorable to 'voluntary work', 'decentralization' and 'the non-representativeness' of APEDEMA than those who defended the 'non-party' nature of MEG.

These polarizations are based on differentiated forms of connections between activists and party organizations and social movements and are shaped by distinct perspective of associative intervention that are present in other situations and environmental protection bodies. It is around these divisions that the definition of the 'ecological entity' and of MEG, the 'environmental questions' that will be prioritized by the 'movement' and the legitimate forms of intervention in the defense of environmental causes, are defined. As an example of this we can cite the interventions of 'NGO' representatives in CONSEMA and the decisions of APEDEMA/RS in relation to the holding of the 2002 State Environmental Conference (*Conferência Estadual de Meio Ambiente (CONFEMA)*) which was created as a forum of debate and to formulate directives for the environmental policies of the state. During CONSEMA meetings the 'MEG representatives' were opposed to the proposal that it be held by the state government, which at that time was administered by the PT, arguing that the way activities would be conducted to allow it be held by the government would not permit 'CONFEMA to have a proper sedimentation process in relation to the discussions about holding it', nor the implementation of a 'well based' conference in the sense of being able to count on the participation of 'ecological entities'. After these proposals were defeated during the CONSEMA meeting, it was

decided in an APEDEMA/RS meeting that because the demands of the ‘movement’ had not been accepted in relation to the holding of the conference, the ‘ecological entities’ that were affiliated to it would not participate in the event. However, associations that had been part of APEDEMA/RS since its creation and the association that was coordinating its executive secretariat participated in the conference, despite the fact that in the APEDEMA/RS meetings the representatives of these associations did not oppose to the decision to ‘boycott’ the conference. Furthermore, during the campaign to publicize CONFEMA, APEDEMA/RS’s slogan was used to promote it. This disagreement created successive conflicts in the following APEDEMA/RS meetings. The associations affiliated to APEDEMA/RS which participated in the conference were those ones whose activists held positions in the state administration, in municipal administrations or in the PT itself.

CONSEMA and APEDEMA/RS meetings highlighted the continuity of a definition of environmental protection bodies as spaces of ‘political and ideological’ conflicts and not just as spaces for the ‘technical’ discussions and interventions. The discussion of political and ideological ‘principals and concepts’ was something that occurred constantly in the interventions of the principal protagonists in the confrontations observed during the meetings. This was evident when the meeting agenda consisted of the evaluation of ‘technical’ questions, such as requests for the ‘qualification of municipalities for environmental licensing’ and the approval of ‘lists of endangered species’, amongst others, since the meetings were quite monotonous and even badly-attended. This vision of the council as a sphere for the politicization of the most different questions is based on the common connections of the principal protagonists of these confrontations in networks of organizations and ‘movements’ that are part of the Workers’ Party.

Unlike a moment when street demonstrations and protests in public places constitute the principal ingredients of repertoires of collective actions of environmentalists, the activities that are at the center of association interventions are meetings of councils, committees and networks of environmental protection, as well as congresses, meetings and forums concerned with the preparation and discussion of directives upon which the implementation of environmental policies should be based. Their interventions in these bodies are based on the simultaneous insertions of their leaders in various types of organizations and social movements. It is the connections of the principal leaders of these organizations that sustain associations’ types of interventions that at the same time explain the multiplicity of ideological and programmatic objectives that they defend in their various interventions. This simultaneous connection of leaders to various types of organizations and ‘movements’ contributed to the proliferation of banners and principally to the fragmentation and multiplication of ideological references connected to the interventions of environmentalist

organizations. In this way the dilemmas related to the creation of formal bodies of articulation between environmentalist organizations and their 'professionalization' placed relatively contradictory aspects in play: on the one hand was a more general tendency towards the institutionalization of the environmental struggle with the aim of integrating the contestation and the forms of representation of the movement towards institutional channels; on the other the diversification of concepts and dynamics of collective intervention in the processes of participation in environmental causes based on various forms of 'mixing' the education and professional experience of leaders with engagements and activism in various type of organizations and social movements.

Conclusions

Analyses of the dynamics of participation in formal bodies for the preparation and implementation of public policies has privileged an 'institutionalist' or 'organizational' perspective. According to this the institutional conditions and constraints for the functioning of these bodies have an important influence on the possibilities and forms of actors' participation and intervention in the decision making that occurs in these spaces. In addition we have also emphasized the importance of technical and scientific expertise resources in the dynamics of public environmental management policy formation and their impacts on the processes of institutionalization and professionalization in environmental activism. Nevertheless, the idea of a strongly professionalized activism whose activist interventions are based on expertise seems to be very distant from the case observed. Similarly to analyses of the 'procedural character of participative processes' that showed differentiated processes of institutionalization according to the social groups linked to the construction of a determined cause (Vilas Boas 2007), this article demonstrated that the dynamics of institutionalization and professionalization of activism and interventions in formal environmental protection bodies are related to particular concepts of participation, as well as to resources, trajectories and modalities of the insertion of activists in different types of organizations and social movements.

It can, thus, be argued that in the case in question, the retributions and positions achieved through activism in environmental causes can be obtained through the reconversion of education and professional activities in different spheres of activity based on the connections established by the activists during their educational and professional itineraries with social movements, trade unions, political parties, universities, etc. What differs in these situations is that it is only with the ascension of environmentalism to power in the state that a greater offer of positions to environmentalist activists is

created (Sainteny 2000). As a result, the collective capital of environmentalist organizations is quite fragile, not due to the lack of positions offered to those involved in this type of cause, but rather primarily because there are widespread possibilities for the articulation of professional experience with political activism in various spheres of activity depending on to the relevant networks of activist insertion. Secondly, because the positions accumulated in multiple networks of organizations and social movements are associated with confrontations in the different groups and factions that are part of these organizations and movements.

These considerations lead us to perspectives differentiated from those that view the institutionalization of environmental activism as a linear process resulting from regular participation in formal environmental protection bodies and the imposition of school and university education as the principal requirement to enter and carry out militant activities. We are not dealing with a situation in which the multiplication of organizations and the forms of activism result from a differentiation between the 'activist camp' and the 'political camp' and between associative participation and political party activism (Matonti & Poupeau 2004). To the contrary, what seems characteristic of the situation analyzed is that since the end of the 1980s there has been a strong overlapping between the actions of leaders of environmental organizations who are also activists in political parties and the holding of positions in the state based on these political connections. This is because the resources used in this type of activism have been increasingly characterized by the intensification of the overlap between university education and political engagement in various types of organizations, social movements and political parties in such a way that environmentalist activism does not seem to constitute a 'specific sector' of political contestation (Passy 1998). On the one hand, it differs from those situations in which organizational structures, strategies and repertoires of actions of environmentalists are characterized by the existence of governmental agencies and organizations specifically aimed at environmental protection (Diani & Donati 1999; Rucht & Roose 1999; Brand 1999). This is because activists who participate in environmental defense are simultaneously connected to very different types of organizations and social movements, in such a way that a large part of the demands and issues raised by environmental leaders are social, economic and urban questions labeled as 'environmental' (Fuks 2000; Leite Lopes 2004). On the other hand, it also differs from the cases in which the environment constitutes a marginalized question subordinated to economic and political questions and in which there do not exist environmentalist groups and organizations, or even formal environmental protection bodies (Haynes 1999). More than this, it involves a situation that approximates cases characterized by the constitution of governmental agencies and associations concerned with environmental protection, but which are dependent on the state and other organizations and social movements in terms of their ideological formulations and their human, organization and financial resources (Jiménez 1999; Devaux 2005).

To the extent that adhesion to environmentalism is constituted as a form of extending prior or simultaneous connections of activists to other organizations and social movements, the principal challenge in analyzing this type of activism is understanding this simultaneous inscriptions of leaders in various networks of organizations and social movements as something inter-connected with their interventions in environmental protection bodies. As shown by Mische (2003) the accumulation of positions in multiple networks also constitutes one of the forms of creating alliances between actors connected to different organizations and implies the negotiation of differentiated types of 'identities, projects and styles of participation' associated with their various involvements and affiliations.

Since many participants simultaneously belong to a variety of social networks, they engage in numerous complex negotiations between the multiple dimensions of their current involvements, which are frequently involved in the overlapping of network formation. This negotiation affects an immense range of relational processes, from recruitment and extension for political coordination to the dispute and construction of alliances (Mische 2003: 258).

For this reason the investigation of interventions in environmental protection bodies has to take into account the multiplicity of references connected to the interventions and activities of the associations and their relationship with the accumulation of multiple positions of activists in various types of organizations and social movements. The interventions of activists does not only result in the negotiation of an individual identity, but also and at the same time in the adjustment of different ideological objectives and the modes of participation that result from the various involvements of activists with political parties, religious organizations, universities, trade unions, social movements, etc. For this reason the difficult articulation between the set of organizations that work with environmental causes does not only result from the existence of a very large quantity of associations with a wide variety of objectives. It results principally from the great heterogeneity of arrangement and itineraries of their principal activists and the connections that these associations simultaneously establish through these activists with other types of organizations and social movements. These multiple activist connections constitute one of the decisive aspects in the differentiation of forms of associative intervention in formal environmental protection bodies, delineating the principal divisions and polarizations among the set of associations.

Notes

- ⁱ This text is a modified version of a chapter of my doctoral thesis (Oliveira 2005). A preliminary version of this was presented to the V Meeting of the Brazilian Association of Political Science in the Public Policies Thematic Seminar. I would like to thank Renata Bichir, a commentator in that session, for her comments and suggestions.
- ⁱⁱ For the case of French environmentalism, see especially the works of Anquentin (2002), Gallet (2002) and Ollitrault (2001).
- ⁱⁱⁱ This paper, coordinated by Christopher Rootes, which is part of a more general research project into the transformations of environmentalism called TEA (Transformation of Environmental Activism), involves a series of studies about various processes and forms of environmental institutionalization in Western Europe, the United States and the Third World. For a more detailed analysis of the influence of international bodies on the institutionalization of the environmental question and their mismatch with the development of national environmental organizations and mobilization, see the work of Jiménez (1999) in this collection.
- ^{iv} The weight of strong personal relations with members of political and scientific elites in recruitment for formal environmental protection bodies has been highlighted as a characteristic of other regional situations. In relation to this, see especially Carneiro (2005).
- ^v Regarding the relationship between ‘an international focus’ (as one of the characteristic aspects of the environmental question) and the ‘cosmopolitan perspective’ (connected to the “social properties frequently found among the actors involved in the environmental area”, in this case Jewish, former leftwing militants or children of former leftwing militants), see Loureiro & Pacheco (1995: 149).

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