

# Enhancing the right to the city by politicizing participative urban governance: the case of Caracas



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\* “The loss of the city”. We have lost the right to the city – **Roberto Briceño León**

\* “The war on words”. When slum returns: does language matter? – **Allan Gilbert**

# How can grassroots participation improve the right to the city?

*Grounded considerations in the light of justice matters  
(distribution – recognition – representation)*

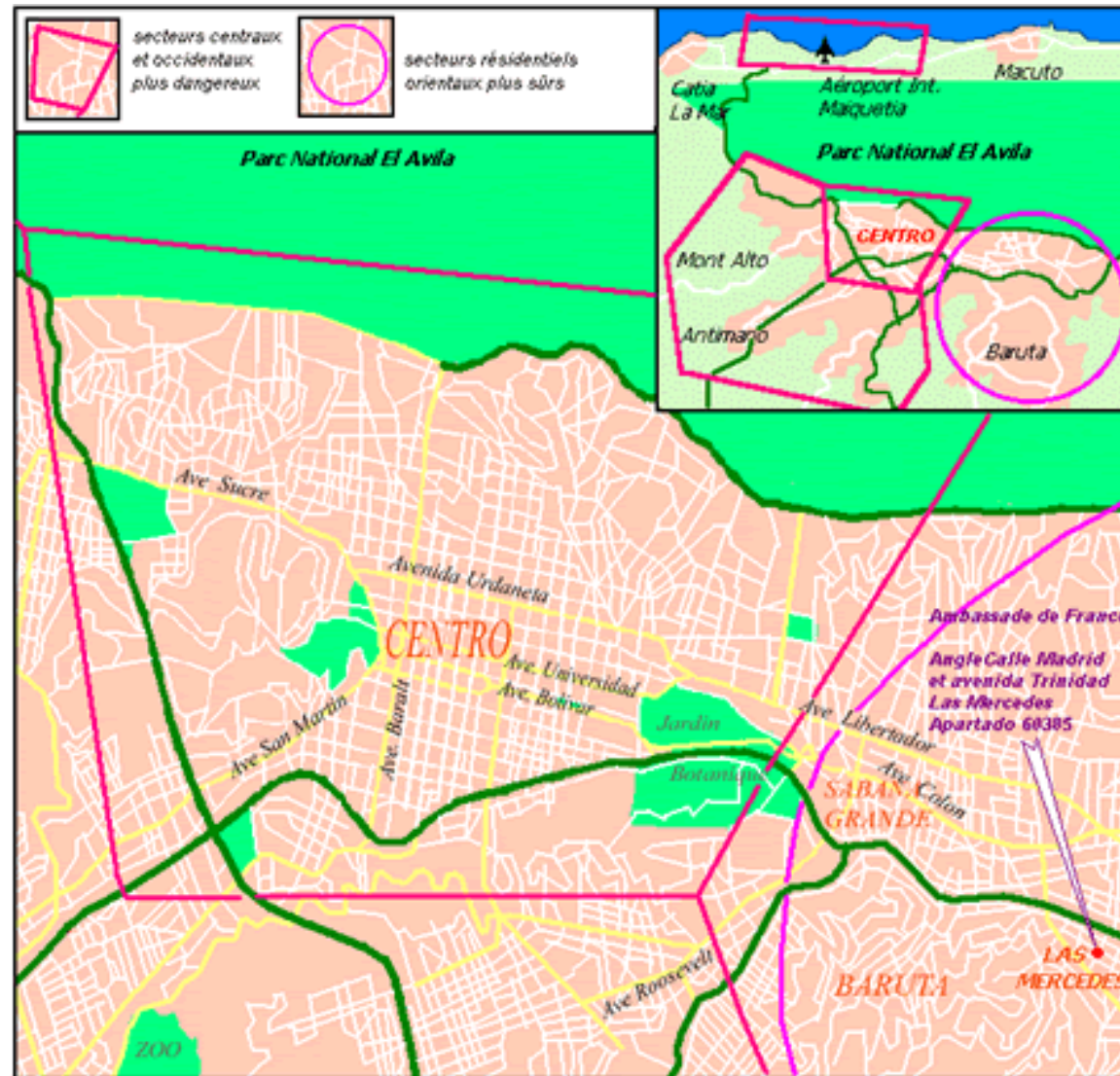
**I. Brief history of participation in democratic Caracas**

**II. Governing insecurity, governing housing issues**

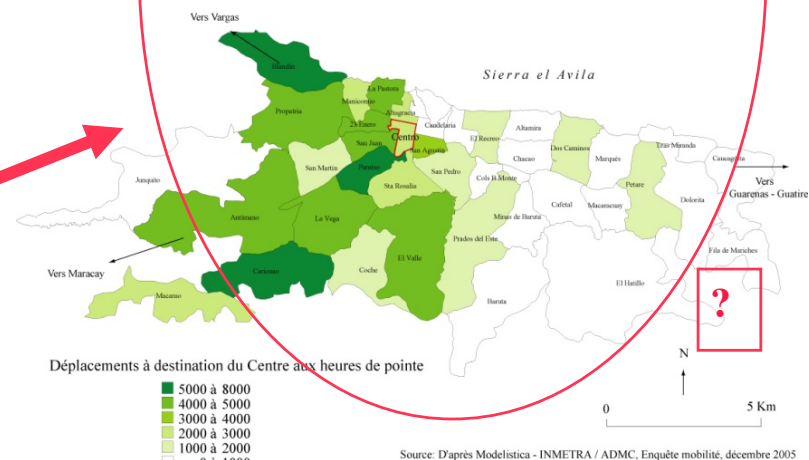
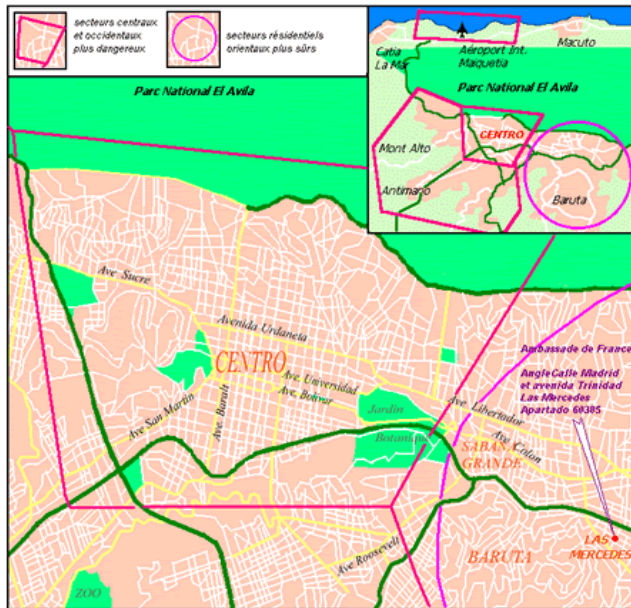
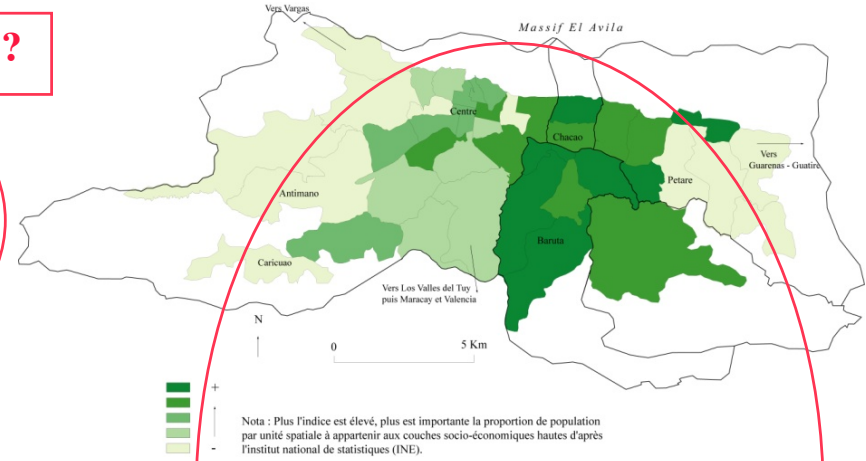
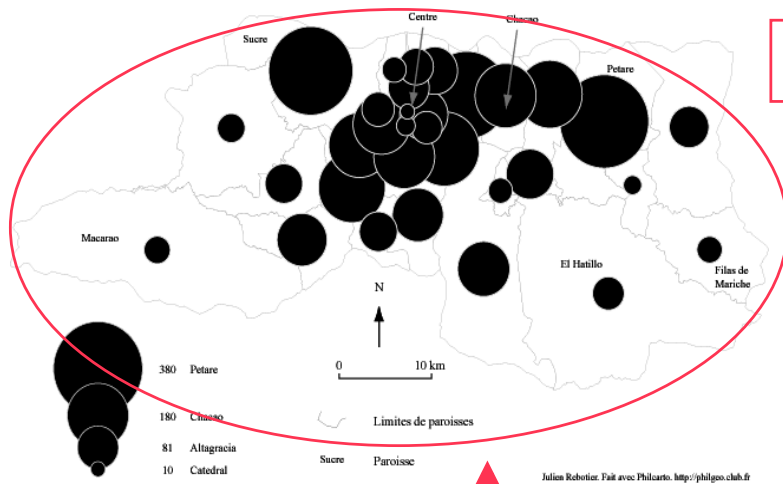
## I. Brief history of participation in democratic Caracas

- Enlarged political participation is part of the democratic discourse in Venezuela (from 1958 on).
- Institutional consequences are uneven over time and mostly depend on grassroots claims and pressure.
- Participation is shaped in structurally unequal context. It can even worsen inequalities.

## II. Governing insecurity, governing housing issues



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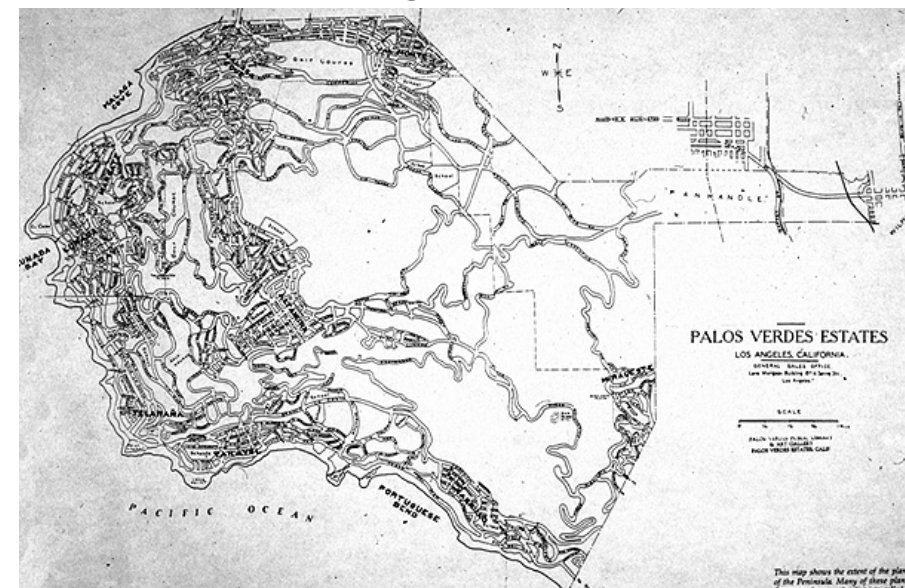


Caracas. La Florida 1940's

Caracas. Santa Sofía 2000's



Los Angeles. Palos Verdes 1920's



Source: Google Earth, <http://www.maureenmegowan.com/PageManager/Default.aspx/PageID=1258058&NF=1> [http://](http://groups.msn.com/VIEJASFOTOSACTUALES/areasdecarcas.msnnw)

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## II. Governing insecurity, governing housing issues





## CONCLUSION

- There is no reason to believe that “participation” gives necessarily more appropriate decisions
- Participation can be instrumentalized and does not necessarily tackle unequal situations

Importance of **contingencies** and **politics of choice** in assessing participation in terms of justice

**Spaces of regulation** as a dimension where actors negotiate, but also where collective – not only communitarian – interests keep working...