The workshop was organised by two working groups of EADI, “Transformations in the World System – Comparative Studies of Development” and “Europe and Latin America”, being hosted by the Faculty of economic and entrepreneurial sciences of Complutense University, Madrid. The working languages were Spanish and English. The sessions started from the opening speeches by Professor Juan Manuel Ramírez Cendrero, Complutense University, and conveners of the working groups, Imre Lévai and Claude Auroi. The papers presented and discussed at the workshop sessions were the following.

1. Susana Dömény, Institute for Political Science (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), Budapest. 
   The Left in Latin America Today/La izquierda de hoy en América Latina
2. Claude Auroi, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Université de Genève. A New Period of Nationalisations in Latin America: Re-definition of role of the actors/Un nuevo periodo de nacionalizaciones en América Latina: Redefinición del rol de los actores
4. André Luiz Martins, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Caruaru/Recife. Leftist or Nationalist? Brazil’s Political Turn Seen from a Class Perspective/¿Izquierdista o Nacionalista? El político viraje de Brasil del punto de vista de la perspectiva de clases
5. Victor Krasilshchikov, Institute of World Economy and International Relations (Russian Academy of Sciences), Moscow. Human Development Indices and Its Dynamics in Latin American Countries: The Social-Demographic Factors of the Left Turn?/Indices del desarrollo humano y su dinámica en América Latina: ¿Los factores demográficos-sociales del viraje a la izquierda?

In addition, the authors of three papers sent their texts but could not come: Thomas Muhr, University of Bristol (“The Global Counter-Hegemony, Regional Endogenous Development and Higher Education for All: Venezuela and the ALBA/La contra-hegemonía global, el desarrollo...
endogenio regional y la educación superior para todos: Venezuela y la ALBA”), Pablo Diego Kornblum, the Argentine Centre for International Studies, Buenos Aires (“The re-conversion of the Latin American Left/La reconversión de la izquierda Latinoamericana”), Gabriel de Paula and Juan Recce, from the same Centre (“The Left in South America: Structural Break or Simple Continuing Inflection of the Old Structures of Power?/Izquierda en América del Sur: ¿Quiebre estructural o simple inflexión continuista de las viejas estructuras de poder?”).

Opening the workshop on behalf of the host organisation, University of Complutense, Juan Manuel Ramírez Cendrero underlined that the social-political changes observable in a vast majority of Latin American countries over the last decade should primarily be treated as inevitable reaction of societies to the neoliberal reforms and deep crisis these countries underwent still in the 1980s as well. Today, in his opinion, we see not only usual, ordinary correction of economic policy but profound change of the development strategy as a whole. It concerns the structure of economies and societies of Latin American countries what has been in focus of all critics of the continental development model since the first studies by Anibal Pinto. This circumstance allows us to unite all different social-economic policies observable either in Brazil and Uruguay or in Bolivia and Venezuela, considering them, in spite of obvious differences, as a single current of the world politics and policy. In this connection, it is not occasional, as Claude Auroi and Imre Lévi marked, that the given workshop is the result of joint efforts of the two working groups of EADI. These efforts concern not only organisation of our discussion but the subject of scrutiny that combines the general world-system with the concrete case studies.

1. Susana Dömény put attention to the essential differences between the Left, which operated in Latin America in the past century, and the contemporary Left. The former were performed by social-democratic and communist parties. Today, the Left political forces undergo
the processes of globalisation and embrace very wide spectre of parties and movements. There is a genuine diversity of origin, forms of organisation and social base of the Left. And, may be, the most important difference between the Old and New Left in Latin America consists in involvement of social groups that were excluded from the process of development in the past: Indians, peasants, urban poor, etc.

Another essential difference between the Old and New Left, in opinion of S. Dömény, concerns an opportunity to act in the conditions of democracy, using the democratic procedures and institutions for peaceful conquest of power. The Old Left was factually deprived of such an opportunity. At the same time, there are some favourable trends that strengthen the Left positions. At first, one of them is cleared social-political inconsistency of the Washington Consensus taken as a set of the pivotal principles for economic policy in the beginning of the 1990s; it succeeded to the rise of widespread social requirements to reject radical neoliberalism. Secondly, the increased demand for natural resources and semi-manufactured goods exportable from Latin America facilitates to the Left, too, allowing to redistribute incomes for poverty reducing. Meanwhile, it is necessary to take into account that the share of Latin America in the world economy continues decreasing.

At last, a variety of political forces that can be treated as the Left in the continent today is not an obstacle to their collaboration upon the common base, namely, the refuse of “market fundamentalism”. Another important common element of the Latin American New Left consists in appreciation of democracy in all its forms, from representative, parliamentary democracy to direct, participative one.

In connection with the statistical data illustrating the diminishing weight of Latin America in the world economy, C. Auroi asked how we can treat a competitiveness of Latin American countries from the point of view of the world-system trends. Replying to this question, S. Dömény has said that it is hardly possible to categorise economies of Latin American countries as highly competitive as a whole. Certainly, some countries are competitive in some branches of industry but not in all of them. Moreover, the declining share of Latin America in the total world GDP and trade allows us to speak about relative marginalisation of Latin America, and the Left turn did not yet change this trend. The growth of trade between Latin American countries and China as well as the growing activity of the latter in the continent over the last years has aggravated the position of Latin American countries in quality of commodities supplier.

Joining discussion, J.M. Ramírez noted that a question on competitiveness is particularly important for evaluation of the Left social-economic policy. A response to this question allows judging how the changes of development model initially known as Latin American have been profound. Since the 1960s, a competitiveness of Latin American countries as a whole, except few of them in few branches of industry and trade, declined, and the change of development model in the beginning of the 1990s (transition from the state regulation to neoliberal policy) did not positively impact on this tendency. Today, indicators characterising competitiveness of the continent in the global trade can indicate how the policy of the Left governments has been successful in the last years.

In his turn, V. Krasilshchikov put the following questions: In which branches of economy are Latin American countries competitive? Are they competitive in new, advanced branches of economy or in old, pertaining technologically to yesterday and not brain-intensive industries? Meanwhile, competitiveness has to be considered in regard to the concrete spheres of trade and industry. For example, Chile is highly competitive in fishing (salmon), flower planting, winery, and polygraph industries but it does not mean that Chile is as competitive as South Korea in electronics or machinery building. In general, the Left economic policy did not yet lead most
Latin American countries, except, probably, Brazil in some respects, to the new heights of competitiveness.

C. Auroi proposed to clarify the social-political aspects of the Left governments’ activity, namely, the concrete correlation between representative and participative democracy as well as between elements of populism and social-democratic policy. According to C. Auroi, a phenomenon of “direct democracy” based on mass mobilisation of women, youth and so on, is important and undistinguishable from the governments’ activity in some Latin American countries. S. Dömény agreed that the social-political practice of “direct democracy” observable, for example, in Venezuela affects the country’s economic situation, and such an influence is rather negative from the point of view of technical and managerial competence.

J.M. Ramírez touched the problem of classification of various kinds of the Left policy in Latin America. Can we speak about “bad Left” and “good Left”, approaching to them from the point of view of economic effectiveness and social achievements? Seemingly, results of the Left policy in Brazil and Venezuela differ from each other, as J.M. Ramírez noted. However, in opinion of S. Dömény, any classification of the Left political forces and governments in Latin America has been difficult because of very ample spectrum of the phenomenon under our scrutiny. This width attributes an additional successfulness to the Left policy but, at the same time, it impedes to crystallisation of definite political currents, movements, and parties within a variety of the Left. It is hardly possible to classify them, neglecting the concrete situation in each country. Many features of the Left policy depend on capacity and power of the civil society to act together with authorities. The old Left in the 1960s-70s had the centre of gravitation, more or less clear ideological framework for their activity and definite goals. Today, the global situation is another, and it influences on political visage of the Left. We see a variety of the Left policies in the continent, so it is almost impossible to apply the same patterns to all countries, evaluating those policies.

2. Claude Auroi, presenting his paper, reminded that some Latin American countries with the Left and Left-centrist governments experience the new wave of nationalisation, particularly, in regard to the property of transnational firms, since the beginning of the new millennium. The continental leaders of this process are Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. Nationalisation embraces such branches as gas and petroleum industry, mining of non-fuel mineral resources, water supply, and service sector (pension funds in Argentina, for example). This tendency has mostly been linked to the new forms of government, whether it is of the populist or neo-socialist type, and is expression of the new relationships between the state and transnational firms. Each actor of these relationships is an economic agent whose activity is not aimed at disappearance of another partner but presupposes searching for the new equilibrium between their powers and economic advantages.
As the speaker noted, some cases of nationalisation have to be treated as anti-monopoly measures when excessive concentration of some socially important services in few private hands led to worsening supply of these services (water, gas, communications, etc.). In such cases, the acts of nationalisation were rather pro-market than anti-market initiatives. In addition, some cases of nationalisation have been motivated by the ecological reasons; they are the specific responses to requirements of the local communities and international ecological agencies to protect natural parks, sources of pure water, areas for rare species of animals, etc.

Undoubtedly, the redistributionist motives play important role in taking decisions concerning nationalisation, too. A concentration of profits in hands of the state enables to fund many social programmes as it has been practised since the times of the Old Left. Meanwhile, as C. Auroi underlined, there are differences between two kinds of nationalisation, one in the 1930s-50s and another – in the last years. He has demonstrated diagrams and tables illustrating the role of the state-owned enterprises in economies, including the external economic ties, of the countries under consideration.

Certainly, the goals of each country in the process of nationalisation are different; they depend on the concrete conditions and the governments’ policies in each country. Moreover, an intention to establish the public control over natural resources encounters various obstacles, whether the latter are international agreements or restricted external demand for primary goods.

In opinion of the speaker, the main problem is not formal ownership as itself but effectiveness of the state-owned enterprises, particularly, in mining industry.

J.M. Ramírez focused on two aspects of the Left policy considered by C. Auroi in his presentation. The first of them concerns intentions to establish the total state control over natural resources and its mining. The second consists in endeavour to develop manufacturing of these
resources what presupposes constructing plants and installing productive capacities. In fact, all these attempts of new, at least, partial, industrialisation can be interpreted as intentions to change radically the model of development.

In connection with the problem of nationalisation, V. Krasilshchikov proposed to compare the experience of two big state-owned petroleum companies, Petrobras in Brazil and Pemex in Mexico. In his opinion, such a comparison can reveals that the main problem consists neither in formal ownership of each company nor in choice between nationalisation and privatisation; it lies in a field of management quality and governance. It is particularly important in light of the Left governments’ efforts to establish the state control over mining and trade of natural resources. As successful activity of Petrobras and poorly effective one of Pemex demonstrate, it is insufficient to proclaim a pertinence of enterprise to the state. It is also indispensable to manage by this enterprise for the social purposes.

Since two presentations, by Liudmila Okuneva and Andrê Luiz Martins, had to be devoted to the situation in Brazil, they were considered and discussed together.

3. Liudmila Okuneva commenced presenting her paper from highlighting some peculiar features of the recent “Left wave” in Latin America. The preceding “Left wave” (in the 1960s-70s) evolved inside of the statist model of development; today, the Left came to power, rejecting neoliberalism and requiring to restore the role of the state in economy and social sphere. In addition to such objective factor of “the Left turn” as the rising protests against devastating social effects of neoliberalism, it is also necessary to mention an increased significance of the Left political sciences, which facilitated to elaborating adequate political slogans capable to attract the contesting masses. According to L. Okuneva, we deal with the long-term tendency, which can profoundly impact on the world development as a whole, more profoundly than it could initially seem to observers.

As L. Okuneva noted, the case study of Brazil is particularly interesting and important for an adequate comprehension of “the Left turn” in the continent. The most significant feature of the Left policy in Brazil consists in reconciliation of moderate neoliberalism in economy with radical social reforms and successful poverty reducing. Moreover, a search for the balance
between the liberal, market-friendly economic policy and the consequent solution of social problems has been realising in the conditions of political democracy, which is stable and works. Seemingly, the Brazilian experience can today be treated as efficient alternative to “market fundamentalism” in contrast to unclear, hesitating policy of the West European social-democracy.

The political shift towards the Left began in Brazil since presidency of Itomar Franco who refused the most odious aspects of the shock therapy policy of Fernando Collor de Mello. It continued under Fernando Henrique Cardoso and succeeded to the situation when the electoral competition has mostly been developing between the two Left parties, Partido da Social-Democracia Brasileira and Partido dos Trabalhadores. In this connection, L. Okuneva referred to such prominent sociologists as François Darcy (France) and Helio Jaguaribe (Brazil). These scholars, firstly, distinguished the modern Left and Right from the archaic ones and, secondly, argued that the genuine Left policy were to be aimed not only at redistribution of incomes for the advantage of poor but also at abolishing the real inequality of rights (for voting, education, property, labour, etc.). Moreover, a distance between the modern Left and modern Right is less than that between the modern and archaic Left or, respectively, between the modern and archaic Right.

Assessing the results of Lula’s presidency, it is very difficult to say whether changes or continuities in regard to the preceding policy (FHC) dominate. What is more important than attempt to count the “correlation” between them with “pharmaceutical precision” is the stable enlargement of strata who are involved into the development process. According to L. Okuneva, this fact predetermined the general trend of the country’s development for a long time – the emphasis on solution of social problems whether it concerns healthcare, education, or environment.

4. André Luiz Martins put attention to the policy of Lula aimed at combating the causes of poverty, in particular, at unemployment reducing. Formal unemployment was the most negative outcome of the macroeconomic stabilisation and structural reform programmes implemented in 1990s under the aegis of neoliberalism. It led, too, not only to increasing job precariousness but also to an overwhelming political fragmentation of the working class.
The speaker characterised the social-professional structure of the Brazilian labour force and society as a whole. He rejected assertions about “disappearance of wage labour” widespread in the 1990s and demonstrated the increase of formal employment (together with raising salaries) in industry and service sectors of Brazil thanks to the social-economic policy of Lula. However, as A.L. Martins said, this policy is focusing on strengthening the country’s international status both as trade partner and political actor; on the promotion of economic growth strongly based upon natural resources; and on income-generation and social inclusion strategies for the low and middle-income classes. Such an agenda got wide support, from the financial elites to the existing range of social movements, old and new, including the well known and influential Movimento dos Sem-Terra. Will this policy have objective limits? How long can the social compromise exist? These questions will inevitably appear on agenda in the future, according to the speaker’s opinion. Since the social reforms are undistinguishable from the structural changes in economy, the continuing struggle against poverty and inequality will soon or later require not only extending social spending but also reviewing the focuses on agro-business and on natural resource-based industrial production.

The discussion about the both presentations on Brazil was proceeding around the poverty reducing issue. All participants of the workshop treated it as the most important and interesting, considering Brazil. Opening discussion, C. Auroi asked to clarify to which degree the increased expenditures for social needs in Brazil correspond to the minimal subsistence level (canasta básica). Moreover, it is worth to learn how many people get incomes, which are within this level as well as exceed it two and three times. Answers to these questions, in his opinion, are indispensable to evaluate the results of Lula’s presidency. As C. Auroi argued, all achievements of this eight years presidency concerned mainly the extreme poverty reducing and famine whereas they were lesser successful in elevating the level of incomes that exceed the threshold of poverty only 1.5 – 2.0 times.

L. Okuneva, replying to the comments by C. Auroi, underlined that the minimal level of subsistence in Brazil has been raised since the beginning of Lula’s presidency. Hence, it is necessary to take into account this circumstance, comparing the recent situation in the country to one existed in January 2003 when Lula began accomplishing his duties. In fact, it is impossible to deny that the conditions of life of the low middle class, not only of the poorest, improved, too, over the last six-seven years. As A.L. Martins specified, joining discussion, the average wages of very large strata have increased under the rule of Lula and PT. It succeeds to substantial changes of incomes’ distribution and social structure of Brazil. However, what is not less important than evident improvements in the incomes’ distribution indicators is the increased social mobility of many young people. Many youngsters from the low middle and even low classes got an opportunity to improve their economic conditions thanks to the PT policy in education. An access to education the government of Lula delivered to them is, in essence, more important for the radical poverty reducing than direct redistribution of incomes. A.L. Martins presented the statistical data that illustrate how the centurial backwardness of the North-East region in Brazil has gradually been overcoming in the process of social modernisation.

V. Krasilshchikov put question about the quantifiable correlation between the CEPAL/ECLAC criterion of poverty (when a household expends 50 and more per cent of its total consumption expenditures for food purchasing) and the ever-increasing line pf poverty in Brazil. In other words, he asked to clarify how the share of food purchasing is changing in the basic consumption basket as result of the social policy in Brazil. In fact, as A.L. Martins explained, the expenditures for food purchasing make up a big part of the basic basket for poor,
despite all raisings of the minimal subsistence level in the last years. Its amount reaches 60, 70, and sometimes even 80 per cent of the total current spending in poor households. It means that Brazil makes only first steps on the way to the radical poverty abolishing.

One of the most debatable issues concerned the system of control for realisation of Bolsa Familia and other social programmes (S. Dömény and other participants of the workshop). The double control that exists in Brazil (from the side of local civil and monetary authorities as well as through civil society organisations) is positively evaluated. The most notable aspect of the Bolsa Familia programme consists in compulsory attendance to school by children from poor families.

5. Victor Krasilshchikov considered the social-demographic factors of disputable phenomenon. He proposed approaching to the Left turn from the point of view of the human development trends in Latin American countries. In his opinion, such an approach can help to better understanding why Latin America has become “the Left moving” continent whereas other regions of the world do not demonstrate signs of profound social-political changes.

The author, using the UN Human Development Reports since 1990, scrutinised the Human Development Indices (HDIs) and its components in Latin American countries as well as in two other regions with emerging markets, East/Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe together with the CIS, formerly the Soviet republics. He compared dynamics of the HDIs and its components as well in Latin America to the average and maximal magnitudes of these indices in the world for respective years. As such a comparison demonstrates, Iberoamérica as a whole has been much more successful in life expectancy and education indicators’ raising than in the economic growth. Namely, the life expectancy and education indices (as components of the HDI) in Latin American countries grew more rapidly that its GDP index, the high level of mass poverty notwithstanding. In this respect, Latin America looks better than other developing regions: Eastern Europe, the CIS and the most successfully developing countries of East/Southeast Asia, including China.

According to V. Krasilshchikov, the accelerated social development (though not yet sufficient for solving the acute social problems of the continent) succeeded to the widening discrepancy between the pretensions of educated youngsters to get good jobs and corresponding remuneration for labour, on the one hand, and the restricted opportunities of economies suffered from neoliberal reforms to satisfy these requirements, on the other hand. This discrepancy led to
radicalising of the large strata and, interfering with the Latin American traditions of political culture, favoured to the rising Left wave.

As the speaker said, the future of the Left political forces in power will depend on their ability to find responses to the new challenges. In particular, the main challenge, the Left in Latin America faces already today, is the increased level of literacy and education of the population. People who were initially living in indigence become less or more educated thanks to the Left social policy. Their wages begin to exceed, at least, a little, the minimal subsistence level, and their needs undergo a dramatic change. Will the Left be able to satisfy their new requirements? Do the Left and Left-centrist governments in Latin America conceive that they have to change themselves, transforming societies where they rule? What are the limits to continuation of the Left policy, which are rooted, in particular, in the social-demographic structure of Latin American societies? In the opinion of V. Krasilshchikov, these limits have to be found in the Left policy as itself.

C. Auroi agreed with the general approach of the speaker to scrutinised issue and specified some essential features of the so called Bolivarian education system in Venezuela. He said about the astonishing ideological indoctrination of education in Venezuela. This indoctrination has been combining with poor quality of education. It enables us to speak about a definite correspondence between declining economy and degrading education what approves ones more a failure of “the XXI century socialism” of Hugo Chávez.

6. Juan Pablo Mateo Tomé presented the paper on behalf of himself and his co-author, Eduardo Sánchez Iglesias. The speaker underlined that the real outcomes of social-economic transformation in Venezuela have often been camouflaged beyond the widespread ideological and political stereotypes. These transformations are labelled as “restoration of the Soviet/Cuban socialism”, expressions of voluntarism, etc. Hence, it is necessary to reveal what is factually happening to the Venezuelan economy and society, looking on the real dynamics of GDP, distribution of incomes, salaries, and other indicators.

J.P. Mateo highlighted three stages of the Bolivarian revolution in economy since 1999. At the first stage, 1999-2001, the government intended to neutralise the most devastating outcomes of neoliberalism of the 1990s. The second stage, 2001-2004, was marked by the start of real transformations of the apparently socialist character in economy. The third stage commenced in
2005 when Chávez proclaimed ‘the First Socialist Plan of Economic Development’. Then the slogan of “the XXI century socialism” finally emerged as the pivotal principle and goal of the government policy. At this stage, attempts to implement the practice of “non-state planning of economy”, through the grass-roots Communal Councils, were undertaken. One of the essential features of this stage has been intensive redistributionist policy with clearly expressed orientation towards solving social problems by means of the petroleum rent appropriation by the state. Simultaneously, the government of Hugo Chávez initiated the emergence of new forms of production aimed at maintenance of communality, solidarity, mutual aid but not at increasing economic effectiveness, profitability and other “capitalist indicators”. In fact, such practice succeeds to an enlargement of the informal sector of low productivity what is the same phenomenon that can be seen in the case of implementation of radical neoliberal reforms.

In addition to observation of the social-economic data, which characterise the economic situation in the country, the speaker said about absence of the modern actors of development in Venezuela. The national bourgeoisie, the social class that could become the actor of industrialisation like in Brazil, is biased to parasitic, consumerist behaviour. The industrial working class as the mass social stratum is numerically small and weak. Factually, the existing social structure becomes factor, aggravating the social conflicts in Venezuela; it does not allow to come to the social compromise, which would be built around development strategy. In such conditions, the state has to play a hypertrophied role in the process of redistribution of incomes. The direct effect of this role is the state domination as a whole. More than one third, 35 per cent, of the national economy is the state-owned.

The authors of the considered paper recognised that all attempts to create new economy did not lead to reducing the external dependency of Venezuela on the world petroleum market. The country’s GDP fluctuated, according to volatility of the latter in the last decade. J.P. Mateo observed dynamics of the social development indicators, mainly the poverty ones. Their analysis enables concluding about the evident success in abolishing the extreme poverty. Nevertheless, all apparent changes that took place in the country did not alternate the fundaments of acute problems that torment the country over the last decades.

Opening discussion on the paper by J.P. Mateo and E. Sánchez, V. Krasilshchikov noted that the paper convinces us in convergences of the two political and ideological extremities with each other. Indeed, according to J.P. Mateo, chavismo is anti-neoliberalism; however, results of the Bolivarian economic policy do not substantially differ from the devastating effects of neoliberal reforms. In the both cases, we see de-industrialisation, aggravation of the structural disproportions, marginalisation of poor and their exclusion from development. Meanwhile, V. Krasilshchikov said, chavismo and neoliberalism need in each other because each of them parasitizes on existence of its political opponent. He evaluated the former as a kind of the Left opportunism (oportunismo izquierdista), which is biased to using pseudo-revolutionary slogans and likes exposing snares of imperialism but is incapable to creative work. In essence, Lula, not appealing to revolutionary rhetoric, is, in essence, more revolutionary than Chávez who can only shake air.

J.P. Mateo, agreeing with critics in regard to chavismo, noted that the government of Chávez intends to use petrodollars not only for support of poor and education but also for investment in communications and manufacturing branches, technologically connected to the national petroleum industry. It is impossible to doubt in intention of Chávez to industrialise the country. At the same time, an inclusion of poor into the development process has been provided through the mechanisms of direct, participative democracy, and, it can be said, these mechanisms work. It is not occasional that the Peruvian authorities look for the experience of Venezuela in education, which is very important social institution for inclusion of poor into development.
According to the speaker, what has been called “the Left opportunism” corresponds somewhat to Latin American political culture; namely, it corresponds to the old tradition of direct communication between masses and their leader.

S. Dömény reminded that free and compulsory primary education existed in Venezuela since the 1960s. Later, secondary, though incomplete education became compulsory, too. However, it did not allow abolishing illiteracy because the respective laws concerned only opportunities but did not guarantee obtaining secondary education. Many children and adolescents from poor families could not accomplish studying, being obliged to earn money to feed their junior brother, sisters and themselves. The government of Chávez did all possible for guaranteeing the right for education through supporting poor families, particularly, in vicinities of big cities, including Caracas. In addition, it is impossible to ignore what is already done for improvements in medical services and diseases’ prophylactics. Thus, the progress in education and healthcare achieved in Venezuela under Chávez is gigantic.

However, indeed, there is a definite discrepancy between pretensions of youngsters to jobs that correspond to their level of education, on the one hand, and real availability of such jobs, on the other. This is one of serious problems the Bolivarian state encounters. In such conditions, it is not astonishing that Chávez exploits nationalism. The latter is one of the props of his rule.

We have to remember that the Venezuelan nation, as well as other nations in Latin America, is young (two hundred years are juvenile age for nations), and nationalism is its undistinguishable feature, S. Dömény continued, commenting the presentation. The Venezuelan nationalism as well as nationalism in some other countries of Latin America is peculiar. The Venezuelan bourgeoisie has always been cosmopolitan. In contrast to the Brazilian or Mexican bourgeoisie, it did not worry about development of the native country, staying very far from something similar to the import substitution industrialisation policy (desarrollismo) in Brazil, Mexico, or Argentina. Nationalism in the concrete conditions of Venezuela, therefore, performs itself as a kind of class, anti-capitalist, anti-bourgeois consciousness.

In the opinion of C. Auroi, nationalism in Venezuela has been evolving, being isolated from various cultural currents in the world, and this relative isolation weakens it. It does not contradict to the social nature of “the XXI century socialism”, which follows for Cuba and the former USSR. This model of society is self-exhausting, and none nationalism can rescue it. Moreover, an inclusion into the global economy that functions according to the laws of capitalist, market economy, on the one hand, and attempts to annihilate all objective economic laws inside of the country, on the other hand, can hardly be compatible with each other, whereas Venezuela depends on the world market to much more degree than the former Soviet Union depended on it in the past. Really, “the XXI century socialism” failed completely before Venezuela accomplished constructing it. The system of food distribution among poor approves it very clearly, and this system is, in essence, the same as in Cuba.

J.P. Mateo, replying to the participants of discussion around his paper, reminded that the social-economic situation in Venezuela was almost catastrophic by the end of the 1990s when Chávez came to power. Venezuela underwent the neoliberal reforms, which destroyed the system of mass education and healthcare. Many specialists, including teachers and doctors, emigrated to abroad. The large territories, particularly in rural areas, were devastating by “market forces”, when the state had factually dropped off its social responsibility. The government of Chávez did very much for improving the poor population’s health. It is possible to speak about the radical changes in the national healthcare, not only in treatment but also in preventing diseases and sanitation. It is notable that the local medics, the Venezuelan citizens, work mainly in rich quarters whereas the Cuban medics cure mostly poor people. In particular, commenting the remarks by S. Dömény, the speaker underlined the specific character of
nationalism in Venezuela. Indeed, he said, it is difficult to categorise it as nationalism of bourgeoisie. It rejects the West, imperialism, the US hegemony, etc. but not other Latin American nations. In this respect it differs essentially from bourgeois nationalism. The latter does not exist in Venezuela because, apart from the national bourgeoisie in Brazil or Mexico, the Venezuelan bourgeoisie is not nationalistic; it preferred making investment in purchasing apartments, prestigious settlements and bonds in Miami but not in development of the domestic economy.

What concerns the model of socialism in Venezuela, J.P. Mateo thinks that it differs from what we saw in the former USSR and/or Cuba. According to him, this socialism bears some elements of market economy in itself and is rather close to socialism existed in Yugoslavia or to that existing now in China. It is much more open and not completely the state-guided as in the case of the former Soviet model.

7. Maria José Paz Antolín presented the paper on behalf of herself and Ricardo Molero Simarro. She evaluated the economic transformation’s programme carried out by the Movimiento Al Socialismo (MAS) in Bolivia during the first term of office of Evo Morales (2006-2009). In her opinion, the biggest difficulty in elaborating this programme consisted in variety of social-political forces, which rejected neoliberalism with its structural adjustment principles but could not initially propose the common alternative to the latter. Hence, it was not occasional that the MAS encountered serious social-political tensions, realising its plan of transformations.

The outcomes of the MAS social-economic policy were analysed in three dimensions: 1) the growth and macroeconomic stability; 2) productive transformation and insertion into the world economy; 3) income distribution and poverty. At the same time, the three main aspects of this policy were scrutinised: 1) nationalisation of the mining industries, mainly ones extracting hydrocarbons (petroleum and gas); 2) agrarian reform; 3) redistribution of the rent for poverty reducing.

M.J. Paz considered a set of measures aimed at nationalisation of hydrocarbon industry and restricting the activity of transnationals in this branch. The process of nationalisation, as she said,
was accompanying by difficult negotiations concerning the conditions of investment in hydrocarbons’ mining and transportation.

The radical agrarian reform has been the main condition of electoral triumph of the MAS, particularly, in poor rural areas. For the first time in history the indigenous population got the state guarantees of its property rights for cultivated land. The two most important direction of this reform were highlighted in presentation: 1) redistribution of the lands, which have been cultivated for the sake of selling harvests at market; 2) expropriation of the lands, which were not used productively.

In social policy, the MAS emphasised on raising the minimal salaries. In addition, it began realising the programme Bono Juancito Pinto that is resemble, in many respects, to the programmes Bolsa Familia and Bolsa Escola in Brazil and aimed at enlargement of the access of poor families’ children to education.

All these measures initiated by the MAS government did not succeed to the transformation of economy from the point of view of its structure. As M.J. Paz showed, using diagrams and graphics, a sincere and explicable intention of the MAS to use the increased petroleum rent for solving social problems eternalises the structure of the Bolivian industry inherited from the past when the mining, outward-looking branches dominated in the national economy. The government stimulated the hydrocarbon exports but did not attain success in development of manufacturing industries. According to the authors of the presented paper, the rising problems the MAS government faces in the last years are mostly conditioned by the internal obstacles to development (la transformación productiva, using the concepts of CEPAL/ECLAC). Perhaps, the only positive outcome of the petroleum rent redistribution that can potentially lead to success in the future, from the point of view of real development, is the growth of public investment in infrastructure. However, today the worsening world conjuncture aggravated the internal economic problems although was not their cause. M.J. Paz noted that the impact of the world financial-economic crisis of 2008-09 on the Bolivian economy has been much more profound than, for example, in the case of Brazil because of its lesser diversification and smaller size of the internal market. The crisis affected the pace of poverty reducing; it slowed because of the fall of petroleum prices.

The most disputable issue that was in focus of discussion about the given presentation concerned the strategy of the MAS in poverty reducing. In particular, the participants of discussion scrutinised the mechanism of petroleum incomes’ distribution for solution of the country’s social problems. A.L. Martins and A. Sanabria asked to clarify whether there are other ways to diminish poverty except the petroleum rent redistribution, which depends on the world conjuncture in a big degree. C. Auroi said about the prospects to augment the exports of gas for compensating losses conditioned by the petroleum prices decrease.

In her reply to comments and questions, M.J. Paz reminded that the government of Evo Morales maintained the macroeconomic equilibrium in spite of the fascinating increase of public expenditures, mainly for combating poverty. Evidently, in her opinion, such government’s capacity depends on: 1) the world prices for gas and petroleum; 2) the volume of production in the sector of hydrocarbons. However, the economic mechanism that would enable to stimulate investments in this sector is not yet created. The same concerns all branches dealing with mining and primary manufacturing of mineral resources. This circumstance does not facilitate to reduce the external dependency of the Bolivian mining industry on the world market. For example, the crisis in Brazil in the end of 2008 – the first months of 2009 decreased demand for the Bolivian gas. It afflicted the country’s economic dynamics with effects for all social programmes of the MAS.
As a whole, a scarcity of resources for simultaneous modernisation of mining industries, agrarian reform and poverty reducing is the main cause of acute social tensions and conflicts in the country, M.J. Paz concluded. In this connection, the taxation reform aimed at increasing effectiveness of the fiscal system stays on agenda in Bolivia.

8. Antonio Sanabria Martín presented the paper on behalf of himself and Luis Buendía García. He considered the experience of the Frente Amplio (FA) government in Uruguay, mainly for the first term of legislature (2004-09), though made some remarks concerning the rule of José Mujica elected for presidency in November 2009. At first, the speaker outlined the historical roots and social-political situation in the country before the electoral victory of Tabaré Vázquez in 2004. This victory has been the direct outcome of the large masses’ reaction to the failure of neoliberal model implanted in Uruguay since the authoritarian rule still in the 1970s-80s. A. Sanabria analysed the six main directions of the FA programme: 1) productive transformation of Uruguay; 2) social policy; 3) innovations; 4) development of democracy; 5) the internal social cohesion and support of integration in the continental scale; 6) development of culture. He noted that the FA programme is not as radical as that of Evo Morales or Hugo Chávez. It is similar to the policies of Lula in Brazil or Bachelet in Chile; this moderateness attributes an additional stability to it. The reforms initiated by the FA in the conditions of Uruguay did not succeed to the rise of deep social split and political conflicts like in Venezuela or Bolivia.

Since Uruguay suffers from scarcity of natural resources and cannot accomplish the social programmes, redistributing the gas or petroleum rent, the principal task of the first direction of policy consisted in improvement of the industry’s structure, namely, in elevating the share of outputs with high rate of value added. This task was linked to improvements in the exports structure, and the speaker demonstrated how different aspects of the economic regulation, financial, fiscal, and labour policies, were subordinated to its solution. In his opinion, the achieved results had to be evaluated as positive; nevertheless, Uruguay continues exporting mostly the primary goods (commodities) and imports the manufactured goods. The government, as A. Sanabria underlined, was successful in raising the rate of investment in fixed capital but this rate did not still exceed the average one in Latin America as a whole. Thus, the low rate of
investment has been among the unresolved problems concerning the productive transformation of Uruguay.

The increased minimal monthly salary (two times for four years, 2004-08) improved the general situation at labour market and decreased the size of informal economy. At the same time, the average salaries did not yet return to the level of 1999. In tight connection with this issue, the programmes of the FA government aimed at poverty reducing and improvement in education were considered, too. Despite evident accomplishments in this direction of the FA policy, as the speaker said, the system of education was not yet reformed. This task should have to be solved in the nearest future. It became particularly insistent because the rate of drop out from secondary schools increased over the last years although Uruguay remained to be one of the most educated nations in the continent.

A. Sanabria scrutinised how the indicators of social inequality changed in the first term of the FA government. The inequality diminished; however, it is still early to speak about profound transformation in the incomes distribution.

A brief discussion on the presented paper was concentrated on impact of the world crisis on the Uruguayan economy, the monetary authorities’ policy, taxation, and dynamics of wages. In particular, A.L. Martins asked to specify how the ratio of salaries in the formal sector to those in the informal one changed over the last five years. As it could be concluded from the answers of the author, the positive changes in Uruguay have been slow but steady.

Conclusions.

Participants of the workshop made the following general conclusions from discussion.

1) The “Left turn” in Latin America is not occasional fluctuation within a framework of the political process. It has character of profound social transformations and can be evaluated as a kind of peaceful revolution. It is neither reproduction of the Left wave the continent experienced in the 1960s – the early-1970s nor “the new edition” of Latin American populism, in spite of visible coincidence of some superficial features of the recent events and those phenomena with each other.

2) The “Left turn” is the direct effect of reaction of the large masses of people to devastating outcomes to neoliberal “reforms” of the 1990s. These “reforms” led to few positive and many negative effects. In particular, they “froze” pertinence of a big part of Latin American economies and societies to the world periphery. At the same time, this pertinence enabled to some Left/Left-centrist governments to redistribute rent attained due to commodities exports for financing the ever-extending social programmes.

3) The recently observable “Left turn” in Latin America is occurring in the conditions of democracy. The democratic institutions continue functioning in all countries where the Left and/or Left-centrist forces came to power, although these institutions underwent through serious modifications in some of them.

4) The “Left turn” encounters a lot of the internal obstacles to itself. A solution of acute social problems, including radical enlargement of the access of poor to education, succeeds to the changes of social structure and the rise of new needs. A discrepancy between the radical social modernisation and obsolete economic structure can further be aggravating. It will potentially lead to disappointment of people in the Left policy. The prospects of the Left in Latin America depend on, to a big degree, whether the Left will be New or not. Simultaneously, the Left political forces, particularly in such countries as Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela, suffer
from a shortage of qualified specialists (*la gente con corazones revolucionarios y cerebros tecnocráticos*). In this respect, the future of the Left in Brazil and Chile (in the latter case, the electoral victory of the Right-centrist forces notwithstanding) looks as more promising than in the called above countries.

5) There are the strong external obstacles to continue the Left policy, too. The social modernisation, which is in focus of the Left/Left-centrist governments’ policy in all countries under scrutiny, did not yet lead to changing position of these countries in the world system. They continue, except few of them, in particular, Brazil, to be mostly commodities suppliers. There is a risk to eternalise their pertinence to the world periphery, making the continental economies vulnerable to the world market fluctuations. The laws of capitalist accumulation in the global scale, substantially modified by the post-industrial trends and the rise of new economic powers in Asia, may not allow Latin America to overcome her pertinence to the world periphery. A temptation to continue financing the social programmes from incomes of the commodities exports can involve the Left into the social modernisation trap when their accomplishments in social development will be depreciated by the obsolete economic structure. It is impossible to exclude that the situation, which is well known in Latin America, cannot emerge again, now in the conditions of globalisation. Latin American countries governed by the Left risk to repeat the Argentine or Uruguayan tragic experience of the late XIX – the first decades of the XX century when the high standard of life even for ordinary people had been maintained due to the primary goods exports. The effects of such practice were described in a lot of books. Today, the similar practice threats to all “Left experiments” in the Western hemisphere.

On behalf of the working groups

C. Auroi, V. Krasilshchikov, I. Lévai, conveners.