Participatory research and participation in research.
A look between times and spaces from Latin America

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We acknowledge that participatory research existed in the past, and exists today within different traditions. We acknowledge the gestation of a “Latin American tradition” based on the pioneering experience of Orlando Fals Borda and Paulo Freire. This tradition of participatory research can only be understood in its origins and its currentness, referenced to the social and political contexts of the time when it was instituted in Latin America, between the 1970s and 1980s. It made much use of the European and North American traditions, but possesses specific characteristics, beginning with its historical connection to the popular social movements and their emancipatory social transformation projects. A few principles of convergence between different styles are presented and discussed.

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1. The social scenarios at the origin of the Latin American tradition of participatory research

Just as we see happen nowadays with the rise of proposals for emerging paradigms about the construction of knowledge through scientific practices, we believe that the multiple and differentiated experience to which we generally give the name of participatory research appears more or less at the same