

Vol. 9, nº 2 (November 2018-April 2019)

ARTICLES

Epistemic communities and their influence in international politics: updating of the concept - Miloslav Machoň, Jana Kohoutová, Jana Burešová, Jaroslava Bobková – 1-15

Theoretically thinking and rethinking the international order: the new emerging international institutions through neo-institutionalist lenses - Mario Guillermo Guerrero – 16-31

The impact factor as a legitimator of the scientific knowledge produced: a review of the literature – Tiago Lima Quintanilha, Gustavo Cardoso – 32-44

The confrontation between tradition and modernity: the proclamation of the Republic in Portugal - Luís Alves de Fraga – 45-59

Complex Interdependence and its contribution to a new approach to the work of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization – Gisela da Silva Guevara – 60-77

Colombia undergoing mutation: from the concept of post-conflict to the pragmatism of the conflict - César Augusto Niño González, Daniel Palma Álvarez – 78-92

Traditional religion in Guinea Bissau political culture - Claudia Favarato – 93-108

CRITICAL REVIEW

Entrepreneurship in Africa: An exploratory analysis with data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) - Renato Pereira, Redento Maia – 109-123

EPISTEMIC COMMUNITIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: UPDATING OF THE CONCEPT

Miloslav Machoň

miloslav.machon@vse.cz

He works in Jan Masaryk Centre for International Studies at the University of Economics (Prague, Czech Republic). He focuses on actors of political negotiations in the area of the international management of the outer space. Field of his specialization also encompasses problematics of science diplomacy.

Jana Kohoutová

jana.kohoutova@vse.cz

Jana Kohoutová does her research on the Faculty of International Relations at the University of Economics (Jan Masaryk Centre for International Studies, Prague, Czech Republic). She is focused on new forms of diplomacy and strategies of political negotiation.

Jana Burešová

jana.buresova@vse.cz

Jana Burešová is on the Faculty of International Relations at the University of Economics (Jan Masaryk Centre for International Studies, Prague, Czech Republic). She specialises in research of international norms and rules, human rights and security studies.

Jaroslava Bobková

jaroslava.bobkova@vse.cz

Jaroslava Bobková is on the Faculty of International Relations at the University of Economics (Jan Masaryk Centre for International Studies, Prague, Czech Republic). Her current research revolves around non-state actors in international relations.

Abstract

The decreasing importance of the state as a prominent actor in international politics has opened a debate about the rising importance of transnational relations. The research focuses on other actors, including epistemic communities. The paper traces previous research using the concept of epistemic communities and their influence in international politics and responds to its limitations. It uses the social constructivist approach for the elaboration of criteria of the professionalization process needed for recognition of epistemic communities. The paper also elaborates the concept of their influence in international regulation, including defining conditions of demand for epistemic communities' activities. The conditions include the introduction of complex problems with an element of uncertainty, acquisition of direct or indirect access to the political decision-making process in the arenas of international politics, and the ability of these arenas to execute international regulation. The paper also explains and elaborates the diffusion process of shared beliefs created by epistemic communities. The ability to diffuse shared beliefs supports modes of persuasion including statistical indicators, focusing events and narratives. Shared beliefs transfer via a process of institutional learning. Successful transfer means that shared beliefs become part of a political agenda. Utilization of the shared beliefs for creation, execution and enforcement of political decisions manifests the influence of epistemic communities in international politics.

Keywords

Epistemic community, Complexity, Uncertainty, Focusing event, Statistical indicator, Narrative, International regulation, Social constructivism

How to cite this article

Machoň M; Kohoutová, J; Burešová, J; Bobková, J (2018). "Epistemic communities and their influence in international politics: updating of the concept". *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, N.º 2, November 2018-April 2019. Consulted [online] on the date of the last visit, <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.9.2.1>

Article received on January 23, 2018 and accepted for publication on September 3, 2018





EPISTEMIC COMMUNITIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: UPDATING OF THE CONCEPT^{1 2}

Miloslav Machoň

Jana Kohoutová

Jana Burešová

Jaroslava Bobková

1. Introduction

The decreasing importance of the state as a prominent actor in international politics has opened a debate in international relations theory about the gradual transformation of international politics (Burton, 1967). The debate has focused the attention of international relations scholars on transnational relations, i.e. contacts and interactions across state boundaries that evade control by foreign policy institutions of governments (Keohane – Nye, 1971: 330-331). Transnational corporations have become new actors in international politics, because they influence the formation of North-South relations.

In the 1980s, social constructivism strengthened its position in international relations with its increased focus on the research of social and ideological structures rather than purely material factors (Kratochwil, 1989). At the same time, the intensity of bipolar conflict decreased, which has sparked the debate about the increasing importance and extent of interdependence (Rosenau, 1990: 11). Aside from states and transnational corporations, transnational advocacy networks (Finnemore – Sikkink, 1998), transnational civil society (Kaldor, 2003), transnational social movements (Tarrow, 2005) and criminal networks (Kahler, 2009) have become fully-fledged actors of international politics.

Networks of professionals called "*epistemic communities*" (Haas, 1990: 2) have also become actors of international politics. The previous research of epistemic communities has been based mostly on a positivist approach to social sciences (Greene, 2014). Only a couple of studies on epistemic communities have taken the social constructivist approach into consideration. However, these studies lack a complex theoretical and methodological approach. Instead, they focus only on partial aspects, such as formal communication among members of epistemic communities in journals (Toke, 1999) or the selection process of epistemic community members (Gjefsen, 2017) or they do not

¹ We would like to thank Jeremy Alan Garlick, PhD (University of Economics, Prague) for English language review. We also acknowledge Radka Druláková, PhD, Associate Professor and Štěpánka Zemanová, PhD, Associate Professor for suggestion with framing of this paper.

² This paper was published within the scope of internal research project at the University of Economics, Prague "IGS 77/2017 Nation Branding and Care about Country Name via New Forms of Diplomacy".



acknowledge the existence of common culture in an organization associating an epistemic community (Bueger, 2015).

This paper responds to the limitations of the previous research by clarifying the concept of epistemic communities and the influence of these communities in international politics. The paper proceeds in five steps. First, it presents the concept of epistemic communities introduced by Peter M. Haas and the main points of its critics. Second, the paper elaborates on the concept of epistemic communities using the social constructivist model introduced by Cross that emphasizes the presence of professionalization in governmental and non-governmental organizations. The social constructivism approach is also used for the study of epistemic communities' influence in international regulation.

Third, the paper develops aspects of complexity and uncertainty. Fourth, conditions of epistemic communities' access to decision-making processes in international politics arenas and the ability of these arenas to execute international regulation are discussed. Fifth, the presentation strategies of epistemic communities are specified and qualitative operationalization of their influence in international regulation clarified. Among presentation strategies the paper has included focusing events, statistical indicators and framing beliefs through narratives. For qualitative operationalization of the influence, the concept of institutional learning is applied.

2. The concept of epistemic communities

The research on networks of professionals has drawn inspiration from studies published by Foucault (1970; 1980). In compliance with them, knowledge is based on the relationship between the historically- and culturally-based social rules of "episteme" (Foucault, 1970: 285-287). The epistemic function is to determine adequate resources and methods for organizing knowledge.

Ruggie (1975: 567-570) further developed Foucault's epistemic concept by generalizing the activity of epistemic communities. According to Ruggie (1975: 569-570), epistemic communities participate in the institutionalization of policies adopted in international political arenas for they form social reality by explaining the relationship between causes and consequences.

Drawing on previous authors, Haas (1992: 3-5) defined the epistemic community as a network or as a set of relations between professionals with a recognized degree of expertise and competence in a particular thematic domain (Carayannis et al., 2011: 132). Within this network, (1) a set of normative, value and (2) causal beliefs, (3) the concept of validity and (4) political belief are shared. The recognized degree of expertise and competence enables this network of professionals to have an authoritative claim to assess the state of knowledge in a given domain (Haas, 1992: 7-14). According to Haas (2001: 11579-11580), the shared criteria of the epistemic community for assessing the level of expertise are an essential feature that significantly differentiates epistemic communities from other actors influencing political decisions (e. g. social movements and interest groups – Haas, 1992: 17-19).

Despite the high degree of elaboration, the concept of epistemic communities and their influence in international politics has been criticized several times. Criticism explicitly challenged the criteria by which Haas defined the concept of epistemic communities



(Dunlop, 2000: 140-141). Haas put a great deal of emphasis on shared normative and causal beliefs, along with shared procedures for determining accuracy.

However, the criteria do not outline the relationship between the internal cohesion of the epistemic community and its ability to diffuse shared normative and causal beliefs among other actors of international politics (Waarden – Drahos, 2002: 930). Moreover, the criteria do not specify the precise conditions for admission of new members to an organization associating epistemic communities (Lorenz-Meyer, 2010: not paged). In addition to that, Haas did not allow for the possibility of change of these criteria (Dunlop, 2000: 41). However, this change occurs in the process of negotiation that takes place within the epistemic community and in its interaction with other actors (Sebenius, 1992: 324-325).

The theoretical framework must take into account the fact that the epistemic community is an active international policy actor interacting with other actors of international politics (Dunlop, 2012: 234). Therefore, the conditions for the entry of epistemic communities into the arena of politics should be specified in detail during the revision (Håkanson, 2010: 12-17).

The way of articulation and diffusion of the political beliefs of the epistemic community also requires more specification. It should be based on the analysis of used communication symbols, including statistical outputs such as image and graphical representations. Thus, the concept of epistemic communities should be broadened to encompass the findings of social constructivism. As such, its analytical capacity would be broadened and a wider spectrum of international networks might be included in the research program of epistemic communities (Zito, 2001: 600-601).

3. Professionalization in governmental and non-governmental organisations

The weak points of the Haas's concept of epistemic communities have been addressed by Cross (2013: 147-159). Her revision of the original model puts emphasis on professionalization which offers more concrete criteria for identification of an organisation that gathers epistemic communities and for judging their influence on other actors of international relations (see Table 1). Her concept builds on the assumption that an epistemic community is a functioning social mechanism which coordinates the activity of its members (Cross, 2013: 149-150; Tarko, 2015: 65-66). The capability of an epistemic community to create shared normative and causal beliefs and to persuade other actors of international politics of them through a process of institutional learning depends primarily on the degree of internal cohesion of the organisation gathering the epistemic community rather than just the degree of recognised expertise and its governmental (or non-governmental) character (Carayannis et al., 2011: 138-139).

Cross is also the first to study the preconditions of an epistemic community for its adaptation and integrity (Schein, 2010: 17-18; Cross, 2013: 150-151). Adaptation and integrity influence the efficiency level of activity of the epistemic community and its relevance to other actors of international relations. An epistemic community is relevant and its activities efficient when the ways of perception, thinking and position-taking on problems that disrupt the adaptation and integrity of the epistemic community are transferred between the individual members of that community in the right way.



Cross (2013: 149) calls the social interaction between members of epistemic communities “*professionalization*”, or a special kind of it that establishes, refines, and re-establishes the role and status of a given profession. Professionalization reinforces internal cohesion of an epistemic community for it contributes to formulation, diffusion and adoption of ideas within the epistemic community (Cross, 2015: 91-93). This process exists within the organisation gathering the epistemic communities. In its framework, common visions, shared standards and the professional identity itself are formulated and modified.

On the national level, epistemic communities consist of professionals working in different institutions, including government, universities, private sector entities or non-governmental organisations (Carayannis et al., 2011: 131-132). On the international level, these professionals meet within international governmental and non-governmental organisations. In doing so, they create transnational networks with a degree of recognised knowledge and expertise in a particular domain (Carayannis et al., 2011: 134; Cross, 2013: 150).

Identification of an epistemic community thus requires an assessment of whether there is (in international organisations) the professionalization process that is delimited by three criteria: (1) common culture, (2) selections of members and opportunities for their further professional development, and (3) meeting frequency and quality.

Table 1: Criteria for recognition of epistemic communities by Haas and Cross

Peter M. Haas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ normative and value beliefs ⇒ causal beliefs ⇒ notions of validity ⇒ policy enterprise
Mai'a K. Davis Cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ common culture (purpose, symbolism, heritage, identity, and consensus) ⇒ selections of new members and their further professional development ⇒ personal meetings

Source: authors on the basis of the above identified used sources

Common culture comprises five elements (Schein, 2010: 14-16; Cross, 2013: 150-151). The first of them is the shared purpose, which are the common publicly stated values, for the realization of which the epistemic community struggles through its activities. It is through fulfilment of these publicly stated values that the epistemic community achieves scientific progress. It consists in the accumulation of scientific truths, which are a part of logical models representing scientific theories and which help us to realize, understand and explain phenomena of the surrounding world (Fano – Macchia, 2015: 65, 72).

The second element of common culture is the shared symbolism that consists of a set of characteristics of the epistemic community. It is imprinted in official materials, including buildings, office equipment or presentation on the internet. The third element is the common heritage which the epistemic community passes to next generations. It is



created in conformity with democratic values and it becomes a socio-economic contribution to the next generations (Lacey, 2016: 14).

The fourth element of common culture lies in shared identity. These are the ideological principles and mental models that determine the way of perception, thinking and acting of members of the epistemic community. The common ideological principles and mental models are based on neutrality, impartiality and resistance (Lacey, 2016: 2-3).

Lastly, the fifth element of common culture is the shared focus on reaching consensus (Tarko, 2015: 70). A consensus-driven process represents an alternative to voting and the final phase of deliberation, in which members of the epistemic community formulate and modify common visions, shared standards, and the professional identity itself.

According to Cross (2013: 150-151), professionalization is reinforced also by *selection of new members* and professional development of the current ones. Both types are dependent on the size of contribution to scientific progress and the consequent level of prestige (Tarko, 2015: 71-72). Contribution to scientific progress is assessed in a self-evaluative process. It is a kind of communication that is used, despite of its sizeable criticism (cf. Binswanger, 2014), for evaluation of professional quality and methodological admissibility of a broad range of epistemic communities' activities (Lee et al., 2013: 2-3, 10-12). The evaluation respects the principles of neutrality, impartiality, autonomy, methodology, cognitive criteria and resistance to outer influences. This reinforces its reliability from which is consequently derived the level of prestige and contribution to scientific progress which takes on the form of a quotation index (Lee et al., 2013: 4). An intensive professional preparation equally contributes to reinforcement of professionalization (Cross, 2015: 150-151).

The third element of the professionalised epistemic community is frequent long "face-to-face" meetings of individual members (Cross, 2013: 151). At these meetings, the members of the epistemic community strengthen shared professional norms, such as internal procedures, protocol, and standards of consensus-building, which is done in a less formal way than a conversation hosted by journal papers (Tarko, 2015: 74). During the meetings of epistemic communities, also informal (behind-the-scenes) meetings in smaller groups take place and enable a more intensive socialisation and strengthening of personal relations.

The reinforcement of shared professional norms can be considered effective when the cores of problems are dealt with in the formal and informal meetings and when the personal meetings are frequent (Cross, 2013: 150-151; Cross, 2015: 92). The meetings of epistemic communities' members are also a kind of a ritual where important events are recalled, awards granted, and results of professional activities of individual members announced. It is also the place where friendly relations and commitment to common objectives, or "*esprit de corps*", are reinforced (Cross, 2011: 28; Cross, 2015: 91-93).

The development of *esprit de corps* is more intensive when individual members of an epistemic community used to cooperate together in a professional way before or when they used to hold the same working positions in different periods of time. Due to that, the members do consider themselves as "*one team*" (Cross, 2011: 29; Cross, 2015: 92).



4. Complexity and problems uncertainty

In international politics, demand for activities of epistemic communities tends to rise when complex problems with an element of uncertainty arise (Adler – Haas, 1992: 373, 375; Cross, 2015: 92). A complex problem is a problem where a cause-effect relationship is difficult to identify (Renn, 2015: 55-56). Complexity of problems in international politics is reinforced by globalisation (Turner – Holton, 2015: 14-15). Globalisation is a multidimensional planetary social process in the framework of which the number and quality of interdependent relations between cultures, commodities, information and people increase.

During political negotiations on complex problems of international politics, the causes and effects of these problems are dealt with (see Table 2). Impact of mutual relations and dependence are taken into consideration in the discussion. Mutual relations concern the relation between causes, effects and the problems of international politics. Discussion of mutual relations assesses whether two or more mutually independent causes lead to a problem of international politics and whether this problem does not produce two or more independent effects.

On the other hand, discussion of mutual dependence focuses only on the relation between causes and effects of problems in international politics, though not only on problems alone. The evaluation consists in examination of mutual influence between causes and effects of problems of international politics. When discussion of mutual relations and mutual dependence is combined, dilemmas occur. Their solution does not get by without coordination of mutually different actors of different identities and interests (Renn – Klinke, 2012: 61; Renn, 2015: 55-56).

Table 2: Complexity and problems uncertainty

COMPLEXITY	Difficulty in identification and quantification of cause and effect
	Widening and deepening of the influence of globalisation
	Mutual relations and dependence
UNCERTAINTY	Interferential effects
	Variability of problems
	Lack of knowledge
	Indeterminacy of problems

Source: author on the basis of identified used sources

Political actors have limited or even no knowledge of the element of uncertainty. This makes it more difficult to assess the expected positive and negative consequences of a political decision (Adler-Haas, 1992: 373, 375, Cross, 2013: 151-153). Subjective or objective lack of knowledge is a permanent part of international politics which goes even beyond the situations called "crisis". It exists in almost all of its areas, including political negotiations on global pandemics, mass migration, the way to fight pirates, or to slow down climate change even beyond the situations which are called "crisis" (Hay, 1999: 317-335). The lack of knowledge occurs if the problem shows at least one of the



uncertainty characteristics - interferential effects, variability of problems, lack of knowledge, and indeterminacy of problems (Renn – Klinke, 2012: 61-62, Türkşen – Özkan, 2014: 160).

The first two characteristics of uncertainty – variability and interferential effects – are subjective components of uncertainty. This arises as a result of faulty measurements that can be narrowed down or almost eliminated by improving the level of existing knowledge and assessment methods (Renn – Klinke, 2012: 61-62). Variability arises in a situation where the problem creates a different relationship with each political actor, leading to mutual disagreements. Interferential effects are related to the overlapping of the problem with other problems and the occurrence of systematic and random errors that emerge during problem evaluation by modelling, statistical methods, or experiments.

The remaining characteristics of the uncertainty - lack of knowledge and indeterminacy of the problem – are objective characteristics of uncertainty (Renn – Klinke, 2012: 61-62). Lack of knowledge is associated with a lack of information about the nature of the problem or a lack of information about the occurrence of a harmful event and its possible consequences. Indeterminacy of the problem lies in the presence of a random event and the inclusion of a suboptimal number of variables into the problem evaluation. An objective component of uncertainty may be, in contrast to its subjective one, only partially eliminated, but not entirely removed by the improvement of existing knowledge and evaluation methods (Türkşen – Özkan, 2014: 160).

5. Epistemic Communities' access to International Regulation

To diffuse beliefs among other actors in international politics, epistemic communities must first acquire direct or indirect access to the political decision-making process in the arena of international politics (Adler – Haas, 1992: 375-378; Carayannis et al., 2011: 135). Direct access is understood as involving members of an epistemic community in political decision-making and in transferring responsibility for creating and implementing policies to members of epistemic communities or the epistemic community as such.

Organizations unifying epistemic communities can gain direct access by acquiring a consultative status, while individuals from epistemic communities can gain direct access to the decision-making process in the policy arenas by getting long-term jobs or by concluding one-time consultative contracts (Adler - Haas, 1992: 376, Carayannis et al., 2011: 135). Organizing professional symposia during political negotiations and the formulation of statements on political issues in professional studies is an example of indirect access by epistemic communities to the decision-making process in policy arenas.

Within the international policy arena, international political decisions are negotiated and implemented (Webber – Smith, 2014: 30). Their function is to exercise international regulation that represents a deliberate and direct intervention in activities of actors in a particular area of international politics through the making of a set of rules, norms, principles and decision-making procedures (see Table 3 / Krasner, 1982: 186, Koop – Lodge, 2017: 105). The rules are understood as abstract objects that exist independently of human activities outside of space and time and guide behaviour (Hage, 2015: 14). Human activity in the form of an expression of consent by an individual or community decides whether these rules are valid (Sainsbury – Tye, 2013: 42).



Table 3: Elements of international regulation

⇒ Rules
⇒ Norms
⇒ Principles
⇒ Decision-making procedures

Source: authors on the basis of identified used sources

The rules that define acceptable or forbidden manners of behaviour using a value-based reason are called norms (Hage, 2015: 14; Wang-Wang, 2015: 200). The value-based reason takes the form of a causal or guiding relationship (Hage, 2011: 156-157). The causal relationship explains the connection between the cause and consequence of the relationship between two or more events or between events and the mental state. In contrast, the guiding relationship defines the connection between events and acceptable or forbidden behaviour or between the mental state and the acceptable or forbidden manners of behaviour (Hage, 2011: 157-158). The principles are rules that alike norms create acceptable or forbidden behaviour using moral reason (Bix, 2015: 135-142). Moral reason is distinguished from norm assessment reason since its validity must be accepted - if possible - by all members of a particular group or society (Grabowski, 2015: 344).

Decision-making procedures are also elements of international regulation. They represent a process of negotiation during which political actors argue about formulation, execution and enforcement of political decisions (Krasner, 1982: 186; Wu et al., 2012: 50-51; Ciot, 2014: 64-65). Their form depends on the character of active actors participating in the political arena – particularly on their perceptions, preferences, attitudes to the problem and their capacity of power. An actor can be an individual or group of individuals that represent mentioned political and bureaucratic elites and has full responsibility for fulfilling their political goals. Within the negotiating process, they take up a particular position which affects their bargaining approach or, more precisely, their influence on a solution to an international political problem (Ciot, 2014: 107-111).

Actors' perceptions, preferences and positions to the problem are related to broader national interests, including security issues, which embrace values that are crucial to the actor's survival and its economic prosperity (Webber – Smith, 2014: 39-42). The form of a decision-making procedure dealing with a particular problem is determined by complexity and uncertainty levels. These are directly linked to an actor's ability to foresee consequences and outcomes of adopted political decisions (Wu et al., 2012: 53-54). If he is able to anticipate them in advance and supposing there is consensus on the development of a political decision between all of the relevant actors, their decision-making is considered to be rational, since they contemplate maximization of interests and values (Wu et al., 2012: 53).

Contrarily, if a given decision-making process is pressed for time and an actor's ability to forestall the consequences of a particular political decision is limited, decisions of actors active in the political arena depend on the given conflict, and their own ability to negotiate and make a compromise. In this case, the desired outcome would be successive



comparisons between proposed amendments and decisions that have been previously carried out and enforced. It usually indicates marginal alteration of the current state. The maximisation of individual goals is objectionable.

Regarding this marginal change, political decisions correspond with discharging of interests and values of individual actors rather than with the technologically most efficient problem-solving method (Wu et al., 2012: 53-54). Provided there is apparently high uncertainty between actors regarding decision consequences and there is a high number of actors involved in the process, the final political decision will be in accordance with the temporary goals and values of the actor or group of actors having the biggest power potential at their disposal (Wu et al., 2012: 54).

6. Diffusing beliefs of epistemic communities

Epistemic communities use modes of persuasion when introducing a problem, and their ability to diffuse shared normative and causal beliefs among other actors of international politics grows (see Table 4). Modes of persuasion include statistical indicators, focusing events and framing beliefs by narratives. Statistical indicators as an exact method demonstrate accuracy, correctness and objectivity through fine measuring (Stone, 2011: 184, 197). Before that, the data are sorted by analogy into two groups. The one having substantial characteristics of the problem becomes the subject of measurement, while the other one with inessential features will be omitted (Stone, 2016: 161). By commencing this process, the epistemic community indicates interest in pursuing further development which is related to the rising importance of the problem (Kingdon, 2014: 90-94; Stone 2016: 166). The course of categorization depends on the judgment of an actor who assesses the problem and on a form of created categories which is conditional on social culture in a particular place and time (Stone, 2016: 162).

Table 4: Modes of persuasion of epistemic communities

⇒ statistical indicators
⇒ focusing events
⇒ narratives

Source: author on the basis of identified used sources

Epistemic communities can diffuse their beliefs more easily by expressing the nature of the problem through figures. It expresses the common attributes of a particular problem and unifies them into groups (Stone, 2011: 194). Furthermore, diffusion is facilitated also by identification of problem magnitude through several statistical indexes from different sources (Birkland, 2011: 192-193). The ability of epistemic communities to do that is associated with the particular interpretation of indexes dealing with the problem (Kingdon, 2014: 93-94). If the statistical indexes are related to a crucial argument supporting adoption of a political decision, it increases (Pearson, 2010: 344-346).

Focusing events also significantly augment the ability of an epistemic community to diffuse its beliefs (Birkland, 2011: 180). They symbolise triggers that transform negligible



problems to ones that require fundamental decisions. They increase not only the probability of a long-lasting problem remaining on the political agenda but also the possibility of finding a solution to the given problem.

Their common characteristics are suddenness and relative rareness (Birkland – Warnement, 2013: 4). They cause consequences that are focused on an exact place and time and cover a large realm. They bring negative externalities to the immediate attention of political actors.

Narratives are another option for epistemic communities to diffuse their beliefs among other actors of international politics. These communication means comprise of four elements: the frame of the narrative, characters, storyline and lessons to be learned (Jones et al., 2014: 5). By its creation, the narrative is framed into a particular context (indisputable legal and institutional principles, commonly known and widely respected facts relating to specific geographical area – Jones et al. 2014: 6).

The characters of a given narrative as anthropomorphic abstractions of specific context do not have to be just persons. However, they always have human characteristics or appearance (Stone, 2011: 166-169). Characters play three different roles: heroes, if they solve a political problem; villains, if they cause one; and victims, if they are aggrieved by it. The storyline defines the relation between the characters and the story. It can be found all over the story.

The denouement of a given storyline can be detected by the alteration of problem-solving and by use of power. The second option can lead to both gain/loss of control over a political problem (Stone, 2011: 159-168). The story ends either with a moral which constitutes a draft of a political decision and strengthens the current situation, or information about uncertainty that requires thorough specification of a problem (McBeth et al., 2012: 163-164).

Epistemic communities diffuse their beliefs among other actors of international politics via a process of institutional learning (Carayannis et al., 2011: 138-140). Provided transfer of beliefs is successful, they are taken into consideration and beliefs gradually become part of a political agenda (Birkland, 2011: 169-170). An agenda comprises a list of problems and their solutions which are debated by actors of international politics in the international political arena. In practice, it means that a given problem has caught actors' attention. After a problem is solved, it is pulled out of the political agenda. Supposing actors utilize shared beliefs for formulation, execution and enforcement of political decisions during this process, epistemic communities' influence is manifested in a particular international political agenda, more precisely in international politics (Dunlop, 2012: 238-240).

7. Conclusion

This paper traced previous research using the concept of epistemic communities and their influence in international politics and responded to its limitations. The paper used a social constructivist approach for elaboration criteria of the professionalization process needed for recognition of epistemic communities. It nominally concretized and elaborated elements of common culture, the selection process of new members, possibilities of their further professional development and the importance of frequent meetings of individual members.



It also elaborated the concept of their influence in international regulation. The paper specified conditions of demand for activities of epistemic communities. Among these conditions is the introduction of complex problems with an element of uncertainty, acquisition of direct or indirect access to the political decision-making process in the arenas of international politics and the ability of these arenas to execute international regulation.

Finally, the paper explained and elaborated the diffusion process of shared beliefs created by epistemic communities. It is diffused between other actors of international politics by modes of persuasion that are comprised of three main attributes: statistical indicators, focusing events and narratives. Shared beliefs are transferred between epistemic communities and other actors via a process of institutional learning. The process is considered successful when they become part of the political agenda. Utilization of the shared beliefs for formulation, execution and enforcement of political decisions is manifested in the influence of epistemic communities in international politics. Theoretical framework presented here opens the horizon for doing case study research on different specific areas, such as environmental and climate diplomacy, trade agreements, monetary unions reforms and many others.

References

- Adler, Emanuel – Haas, Peter (1992). Conclusion: Epistemic Communities, World Order, And The Creation of a Reflective Research Program. *International Organization*. (46)1: 367-390.
- Binswanger, Mathias (2014). Excellence by Nonsense: The Competition for Publications in Modern Science, in: Bartling, Sönke – Friesike, Sascha (eds.), *Opening Science*. Springer, 49-72.
- Birkland, Thomas – Warnement, Megan (2013). Defining, Explaining, and Testing the Role of Focusing Events in Agenda Change: 30 Years of Focusing Event Theory [online]. *APSA 2013 Annual Meeting Paper*. [15. 1. 2018]. Available at https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2300441.
- Birkland, Thomas (2011). *An Introduction to the Public Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making*. Armonk: Sharpe.
- Bix, Brian (2015). Rules and normativity in law, in: Araszkievicz, Michał – Banas, Paweł – Gizbert-Studnicki, Tomasz – Pleszka, Krzysztof (eds.), *Problems of Normativity, Rules and Rule-Following*. Springer, 125-146.
- Bueger, Christian (2015). Making things known: epistemic practices, the United Nations, and the translation of piracy. *International Political Sociology*. (9)1: 1-18.
- Burton John (1967). *International Relations: A General Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Carayannis, Elias – Pirzadeh, Ali – Popescu, Denisa (2011). *Institutional learning and knowledge transfer across epistemic communities: new tools of global governance*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Ciot, Melania-Gabriela (2014). *Negotiation and Foreign Policy Decision Making*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.



- Cross, Mai'a (2011). *Security Integration in Europe: How Knowledge-Based Networks are Transforming the European Union*. University of Michigan Press.
- Cross, Mai'a (2013). Rethinking Epistemic Communities Twenty Years Later. *Review of International Studies*. (39)1: 137-160.
- Cross, Mai'a (2015). The Limits of Epistemic Communities: EU Security Agencies. *Politics and Governance*. (3)1: 90-100.
- Dunlop, Claire (2000). Epistemic Communities: A Reply to Toke. *Politics*. (20)3: 137-144.
- Dunlop, Claire (2012). Epistemic Communities, in: Araral, Eduardo – Fritzen, Scott – Howlett, Michael – Ramesh, Michael – Wu, Xun (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Public Policy*. Routledge, 229-243.
- Fano, Vincenzo – Macchia, Giovanni (2015). Scientific Progress. in: Alai, Mario – Buzzoni, Marco – Tarozzi, Gino (eds.), *Science Between Truth and Ethical Responsibility*. Springer, 65-78.
- Foucault, Michel (1970). *The order of things: An archaeology of the human sciences*. New York: Pantheon.
- Foucault, Michel (1980). *Power/knowledge*. New York: Pantheon.
- Gjefsen, Mads (2017). Crafting the expert-advocate: training and recruitment efforts in the carbon dioxide capture and storage community. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*. (30)3: 1-24.
- Grabowski, Andrzej (2015). The Validity of Moral Rules and Principles as a Legal Problem. in: Araszkiwicz, Michał – Banas, Paweł – Gizbert-Studnicki, Tomasz – Pleszka, Krzysztof (eds.), *Problems of Normativity, Rules and Rule-Following*. Springer, 341-349.
- Greene, Jack (2014). The Upside and Downside of the 'Police Science' Epistemic Community. *Policing*. (8)4: 379-392.
- Haas, Peter (1990). *Saving the Mediterranean: The Politics of International Environmental Cooperation*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Haas, Peter (1992). Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination: Introduction. *International Organization*. (46)1: 1-35.
- Haas, Peter (2001). Policy Knowledge: Epistemic Communities. in: Baltes, Paul – Neil, Smelser (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. Oxford: Pergamon, 11578-11586.
- Hage, Jaap (2015). Separating rules from normativity. in: Araszkiwicz, Michał – Banas, Paweł – Gizbert-Studnicki, Tomasz – Pleszka, Krzysztof (eds.), *Problems of normativity, rules and rule-following*. Springer, 13-29.
- Håkanson, Lars (2010). The firm as an epistemic community: the knowledge-based view revisited. *Industrial and Corporate Change*. (19)6: 1801-1828.
- Hay, Colin (1999). Crisis and The Structural Transformation of The State: Interrogating The Process Of Change. *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations*. (1)3: 317-344.
- Jones, Michel – McBeth, Mark – Shanahan, Elizabeth (2014). Introducing the narrative



policy framework. in: Jones, Michel – McBeth, Mark – Shanahan, Elizabeth (eds.), *The Science of Stories*. Springer, 1-25.

Kahler, Miles (2009). Collective action and clandestine Networks: The case of al Qaeda. in: Kahler, Miles (ed.), *Networked politics: Agency, power, and governance*, New York: Cornell University Press, 103-124.

Kaldor, Mary (2003): The Idea Of Global Civil Society. *International Affairs*, (79)3: 583-593.

Keohane, Robert – Nye, Joseph (1971). Transnational Relations And World Politics: An Introduction. *International Organization*. (25)3: 329–349.

Kingdon, John (2014): *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies*. London: Pearson Education.

Koop, Christel – Lodge, Martin (2017). What is regulation? An interdisciplinary concept analysis. *Regulation & Governance*. (11)1: 95–108.

Krasner, Stephen (1982). Structural causes and regime consequences: regimes as intervening variables. *International Organization*. (36) 02: 185–205.

Kratochwil, Friedrich (1989). *Norms, Rules and Decisions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lacey, Hugh (2016). Science, respect for nature, and human well-being: democratic values and the responsibilities of scientists today. *Foundations of Science*. (21)1: 51–67.

Lee, Carole – Sugimoto, Cassidy – Zhang, Guo – Cronin, Blaise (2013). Bias in peer review. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*. (64)1: 2–17.

Lorenz-Meyer, Dagmar (2010). Possibilities of enacting and researching epistemic communities. *Sociological Research Online*. (15) 2: 1–13.

McBeth, Mark – Shanahan, Elizabeth – Arrandale Anderson, Molly – Rose, Barbara (2012). Policy story or gory story? Narrative policy framework analysis of Buffalo field campaign's YouTube videos. *Policy & Internet*. (4)3–4: 159–183.

Pearson, Robert (2010). *Statistical persuasion: How to collect, analyze, and present data... accurately, honestly, and persuasively*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Renn, Ortwin – Klinke, Andreas – Asselt, Marjolein van (2012). *Complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity in inclusive risk governance*. Collingwood: CSIRO Publishing.

Renn, Ortwin (2015). Risk. In: Pattberg, Philipp – Zelli, Fariborz (eds.): *Encyclopedia of Global Environmental Governance and Politics*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, s. 53–60.

Ruggie, John (1975). International Responses To Technology: Concepts And Trends. *International Organization*. (29)3: 557–583.

Sainsbury, Mark – Tye, Michael (2013). *Seven Puzzles of Thought: And How to Solve Them: An Originalist Theory of Concepts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sebenius, James (1992). Challenging conventional explanations of international cooperation: negotiation analysis and the case of epistemic communities. *International Organization*. 46(1): 323–365.



Schein, Edgar (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Stone, Deborah (2011). *Policy paradox: The art of political decision making*. New York: WW Norton and Company.

Stone, Deborah (2016). Quantitative analysis as narrative. In: Bevir, Mark – Rhodes, Arthur William (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*. Routledge, 157–170.

Tarko, Vlad (2015). Polycentric structure and informal norms: competition and coordination within the scientific community. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*. (28)1: 63–80.

Tarrow, Sidney (2005). *The New Transnational Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Toke, Dave (1999). Epistemic Communities And Environmental Groups. *Politics*. (19)2: 97–102.

Türkşen, Burhan – Özkan, Ibrahim (2014). Recent Advancement in Fuzzy System: Full Type 2 Fuzziness. *Chaos and Complexity Theory in World Politics*. IGI Global, 158–168.

Turner, Bryan – Holton, Robert (2015). Theories of Globalization: Issues and origins. In: Turner, Bryan – Holton, Robert (eds.). *The Routledge International Handbook of Globalization Studies*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1–22.

Waarden, Frans van – Drahos, Michaela (2002). Courts and (Epistemic) Communities in The Convergence Of Competition Policies. *Journal of European Public Policy*. (9)6: 913–934.

Wang, Peng-Hsiang – Wang, Linton (2015). Rules as Reason-Giving Facts: A Difference-Making-Based Account of the Normativity of Rules. In: Araszkievicz, Michał – Banas, Paweł – Gizbert-Studnicki, Tomasz – Pleszka, Krzysztof (eds.): *Problems of Normativity, Rules and Rule-Following*. Springer, s. 199–213.

Webber, Mark – Smith, Michael (2014). *Foreign policy in a transformed world*. London: Routledge.

Wu, Xun – Ramesh, Martin – Howlett, Michael – Fritzen, Scott (2012). *The public policy primer: Managing the policy process*. London: Routledge.

Zito, Anthony (2001). Epistemic Communities, Collective Entrepreneurship and European Integration. *Journal of European Public Policy*. (8)4: 585–603.

THEORETICALLY THINKING AND RETHINKING THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER: THE NEW EMERGING INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS THROUGH NEO- INSTITUTIONALIST LENSES

Mario Guillermo Guerrero

mgg0921@gmail.com

Ph.D. student in Political Science at the Universidad Nacional de San Martín (UNSAM, Argentina).
Assistant Guest Professor at the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo (UNCuyo).

Abstract

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the emergence of various institutionalization processes of new informal institutional spaces (such as BRICS, IBSA, BASIC or P5+1) has been observed internationally, but little has been studied in depth. Accordingly, this paper seeks to rethink, through a theoretical approach standing between Political Science and International Relations, the theoretical concepts of neo-institutionalism in order to make a new critical theoretical-analytical contribution that accounts for the particular characteristics of such phenomena. We believe that it is of interest for the study of international institutions to expand the current field of analysis in order to explain how the emergence of these new institutions occurred and how they interact with already established formal institutions. This article examines two traditional forms of neo-institutionalism (rational choice neo-institutionalism and historical neo-institutionalism), making explicit what the starting points of each are and what elements each can contribute to the study. At the end of the work, a dialogue is held between the perspectives that allow us to establish a theoretical analytical criterion to study these new phenomena.

Keywords

International Institutions, Neo-institutionalism, New Emerging Institutions, International Cooperation, International Organizations

How to cite this article

Guerrero, Mario Guillermo (2018). "Theoretically thinking and rethinking the international order: the new emerging international institutions through neo-institutionalist lenses". *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, N.º 2, November 2018-April 2019. Consulted [online] on the date of the last visit, <https://doi.org/10.26619//1647-7251.9.2.2>

Article received on December 20, 2017 and accepted for publication on September 1, 2018





THEORETICALLY THINKING AND RETHINKING THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER: THE NEW EMERGING INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS THROUGH NEO- INSTITUTIONALIST LENSES¹

Mario Guillermo Guerrero²

The literature devoted to the study of international institutions is very prolific (Cox & Jacobson, 1973; Hass, 1964; Keohane & Nye, 1989; Martin & Simmons, 1998). However, the greatest criticism has been the fact that international institutions are understood as synonymous of international organizations and do not consider the study of existing informal international institutions that are in constant interaction with formal institutions (Albaret, 2013; Reinalda, 2013; Simmons & Martin, 2002). Much has been discussed about the cases of the United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), but the emergence of new international institutions in the 21st century such as the BRICS³, the G20⁴ or the P5 + 1⁵, which have diffuse temporal horizons, high levels of informality and flexibility, has been little studied (Albaret, 2013). In historical terms, the particularity of such institutions is that they arise at a time when large armed confrontations that shook the international sphere, such as the world wars did, did not occur. Still, critical events took place which questioned the power of Ikenberry's victorious States (2001). Examples include the attack on the twin towers in 2001, the establishment of large terrorist organizations as important international actors, such as the Islamic State (ISIS) or Al Qaeda, which came to dispute the state-centric dominance of the international arena, or the 2008-2009 economic and financial crisis that exposed the main weaknesses of the economic-financial governance in force (Guerrero, 2017a, 2017b; Patiño Villa, 2012). The informal institutions discussed here have not only emerged from outside the existing formal institutional structure, but

¹ The translation of this article was funded by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia - as part of OBSERVARE project with the reference UID/CPO/04155/2013, with the aim of publishing Janus.net. Text translated by Carolina Peralta.

² The author would like to thank Carlos Acuña, Jorge Battagliano, Julio Leonidas Aguirre, Jacqueline Behrend, Yesica Kolliker, and Lucio Marinsalda Pastor, as well as the anonymous reviewers, for their comments to previous drafts of this work.

³ Institutional space composed of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, which emerged in 2001 within the framework of the Goldman Sachs' research programmes but which, over time, was appropriated by the member countries as their own space, organizing their own summits since 2009.

⁴ It is a forum created by developing and emerging countries that seek to discuss issues related to international economic-financial cooperation. The member countries are: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States (the latter known as the G8); together with Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, and the European Union.

⁵ It is an *ad hoc* dialogue table established in 2006 for the purpose of negotiating the nuclear issue with Iran. It was composed of the five permanent members (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States) with Germany, hence the acronym.



also their main engineers were emerging or developing countries. This article seeks to present a theoretical approach standing between Political Science and International Relations. We believe that it is of interest for the study of international institutions to expand the current field of analysis through the recovery of the neo-institutionalist tradition in order to explain how the emergence of these new institutions occurred and how they interact with already established formal institutions.

Interrogating ourselves on this point is to ask ourselves why the emerging States seek to build these informal institutions and how they carry out their establishment. To do this, it is necessary to reflect on the potentialities and weaknesses that neo-institutionalism presents as a theoretical tool to address the topic suggested here. This paper seeks to examine two traditional neo-institutionalisms, rational choice neo-institutionalism (from now on, RCN) and historical neo-institutionalism (from now on, HN), making explicit what the starting points of each are and what elements each can contribute to the study. At the end of the article, a dialogue is held between the perspectives that allow us to establish a theoretical analytical criterion to study these new phenomena.

I. Stirring in the box of conceptual tools of neo-institutionalisms: strengths and weaknesses

It is difficult to identify with precision the date when the institutional tradition is born. To determine which was the first work that addressed this theoretical line is very complicated, since it is possible to identify various studies capable of being considered "classical" in the study of institutions. Books such as Plato's "Laws" or Aristotle's famous study of the "Athenian Constitutions" are simple examples of how far one can go in an attempt to identify the roots of this theoretical tradition. According to Rhodes, "[old] institutionalism is one of the main pillars of political science that focuses on the formal rules, procedures and organizations of a system of government. Its methodology has an institutional-descriptive, formal-legal and historical-comparative nature, uses historians' and jurists' techniques, and aims to explain both the relationship between structure and democracy and how rules, procedures and formal organizations determine or not the political behaviour." (1997: 65).

However, with the passage of time, the consolidation of Political Science as a scientific discipline aroused among its scholars a growing interest in delimiting with greater precision the theoretical scope of the theoretical perspectives that composed it, thus obliging the successive discipline research to be (or at least seek to be) more precise about what they wanted to study and how they would carry out this study. At this point, the intervention of behaviourism played a very important role, marking a before and an after in the way the standards of scientificity in Political Science were conceived (Sanders, 1997). For this perspective, these criteria went hand in hand with the emphasis on observable behaviour. Political behaviour was defined as "an orientation or point of view that seeks to raise all the phenomena of government in terms of observed and observable behaviour of men" (Immergut, 2006: 389). That is, the interest was placed in the quest to answer the question of why individuals, institutional actors and nation-states behave as they do. All these criticisms led to attempts to adapt and/or reformulate the old institutionalism. The new institutionalism was born from these attempts. This perspective



seeks to respond to behavioural criticism, while trying to recover the centrality of institutions for the discipline. The first step was the reconceptualization of the concept of institution, understanding it in a broader way. However, the broad sense in which institutions are approached by this perspective is more flexible regarding the old institutionalism, since they are not perceived in the normative sense they were previously understood. It is no longer a matter of studying the ideal institutions, but of understanding the plurality of existing ones and how they affect political behaviour. According to neo-institutionalism, political behaviour cannot be understood outside the institutional framework. The latter not only affects (to a greater or lesser extent) the preferences that guide the actors to act, but also affect the decision-making processes that they carry out. The breadth with which the concept of institution is worked on in the new institutionalism resulted in the emergence of a plurality of research programmes that differ both theoretically and methodologically in the study of institutions, either understanding them as dependent variables (explaining the emergence and change of the institutions) or independent ones (explaining what are the effects both in the political results and in the preferences of the actors that these institutions provoke), according to the interest of the researcher.

I.a. Rational Choice Neo-institutionalism (RCN)

Within the institutionalist tradition, rational choice neo-institutionalism (RCN) is one of the most discussed and used institutionalisms in Political Science (Cook & Levi, 1990). The particularity of this institutionalism is the theoretical debate it has with the neoclassical theory of political economy, mainly with its behaviour theory and efficient markets (North, 1990, North & Weingast, 1989). The idea of this dialogue is to overcome the weakest elements of the perspective by incorporating an institutional theory, which would allow maintaining what North (1990a: 112) considers the two most significant conceptual blocks of neoclassical theory (which are scarcity/competition and incentives as driving forces). At the same time, the theory is modified by recognizing the existence of incomplete information, subjective models of reality and institutions. For this, North (1990) proposes an institutional theory based on two pillars: a) a new theory of human behaviour; and b) a theory of transaction costs.

First, North (1990, 1991, 1998) begins by discussing the concept of instrumental rationality inherited from neoclassical theory. By such it is understood that "the actors have correct models to interpret the world that surrounds them; or, that they receive information that allows them to revise and correct their initially incorrect theories." (North, 1998: 98). Understanding the rationality of the actors implies that: a) all players can identify without any problem which are the sources of loss in the search for the maximization of their benefits; and b) each has equal access to the decision-making process (North, 1998). Accordingly, given the case of existing actors and organizations that were not able to have an adequate (i.e. rational) interpretation of the market, they would be destined to perish in competitive markets due to their inefficient behaviour (North, 1998).

However, according to North, understanding the rationality of the actors in these terms would be denying the effect produced by both the motivations and the environment on the actions conducted by the actors. If these two elements are not taken into account,



the fact that the actors present particular subjective structures that determine their order of preferences would be denied, the same applying to denying the existence of problems when collecting and processing the necessary information to make an efficient decision in terms of neoclassical theory. It would be tantamount to denying that ideas and ideologies play an important role in the mental structuring of individuals regarding the world and how actors act accordingly (North, 1990).

Thus, North proposes a new behaviour theory that refers to a procedural rationality instead of an instrumental one. The main difference between them is that in the former the actors "learn by doing" (1998). Through learning by doing, actors carry out decision-making processes in contexts of imperfect information (due to the subjective models used, or the impossibility of fully processing information or acquiring all the information), which prevents them from fully maximizing their benefits in a single movement. But as the actors participate in various successive games, they are able to obtain more information about the prevailing rules, which are the most rewarded behaviours (and which are not), who are the various actors who also intervene in the decision-making process of a given situation. In short, what should be done to continue maximizing the benefits (North, 1998).

Secondly, and in a complementary way to the new theory of behaviour developed above, North (1998) starts by considering a political theory based on the notion of transaction costs that is built on three assumptions: a) information is expensive; b) the actors use subjective models to explain their environment; and c) the agreements are only imperfectly fulfilled. Decisions made using such subjective models have high transaction costs and make political markets imperfect. Neoclassical theory starts from the consideration that there is no interference between what an actor needs, his desires and his action. As proposed by Elster (1990), identifying a certain action as rational implies recognizing three operations in it: 1) finding the best option for a certain set of beliefs and desires; 2) creating the best-founded belief set according to the available evidence; 3) Collect the amount of evidence just needed for a certain set of beliefs and desires. However, the transaction costs theory allows us to understand that the relationship between desires, beliefs, evidence, and action is not as harmonious as it was believed. Such a scheme finds its weaknesses in reality facts such as: the non-existence of an action, evidence or unequivocally optimal belief in a particular case; the possibility that people may fail either to implement a certain action, form their beliefs, collect evidence and/or process such evidence (Elster, 1990, North, 1998).

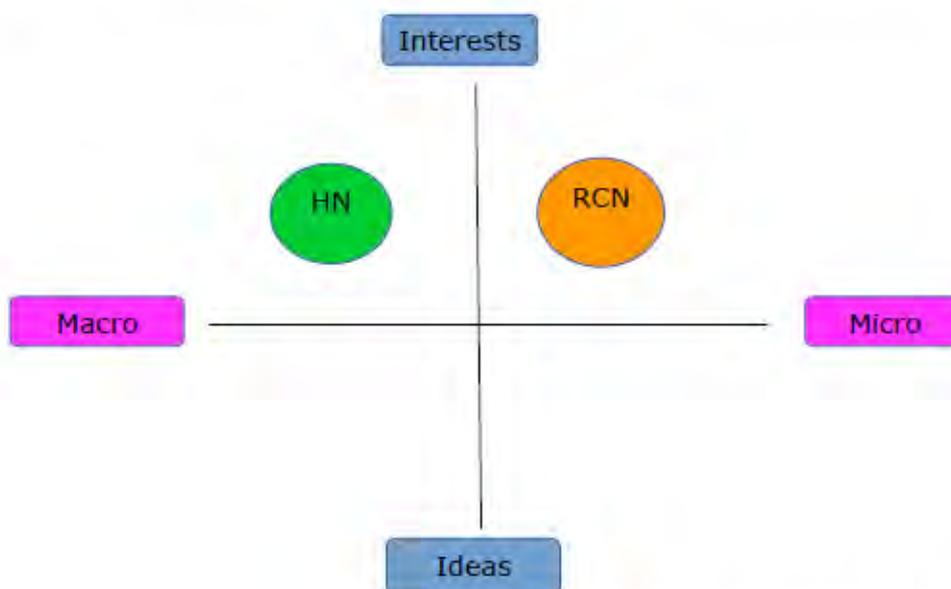
Another aspect that is intimately related to North's transaction costs theory is the "cooperation problem" (Olson, 1998). In a context where the actors have important incentives to distrust what other actors can do due to lack of information, inability to process the available information, existence of high risks regarding future payments, difficulty in identifying the free-riders inside a large collective body and the clear non-identification as to who and how to punish uncooperative behaviour, what incentives could the actors have to display cooperative behaviour? (North, 1990, 1991, 1998, North & Weingast, 1989). That is why, based on his theory of procedural rationality and his transaction costs theory, North believes that an institutional theory would solve the weaknesses mentioned in previous paragraphs.



For this author, an institution is the set of "humanly designed constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction. They are both informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions and codes of conduct) and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights)"⁶ (North, 1991: 1). Institutions make it possible to reduce uncertainties in the exchange. They define the set of available options and therefore determine transaction and production costs for a given time and space. The latter does not mean that the actors' wishes or beliefs are structured by the institutions, but rather that the preferences continue to be thought of as exogenous within the institutional analytical framework of the author (North, 1990a: 111).

However, if the actors intend to maximize their benefits, they must take into account the incentives (both positive and negative) that the institutional (particularly economic) structure presents. In particular, what interests North is to see how the relationship between the subjective frameworks of the actors and the institutions occurs, since understanding this relationship means understanding how it has translated into various economic-political institutional frameworks throughout history. This way, if we take the schematization made by Fioretos, Faletti & Sheingate (2016), who drew a chart that shows two central dimensions (on the one hand the structure-actor continuum, and on the other the interest-idea continuum) to be able to compare the two neo-institutionalisms, we can affirm that the RCN is a theoretical perspective focused on actors and that it adopts a base centred on interests (see Chart 1).

Figure 1. Neo-institutionalisms according to the two central dimensions of analysis in the social sciences.



Source: Fioretos, Faletti & Sheingate, 2016: p. 21

⁶ Author's own translation



In North's institutionalist theory, institutions are a tool to solve the cooperation problems between actors. This is due to the fact that institutions allow reducing the uncertainties that surround all human actions. The norms, the rules and the procedures (whether formal or informal) make it possible to simplify the process according to which the actors make decisions in a changing context, where obtaining information is costly even in the processing of the information one has. In particular, institutions allow solving the cooperation problem, since they establish incentives (both positive and negative) that reward and punish the actor's behaviour. This forces the actors who seek to survive and continue to maximize their benefits to comply with the established set of norms, rules and procedures: otherwise, they will be sanctioned and the competitiveness itself would be seriously deteriorated.

For North, the central axis of Political Economy is to be able to account for the evolution of economic and political institutions that create an economic environment capable of inducing increasing productivity (North, 1990, 1991). Within this analytical scheme, what happens with history? Although North intends to explain how the evolution of political and economic institutions occurs, in his analyses history is a tool to illustrate his hypothesis and not so much the main element of institutional analysis. At this point, it is interesting to bring back the comments made by Pierson (2004) regarding the various ways history can be used in an analysis. One of the most used, and particularly in regard to rational choice theories, is the concept of "history as the hunt for illustrative material". History is used as a reservoir of illustrative cases where the researcher seeks to find examples that allow him to account for the theoretical-empirical scope of his explanatory models. However, in these cases the analyses say very little (or nothing) about the temporal dimensions of the political-social processes (Pierson, 2004: 5). The latter is very often seen in North's works. Examples include the work carried out by North & Weingast (1989), where they question the constraints placed by the English Parliament on the Crown during the seventeenth century, or the use of merchant caravans or Souks in the Arabian Peninsula as examples of "primitive" and unproductive markets (North, 1990, 1991). Therefore, in North's analysis there is not much interest in giving an account of what the explanatory role of the temporal dimension in the development of institutions is, but rather in identifying what the different institutions that have developed in history have been and how they have contributed (or not) to an increase in productivity in a particular society.

Even the non-consideration of the temporal dimension in the political-social processes as an explanatory variable Pierson speaks of can be observed if we take into account North's explanation of why institutions change (or not). The institutions persist because they are useful for the actors. When these ceases to be, the actors decide to change them for another set. But this change is gradual and occurs as a result of the actors' incessant actions. The latter is possible because North assumes the concept of a Schumpeterian entrepreneur, who, as he gains more knowledge and develops greater capabilities, together with great advances in the technological structure and prices, changes his preferences and seeks to make institutional changes that allow them to be maximized (North, 1990). However, in the short term the maximization of the actors' interests is guaranteed by institutional stability. The source of this stability is the institutional path dependence. Here the path dependence concept is not understood in the terms of historical neo-institutionalism, but rather as the institutions' ability to generate increasing



returns and give stability over time to the norms, rules and procedures that constrain the performance of the actors (North, 1990, 83). Accordingly, through successive games, the actor can acquire information that allows him to understand not only the behaviour that a certain institutional framework rewards but also the ways such institutional frameworks can be altered in order to maximize other types of interests.

In short, the main wealth of the RCN as a theoretical perspective is that it adopts an analysis based on actors and interests, in which the actors, according to their exogenously established preferences, decide to select and build (formal and informal) institutions that allow them to reduce transaction costs and the information costs they face on a daily basis when it comes to maximizing their benefits. Thus, institutions are presented as synonyms of stability, a stability that limits the range of actions available to actors when deploying their behaviour, but under no conditions such institutions shape preferences, ideas and/or interests (Hall & Taylor, 1996, Immergut, 2006). Perhaps the main difference between the RCN and the HN is precisely how they understand the establishment of preferences (Orfeo Fioretos et al., 2016).

I.b. Historical Neo-institutionalism (HN)

Historical neo-institutionalism (HN) is characterized by understanding institutions as procedures, routines, norms and formal and informal conventions of politics and political economy (Hall & Taylor, 1996). However, the biggest difference from the RCN is that here institutions "are always constellations that combine rules with cultural, geographic and historically specific norms, value beliefs, formal organizations, and social practices. Institutions are complex structures that link action. An institution is not a monolith, but a system of social factors that together generate a regularity of action" (Katznelson, 2009, 109). Seen from this perspective, institutions are presented as structuring preferences and choices (paths) (Hall & Taylor, 1996, Immergut, 2006, Katznelson, 2009, Pierson & Skocpol, 2008; Thelen, 1999).

For this perspective, the various institutional schemes that characterize political-economic structures in a given historical context are the product of the struggle of various actors for the distribution of scarce resources. Therefore, the institutions reflect the crystallization of the results of these struggles. For this reason, historical institutionalism considers it interesting to carry out an analysis at meso-macro level that allows identifying the multiple institutions in an interaction that operate in broader contexts. Institutions are not considered in an isolated and separate way, but as being in constant interrelation and superimposed on each other, configuring a framework or institutional network (Orfeo Fioretos et al., 2016, Hall & Taylor, 1996). The historical institutionalists

"analyse how groups of organizations and institutions relate to each other and shape the processes or results of interest. (...) The results are generated not by some apparent universal principle characteristic of a given type of actor or area of activity, but by intersections of organized practices. These practices often originated at different times and, therefore, configurations that give advantage to certain key actors would have developed. These actors work to



maintain the configuration while the economic, cultural and geopolitical circumstances change" (Pierson & Skocpol, 2008: 20).

The key question that historical institutionalism asks is: why do certain structures or patterns take shape at certain times and places, while others do not? Historical institutionalists are interested in developing time-based arguments that allow understanding the temporality and sequence of the various political phenomena that we intend to study, since these are understood as political processes. The fact that they are perceived as such implies that these phenomena are not studied as a simple "photograph" of a given situation, but rather intend to trace transformations and processes of varying scale and temporality. "Historical institutionalists go through a constant back and forth movement between cases, questions and hypotheses" (Pierson & Skocpol, 2008: 10). Accordingly, the problems that matter come from identifying real-world variations previously unexplained or from noticing that empirical patterns go against popular and academically established concepts. As previously mentioned, historical institutionalists do not have totalizing ambitions, nor do they seek to understand the historical-universal dynamics of the political phenomena. Instead, they seek to identify the historical dimensions of causality. This means that "statements about the existence of causal relationships should be supported not only by a correlation between two variables, but also by a theory that would show why this connection should exist, as well as by evidence that would support this theoretical connection" (Pierson & Skocpol, 2008: 12). To this effect, the analyses start from the consideration of a small N, which allows a detailed examination of the processes that can facilitate the evaluation of assertions about causal mechanisms; and, on the other hand, of causal arguments, with a theoretical basis on causal relations that generally imply particular time-based relationships between variables, where one precedes the other, or both take place essentially at the same time.

A series of central concepts allow establishing this set of causal arguments: sequence, path dependence, and critical conjuncture.

On the one hand, a key concept in the present perspective is that of "sequence". The order in which events occur matters, since a fundamental difference can arise from it. The answer to the question why one phenomenon occurred at a given moment and not another may lie in the sequence (Falleti & Mahoney, 2016, Pierson & Skocpol, 2008). Therefore, the sequences have a lot to do with the positive feedback process. This is due to the fact that depending on how the order of events takes place, this will influence the different reproduction mechanisms adopted for a given trajectory.

When the HN uses the concept of path dependence (or trajectory dependence), it refers to the dynamics of positive feedback processes in a political system" (Pierson & Skocpol, 2008: 12). This means that institutions are consolidated as they are set in motion. The implementation of a particular institution makes it adopt an institutional inertia that leads it to strengthen the chosen institutional trajectory. Thus, institutions become less prone to change over time, and this is only possible in the presence of critical conjunctures. The richness of this concept allows us to study how the actors choose different paths and how, with the implementation of various institutional decisions, the institutions move away from, or approach what the actors thought in the first instance.



As already mentioned, for the HN the institutions should not be understood as "monolithic" structures that are completely rigid against any type of change (Katznelson, 2009). The concept of critical juncture introduces a dynamic argument in the institutional historical analysis, since it suggests that a series of small or large events can reconfigure the path or trajectory that had been chosen in the beginning and give rise to a new dispute over resources involving the various actors, resulting in a new institutional configuration. There are many works that use this concept to refer to large scale phenomena or events to explain the emergence of new path dependence dynamics, but such dramatic situation is not a necessary nor sufficient condition to be considered a critical juncture: what makes a particular juncture critical is the fact that it triggers a positive feedback process, regardless of its "size" (Pierson & Skocpol, 2008).

Taken together, all these concepts allow us to study the weight of the temporal dimension within a given explanation that accounts for a relevant socio-political phenomenon. Such concepts force us to think about the causal sequence that connects our phenomenon-result of interest (dependent variable) with those events and processes that intervened in such result (Falleti & Mahoney, 2016). Thinking about causal mechanisms like this enables understanding why a certain institutional framework emerges at a certain time and place, while in others it does not. The path dependence permits understanding how institutions endure over time and space, even though the initial conditions that facilitated their emergence have disappeared. The critical juncture allows us to study how institutional changes occur in those institutions that were believed to be difficult to change. In addition, it allows understanding how actors seek to create new institutional frameworks that make them keep the new power obtained after a critical juncture and how such frameworks tend to be established in a completely different way from those originally conceived (Thelen, 1999). All these are just examples of how, by introducing temporality as an explanatory dimension, we can obtain a completely different analysis than what is proposed by the RCN.

An aspect to take into account when carrying out an institutional analysis from the perspective of the HN is to avoid falling into the trap of explanatory rigidity that "institutions explain everything" (Acuña & Chudnovsky, 2013). When conducting a study of institutions resorting to HN, it is often tempting to think of institutional changes and reproductions as devoid of actors, since the latter are subsumed to the dynamics of institutions that overcome them, which often leads to thinking tautological causal relationships. This difficulty can be overcome if one establishes precisely which are the elements that make up the causal mechanism that links the independent variable(s) with the dependent variable (Falleti & Mahoney, 2016).

II. What contributions can neo-institutionalism make to the study of the new emerging international institutions?

The specialized literature suggests that the institutionalization of the associative dynamics among the agents increases their cooperation and collective action (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Immergut, 2006; North, 1990; North & Weingast, 1989), even when we talk about international cooperation between nations (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985). However, little has been done to study the institutionalization processes of informal institutions initiated at the beginning of the century. Faced with this, it becomes relevant



to (re)think about the theoretical contributions of neo-institutionalism in order to have a critical theoretical-analytical criterion that accounts for these new phenomena.

To begin with, the concept discussed here is that of an international institution. Although there is diverse literature that expands and works on the concept, the conceptual discussion suggested here brings back three approaches: idealism, liberal institutionalism and historical neo-institutionalism.

The traditional idealist school of international relations emphasizes formal international institutions (Judge, 1977; Schechter, 2010; Simmons & Martin, 2002). An international institution is defined as any institution in which the following three elements can be identified simultaneously (Judge, 1977): 1) be based on an agreement which is formally implemented by the governments of different nation-states; 2) include three or more nation-states as members of the agreement; 3) have a permanent secretariat with its own autonomous tasks and activities. As can be seen in the previous definition, the literature associates international institutions with international organizations (Simmons & Martin, 2002). The latter is not surprising since the greatest proliferation of the formal literature emerged in the period between world wars, and the main elements of empirical observation are the League of Nations (LN) and the United Nations Organization (UN). In addition, one notes that the concept is thought in terms of being able to evaluate the autonomy of a particular organization with respect to the States that create them. This is described by Schechter (2010) as the greater or lesser capacity on the part of the organization to establish and develop a bureaucracy that works separately and is functionally autonomous with respect to the countries that created it. This is so because such organizations were thought of as third parties in the resolution of peace and war conflicts. The greatest weakness of this concept is the confusion between institution and organization. The latter not only does not allow us to observe the effects that rules, procedures and norms can produce on international actors, but also it does not allow us to observe the role of rules, norms and informal procedures that come into play and of the formal ones in the international scenario.

A second tradition is related to institutional analyses known in International Relations as liberal institutionalism (Axelrod & Keohane, 1985, Keohane & Martin, 1995). Since the beginning of the 21st century, the international scenario has seen an exponential increase regarding the creation of international institutions that do not have the three previously mentioned characteristics (Albaret, 2013; Reinalda, 2013). Observing this phenomenon is only possible if the concept of international institutions previously presented is broadened. According to Keohane & Nye (1989: 3), international institutions are the persistent and interconnected set of rules (formal and informal) that prescribe roles of behaviour, constrain the actors' activity and define their expectations. The greatest weakness of this concept is that international institutions are understood as static elements. Most of the literature in this tradition has been dedicated to the study of the effect that international institutions have on the commercial exchange between countries (McLaughlin Mitchell & Hensel, 2007) or on armed conflicts (Keohane & Martin, 1995, Keohane & Nye, 1989). In all these works, the absence of temporality as an explanatory dimension of the phenomena to be explained is constant.

It is for this reason that studies from a historical neo-institutionalist perspective have gained important ground in recent years in the study of international institutions. In this



tradition, we have authors such as John Ikenberry (2001) and Orfeo Fioretos (2011). For example, a large part of the work of John Ikenberry (2001, 2014) has focused on how the processes of establishing international political orders occurred throughout history. In his book *After Victory* (Ikenberry, 2001), the author begins by wondering about what the States that have just won great wars do with the newly acquired power. Taking these questions as a basis, *After Victory* is a work structured around the consideration of three critical global conjunctures (1815, 1919 and 1945), which allow explaining the consequent emergence of institutional frameworks as a deliberate product of the victorious states. Ikenberry's hypothesis is that each of these critical junctures, by being a point of completion of major armed conflicts worldwide, presented unique opportunities for the establishment of international institutional agreements that were capable of tying-linking states to each other. The main characteristic of such institutional frameworks was that they generated a lock-in effect with respect to the dominant and favourable position obtained by the victorious states. At the same time, they left certain institutional spaces in which the loser and/or weaker states could deploy strategic behaviour. Accordingly, the international institutions allowed the victorious states both to maintain control over the international agenda and the orientation of the main foreign policies with the consequent primary action on these issues and to grant the other states some credible and institutionalized control tools that limit the power gained by the victorious states (Ikenberry, 2001). As a result of these dynamics, international organizations like the United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank (WB) were created, which sought to become the main channel for resolving all types of international conflict but which, at the same time, reproduced inside the victorious condition obtained by some countries after each conjuncture (for example, the establishment of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia and China as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council).

Regarding the new emerging institutions, since the beginning of the 21st century, the international scenario has seen an exponential increase in the creation of informal international institutions that do not have Judge's three characteristics (Albaret, 2013; Reinalda, 2013). From a conceptual point of view, these new informal institutions have the following characteristics:

- ⇒ Non-existence of a selection process open to all states: participation in such institutions is voluntary, but not universal, since to be part of them is subject to invitation.
- ⇒ They are multilateral but with small N: this means that these institutions are not thought about in the same universalist way that the main international institutions of the period between war or post-cold war were seen, but rather as smaller number of states than the UN or the WB and usually closely linked to the theme or function for which the institution was created.
- ⇒ They are highly flexible: they do not denote the high levels of bureaucratization that the UN or the WB have, but they are spaces for deliberation where the member states can establish rapprochement policies on particular topics and in an *ad hoc* manner.



All these elements do nothing but raise questions such as: why do states create this type of international institutions? What changes did occur in the international scenario that facilitated their emergence? What is the role of these new informal institutions? What changes did take place in the functional dynamics of traditional international institutions, such as the UN, the IMF or the WB, that facilitated the emergence of these new international institutions? What were the main obstacles and difficulties that the states had to address when creating these new institutional spaces? Observing this phenomenon is only possible if the concept of international institutions that was previously presented is expanded, alongside the approach with which their study is carried out.

As can be seen, the study of international institutions has been carried out from different perspectives. In the first place, there has been a confusion between the concepts of international organization and international institution, which meant that research programmes only studied the characteristics of international organizations in force at that time. On the other hand, in Keohane's & Nye's approach (1989), the agency capacity of the states begins to play a central role in the explanation of the various international institutions that prevail. However, the greatest weakness of this analysis is that it has difficulty in explaining the emergence and evolution over time of institutions due to their static view of them. The latter is a point that historical neo-institutionalism seeks to strengthen, suggesting the study of the international institutional framework through its instituting dynamics, such as path dependence and its change moments through critical conjunctures. But in many of their explanations, the agency capacity of the actors loses explanatory weight, often going to the extreme of affirming that the institutions can explain everything (Acuña & Chudnovsky, 2013). At this point, the dialogue between perspectives seems to suggest that there is analytical richness in the conciliation of both perspectives. Given the particularities of the institutionalization processes led by the emerging countries, resorting to the states' agency capacity without renouncing the temporality of the phenomenon would allow identifying how such processes are similar or distant from those initiated by central countries.

This article suggests addressing the problem through the revival of the state's centrality in the construction of institutions proposed by liberal institutionalism. It also rationalizes the historicity of the phenomenon through the incorporation of temporality into the study of the emerging states' action involved in the constitution of these new institutional spaces. Accordingly, one could study the effect of the important variables that came into play during the negotiation period regarding a given institutional project, such as: 1) the existence of a homogeneity of interests in the member states; and 2) the establishment of a feeling of trust between the member states. In addition, as regards temporality, the sustained increase in the interactions between member states is suggested as the third variable. A fourth, and last, variable could be the fulfilment of the previously established institutional objectives. This would be a key dimension in terms of explaining whether there was a positive or negative development or even stagnation in the process of institutionalizing such initiatives. For example, keeping these variables in mind could address with greater precision the institutionalization processes of the various regional institutions, such as the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), and the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) in South America without having to fall into the "N = 1 problem" generated by



the European Union as a normative model in the explanation of any type of regional integration (Malamud, 2011).

Taken together, these variables would make it possible to account for the political-institutional conditions according to which emerging countries have constituted these new institutional spaces, since they address the phenomenon taking into account their informal institutionalization in high volatility contexts in the international scenario, while at the same time addressing them in their historical rationality.

III. Brief Final Comments

In a field of study where the idealist and realistic perspectives have hegemonized the theoretical-empirical discussion, any approach to international problems from an institutionalist perspective implies a novel work. The latter increases its novel character if one takes into account the few studies carried out about the informal international institutions that emerged at the beginning of the 21st century. Understanding how international actors, mainly states, resolve their collective action dilemmas in the international arena from a view that rationalizes the historicity of such processes involves conducting studies that go beyond the traditional study of international organizations. This article aimed to discuss new conceptual tools that allow studying how the sequences of changes in the international institutional framework occur and identifying in particular the role played by international actors, institutions, and temporality in such a sequence.

IV. References

- Acuña, C., & Chudnovsky, M. (2013). Cómo entender las instituciones y su relación con la política. Lo bueno, lo malo y lo feo de las instituciones y los institucionalismos. En C. Acuña & M. Chudnovsky (Eds.), *¿Cuánto importan las instituciones? Gobierno, Estado y actores en la política argentina*. (pp. 19–67). Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI.
- Albaret, M. (2013). Multilateralism under transformation. International organizations and “clubs”. In B. Reinalda (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of International Organization* (pp. 512–523). New York: Routledge.
- Axelrod, R., & Keohane, R. (1985). Achieving Cooperation under Anarchy: strategies and institutions. *World Politics*, 38(1), 226–254.
- Cook, K., & Levi, M. (1990). *The Limits of Rationality*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Cox, R. W., & Jacobson, H. K. (1973). *The Anatomy of Influence: decision making in international organization, by Robert W. Cox and Harold K. Jacobson, and [others]*. Yale University Press New Haven.
- Elster, J. (1990). When Rationality Fails. In K. Cook & M. Levi (Eds.), *The Limits of Rationality* (pp. 19–51). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Falleti, T., & Mahoney, J. (2016). El método secuencial comparado. *Revista SAAP*, 10(2), 187–220.



- Fioretos, O. (2011). Historical Institutionalism in International Relations. *International Organization*, 65(02), 367–399. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818311000002>
- Fioretos, O., Falleti, T., & Sheingate, A. (2016). Historical Institutionalism in Political Science. In O. Fioretos, T. Falleti, & A. Sheingate (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Institutionalism* (pp. 18–49). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Guerrero, M. G. (2017a). *BRICS: proceso de institucionalización de un nuevo actor colectivo en el sistema internacional (periodo 2001 - 2015)*. Universidad Nacional de Cuyo.
- Guerrero, M. G. (2017b). Congruencia del BRICS en la Agenda de Seguridad Internacional: El Caso Siria (periodo 2011 - 2015). Buenos Aires: XIII Congreso Nacional de Ciencia Política.
- Hall, P., & Taylor, R. (1996). La ciencia política y los tres nuevos institucionalismos. *Political Studies*, 44, 936–957.
- Hass, E. B. (1964). *Beyond the Nation-State: Functionalism and International Organization*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Ikenberry, G. J. (2001). *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (STU-Stud). Princeton University Press. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7t1s5>
- Ikenberry, G. J. (2014). *Power, Order, and Change in World Politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Immergut, E. (2006). El núcleo teórico del nuevo institucionalismo. In V. Alarcón Olguín (Ed.), *Metodología para el análisis político. Enfoques, procesos e instituciones*. (pp. 387–424). Mexico: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana.
- Judge, A. (1977). International Institutions: diversity, borderline cases, functional substitutes and possible alternatives. In P. Taylor & A. Groom (Eds.), *International Organisation: a conceptual approach* (pp. 28–83). London: Frances Pinter Ltd.
- Katznelson, I. (2009). Strong theory, Complex History. In M. Lichbach & A. Zuckerman (Eds.), *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure, Second Edition* (pp. 96–116). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511804007>
- Keohane, R. O., & Martin, L. L. (1995). The Promise of Institutional Theory. *International Security*, 20(1), 39–51. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539214>
- Keohane, R. O., & Nye, J. (1989). *Power and Interdependence*. Glenview: Scott, Foresman and Company.
- Malamud, A. (2011). Conceptos, teorías y debates sobre la integración regional. *Norteamérica*, 2, 219–249.
- Martin, L. L., & Simmons, B. A. (1998). Theories and Empirical Studies of International Institutions. *International Organization*, 52(4), 729–757. <https://doi.org/10.1162/002081898550734>



- McLaughlim Mitchell, S., & Hensel, P. (2007). International Institutions and Compliance with Agreements. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(4), 721–737.
- North, D. (1990). *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- North, D. (1991). Institutions. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 5(1), 97–112. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2234910>
- North, D. (1998). Una teoría de la política basada en el enfoque de los costos de transacción. In S. Saiegh & M. Tommasi (Eds.), *La nueva economía política* (pp. 97–112). Buenos Aires: EUDEBA.
- North, D., & Weingast, B. (1989). Constitutions and Commitment: the evolution of institutional governing public choice in seventeenth-century England. *The Journal of Economic History*, 49(4), 808–832.
- Olson, M. (1998). La Lógica de la Acción Colectiva. In S. Saiegh & M. Tommasi (Eds.), *La nueva economía política* (pp. 37–62). Buenos Aires: EUDEBA.
- Patiño Villa, C. (2012). De la bipolaridad al fracaso de la unipolaridad. *Analecta política*, 1(1 Jul-Dec), 33–61.
- Pierson, P. (2004). *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592705520255>
- Pierson, P., & Skocpol, T. (2008). El institucionalismo histórico en la ciencia política contemporánea. *Revista Uruguaya de Ciencia Política*, 17(1), 7–38.
- Reinalda, B. (2013). International Organizations as a field of research since 1910. En B. Reinalda (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of International Organization* (pp. 1–23). New York: Routledge.
- Rhodes, R. (1997). El institucionalismo. En D. Marsh & G. Stoker (Eds.), *Teoría y métodos de la ciencia política* (pp. 53–67). Madrid: Alianza Universidad.
- Sanders, D. (1997). El análisis conductista. En D. Marsh & G. Stoker (Eds.), *Teoría y métodos de la ciencia política* (pp. 69–84). Madrid: Alianza Universidad.
- Schechter, M. G. (2010). *Historical Dictionary of International Organizations* (Second Edi). Plymouth: The Scarecrow Press. Retrieved from www.scarecrowpress.com
- Simmons, B., & Martin, L. (2002). International Organizations and Institutions. En *Handbook of International Relations* (pp. 256–281). London: SAGE.
- Thelen, K. (1999). Historical institutionalism in comparative politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2, 369–404.

THE IMPACT FACTOR AS A LEGITIMATOR OF THE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE PRODUCED: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Tiago Lima Quintanilha

Tiago.lima@obercom.pt

PhD student in Communication Sciences at ISCTE–IUL (Portugal) and doctoral scholar of the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT). Quintanilha works in the area of Social Sciences, with emphasis on communication sciences, open science and journalism studies. He was the manager of an international scientific journal, from 2009 to 2016. He attends the third year of the PhD in Communication Sciences at ISCTE-IUL. He received two prizes of academic merit and is the author and co-author of three books, 12 book chapters, ten articles in international and national academic journals, and more than 60 research reports in the area of media and communication. He also collaborated with the Observatory of Communication, the SOCIUS, Center for Research in Economic and Organisational Sociology at ISEG-UL, the Regulatory Entity for Social Communication and the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism with the project Digital News Report Portugal (2015 & 2016).

Gustavo Cardoso

Gustavo.cardoso@iscte-iul.pt

Cardoso is a full Professor at ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (Portugal), researcher integrated in the CIES-IUL, associate researcher in Le collège d'etudes mondiales and editor of the journal *OBS*Observatory*.

Abstract

The impact factor (IF) is perceived by all researchers and scientists as the main criterion in their publication strategies, in order to respond to the demands of the academic reward system that defines career progression and the allocation of funds for research. Through a review of published literature we aim to explore different limits and ranges associated with impact factor, according to academia. We also try to understand in which way the state of the art is evolving, as well as the features that point to ambiguous criteria inherent to the construct on which impact factor was established as the legitimising criteria of scientific knowledge production.

Keywords

Impact factor; legitimacy; scientific knowledge production; citation metrics

How to cite this article

Quintanilha, Tiago Lima; Cardoso, Gustavo (2018). "The impact factor as a legitimator of the scientific knowledge produced: a review of the literature". *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, N.º 2, November 2018-April 2019. Consulted [online] on the date of the last visit, <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.9.2.3>

Article received on February 2, 2018 and accepted for publication on October 13, 2018





THE IMPACT FACTOR AS A LEGITIMATOR OF THE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE PRODUCED: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE¹

**Tiago Lima Quintanilha
Gustavo Cardoso**

The quest to quantify everything undermines higher education

(Muller, 2018)

Introduction

At a time when the main challenges to the Open Science model (Priem, 2012; Bare, 2014; Quintanilha, 2015; Berghmans, 2015) are being discussed, or the derivation of a phenomenon of scientific *res publica* (Cardoso et al, 2009) for skewing logics of the Open Access movement from its appropriation by the parallel and parasitic industry (Quintanilha, 2015), it is important to reflect on one of the crucial points that are part of this derivation.

Within a framework of "certification independent of the means of registration" (Borges, 2006: 72), where belonging to the main indexers (Thomson Reuters, Scopus) relates to the most important criteria for accreditation of scientific journals, impact factor (IF) (Garfield, 1955; Borges, 2006; Johnstone, 2007; Saarela, 2016; Seglen, 1997; Greenwood, 2007) – appropriately named as factor of influence by Sygocki and Korzeniewska (2018) – is assumed as the great criterion defining the panorama of the worldwide scientific publication. Other authors, such as Muller (2018), call it the tyranny of metrics, whereas Garfield (2006), five decades after the concept was created, uses the neologisms "sciencimetry" and "journalology" to define the time. Impact factor is a sort of filter that separates almost indiscriminately the relevant knowledge produced from the rest. Thus, it constitutes itself as the great and current legitimating factor of the scientific knowledge produced at the same time and, directly or indirectly, contributes to the imprisonment of the Open Science model. Thomson Reuters/Web of Science/Clarivate Analytics – through its journal citation reports – and Scopus Elsevier – through its SJR (SCImago Journal Rank) and SNIP (Source Normalised per Paper) – control the great metrics associated with the publication of scientific knowledge. Due to the way they were established, these metrics end up contributing to factors of higher impact and influence

¹ The translation of this article was funded by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia - as part of OBSERVARE project with the reference UID/CPO/04155/2013, with the aim of publishing Janus.net. Text translated by Thomas Rickard.



in scientific journals which are mostly of Anglophone origin and controlled by the major publishers, such as Sage, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, Routledge, etc. These publishers impose pay-per-query dynamics and help to pervert and strongly compromise the idea of democratising a more inclusive Open Science model, forcing an almost tacit acceptance of legitimating structures in a large number of highly requested journals which antagonise the Open Science model due to their close access and how they operate. An article in *Science Magazine*² considers these as exorbitant amounts applied by the major publishers, which own the scientific journals with the greatest impact factor, a sort of disruptive body to the continuity of the Open Access model in the sense that they create tremendous pressure on the future of academic publishing.

Impact factor, depending to a large extent on the number of citations generated by an article or publication, is determined beforehand by the hegemonic position of the Anglosphere and the holders of greater symbolic capital in the academia – an adaptation of Bourdieu's (1994) concept. In other words, an article published in English will have, for example, a greater possibility of being cited, in a context of cumulative scientific construction (Quintanilha, 2015), when linking texts with other texts, blocks of signification and units of reading or *lexia* (Barthes, 1972).

Similarly, Saarela (2016: 699) noted that the top journals or core journals of large disciplines typically have more citations, embodied in larger impact factors, compared to the ones of smaller disciplines (Saarela, 2016). Whilst Howard (2009) calls them the "A-list" of academic publication, Adler, Ewing and Taylor (2009) remind us that in some scientific fields, such as biomedical sciences, most articles are often cited shortly after their publication; and in other disciplines, such as math, most citations begin to emerge two years after the articles are published. Some institutions, such as the University of Western Australia³, warn of the fact that the metrics could be beneficial for validating knowledge produced by journals in natural sciences, medicine and social sciences, and totally irrelevant in the arts and humanities.

On the other hand, entry in this reading system of the impact factors is only possible, therefore, by the aggregation of the journals to the main global indexes, some of them controlled by the biggest publishers in the world – such as the case of Scopus, owned by Elsevier. Thus, the process that defines the impact factor of a publication depends, in the first instance, on the entry and association of it with the two main world indexes (Thomson Reuters' Web of Science and Elsevier's Scopus). The most evident sign of this bias associated with the organisations that have the main impact factors (i.e. Reuters – Web of Science/Clarity Analytics – Journal Citation Reports) is given when the journals themselves apply to the main indexers. One of the great criteria used by the Web of Science, for example, in accepting journals is the publication of articles exclusively in English, to the detriment of the quality that may be associated with articles published by the proponent journal. The reason seems obvious: articles exclusively published in English have a superior scope and potential for citation than an article published, for example in Portuguese, and are restricted to the speakers of this language.

This controversial process, which regulates the panorama of the world scientific

² <http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2017/08/bold-open-access-push-germany-could-change-future-academic-publishing>

³ <https://guides.library.uwa.edu.au/c.php?g=325233&p=2177836>



publication, inaugurates a certain institutionalised way of looking at a scientific journal based on its legitimation or delegitimation according to the impact factor attributed to it. Therefore, it is important to reflect on the construction of the concept itself, observing the criteria for the evolution and redefinition of the dimensions that have been on the basis of the construction of this concept in systems of academic reward, which significantly contributes to access to entry exams and progression in teaching and research careers. It is also fundamental to think about how these criteria have been decisive for the granting of postdoc fellowships and, to a certain extent, for PhD fellowships as well as for the financing of research projects based on the merit of the candidates and their research centres to which they are associated. Currently, impact factors have increasingly played a crucial role in the allocation of resources for scientific research purposes (Saarela, 2016) in many countries and constitute the primary criterion for academics' prestige and survival (Pirmez, Brandão & Momen, 2016: 543).

Framework of the concept

Maria Manuela Borges (2006) introduces the historical roots of the term "impact factor", first used by Eugene Garfield (1955). This quantitative concept "seeks to express the intellectual influence or the contribution of a work in a given area of knowledge", and "other functions can be added to these ones, such as the increasing degree of communication between authors or bringing up for them all the references related to their work (Borges, 2006: 55).

Others, such as Seglen (1997), use the term "citation rate" as a complement to the term impact factor in order to define the average of citations contained in a given journal and in a certain period of time. Impact factor is usually defined by calculating the number of citations in a given year in relation to the number of items published in that year (Seglen, 1997). Following the same reasoning, Greenwood (2007) states that "impact factor is thus calculated as the number of citations a journal has received in the last complete year for articles published in the two preceding years, divided by the total number of articles the journal published in the two preceding years". According to the author, this calculation expresses the average number of citations of published articles, without discriminating positively or negatively the larger or more frequently published journals (Greenwood, 2007: 1).

Traditionally, impact factor was used to determine the most important sources of knowledge to be acquired by universities (Saarela, 2016). Currently, impact factors are carefully consulted by researchers from around the world, who thus define the scientific journals to which they submit their articles (Greenwood, 2007). Johnstone (2007) argues that impact factor is being used as an absolute measure to define the quality of scientific journals. In addition, she points out that impact factor is also increasingly used as a tool to measure the academic performance of researchers and to evaluate the feasibility of departments and universities (Johnstone, 2007).

For Garfield (1955), the calculation of impact factor was done based on the number of citations received by the scientific journals in a period of two years. "If one intends, for example, to calculate the impact factor of a journal in 2005, one will use the data from 2003 and 2004, i.e. the total number of citations in 2005 for articles published in 2003 and 2004 divided by the total number of citable items in 2003 and 2004" (Borges, 2006:



56).

Figure 1: Calculation of impact factor, example 1

$$\text{IF 2005} = \text{n}^\circ \text{ total de citações (2003-2004)} / \text{n}^\circ \text{ items citáveis (2003-2004)}$$

Source: Maria Manuela Borges (2016). *A Esfera*. PhD thesis: 56.

Figure 2: calculation of impact factor, example 2

Calculation of 2010 IF of a journal:

A = the number of times articles published in 2008 and 2009 were cited by indexed journals during 2010.

B = the total number of "citable items" published in 2008 and 2009.

A/B = 2010 impact factor

Source: The University of Illinois at Chicago University Library Website.
<https://researchguides.uic.edu/if/impact>

It should be noted that, parallel to the two-year criterion, there is also the five-year impact factor, which is identical to the two-year impact factor, but with a naturally greater time interval, allowing us to observe much subtler variations in citation counts.

The cumulative construction of the term

The enormous plasticity of meanings attributed to the universe of the concepts involved in the phenomenon of open science collaborates for some parallel definitions, which also determine variations within the interpretation of the impact factor itself, giving it sub-dimensions that, together, allow us to look to the concept in a more maximalist and structured way, as if it were layered.

As an example, Bauer and Bakalbas (2005) introduce two concepts: co-citation analysis, which is the number of times two documents are cited simultaneously in later publications; and bibliographic coupling, which consists in a forecast that two articles that cite a previous work may have something in common (Borges, 2005: 55).

Other secondary indicators, such as the "h-index", for example, already quantify scientific productivity and the apparent scientific impact of a scientist or researcher through the number of citations that their cited articles reach. "The h-index measures the total number of papers a scientist has authored and the number of citations those papers have received, may be more acceptable to some. If, over a lifetime of a research career, you have authored 50 papers that have been cited 50 or more times, your h-index equals 50" (Kupiec-Weglinski, 2015: 482). In this way, the h-index can more accurately measure



the micro side associated with individual scientific production.

The "g-factor" quantifies, on the other hand, the scientific productivity of a researcher and its calculation is based on the distribution of the citations received in the publications of this researcher. The g-factor was firstly developed to respond to the underrepresentation of European scientific journals in the bibliographic databases of Thomson ISI. The "y-factor" results from a simple combination of the impact factor available on the ISI databases and the weighted "page rank" in order to consider and adjust the impact factor according to the greater or lesser popularity of scientific journals (Satyanarayama, 2008).

Thomson also publishes the influence index of the article and the immediacy index, which appears as a measure of the time (speed) that elapses between the moment a given content is acquired and the moment of its reference/citation.

Eugene Garfield (2006) acknowledges that the creation of the impact factor in 1955 was based on the need to select additional journals and sources of research. With the legitimacy conferred upon him as the creator of the term impact factor, Garfield argues that the "term 'impact factor' has gradually evolved to describe both journal and author impact" (Garfield, 2006: 1). He also states the impact factor of scientific journals usually involves large amounts of articles and citations, and individual authors generally produce fewer articles, although some of them have published an admirable number. Garfield gives the example of a transplant surgeon named Tom Starzl, author of more than 2,000 scientific articles; and Carl Djerassi, who invented oral contraceptives and published more than 1,300 articles.

The ineffectiveness of the indicator and its repercussion in the skewing of the evaluation of the scientific knowledge produced

One of the problems associated with impact factor has to do with a kind of appropriation of the indicator by major indexers, such as Scopus⁴ or ISI Web of Science, resulting in evidence of the most prominent journals indexed in them, to the detriment of others, or even of other documents, such as monographs and dissertations (Borges, 2006). This evidence leads us to a snowball effect with repercussions on the motivations and strategies of researchers and scientists whose annual evaluation and career progression depends to a large extent on the volume of publications and their impact factor.

New researchers need to publish in the most prestigious scientific journals as well as senior and associate researchers, who need to do so to maintain their fellowships and/or research funding or to progress in teaching careers. "The researchers submit the manuscripts to prestigious journals" (Borges, 2006: 275), entering the databases of the great world indexes, which institutionalise the calculation of the impact factor. "In the case of the scientific article, recognition of its quality is linked to the journal in which it is published" (Borges, 2006: 36). It depended previously on the editorial board and today depends on the impact factors of core journals.

However, "Ever since its discovery in 1960s, impact factor continues to be in the news, often for the wrong reasons" (Satyanarayama & Sharma, 2008: 4). Some authors point

⁴ Scopus uses two metrics: SJR (SCImago Journal Rank) and SNIP (Source Normalised per Paper).



out that there are significant dangers and limitations associated with the calculation of impact factors, such as the lack of quality of citations and the existence of journal self-citation (Archambault & Larivière 2009; Falagas et al, 2008; Vanclay, 2012) – scientific journals that tend to value proposals for the publication of articles that refer to other articles published by them – as well as the informal combinations of researchers who take the *modus operandi* of citing each other, raising the impact factor of their articles.

For Seglen (1997), assessing scientific quality without a universal solution is an extremely complicated task. The author argues that, ideally, all processes to validate scientific knowledge produced should be defined by academic certification based on the scrutiny and verification of real experts in a given area. In practice, the so-called “peer-review”, usually carried out by committees that have too generalist competences, conditions everything else, from the simplistic verification of the knowledge produced to the processes that legitimise journals (Seglen, 1997). This author, who is a critic of the model of legitimating scientific knowledge produced based on impact factors, argues that this impact factor, or citation rate, does not represent individual scientific production as it does not define its quality.

The author lists the problems at the basis of impact factors:

- 1) the impact factors of scientific journals are determined by technical procedures that are not related to the production of scientific knowledge per se;
- 2) the impact factors of scientific journals depends on the research area. Higher impact factors are usually associated with scientific journals that cover vast areas of exploratory research, fast-growing and short-lived literature that typically involves several references per article;
- 3) the fact that the citation rates of scientific journals determine the impact factor of the publication, and not the other way around;
- 4) citations of non-citable items are usually included in the same databases;
- 5) review or survey articles are strongly cited and inflate the impact factors of some scientific journals;
- 6) the larger articles result in higher citation levels, also inflating the impact factors of journals;
- 7) printed works (i.e. books) are not included in the databases as sources of citation;
- 8) the bibliographic databases are oriented to the English language and dominated by US publications;
- 9) the impact factors depend on the dynamics (expansion or contraction) of the different academic areas;
- 10) small areas of academic research tend to have fewer journals with higher impact factors;
- 11) the relationship between research fields also determines the impact factors of scientific journals (i.e. differentiated fields interconnected in the area of health compared to smaller fields of research);
- 12) the limitations of databases or the example given by the Science Citation Index, which covers a limited number of scientific journals around the world (Seglen, 1997).



Ultimately, Seglen (1992) points out that it is the large variability in citation processes that renders the criterion of impact factor little accurate, which means that it should not be used to evaluate scientific production.

The article "*Hate journal impact factors? New study gives you one more reason*",⁵ written by John Bohannon (2016) and published in *Science Magazine*, said that scientists have a love-hate relationship with the impact factor of scientific journals. This measure, used to classify scientific journal prestige, is seen by many as a destroyer of the scientific community.

Regarding the need to rethink all metrics and impact factors as legitimators of the knowledge produced, authors such as Adler, Ewing and Taylor (2009) suggest new multiple criteria to validate these metrics separately for each discipline, whilst being calibrated and adjusted according to the specificity of each discipline, as well as according to the attributes of each classification. In other words, metrics and impact factors should be as diverse and rich as possible.

Adler, Ewing and Taylor (2009), with a fundamentally optimistic view of the Open Science model, particularly due to its ability to provide greater variability of metrics that is contrary to structures of manipulation and misuse of themselves – possibly because, at the date of the respective article, they had not contemplated yet some bias of the model itself⁶ – list some reasons, close to Seglen's model (1997), that explain their opposition to the panorama of metrics as a criterion of scientific validation:

- 1) the meaning of a citation may be even more subjective than the peer-review itself;
- 2) unique trust in citation metrics provides, at best, an incomplete and superficial understanding of research;
- 3) the fact that the validity of statistics for the impact factor and h-index are not well known or even well studied;
- 4) the fact that the citation metrics provide only a limited and incomplete view of the quality of research, and the statistics resulting from these metrics can be misunderstood and misused;
- 5) the possibility that exclusive trust in citation-based metrics may replace the criterion of subjective peer-review as the preponderant element to validate research;
- 6) the idea that impact factor cannot be used to compare scientific journals between disciplines;
- 7) the certainty that impact factor does not accurately reflect the range of citations in some disciplines, as not all scientific journals are indexed; and
- 8) the possibility that impact factor can be easily influenced by the (high) frequency with which some authors are wrongly identified.

⁵ <http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2016/07/hate-journal-impact-factors-new-study-gives-you-one-more-reason>.

⁶ Model captured by commercial interests, with an evident crisis of reproducibility and with questionable research practices. <https://opensciencemooc.eu/>.



Recurring to Moed, Borges (2006) points out other limitations, such as: "when measuring the impact of citation in the second or third year after its publication, may be there is a biased towards magazines that have a faster IF maturation or decline".

One of the reasons given for the uselessness of the impact factors is that they have no validity as a predictive measure, since they are vaguely calculated.

Paulus, Cruz and Krach (2018) attempted to illustrate the fallacies inherent in the use of metrics to evaluate journals and scientists' works. For the authors, the simple fact that scientific quality is judged by the impact factors of the journals shows that we are being driven by weak and invalid arguments. And the uncertainty regarding the quality of a work is exceeded by its impact factor rather than the quality of the work itself.

Kupiec-Weglinski (2015) argues, in turn, that impact factors do not reflect the quality or reliability of science nor the scientist's ability, valences and creativity. In addition, the author says that the most important thing is to publish quality and innovative knowledge whilst maintaining a continuous record of publications and good productivity. "The bottom line is, you need to publish research that is reproducible, impactful and moves your field forward" (Kupiec-Weglinski, 2015: 482).

For Satyanarayama (2008), impact factors can even skew the direction of scientific investigation, as the scientists themselves tend to direct their investigation to mainstream areas that are more easily financed. On the other hand, those researchers who are dedicated to less-mainstream areas, although important, have greater difficulty in getting funds for research and being recognised. "It is well known that funding follows what is considered 'significant' in science, which is usually science driven by citation hype and publications in high impact journals" (Satyanarayama, 2008: 4).

Towpik (2015: 465), in contrast, points out a mania associated with the impact factor that persists and inflicts a pernicious effect on science and on some scientific conducts and practices.

Weglinski (2015) goes further and argues that high impact factors are often mere conveniences that money can afford. The higher the impact factor of a scientific journal, the higher the costs of publication addressed to the authors who decide to publish in that same scientific journal and/or to the institutions/researchers that intend to acquire these publications. As a consequence, the entire democratising root of the open science movement is also perverted, with its own impact factor contributing to this scenario.

Moustafa (2015) considers that impact factor has become the worst enemy of scientific quality, placing great pressure on authors, editors, stakeholders and funders. Worst of all, in a significant number of countries, the allocation of budget and government funds is entirely channeled into the only journals with so-called high impact factors, leaving everyone else out.

Referring to the case of research in the area of health, more precisely in nursing, Johnstone (2007) argues that this obsession with impact factors endangers the sustainability and viability of scientific journals in nursing and its academic texts. In nursing, the author explains, researchers abandon their publishing agendas in order to publish only in elite scientific journals, some of them outside the area of nursing. The author argues that other ways of assessing the quality and impact of scientific journals



in nursing should be planned, and that books and book chapters should also begin to be included in the metrics.

Ironside (2007) is peremptory in stating that impact factors are not useful and should be abolished, although they may provide some useful information for the review process if used in a judicious and conscientious manner.

Finally, it should be noted that the arguments that give a more stated defence of impact factor focus, above all, on 1) a kind of tacit acceptance of metrics by researchers and academics, and 2) the defence of initial reductionist thinking of Eugene Garfield who conceived the impact factor as a way to evaluate science and scientific journals per se. Some authors, such as Oppenheim (2008), recognising the importance of metrics, consider that impact factor is strongly correlated with other scientific quality criteria, such as peer-review. Oppenheim (2008) cannot foresee, for example, that impact factor can easily replace the criterion of the peer-review in the structures that validate the knowledge produced. Essentially, because the second is mostly a closed and silent criterion, it is restricted to the author-mediator-reviewer relationship and not available for consultation, which makes it vulnerable to the easy accessibility and enormous reach of the impact factor as a validation criterion of knowledge produced, as considered by most of the academic structure. For authors who celebrate the existence of metrics and impact factors as legitimators of knowledge produced, articles of proven quality are necessarily the most cited, since citations and other metrics correlate strongly with the most subjective side of the peer-review.

On the other hand, Kampourakis (2018) points out that the most beneficial side of the impact factor, albeit indirectly, is related to the very idea of dissemination and running of the knowledge produced because of two reasons. First, researchers and scientists have realised that the greater the dissemination of their work (i.e. ResearchGate), for example, amongst their networks, the greater the likelihood that they could be cited – besides generating greater scrutiny and verification of the knowledge produced. Second, the journals that reach higher impact factors end up having an acknowledgment that, in the short-term, allows them to benefit from a larger number of articles for publication, managing their needs from this bigger influx of articles.

Publications often tend to celebrate (with notifications to their subscribers) and to congratulate themselves⁷⁸ when entering major indexers and consequently accessing impact factors (i.e. Scopus – Scimago Journal & Country Rankings), since they perceive that being part of this system is, in the first instance, a crucial criterion for their validation and accreditation in the academic community in a much more decisive way than the degree of quality that may be associated with the material published. This is because, ultimately, impact factor is today understood as the first criterion to define the value of a scientific journal and published articles.

Final considerations

In general terms, the discussion in the scientific community about whether or not impact factors are reliable in measuring knowledge produced results in a theme that has been

⁷ <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/admt.201800285>.

⁸ <https://www.advancedsciencenews.com/celebrating-first-impact-factor-advanced-science/>.



associated with the very mutability and evolution of the Open Science movement.

Although academic debate focuses less on the tacit aspect of the analysis and reading of the values of the impact factors and more on the contradictions and problems associated with the phenomenon – with repercussion on the skew of the processes to legitimate the knowledge produced – there is still room for the use and discussion of the main ideas listed in this article.

An example of the importance of a broad reflection on the limits of the impact factor concept can be defined by the attempt to make it increasingly efficient by introducing new sub-dimensions that give it greater scope.

The g-factor, y-factor as well as h-index are good examples that aim to make the definition criteria less dependent on the characteristics described by academia as being detrimental and little recognisable for researchers' work and the activity of scientific journals that are not part of the so-called A-list of scientific publication (Howard, 2009).

Eugene Garfield (2006) suggests that impact factor accuracy is questionable and that citation studies should be adjusted to include variables such as peculiarity of the knowledge produced, citation density – average number of references cited by origin article – as well as the criterion of half-life (also from Thomson Reuters) or the number of years required to find 50% of the references cited.

In the future, it will be interesting to note: if the calculation of impact factors evolves into a more inclusive and parity model that values issues such as the scientific productivity of researchers and scientific journals, based on criteria to define scientific quality; or if the legitimacy of the knowledge produced will continue to be an extension of the tyranny of the metrics and the assumptions that are intrinsic to it. What is important to discuss – and what constitutes the aim of this article – is whether or not scientific openness can thrive in a world of publishing relations in which impact factors tend to perpetuate monopolies of scientific dissemination, resulting from the infinite replication of the status inherited by the previous publication of others and perpetuated by the repetition of practices that legitimised a given position in the ranking of impact factors. Therefore, should science produce aristocratic scientists and knowledge, based on the inheritance of those who already had a status before by publishing in a given periodical; or should it be based on merit and virtue, regardless of where it is published, and on the peer-review of the scientific knowledge produced? Science develops itself in both democratic and autocratic societies, but it also has a contribution for the strengthening of democracy. It is up to us, scientists and researchers, to decide what contribution we are ready to give, beyond knowledge produced, to the society that gives us context and conditions to investigate and publish.

References

Adler, R., Ewing, J. & Taylor, P. (2009). Citation statistics: a report from the International Mathematical Union (IMU) in Cooperation with the International Council of Industrial and Applied Mathematics (ICIAM) and the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS). *Statistical Science*, 24(1), 1-14. Retirado de https://www.jstor.org/stable/20697661?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

Archambault, E. & Larivière, V. (2009). History of the journal impact factor: Contingencies



and consequences. *Scientometrics*, 79 (3), 635–649. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11192-007-2036-x>

Bare, C. (2014). The guide to Open Science. [Post em blogue]. Retirado de <http://digitheadslabnotebook.blogspot.com/2014/01/guide-to-open-science.html>

Barthes, R. (1972). *S/Z*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira.

Bauer, K. & Bakkalbasi, N. (2005). An Examination of Citation Counts in a New Scholarly Communication Environment. *D-Lib Magazine*, 11(9). Retirado de <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/september05/bauer/09bauer.html>

Berghmans, S. & Kisjes, I. (2015). The evolution of Open Science – how digitization is transforming research. Elsevier Connect. Retirado de <https://www.elsevier.com/connect/the-evolution-of-open-science-how-digitization-is-transforming-research>

Bohannon, J. (2016). Hate journal impact factors? New study gives you one more reason. Science. Edição online, 6 de Julho de 2016. Retirado de <http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2016/07/hate-journal-impact-factors-new-study-gives-you-one-more-reason>

Borges, M. M. (2006). *A Esfera*. Dissertação de Doutorado em Letras, área de Ciências Documentais, Especialidade de Tecnologias da Informação. Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Coimbra. Retirado de <https://estudogeral.sib.uc.pt/jspui/handle/10316/8557>

Bourdieu, P. (1994). *O Poder Simbólico*. Algés: Difel.

Cardoso, G., et al (2009). As políticas de Open Access. Res publica científica ou auto-gestão? *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*, 60, 53-67. Retirado de <http://www.scielo.mec.pt/pdf/spp/n60/n60a04.pdf>

Falagas M. et al (2008). Comparison of SCImago jornal rank indicator with jornal impact factor. *FASEB journal*, 22 (8), 2623–2628. <https://www.fasebj.org/doi/10.1096/fj.08-107938>

Garfield, E. (1955). Citation Indexes for Science: A New Dimension in Documentation through Association of Ideas. *Science*, 122 (3159), 108-111. DOI: 10.1126/science.122.3159.108

Garfield, E. (2006). The History and Meaning of the Journal Impact Factor. *JAMA*, 295 (1), 90-93. DOI.1001/jama.295.1.90.

Greenwood, D. C. (2007). Reliability of jornal impact factor rankings. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 7(48). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-7-48>.

Howard, J. (2009). Humanities Journals Confront Identity Crisis. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 55(29), 1. Retirado de <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ838618>

Ironside, P. M. (2007). Advancing the Science of Nursing Education: Rethinking the Meaning and Significance of Impact Factors. *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*, 38 (3), 99-100. DOI10.3928/00220124-20070501-09

Johnstone, M.J. (2007). Journal impact factors: implications for the nursing profession. *International Nursing Review*, 54 (1), 35-40. DOI: 10.1111/j.1466-7657.2007.00527.x



- Kampourakis, K. (2018). What is the impact of the impact factor? *Science & Education*, 27(5-6), 405-406.
- Kupiec-Weglinski, J.W. (2015). Journal Impact Factor (JIF): The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Nowotwory. Journal of Oncology*, 65(6), 481-482. DOI: 10.5603/NJO.2015.0094
- Moustafa, K. (2015). The Disaster of the Impact Factor. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 21(1), 139-142
- Muller, J. Z. (2018). The Tyranny of Metrics. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Edição online de 21 de Janeiro de 2018. Retirado de https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Tyranny-of-Metrics/242269?cid=wsinglestory_hp_1
- Oppenheim, C. (2008). American Scientist Open Access Forum. [Post em blogue]. Retirado de <http://openaccess.cmb.med.rug.nl/?p=146>
- Paulus, F.M., Cruz, N. & Krach, S. (2018). The Impact Factor Fallacy. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9(1487), 1-7.
- Pirmez, C., Brandão, A.A., Momen, H. (2016). Scientific journal publishing is too complex to be measured by a single metric: Time to review the role of the impact factor! *Memórias do Instituto Oswaldo Cruz*, 111(9), 543-544.
- Priem, J. & Hemminger, B. (2012). Decoupling the scholarly journal. *Frontiers Computational Neuroscience*, 6(19), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fncom.2012.00019>
- Quintanilha, T. L. (2015). Considerações sobre os desafios múltiplos da Ciência Aberta. *Estudos em Comunicação*, 21, 13-34. DOI: 10.20287/ec.n21.a02.
- Saarela, M. et al (2016). Expert-based versus citation-based ranking of scholarly and scientific publication channels. *Journal of Infometrics*, 10, 693-718. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2016.03.004>
- Satyanarayama, K. & Sharma, A. (2008). Impact Factor. Time to move on. *Indian Journal of Medical Research, Editorial*, 127(1), 4-6. Retirado de <http://www.ijmr.org.in/article.asp?issn=0971-5916;year=2008;volume=127;issue=1;spage=4;epage=6;aulast=Satyanarayana;type=0>
- Seglen, P. O. (1997). Why the impact factor of journals should not be used for evaluating research. *British Medical Journal*, 314(7079), 498-502.
- Sygocki, W. & Korzeniewska, E. (2018). Impact factor (IF) True or False? *Przegląd Elektrotechniczny*, 1(1), 107-110.
- Towpik, E. (2015). IF-mania: Journal Impact Factor is not a proper mean to assess the quality of research, individual researchers, nor scientific institutions. *Nowotwory. Journal of Oncology*, 65(6), 465-475. DOI: 10.5603/NJO.2015.0092
- Vanclay, J. K., & Bornmann, L. (2012). Metrics to evaluate research performance in academic institutions: a critique of ERA 2010 as applied in forestry and the indirect H2index as a possible alternative. *Scientometrics*, 91 (3), 751-771. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11192-012-0618-8>

THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY: THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC IN PORTUGAL

Luís Alves de Fraga

alvesdefraga@gmail.com

He holds a PhD in History, a master's degree in Strategy, a degree in Political Social Sciences and is a retired colonel from the Portuguese Air Force. He is also a professor at the Autonomous University of Lisbon (Portugal).

Abstract

We have enjoyed the pleasure of discussing the proclamation of the Republic in Portugal in a variety of ways. The most profound work impressing us through the multiplicity of perspectives was that of the researcher Alice Samara (2010). It raises several explanatory hypotheses for different understandings of the Republic, according to the perspectives and the moments by which the regime and the republican idea are looked at.

Also recently, an excellent article by Jorge Pais de Sousa on Afonso Costa has been published, which gives us the possibility of understanding the Republic from a point of view almost unidentified so far (Sousa, [s.d.]).

Our perspective does not seek to make a critical, piecemeal judgment of legislation and political and party behaviour during the sixteen-year regime between 1910 and 1926. It concludes with the victory or defeat of republican thought; we are interested in focusing attention throughout the period perceiving and explaining the Republic - before and after the proclamation - as a result of the confrontation between the social group's leaps to modernity, to the new, to the different, and to the group that maintains the existing reality of tradition and conservatism.

Keywords

The 1st Republic, Modernity, Conservatism, Portugal, Revolution.

How to cite this article

Fraga, Luís Alves de (2018). "The confrontation between tradition and modernity: the proclamation of the Republic in Portugal". *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, N.º 2, November 2018-April 2019. Consulted [online] on the date of the last visit, <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.9.2.4>

Article received on March 5, 2017 and accepted for publication on July 13, 2018





THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY: THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC IN PORTUGAL¹

Luís Alves de Fraga²

Introduction

In the past there have been studies that seek to understand the First Republic (Wheeler, 1978) or explain some of its failures (Lúcio, Marques, 2010) - or that go a little deeper into certain specificities such as education, demonstrating the little effectiveness of republican policies (Candeias, 2003). Others wanted to relate the religious question to the social question, demonstrating republican anticlericalism (Catroga, 1988).

Here we have to explain, in order to make it operational, the concept of modernity on the one hand, and on the other, tradition.

According to Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, quoted by João Feres Júnior (Feres Júnior, 2010: 31), modernity can have the meaning:

"of 'new' in opposition to the 'old': in this case one already has the embryo of an epochal consciousness where modern defines a space of present experience that is wanted from the past. This use is usually linked to a more or less explicit time frame of the hierarchy of eras, that is it is strongly evaluative."

It is from this perspective that we use the term *modernity*, which is, as the sociologist affirms, in opposition to the old and tradition. This notion of modernity and tradition is also evident in Cultural Anthropology (Titiev, 1969: 176-183).

We will use another idea, which will serve as a support and that has its origin in strategy: conflict (Fiéviet, 1993: 51; 57; 81-82) - as in the engine of change, that is the dialectical opposition, affirmed or latent, between social groups in confrontation.

It may seem almost to underestimate our objective, however, because we are certain about the slowness of collective and deeper behavioural changes in human societies, we argue that conductive wires of cultural and sociological changes are transmitted almost without change from generation to generation, defining collective behaviours that are

¹ The translation of this article was funded by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia - as part of OBSERVARE project with the reference UID/CPO/04155/2013, with the aim of publishing Janus.net. Text translated by Thomas Rickard.

² The author writes according to the Old Orthographic Agreement of Portuguese.



conditioning political choices and changes that they themselves carry. It is not a question of determinism, but of the imbalance or, if one prefers, of the permanent confrontation between Apollo and Dionysius (Benedict, [s.d.]), between order and disorder, between the conventional and unconventional. It's that staying and leaving is permanent, varying only in function of the force of each of opposing and confronting element. The choice of the change from a monarchical regime to a republic allows us the ideal observatory that leads us to an understanding of the dynamics of forces in a constant pre-conflict dialectical dialogue or even in declared conflict.

We will dismantle the idea of the Republic to realise the extent to which it was fulfilled in Portugal both in the period immediately preceding and after the change of regime in 1910. There will be many lapses, many aspects to be addressed, but we will make a thesis, which we hope will not be understood as commonplace.

Our work is divided into two parts. In the first one, we intend to contemplate what as revolutionary contained the republican idea and reality in Portugal; in the second, shorter in detail, we will try to understand how the Republic defrauded Republicans or, if you prefer, how republicans were not able to accomplish the Republic and what it brought in itself - if anything different - besides appearances that did not exist in during monarchy.

1. The Republic: A Revolutionary Perspective

In Europe, the conception of a republic was, since modern times, revolutionary. The reason for this is understood: monarchy is associated with divine power as the legitimating process of the monarch. Medieval theocentrism had to be reflected by the throne in order to justify it and give it superiority alongside all the seigniorial powers of that time. But in the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, the necessity of the leap forward was perceived, thus transferring the power of governing from the aristocracy to the studious and working bourgeoisie. The French Revolution, being drunk on theorists, who discerned governmental principles over the popular will learn, in practice with the American Revolution that the peoples did not lack monarchs for sovereignty. It has been learned that the new aristocracy came not from the cradle, but from the use of opportunities. This was the lesson that came from the New to the Old World.

In the nineteenth century, the successes and failures of republics in Europe resulted from the articulation between the Industrial Revolution and the Liberal Revolution, because the first one generated the cultural broth necessary for the consciousness of the power to reside in the people, although not always the holders of capital accepted their political decision-making capacity (Obsbawm, 2001). It was in France that the first definitive turn for the Republic took place, full of revolutionary traditions, social contrasts and chasms between groups of the population. However, alongside this turn, France had learned from Napoleon Bonaparte that the export of the revolution should not be imposed outside the borders, because this would generate wars and the loss could be greater than the gain (Kissinger, 2015: 62). In turn, the monarchies in Europe, accepting the Republic in France, realised that they were preserved through a peaceful and tolerant coexistence. However, after France, it was in the most unlikely state that the Republic settled and to stay forever. Unlikely because, being essentially agricultural, without significant industry, it did not seem to have the political and sociological conditions needed to dump the monarchy and implant a republic. This state was Portugal.



It is in this perspective that one has to try to perceive the reason for a republic in an old state, monarchical by tradition for eight hundred years. In this respect, we judge, one must choose several points of observation to arrive at an intelligible result.

1.1. A country of illiterates

According to the census carried out in 1911, 75% of the Portuguese population were illiterate (Marques, 1980: 83), but from the report of events on 5 October 1910 - the date of the republican victory - it is possible to observe that those who struggled the most against the monarchy were the street men and the soldiers of some of Lisbon's military units, and certainly neither of them were learned people. Illiterates would prevail in large numbers. But they made the revolution.

How do you explain this apparent nonsense? It would be worth trying to understand that illiteracy was transversal to the whole of society and had a higher prevalence in the agricultural rural population. On the other hand, it is in this social segment that Catholic clerical influence was more deeply rooted, which was then affirmed to be truly obscurantist and politically conservative. Thus, in the same group - that of the illiterate - there are two diametrically opposed political positions: one, rural and agricultural, conservative and alienated, and another, urban, radical and, at the most, anticlerical.

The rural illiterate population endured, almost without complaint, all the burden of demands made by an exaggerated and bewildered monarchy. It was from it and from its work that middle and large landowners lived in the city, spending enough to enjoy the pleasures of doing nothing or combining incomes with the meagre income of a job dependent on the ever-deficient budget of the state. These poor illiterates kept within themselves the infinite ability to endure everything in return for the promise of eternal salvation after death. And the parish priest of the village was in charge of this, a visit to the houses of leaders, where he was received with honours that swelled his ego. But in the cities, especially the larger ones - Lisbon, Porto and Coimbra - illiterates lived with those who knew how to read, write and count. They listened to what was said in the streets, in the taverns - a place to drink a glass of wine with calorific effects, enough to supply an almost always deficient food - and in the neighbourhoods of narrow streets, unhealthy and miserable. And these illiterates, although believers in the religion of their fathers, had a much more critical view of clerical action than of rural ones. Living in the city enabled them to perceive differences and, above all, injustice. Thus, they were pushed into the lands of the revolt, being easy prey to Sebastianist, Messianic, thaumaturgical hope.

1.2. A messianic country

The crossing of cultures before Portugal existed (Portugal was born at the end of the first half of the twelfth century), particularly the Islamic with the Jewish and the Christian, gave specific characteristics to the behaviour of the Portuguese people regarding the divine and, especially, the hope of divine solutions. Messianism - whose origin is common to the three religions in Portuguese space - assumed, at the end of the sixteenth century, a tonality specific after the battle of Alcacer-Quibir, when King D. Sebastião disappeared, swallowed by the fury of individual combats. The divine messiah was transfigured, to the



people's eyes, into the political messiah who would take the figure of D. Sebastião to reclaim the throne that was his and was occupied by his uncle, Philip II of Spain. From a true fact - the disappearance of the young king - the wonderful legend of the saviour was able to rescue his people from all the misfortunes and bad management of Portugal. Sebastianism became Portuguese national religion, hope in moments of a lack of hope. And it has been repeating over time, pushing into the realm of the miraculous that only work, will and determination can solve (Quadros, 1982).

In the last twenty years of monarchy - from 1890 to 1910 - the accentuation of misrule in Portugal was notorious. There was a lot of borrowing, because public revenues were not enough to cover expenses. Customs revenues were considered a guarantee of payment, and more and more government employees were being poorly paid in a country where everyone received poor salaries, but did all they could to hide this endemic misery by taking refuge behind titles - of nobility or not, almost always having no value, concerning either the merit of those who possessed them or the merit of those who granted them - or of honorary sinecure without any importance or statute. In urban society at that time the middle classes were living, as Gervasio Lobato shows us, in a novel that was provoked by the caustic irony of the situations described (Lobato, 1898). The Portuguese Republican Party (PRP), which began to gain strength and credit around 1880, during the celebrations of the third centenary of the death of Luís de Camões, was still, at that time, an incipient opposition to the monarchy and a political grouping without popular foundations, interesting only some young bourgeois intellectuals, students in Coimbra or those already employed in Lisbon. However, some of the names in 1910 were to stand as figures of the Republic.

It is only a decade later, in 1890, that the PRP reaches prominence and begins to mobilise adherents to the new regime following the traumatic British ultimatum to Portugal. And it is convenient that here we stop to perceive the sociological transmutations, consequence of the political practices of the monarchy operated at the time.

Although it was not entirely true, the Portuguese with some illustration - and here we exclude the agricultural, illiterate and ignorant rural population of the villages and villages lost in the interior of the country - believed that the African territories, where few colonists had hoisted the national flag, were a heritage of the past - glorious and glorified - somewhere in the time of the Discoveries. They painfully believed in this quasi legend, just like the recent loss of the immense colony of Brazil. And in order to compensate for the independence of the great American colony, it was first of all designed among a few idealists and then, in a significant mass of people lacking a great and respected Portugal, the desire to achieve in Africa another Brazil limited to the west by the Atlantic coast of Angola and, to the east, by the coast of Mozambique by the Indian Ocean. This one dream found practical explanation in the decisions of the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, which stipulated that the effective occupation of the territories be carried out by the colonial ambitious powers. But the Portuguese dream contended with the British reality of connecting Cape Town in southern Africa to Cairo. Although Lisbon had adopted as its diplomatic policy silence over London's repeated calls for attention, it was awakened by the abrupt threat posed by England, which did not fear to intimidate, by the use of force, a state whose military capacity was almost nil. The people in Portugal did not expect such a powerful manifestation of power, even from the old ally, because, more than a political and diplomatic problem, what was felt in Portugal was the weight of the slap without the



capacity to respond. It was the trauma of the disabled brutalised by the unscrupulous individual, without morality and without principles of cordiality. The Portuguese felt themselves shaken in the dusty scrolls of a past greatness. It was as if they were all almost crippled elders and forced to stall until they reached exhaustion. The Portugal of dream woke up abruptly to an unknown reality: the overwhelming interest of the powerful unable to spare the manly rags dragged by a worn out and impotent old man. In this awakening, Portugal finally blamed the monarchy and its governments, not realising that governance was the result of their choices and was itself to blame. Thus, although contradicted by republican positivist study (Andrade, 2014, 120-128), the submerged messianic idea came to light, and all that was left was to find the messiah capable of facing with greatness, honour and power the hand that had wielded the scourge and humiliated the old motherland who give birth to worlds given to the world. The messiah, in our opinion, was raised in a popular perspective and not conscientised by the republican politicians, in the figure of the PRP. The Republic was the salvation and the saviour (Marques, 1978: 544-545). It was only necessary to feed the fire capable of this thaumaturgical epic. And he repudiated the *perfidious Albion*, his products, his language, which stopped being taught in the country's schools, his friendship, his coldness, his hypocritical punctuality. A hymn was composed, and it was sung as a patriotic march. And the Portuguese were left to the cradle by the theorists of republicanism.

Some people look and explain messianism (Anes, s.d.: 14-16), associating it with the practice of the Catholic religion and the rebirth of the splendour, national or even nationalist, although it also connected with a certain political practice. We believe that it is not a reprehensible thing to do a different reading, putting Sebastianism as the driving salvation of Portugal through the redemption of calamitous situations. To this end, when we associate it with the proclamation of the Republic and republicanism, we have Teixeira de Pascoaes, Jaime Cortesão, Augusto Casimiro, all of whom are republican and Sebastianist, mentors of the Portuguese Renaissance society and the journal *Águia*.

1.3. A country of republicans

If it is true that the PRP was the result of the will of learned people, knowing the ideals and aims of a republic, it is also true that the strongest adherence to the new political ideology was made between the urban population of both the middle bourgeoisie and weak working groups that existed then. The PRP, after 1890, knew how to make an ambivalent discourse pleasing both the average bourgeoisie, desirous of getting out of the economic and social impasse for which the monarchy had no way out, and to the working class, since socialist and socialising ingredients were used. And it was here that the ideas defended by Afonso Costa, expressed in his doctoral thesis (Costa, 1895), became relevant, as they already revealed the revolution that gained body in the legislation of 1911 (Sousa, [s.d.]: 7-19). The wave of supporters grew and the PRP was able to elect three deputies in 1890, after crawling along with an only one for several decades. But it should be said, in order not to have a false idea, the republicans were few. The monarchist parties, fearing the ever-increasing antipathy of the PRP militants, did everything to alter the geography of the electoral circles and the results seemed ridiculous.

If, in the villages and towns of the provinces, the monarchist caciques dominated



elections, generating an illusion of full sympathy for the crown, a large number of voters were republican in the cities - even in some distant from Lisbon and embedded in the strongholds of the monarchy.

We can only perceive this urban disparity if we take into account the drowning experienced by the middle classes of meagre financial resources, dependent on the state budget or small commerce. A republic constituted the possibility of altering, it was thought, elements which later proved to be structural. Being agricultural, Portugal was little profitable. The biggest industry in the cities was construction. There were no large factories, but there was a proliferation of family workshops where a little bit of everything was done. Trade was, internally, the way to raise sustenance. Exports of wine, olive oil and little else were for Brazil, then to the colonies, and then to Great Britain. It was from this country that almost everything that was consumed in Portugal came. The dependence on British commerce was total. But the great source of income, which still managed to make the economy and national finances feasible, was the remittances of money from emigrants, who, in those days, sought first Brazil and then Argentina and the United States of America.

In the context described it is natural that the Republic should be felt, by the group that believed in it, as the magic formula that would solve everything. It was more a mirage than an effective project of change. And the truth is that republican propaganda was based essentially on the critique of monarchical governance rather than on the definition of a concrete project of change (Catroga, 1991, I vol.), which made the PRP a political front rather than a party. And yet, among the most prominent members of the PRP, there were those who knew how to begin a process of modernisation in Portugal. But it was convenient not to give him much publicity, because only radical measures could result in the future. Do not give him publicity stated Jorge Pais de Sousa, because Afonso Costa - defender of integral socialism, later dubbed as radical - understood that the different sensitivities should be kept together until the possibility of a political change separating them and making them autonomous.

1.4. A country waiting for revolution

In the aftermath of the English ultimatum, and in the aftermath, a year later, in Porto 31 January 1891, a military revolution led essentially by army sergeants and encouraged by civilian republicans ensured. From the porch of the town hall the Republic was proclaimed, applauded by the population that awaited the event. But it was an unsuccessful attempt as, within hours, the guard was suppressed by cannon fire. There followed arrests, judgments and deportations. The Bragança throne trembled but did not fall. Don Carlos, still a young monarch, could live for over seventeen years imagining hard and illiberal political solutions that came to fruition at the end of his life. From the episode was a lesson for the PRP: regime change had to involve more than a few revolting regiments and had to be supported and executed by the people in conjunction with the troop. This was the understanding of the revolutionary wing of the PRP, because, along with it, another took shape: that of the change through the electoral route. Thus, the years passed and gave opportunity to the successive degradation of monarchical governments that, instead of solving the Portuguese crisis, made it worse. Danger lurked in 1898 when, in Lisbon, suspicions were almost certain that Britain and



Germany had come to an understanding, giving a large loan to Portugal and sharing the colonies among themselves due to a lack of debtor payment. The old Lusitanian homeland was spared thanks to the intervention of republican France, which with excellent conditions granted a loan, avoiding the colonial enrichment of the rival states. The turn of the century gave republicans strength. But propaganda continued to be made against the monarchy without clearly outlining a program beyond the overthrow of the king and the ruling house. It was not by chance that this happened; it was important, above all else, to guarantee adherence to the PRP even though it was done by mere opposition to the throne; afterwards, it was known that two fundamental pillars for the existence of Portugal could not be changed: the almost total dependence on Great Britain and productive incapacities (Marques, 2010). Thus, at the international level, republicans had to hide two dangers: on the one hand, the English antipathy with the republican cause and, on the other hand, to ensure that London did not give carte blanche, after the proclamation of the Republic, to Madrid to proceed to the old dream of Iberian union. Let us agree that to maintain the revolutionary spirit at such a juncture was to be able to balance, with great skill, dangerous antagonisms. This was perhaps the reason why the PRP program was diffuse about the future; this was the reason for the PRP, a group that hoped to reach the Republic through electoral routes.

Now, as monarchic politics degenerated, republican voices against the monarchy rose. In order to satisfy the internal front, the revolution had to be prepared and this was done in 1908 with a less clear manoeuvre at the PRP congress in Setúbal: a group with a strong revolutionary lean was elected, and civil and military revolutionary committees were created.

But to go further in understanding this change of attitude, one has to realise how the revolutionary force was already structuring itself.

1.5. A city of Carbonarians

Lisbon has long been the centre of all political action and also the seat of the PRP. The change of regime, when it operated, only very exceptionally should not occur in this city. Everything was being prepared, since before 1908, so that Lisbon was the scene of the fall of the throne.

In Freemasonry, in the shops where members were assigned to republicanism, the desired revolution was discussed, but it was not there that the forces moved to do so. Carbonaria was responsible for this role, this action of arms in hand (Ventura, 2004). Recruitment was being made among less well-off people, living in some of Lisbon's poorest neighbourhoods. The organisation was cellular, avoiding the arrest and denunciation of the ringleaders. The initiation was carried out by rituals of terror and death threats for the traitors and, to give more realism to the act, places of darkness in dark nights were chosen. The men wore hoods that covered their faces, so they would not be recognised, and daggers and pistols were displayed as revenge elements against anyone who faltered at the time of arrest and torture.

Carbonaria grew in a short time and became radicalised in hatred of the monarchy. The last end was the overthrow of Bragança and not the construction of a republic marked by a program, however radical it might be.



The regicide, in February 1908, was, as far as is known in historical uncertainty, an isolated act of Carbonaria. It was not a murder in the purest and simplest sense of the term; it was, rather, the execution of a sentence long dictated by the political behaviour of D. Carlos. Hence, just for being, the funerals of the regicides had the applause of a population enraged against the monarchy. The death of the executioners was the last ruckus of a reigning house unable to raise the dream of a people, to raise its morale, to give it the courage to face modernity. Carbonaria had already occupied all the space where political tolerance could be moved. Shortly before the proclamation of the Republic, it was thought, perhaps with some exaggeration, that some twenty thousand men were operating in the ranks of that secret and revolutionary association, all of them possessing at least one firearm.

Thus, in Lisbon, the bulk of the revolutionary force was gathered, which manufactured handcrafted bombs to be used at the proper time. These men knew what to do and when to do it, and their action ranged from attacking the rear of the forces loyal to the throne, when they were ready to crush the revolt, to entrenchment in the places of resistance to liquidate the monarchy once and for all, also going through the coup service between attack nuclei or the assault on army and navy barracks to obtain war weapons and munition (Fraga, 2010).

Carbonaria, with the support of the army and navy, won the republican victory on the morning of 5 October 1910, but there is a question that must be asked: "But what Republic has proclaimed itself?"

As we have pointed out, we judge from what we have said before that the sociological reality of the Republic proclaimed in 1910 is a crumbling of ideas with no other guiding line that goes beyond the desire to overthrow the monarchy in order to achieve changes capable of projecting Portugal in the realms of modernity. Thus, in order to understand what was and what the proclamation of the Republic represented, it will be necessary to go further, entering into the Republic itself and disassemble the forces and the dynamics in its present from the day of the overthrow of the monarchy.

2. An Ambiguously Liberating Republic

With the Republic proclaimed, it can be said that the process of fracture between republicans began in the same day as the hero of Rotunda, Machado Santos, an officer of the navy and one of the highest officials in charge of Carbonaria, considered himself betrayed since the PRP politicians, who had not contributed to the victory, took over the process. And, without giving him the explanations he thought he deserved, they advanced to the formation of a Provisional Government (Santos, 2007). This fracture, besides explaining the temperament of Machado Santos, gives us a magnificent indication of how the change of regime was envisaged: the Republic had to be tutored by the man of arms who had commanded the revolt; the regime was not of concern, but rather who changed it; the people were not in the foreground, but rather the individualities engaged in the change that had just happened. Individualism began to scream even though the Republic had just been born in Portugal.

The Provisional Government had the task of approving the change from monarchy to republic throughout the country, and it is not uncommon to have historians who, in an



air of laziness, claim that this proclamation was made by telegraph. It was, in fact, but it in no way belittles the republican victory. If the country accepted being a republic, proclaimed and implemented in this way, it is because it was neither republican nor saw any reason to defend the monarchy, which, we can therefore consider, was then rotten and only waiting for someone to overthrow it. But this conclusion is also wrong. The monarchists (some of them), almost the day after the republic's acclamation, began to conspire. It was not the anonymous monarchist citizen by habit or conviction that conspired. It was all those who knew how much it would represent for them to move to a republic. They began meetings to study how the throne was to be restored and put the king back in his place. A year later, after bad training in Galicia close to the Portuguese border, and with the knowledge and consent of the Spanish authorities, an ill-armed force, commanded by a monarchist faithful to the monarchy, but not very trustful of his king, invaded a settlement of the north and proclaimed the restoration of the old regime. But it lasted for only a little while – just a few hours. He had to run away. He believed that this unusual act would be enough to generate a wave of revulsion in the country, giving rise to the revolt against the republic. He was utterly deceived (Fraga, 2012: 367-401).

The conspiracy continued through the years (Samara, 2010: 381), weak but incapable of a return. Would the Portuguese be republicans? Or simply indifferent? That's what we'll try to figure out next.

2.1. The Provisional Government or the true revolution

After the proclamation of the republic, when it became normalised, the Provisional Government took office. Legislation began to emerge in cascades. In Portugal the bases of change were drawn and laid. This change was, after all, the revolution. Being provisional, the government did not limit itself to a day-to-day management. It was revolutionary. The revolution was not on 5 October 1910; the revolution lasted while the Provisional Government lasted (Ferrão, 1976), but it would not govern alone, as there were weekly meetings with the PRP and advisory board. The Republic was imposing itself. It is this dependence and this connection that make legislation a revolutionary body. It is true that Carbonaria also maintained pressures with the Ministry of War; it was against the strikes that are beginning a little everywhere. The claims grew louder than ever before in the monarchy. And the monarchy spoke of itself as liberal.

From the outset, within the government, political trends corresponding to different sensitivities in the PRP were verified. The most radical was the link between Bernardino Machado, Afonso Costa and some of the army officers who were most committed to the Republic. This alliance will subsist until after the end of the Great War and found resonance in much of the population. But it is in this that the different social divisions, which matter to us, are made; they occur at the level of the people, especially because of the publication of the law on separation of state and churches (20 April, 1911) and of all anticlerical legislation proposed and approved by Afonso Costa, Minister of Justice. He was, to us, the soul of the republican revolution at various times - in the 1933 provisional government, in his first government, the most stable of all the Republics; in the second, in 1915, when it received belligerence in the Great War; in the Sacred Union and subsequently in 1916 and 1917; and finally, when he stayed at the League of Nations to ensure that Portugal was able to benefit greatly, from a financial point of view, from the



Great War, gaining the possibility of maritime trade with competitive conditions. It was because of the Roman Catholic Church and the reactionary clergy that Portugal practically split almost in half. To the north, the great weight of the religion was decisive to move the rural populations away from the Republic, without, however, moving them closer to the defunct monarchy. The populations were divided between the perception of the intentions of the radical republicans and repudiation. In the rurality of the villages and small villages, the anger of the parish priest had strong repercussions on the families, but the same did not happen in the cities where there was a greater tolerance for perceiving or judging the extent of government measures. Because, in fact, the great republican struggle was against the influence of the clergy and not against religion, as some believed at the time.

The effect of more aggressive legislation in relation to tradition made itself felt in successive waves of less intense shock over time, until after the military and dictatorial coup of May 1926.

But, apart from the anti-clerical laws, what other laws did they have from the Provisional Government to give it revolutionary character?

In addition to the creation of the universities of Lisbon and Porto, which, once and for all, broke away from Coimbra's monopoly of university higher education, rejecting the hegemony of the old academy in Portugal (remember, in 1837, when creating the University of Lisbon, the scholars from Coimbra managed to make the government fall), the publication of the decree regulating strikes should be mentioned as an achievement for the workers, as it gave to the bosses rights that were never accepted by the working class. And it was in this particular aspect that the biggest challenge was in the first year of life, because, as we have already mentioned, the number of strikes increased exponentially compared with those of the time of the monarchy. Now, it was not only because there was more freedom that this happened. It was because, in fact, the Republic defrauded the expectations of the workers, making it very clear that it was a regime aimed at the bourgeoisie, that the revolution carried out by the Provisional Government defined the bourgeois as the goal of modernity.

But it was not only at previous levels that the Provisional Government left its indelibly revolutionary mark. In fact, another highly significant aspect was the reform of the army. Indeed, on 25 May 1911, a law was published which established new bases for military service, transforming the old permanent system into a militiaman with great inspiration in the Swiss model. It was an attempt to change, in a few years, the mentality of male citizens, generating within them a sense of belonging and total integration in the homeland (Fraga, Samara, 2014: 93-115). Curiously, this idea had its origin, not in the young turks as it is common to read and refer to, but in Afonso Costa, who expounded it in his doctoral thesis (Sousa, [s.d.]: 15-16).

As can be seen, there are deep contradictions in the social aspects of the positions assumed by the Provisional Government of the Republic in Portugal, as it sometimes draws abrupt and almost insurmountable ruptures and, in others, it seeks ferociously to amalgamate this fabric around a concept intended to retake the historical past with pride. But the republican revolution generated by the Provisional Government opened gaps between the republicans themselves. The first was created by the principle of facilitating the adhesion of the PRP to those who had recently been active in monarchic ranks. The



second was the result of some historic republicans wanting to have elections for a constituent assembly shortly after October, with the interim government legislating. The third, and more serious, was the election of the President of the Republic, which brought together, on the one hand, the moderate and more conservative wing of the republicans, and, on the other, the most radical headed by Afonso Costa. This was the beginning of the end of apparent republican unity.

By the end of its term, the Provisional Government had indeed laid the foundations of the republican revolution, and had failed to complete it on other fronts, but politically, the hopes of the Republic before it that had been proclaimed were lost. The dream, because that was it, was broken after the awakening, giving rise to a profusion of open and latent conflicts, which only a cold analysis before October 1910 would have been able to detect. If anyone detected it, nothing was said, so as not to disturb the overthrow of the monarchy. Did Portugal win anything with the Republic? Did the people benefit from regime change? Did the trend towards modernity win and put Portugal on the path of Europe? Has Portuguese sovereignty strengthened with the Republic?

2.2. The Great War and the crux of the true revolution

When the Republic was proclaimed, Portuguese national symbols were chosen with the traditional flag and national anthem being replaced. Both symbols have a foundation that carries history and a meaning not immediately visible or comprehensible. Turning to the republican national anthem, we find that, with the slight alteration of a single verse, the written and composed hymn was adopted during the English ultimatum of 1891. Is it necessary to add more in order to realise that, in foreign policy, the Republic was not - for mere convenience of moment - anti-British. Was it an advocate of the end of English tutelage to the extent that it was possible? This was the aspect that resumed the revolution in 1914, since, contrary to Britain's wishes, the most radical wing of all Republicans - Afonso Costa's political companions - did everything to bring Portugal to the war at the request of England, thus proving to the world that Portuguese national sovereignty was as valuable as British national sovereignty (Fraga, 2012). However, the intentions of a certain republican faction, which defended conservative behavioural ruptures in the last year of war and those that followed it until 28 May 1926 - the day of the military coup that established the long dictatorship until April 1974 - was challenged by successive political or military coups. Thus arising, in the masses who supported the Republic and to those for whom it was implemented (the small and middle bourgeois), was the desire for social peace, living tranquility, even if it sacrificed the path to a modern way of living. In this way, conservatism overcame innovation. Tradition prevailed over the revolution, as, on the one hand, ruptures ran too deep in Portuguese social fabric, generating a series of conflicts in antagonistic, minority sectors, desirous of achieving governance and, on the other, the Republic's supportive population grew tired of the exhausting political crises. To these two grounds more elements were added: the economic disorganisation of Europe, Portuguese industrial backwardness, the poor profitability of agriculture and, above all, the very low rate of investment in new productive sectors. In short, everything in Portugal tended to the ultra-conservative tradition. But behind this tendency, or to justify it, there was, for a long time, a concept that gained space among some catholic, monarchical and even republican elites. This concept entered the Portuguese political lexicon in the post-Great War period, in the early



1920s, when the Nationalist Republican Party (Leal, [s.d.]: 35) was founded in 1923. Tradition gained a form of designation: nationalism (LEAL, 1999).

The political ascension of António de Oliveira Salazar and Portuguese fascism from 1928 resulted from a game that he knew to play between opposing interests that was always carefully managed regarding the peasant, village and rural tradition (Curto, 2016). The Republic ceased to be revolutionary, almost ceased to be a republic, being a political regime of a man who could be king without sitting on a throne - or without nominal regime change.

The Republic of 1910 did not die with the entry of the political constitution of 1933 but with the inauguration of Salazar as Ministry President in 1932. It was tradition, conservatism, dubbed nationalism, that took the reins of governance. Portugal receded for thirty years, returning to the mental behaviour of the early twentieth century. The hand of pre-censorship, of the political police, and the exaltation of a catholicism close to creed put the population of the city and the country out of any movement of modernity that could come from Europe, contours of fascist and nazi dictatorships.

The political regime that ruled Portugal until 1974 only in name had some connection with the previous. Of course, the Republic that was reborn on 25 April 1974 was the heir of what had been proclaimed in 1910 in a completely different time and context, and also wanted to be revolutionary, yet seeking other paths and aiming at other objectives, it was only in freedom and in practice where slight points of contact were encountered.

Conclusion

Throughout the previous pages we have tried to describe the process of change from monarchy to republic in Portugal.

We highlighted several aspects of Portuguese social fabric from the late nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, and we also highlighted how the change of monarchy to republic took place in the context of the ruptures provoked by the revolutionary decisions of the Provisional Government - the most revolutionary of all republican governments in the post-republic. We have left, we think, quite clear the idea that the PRP did not have a program that went much further than the mere repudiation of the monarchy. Nevertheless, one element - Afonso Costa - whose primary objective was to break with traditions and ancillaries, lead Portugal to the European modernity of the time.

We tried to connect social realities with legislative dispositions where the fracture of continuity prevailed. We showed that the conservative element in Portuguese society was more resistant to change, annulling innovative efforts represented by a wing of the republicans. We paid some attention to the return to social peace and consequent return to the limits of conservatism after the end of the Great War. We were able to finish this ambulation through the years of the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, when, in Portugal, lived republicanism and the proclamation of the Republic.

In way of conclusion, we can affirm that the confrontation, in Portugal, between tradition, acting dialectically on innovation hindered, from the beginning, the process of opening up to modernity in the early 20th century. But even more so, it led to the degeneration



of the Republic that, being democratic, liberal and petty-bourgeois, but with remarkably socialising affirmations, ended up transforming itself into a fascist dictatorial Republic with a long duration of forty-eight years.

References

- Andrade, José Carlos de Souza (2014). *Em Demanda do Sebastianismo em Portugal e no Brasil: Um Estudo Comparativo (Séculos XIX/XX)*. Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra. Tese de doutoramento em História.
- Anes, José (s. d.). *O complexo sebastianista no comportamento político*. S.l. Disponível em http://www.e-cultura.sapo.pt/ieei_pdf/31/JoseEnes_O_complexo_sebastianista_no_comportamento_politico2.
- Benedict, Ruth (s. d.). *Padrões de Cultura*. Lisboa: Livros do Brasil.
- Candeias, António (2003). *A Primeira República Portuguesa (1910-1926): educação, ruptura e continuidade, um balanço crítico*. Encontros Ibéricos de História da Educação, vol. 5º Encontro, p. 161-192.
- Catroga, Fernando (1988). "O laicismo e a questão religiosa em Portugal (1865-1911)". In *Análise Social*, vol. XXIV (100), 1988 (1.º), 211-273.
- Catroga, Fernando (1991). *O Republicanismo em Portugal: Da Formação ao 5 de Outubro de 1910*. I vol. Coimbra: Faculdade de Letras.
- Costa, Afonso (1895). *A Igreja e a Questão Social: Análise Crítica da Encíclica Pontifícia De Conditione Opificum, e 15 de maio de 1891*. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade.
- Curto, Diogo Ramada (2016). "Fernando Rosas: uma vida cheia, uma escola aberta e uma visão do Estado Novo". In Público [Em linha]. (28 Abr. 2016) [Consult. 30 Abr. 2016]. Disponível em <https://www.publico.pt/culturaipsilon/noticia/fernando-rosas-uma-vida-cheia-uma-escola-aberta-e-uma-visao-do-estado-novo-1730315?page=-1>.
- Feres Júnior, João (2010). "Introdução a uma crítica da modernidade como conceito sociológico. Mediações". In *Revista de Ciências Sociais*. Londrina: Vol. 15, n.2, p. 28-41.
- Ferrão, Carlos (1976). *História da 1.ª República*. Lisboa: Terra Livre.
- Fiévet, General Gil (1993). *Da Estratégia Militar à Estratégia Empresarial*. Mem Martins.
- Fraga, Luís Alves de (2010). "A Carbonária, uma Força Civil, e os Militares: Uma Reflexão Histórica". In *XIX Colóquio de História Militar, 100 anos do regime republicano: políticas, rupturas e continuidades — Actas*. Lisboa: Comissão Portuguesa de História Militar, p. 91-123.
- Fraga, Luís Alves de (2012). "Nos Bastidores da Conspiração. Espanha, Alemanha e a República Portuguesa: 1916 – 1917". In *Actas do Colóquio Internacional. Os Açores, a I Guerra Mundial e a República Portuguesa no Contexto Internacional*. [s.l.]: Presidência do Conselho Regional dos Açores, Direcção Regional da Cultura, p. 367-401.
- Fraga, Luís Alves de (2012). *O Fim da Ambiguidade: A Estratégia Nacional Portuguesa de 1914 a 1916*. 2.ª ed. Lisboa: EDIUAL.



Fraga, Luís Alves de; Samara, Maria Alice (2014). *João Pereira Bastos: O Sonho de um Exército Republicano*. Lisboa: Assembleia da República.

Hobsbawm, Eric (2001). *A era das Revoluções: 1789 – 1848*. 5.ª ed. Lisboa: Editorial Presença. <http://www.centrodefilosofia.com/uploads/pdfs/philosophica/22/3.pdf>.

Kissinger, Henry (2015). *A Ordem Mundial*. 2.ª ed. Lisboa: D. Quixote.

Leal, Ernesto Castro (1999). *Nação e Nacionalismos. A Cruzada Nacional D. Nuno Alvares Pereira e as Origens do Estado Novo (1918-1938)*. Lisboa: Edições Cosmos.

Leal, Ernesto Castro (s.d.). *Nacionalismo e Federalismo. Tópicos de Pensamento Político Português e Europeu (1901-1926)* [Em linha]. [Consult. 2 Mar 2017]. Disponível em <http://docplayer.com.br/2549831-Nacionalismo-e-federalismo-topicos-de-pensamento-politico-portugues-e-europeu-1901-1926.html>.

Lobato, Gervásio (1898). *Lisboa em Camisa*. 3.ª ed. Lisboa: Livraria António Maria Pereira.

Lúcio, José; Marques, Filomena (2010). *A Pobreza em Lisboa na I República*. Lisboa: UNL/FCSH.

Marques, A. H. de Oliveira (dir.) (1978). *História da 1.ª República Portuguesa: As Estruturas de Base*. Lisboa: Iniciativas Editoriais.

Marques, A.H. de Oliveira (1980). *A Primeira República Portuguesa: Alguns Aspectos Estruturais*. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte.

Marques, Alfredo Pereira (2010). *Sobre as Causas do Atraso Nacional*. Vialonga: Coisas de Ler.

Moura, Maria Lúcia de Brito (2004). *A Guerra Religiosa na Primeira República*. Cruz Quebrada: Editorial Notícias.

Quadros, António (1982). *Poesia e Filosofia do Mito Sebastianista. I volume. O Sebastianismo em Portugal e no Brasil*. Lisboa: Guimarães & C.ª Editores.

Samara, Maria Alice (2010). *As Repúblicas da República: História, Cultura Política e Republicanismo*. Lisboa: Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas. Dissertação de doutoramento em História Contemporânea Institucional e Política de Portugal.

Santos, Machado (2007). *A Revolução Portuguesa: 1907-1910*. Lisboa: Sextante Editora.

Sousa, Jorge Pais de (s.d.). *Afonso Costa: Republicanismo Socialista e Ação Política (1887- 1911)* [Em linha]. [Consult. 28 Fev 2017] disponível em http://www.intellectus.uerj.br/Textos/Ano12n1/JORGE_PAIS_DE_SOUSA.pdf.

Titiev, Mischa (1969). *Introdução à Antropologia Cultural*. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.

Ventura, António (2004). *A Carbonária em Portugal: 1897 – 1910*. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte.

Wheeler, Douglas L. (1978). "A Primeira República Portuguesa e a história". In *Análise Social*, vol. XIV (56), 1978-4.º, 865-872.

COMPLEX INTERDEPENDENCE AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO A NEW APPROACH TO THE WORK OF THE AMAZON COOPERATION TREATY ORGANIZATION

Gisela da Silva Guevara

gisela.silvaguevara@gmail.com

Ph.D. Holder. Professor and researcher at the Faculty of Finance, Government and International Relations of the Externado University of Colombia. A researcher at the Centre for Research and Special Projects (CIPE) of the Externado University in Colombia, she carries out projects on regional security with emphasis on Brazil. Her latest published books include *Geopolítica Latinoamericana: Nuevos Enfoques y Temáticas*, Bogotá: Externado University. She holds a Master Degree in Security and Intelligence Studies from Brunel University, London, and a Ph.D. in Political Science and International Relations from the University of Minho, Portugal.

Abstract

This paper aims to analyse the work that the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (TCA), later converted at the beginning of the 21st century into the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) with permanent secretariat in Brasilia, has conducted in favour of the debate on the sustainability of the Amazon. Although the work of this organization has usually been studied under a realist approach, focusing mainly on the action of its Member States, it is argued that the Complex Interdependence, a theory developed by Nye and Keohane, can expand the knowledge of the work of the Treaty in favour of the debate on the sustainability of the Amazon region

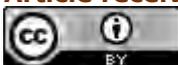
Keywords

Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO); sustainable development; complex interdependence theory; regional environmental debate.

How to cite this article

Guevara, Gisela da Silva (2018). "Complex Interdependence and its contribution to a new approach to the work of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization". *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, N.º 2, November 2018-April 2019. Consulted [online] on the date of the last visit, <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.9.2.5>

Article received on September 14, 2017 and accepted for publication on July 1, 2018





COMPLEX INTERDEPENDENCE AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO A NEW APPROACH TO THE WORK OF THE AMAZON COOPERATION TREATY ORGANIZATION^{1,2,3}

Gisela da Silva Guevara

Introduction

The Amazon Cooperation Treaty (TCA) and its re-launch in the 1990s with the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), was a historic opportunity for South American countries to reflect on the meaning of sustained and sustainable development for their Amazonian territories. Six years before the Treaty was signed, the Stockholm Conference had defined sustained development as "a process through which natural resources are preserved for the benefit of present and future generations" (Stockholm Declaration, 1972, principle 2). Over ten years after Stockholm, the Brundtland Report (UN, 1987) not only expanded the concept to sustainable development, but also drew attention to the seriousness of forest deforestation.

Patricia Guzmán emphasizes that

"The conceptual fragmentation of the territory through 'borders' had an incoherent impact. Ideally, given the presence of a limited resource, the concept of political boundaries should have led to an integral understanding of the causes and effects of human activity [...]" (2012: 29).

This statement could not be better applied to the Amazon, a territory that is shared by eight South American nations that share numerous common problems. These range from disturbing levels of deforestation and water resource management to high poverty rates, correlated, in some cases, with a greater propensity for illegal activities.

For the eight member countries of the TCA, the Amazon represents a very different percentage with respect to the extension of their respective national territories. While for

¹ All parts in foreign languages in this text were translated into Spanish by the author, except in the explanatory notes, where they were kept in their original language.

² The author thanks the two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments. Any error is the sole responsibility of the author.

³ The translation of this article was funded by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia - as part of OBSERVARE project with the reference UID/CPO/04155/2013, with the aim of publishing Janus.net. Text translated by Carolina Peralta.



Brazil it represents more than 60% of its territory, for nations like Ecuador it corresponds to about 46%. In Brazil there are also large asymmetries between the south and southeast with their industrialized megacities, such as São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro, responsible for 50% of the GDP, and the north and west of the territory, with low population density, high poverty rates and difficulties in integrating into the national space (Anatol, 2011).

Focusing especially on the Brazilian Amazon, Espitia Caicedo (2007) highlights that 80% of the wood of the Amazon rainforest is illegally exploited and even when such exploitation is done legally, it causes great destruction. On the other hand, when we take into account the unemployment problems affecting the Amazonian states such as Pará, Mato Grosso and Rondonia, and that the exploitation of wood corresponds to 15% of the GDP (Espitia Caicedo, 2007), we realize that to develop more sustainable models for the Amazonian territories, whether Brazilian or non-Brazilian has been, for decades, a blunt need.

When the TCA was signed in 1978, the relationship between sustained development and economic models had not yet been clarified. In fact, in an ambiguous way, the TCA mentions that

"Considering that in order to achieve an integral development of the respective territories of the Amazon it is necessary to maintain the balance between economic growth and the preservation of the environment" (ACTO, n.d.).

Only at the beginning of the 1990s were the premises of the Amazon Pact re-evaluated and the concept of sustainable development recognized, with the creation of two new Special Commissions, the Environment Commission and the Indigenous Affairs Committee. (Román, 1998). It is necessary to emphasize that the re-launching of the TCA in those years had been closely tied to the threats, real or perceived, of the internationalization of the Amazon⁴. However, it was still not clear how the TCA signatories should cooperate regarding the Amazonian affairs and how funding for the Treaty could be obtained. The dilemma remained for the members of the Amazonian pact, and especially for Brazil: should the Treaty's priority be to protect the sovereign rights of the Amazonian countries against the supposed ambitions of the North? Or to coordinate common policies to manage in a sustainable way the Amazonian resources of the eight TCA signatory nations?

The South American states, both within the framework of their centralist models, as in the case of the Colombia, and as federalists, as in the case of the Brazil, tend not only to ignore the specificities of their Amazonian areas, but also not to value the transboundary possibilities of their environmental and cultural characteristics. In the case of the Colombian Amazon, Arenas and Ruedas (2012: 145) affirm that the national government's policies "reflect a vision from the Andean or the Caribbean facet and have

⁴ For an in-depth view of the topic on the internationalization of the Amazon, especially the Brazilian case, see Da Silva Guevara, Gisela (2016).



not managed to incorporate the particularities of a region where the environmental and cultural wealth goes beyond the national border".

Germán Grisales sums up how to deal with the problems of the Amazon region as follows: "We must treat the Amazon as an internal matter; defend it as a regional issue, and receive financial and technical support [...] as a global plan." (quoted in Espitia Caicedo, 2007: 78). Starting from Grisales' statement, this article seeks, in the first instance, to analyse the efforts of the TCA, at a regional level, to encourage reflection on models of sustained development for tropical forests. Secondly, the limitations of the neorealist approach to ACTO are examined, and a proposal to expand knowledge about this organization through Complex Interdependence is advanced. These aspects are analysed in order to assess whether ACTO has contributed significantly to the debate on the sustainability of forests, regionally speaking.

We suggest that several premises of the Complex Interdependence (CI) theory can be applied to the analysis of the TCA/ACTO, reviewing the realist/neo-realist analytical approach. Among them is that the role of the hegemon requires "deference", but it does not mean that it does not have to lead to a consensus with the member states of the regional organizations. On the other hand, the relevance of the action of transnational networks of contacts during the consolidation of the funding of the TCA was not taken into account at the time, since a realist/neorealist state-centric approach dominated, as we will see in this article in the case of the network built around Carrera de la Torre. Under the CI approach, these networks make it possible to highlight that not only the states are determinant in the consolidation of regional organizations. Finally, we believe that it is necessary to take into account that CI allows to give importance to the work of transnational actors which, in many cases, are very proactive when promoting the environmental initiatives of environmental organizations, as we will see with the pilot project of the MAP initiative (Madre de Dios, Peru, Acre, Brazil, Pando, Bolivia).

The methodology is qualitative, using several academic works and articles and primary sources, where the role of the ACTO in the regional debate in favour of the sustainability of tropical forests can be evaluated. A set of treaties and other official documents were triangulated with secondary sources in order to shed light on the work of transnational actors, among others. Several dimensions were defined from which we aimed to review the limitations and biases of the realist or neorealist theoretical approach, in order to open a new field of analysis under the Complex Interdependence theory applied to the TCA/ACTO. These dimensions include:

- 1) The funding of the TCA driven by transnational networks of contacts, which were largely ignored by realist or neorealist analyses;
- 2) The overvaluation of the role of the hegemon (Brazil) in explaining the progress of the TCA/ACTO;
- 3) The undervaluation of the work of transnational actors such as the MAP, which encompasses the work of NGOs, think tanks, transnational organizations and university academics, among others, which deserves more precise study when analysing the work of environmental organizations, like the ACTO;



- 4) The undervaluation of the work of environmental organizations articulated with non-state actors, in the sense of promoting the "bottom up" protection of environmental aspects of tropical forests.

Theoretical framework

According to Brazilian academic de Brito (2007: 182)

*"Legally, the TCA can be classified as a multilateral, international framework treaty. It is also considered an international environmental treaty, with soft law norms' characteristics, and which creates an international regime in the Amazon region [...]."*⁵

The treaty, also known as the Amazon Pact, had been promoted in the 1970s by Brazil under the label of regional cooperation, in order to manage environmental issues combined with the economic development of the Amazon. When the pact was signed, at the end of the 1970s, the concept of sustainable development⁶ had not yet been fully debated internationally. At the Stockholm Conference in 1972, only the concept of sustained development had been defined in its final Declaration.

For Philippe De Lombaerde (2009: 8) regional cooperation

"can be defined as an open process, whereby individual states (or possibly other actors) within the framework of a given geographical area, act together for mutual benefit and to solve common tasks, in certain aspects [...] despite conflicting interests in other fields of activity."

This definition is differentiated, according to the same author, from that of "regional integration", which refers to "a more in-depth process, by means of which units that were previously autonomous are merged into a whole" (op. cit.: 8). Based on De Lombaerde's definitions, we will move on to discuss which theoretical approach would best serve us for our case study of the ACTO.

The eight South American countries that ended up signing the Amazon Pact in 1978 had fuelled serious distrust regarding Brasilia's objectives with this agreement, which were not easily eliminated with the signing of the pact. Indeed, the initial ambitions expressed by Brazil to make the TCA a broader integration scheme were rejected by Venezuela, which "feared a Brazilian expansion in the region." (Román, 1998: 242).

⁵ Author's Translation.

⁶ Sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (*Our Common Future*, UN, 1987).



The mistrust mentioned above was justified. As Román⁷ (1998: 250) stated, in the mid-1980s, "Brazilian leaders now considered regional cooperation as a tool to achieve military security objectives." In fact, the TCA and later the ACTO have been met with scepticism by a large part of academics. Da Silva (2012) mentions that despite the cooperative mechanisms in environmental terms, the interests and ambitions of the member countries, which are mainly focused on power relations, continued to rise above all on this organization. De Brito (2007), on the other hand, emphasizes the incongruity between the sustainability discourse of the ACTO and the practice of the signatory countries.

The aforementioned could lead us to see it, at first glance, with realist lenses, or more precisely, to conclude that offensive neorealism could be the theory that would best apply to our case study. In fact, neorealist Mearsheimer (2001) argues that countries do not cooperate to promote peace, but to maximize their power in the system.

In the case of Brazil, the Calha Norte Plan (PCN), created in 1985 and released to the public domain the following year, sought to strengthen the military protection of the northern border against unstable neighbours such as Peru, Bolivia or Colombia⁸. These three countries produced constant amounts of cocaine at the beginning of the 1990s (Anatol, 2011). Román (1998) states that the priority of the Brazilian leaders was to complement the PCN with the TCA. In other words, Brasilia pursued national security objectives with this treaty and not so much promoted regional cooperation to deal with the environmental issues of the Amazon. But then, how to explain that, despite the rejection by the other Amazonian nations of the Brazilian military objectives regarding the TCA, the pact gradually became a regional cooperation tool, through which there was

"a conceptual redefinition of the relationship between environment, security and economic development [...], with the military security issues becoming less prioritized"? (Román, 1998: 256).

Due to the aforementioned, offensive neorealism proves to be a theory with limitations for our case study, because it does not fully explain the consolidation of the TCA. Under the mandates of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002), Brazilian diplomacy began to address issues in "a cooperative international environment with a predominance of interdependence" (Vigevani, i.a., 2003: 56). To explain the consolidation of the TCA, the theoretical approach to complex interdependence of Nye and Keohane (1977) could be very useful. Neither Brazil nor the other South American countries could consider taking forward only their military objectives to protect their borders, from the exclusive perspective of their sovereignty, having to use multilateral fora to better interact with other nations in a Post-Cold War context, more interdependent, in order to discuss such pressing issues such as the sustainable development of the Amazon. In fact, with the creation of the TCA in 1978, even if the context was the Cold War, in the framework of

⁷ He is one of the TCA top experts and wrote a Ph.D. thesis on the subject.

⁸ Brazil has special contingents of border patrols along the borders with Peru, Bolivia and Colombia, which according to the neighbouring country are designated BOBRA (Bolivia-Brazil); PEBRA (Peru-Brazil) or COBRA (Colombia-Brazil) (Anatol, 2011).



authoritarian regimes⁹ member countries had recognized that they had to cooperate to safeguard the Amazon. We have then in the TCA and, later, in the ACTO, the awareness of the member countries that 1) Measures must be taken against the environmental deterioration of the Amazon and 2) that the Amazon had to be considered as a South American regional priority.

The notion of Complex Interdependence arose in the 1920s with academic Raymond Leslie Buell but it was with the work of Nye and Keohane, published for the first time in 1977, entitled *Power and Interdependence*, that what interdependence means for International Relations and its usefulness for the analysis of this field of knowledge became better understood. The two Americans argue that the decline in the use of military force as a political tool and the increase of economic interdependence (and other forms) should increase cooperation between states (and other actors) (Nye and Keohane, 1977).

The characteristics of Complex Interdependence mentioned by Nye and Keohane (1977) include interstate, trans-governmental and transnational relations. On the other hand, while the realists or neorealists start from the premise that the connection channels in world politics are, par excellence, between states, the two North American authors explain that the agenda of interstate relations is composed of multiple themes not always clearly hierarchized. Thus, "Different issues generate different coalitions, both in the framework of governments and transversally to them, and involve different degrees of conflict." (Nye and Keohane, 1977: 25)¹⁰.

Likewise, according to Complex Interdependence, it is stated that "less vulnerable states will try to use asymmetric interdependence in some particular groups of issues as a source of power" (Nye and Keohane, 1977: 32). In the case of the TCA and after the ACTO, Brazil tried to launch proposals that were articulated with regional security, economic and environmental integration issues. The first two were rejected by some neighbouring nations, but the last one had some acceptance, as we shall see.

Nye and Keohane (1977: 32-33) argue that Complex Interdependence would make it more likely that the topics' agendas would be "affected by international and domestic problems [...]." The question is, in our case study, in what way, for example, the discussion that took place at the beginning of the nineties about the internationalization of the Amazon or the Rio 92 Conference¹¹ led to a reactivation of the TCA. On the other hand, what role did international organizations have in environmental issues, in the agenda established by the TCA and in its reactivation, according to Complex Interdependence? We will therefore find out, according to this theoretical approach, what was the role of the TCA at regional level in promoting the debate on the sustainability of tropical forests.

⁹ In the case of the Brazilian authoritarian regime, it extended between 1964 and 1985.

¹⁰ Author's translation.

¹¹ The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.



The ACTO and the debate on the sustainability of forests at regional level

In the academic literature, the ACTO has often been negatively described. This is due to various reasons: for example, in Rodolfo Ilario da Silva's master degree thesis (2012), it is mentioned that the organization's budgetary difficulties, depending on external resources, mean that the cooperation among its members is not as close as it would be desirable. In addition, he emphasizes that while it is true that member countries show consensus as to their willingness to cooperate, they nevertheless have "difficulty [...] in translating this compatibility into practical actions." (da Silva, 2012: 179). For Sant'Anna (2009: 121) "The preservation of sovereignty is still a topic of greater relevance in meetings within the scope of the ACTO. It is understood that countries are reluctant to affirm commitments that imply greater obligations."

Despite the scepticism demonstrated by the aforementioned authors, other scholars, such as historian Amado Cervo, emphasize the importance of signing the Amazonian pact, stating:

cooperation matters began to acquire relevance and to exceed the limits and possibilities of bilateral cooperation. [...] This treaty was conceived with a different purpose from the treaties which created the Alalc, the Aladi or the Andean Pact, which sought to stimulate intra-zonal trade or the common market. Its main objective was to implement a permanent agreement mechanism between the governments and the technical sectors of the Amazonian countries, with a view to cooperation in non-economic areas, such as hydrological and climatological studies, technical and scientific cooperation in health, transportation, communication, preservation of the environment, etc. (Cervo, 2001: 261).

The economist Alfredo Costa-Filho (2003), in turn, points out that cooperation is increasingly important, since the Amazon is worldwide of growing significance. However, he warns that the eight ACTO countries conduct their Amazonian programmes very heterogeneously. Still, we must recognize, as Keohane (1984) does, that cooperation cannot be seen only in terms of common interests, as the the states' potential objectives must be taken into account. On the other hand, we must bear in mind, like Paasi (2011: 15) that

"Like it or not, regions and regional identities seem to have maintained their important roles in the world. They are not merely abstract academic discourses, but crucial elements of social and political practice and discourse."

The TCA also leads us to question whether a regional agreement which was signed at the end of the 1970s, later reactivated in the 1990s, that prioritized cooperation in



environmental terms, or if it was, first and foremost, a pact intended, as the Brazilian slogan put it, to "occupy in order not to deliver", faced with the supposed ambitions of the industrialized powers regarding the rich Amazonian resources. In this sense, José Greño Velasco (cited in Román, 1998: 128) questioned: Did the TCA have the intention of specifying a cooperation through integral development or did it (just) seek the mutual recognition of sovereignty over the respective Amazonian territories?

In 1980, a few years after the TCA was signed, a document from the Brazilian Foreign Ministry contradicted the idea that the colossus was seeking hegemony in South America, stating

"In general terms [...] Brazil seeks the reality of cooperation, not the chimera of the hegemony and considers highly positive that Latin America is an area of deconcentration of power [...]" (Itamaraty to the Delegation in Buenos Aires, 25.08.1980, cit. in Cervo, 2001: 262).

It must be noted, despite the aforementioned, that the studies on the TCA (for example Román, 1998) show that the fears of the South American neighbours continued.

Regardless of the fears of the TCA member countries against the claims, real or fictitious, of Brazil, under Complex Interdependence we have a different approach from the neorealists regarding the role of hegemony and leadership in International Relations, which enriches the study of our case on the ACT. Regarding the role of leadership in International Relations, it is stated:

Successful hegemonic leadership depends, to some extent, on asymmetric cooperation. The hegemon has a different role, providing its partners with leadership, in exchange for deference. However, different from the imperial power, it cannot make or force [to fulfil] the rules without a certain degree of consensus on the part of the other sovereign states. (Keohane, 1984: 46).

When the TCA was signed, it was stipulated that ordinary meetings should be held every two years. That did not materialize. Additionally for meetings aimed at studying specific problems defined by the Treaty, the countries and their representatives did not take seriously the preparation of the topics announced in advance, arriving at the meetings without having done the due preparatory work. Additionally, it was necessary to wait until the end of the 1980s for the first special Commissions¹² to be created, due to initial scepticism about the Treaty. (Román, 1998).

Until the 1990s, the TCA's functioning was affected by budgetary insecurity, since the nations-member of the pact defended the idea that the developed countries had to

¹² It is also important to note that, in 1996, Guyana, Suriname and Venezuela had not yet created permanent national commissions, which should work in coordination with the TCA Commissions. (Román, 1998).



provide the funds for the protection and development of the Amazon, which placed the agreement in the paradox situation of depending almost entirely on international organizations (Román, 1998). This clearly contradicted the idea that the countries of the South should finally take the development of their territories in their own hands.

In the 1990s, before and after Rio 92, the debate over the shared responsibility of the North on environmental issues was heated. While the position of the nations of the South was usually that the Northern countries should provide resources for the environmental services provided by the South, during, for example, the talks on Agenda 21, within the framework of the Rio 92 Conference,

"strong criticism against the Southern bloc was heard because it was viewed that their only interest in the Conference was to look for mechanisms to extract more resources from the North" (Rodriguez Becerra, 1994: 84).

It should be noted that the text of Agenda 21¹³ calls for not only states to promote international cooperation in sustainable development, but also states that "other international, regional and sub-regional organizations must also contribute to this effort." (Argentine Ministry of the Environment, chapter 1, 1.3.).

The obstacles to launching environmental projects were of different kinds, and not only in terms of resources. They started with the principles stipulated in the TCA, which were not very clear about which development was desired for the Amazon. It is mentioned that the Amazonian pact had the objective of

"promoting the harmonious and integrated development of the basin, as a basis for sustaining a model of regional economic complementation that contemplates the improvement of the quality of life of its inhabitants and the conservation and rational use of its resources." (OAS, n.d. n.p.).

However, the definition is quite ambiguous and therefore leading to a wide variety of interpretations and forms of implementation.

Even at a systemic level, as in the case of Agenda 21 of the United Nations, there are strong criticisms on the part of academics dedicated to environmental issues. Blühdorn and Welsh (2008: 6), for example, mention that both the global Agenda 21 and local ones "are invariably subordinated to economic growth, competitiveness and innovation." The same authors also state that an obstacle to dealing with environmental crises is that there are so many ecological approaches in this regard, so the impact of environmentalism ends up being overwhelmingly affected. Blühdorn goes so far as to

¹³ Agenda 21 was a programme developed by the United Nations Sustainable Development Division to implement sustainable development principles at all levels, from the local to the global.



mention the "abdication of the ecologist paradigm" (Blüdorn, 1997 cit. in Blüdorn and Welsh 2008: 9).

Also, in the 1990s, Brazil accepted to be part of the International Pilot Programme for the Protection of the Tropical Rainforests of Brazil, which sought to enhance "the natural heritage, productive potential and cultural diversity of the regional population" (Kohlhepp, 2018: 308). This programme had five subprogrammes that included science and technology, the management of natural resources such as parks and nature reserves, and analysis and monitoring. The novelty of this programme was that it emphasized the contributions, among others, of small producers, *seringueiros*¹⁴ and indigenous groups, with "bottom up development" characteristics (Kohlhepp, 2018: 315). We can thus verify that already in the international cooperation for environmental issues, an approach in which not only the national state, but also several state and non-state actors at various levels, from the international to the local, are important.

Ravena (2012) highlights that environmental problems and the access/use of natural resources have substantial implications for reaching a common institutional framework at the national level of the contemporary state, which has a global dimension. However, according to the same author, when analysing the formulation and implementation of environmental policies in the European Union, contradictions or dilemmas characterized by "the intrinsic relationship between the domestic and international levels" arise (Ravena, 2012: 36). Nevertheless, the author admits that "interdependence continues to be the beacon of an international policy aimed at environmental regulation [...]" (op. cit. 36).

One must not ignore that the obstacles to achieving a unified approach in dealing with environmental issues are vast. Emily Forster (2013) mentions a fundamental one. This leads to the propensity, within the framework of security organizations and agencies, to maintain traditional security ideas that invariably tie environmental issues to the interests of the national state. In this regard, the author emphasizes,

"state-centric notions of green [environmental] security are not sustainable [...] and military intervention [...] is not necessarily the way to deal with problems." (Forster, 2013: 43).

The foregoing does not stop considering that the Armed Forces are well positioned to deal with environmental issues due to their technological capabilities, such as monitoring satellites (Forster, 2013). This undoubtedly applies to the Amazon, whose extensions can hardly be supervised without their support. However, in the case of the SIPAM/SIVAM satellite system that Brazil developed, it is not always seen with good eyes by its neighbours, perhaps because it is intended, together with the Calha Norte Plan, as mentioned by the academic Nascimento (2010: 185), to "defend, protect and guarantee the integrity of the national territory, combat illicit acts," and, he adds "above all, to promote the sustained and sustainable development of the Amazon and the Border Strip in particular".

¹⁴ Rubber collectors.



The Brazilian approach seems to be that of protecting the territory of the colossus of the south, also in a sense, though not explicitly stated, against the illicit acts of its neighbours. This is an attribution and a good right of any sovereign state. However, it is necessary that the Amazonian States complement their monitoring with activities that support the local populations. This is because the abandonment of remote areas such as the Amazon, whether Brazilian, Colombian or otherwise, often prompt the local inhabitants to engage in illegal activities due to lack of job opportunities.

In the case of Brazil, the country has an environmental police in the Amazon, which, with the support of SIVAM, monitors illegal tree cutting, illegal mining and illicit activities perpetrated on indigenous reserves (Anatol, 2011). However, it becomes imperative that both Brazil and the other Amazonian countries cooperate more in regional sustainable development projects that support the local populations living in the jungle.

From the Brazilian perspective, Cordeiro da Trindade (2010) states that, in the official discourse, the Amazon region was always viewed as area that should be protected from other South American countries. The author emphasizes that "much more than revealing the region, as content-forms, political borders tend to only formally single out regional dimensions, denying the extensions of socio-spatial formations beyond those same borders." (Cordeiro da Trindade, 2010: 111). The author ends by questioning: what is the profile and importance of the lower and upper, formal and informal circuit of the economy in border areas of the Brazilian Amazon with neighbouring countries? (Cordeiro da Trindade, 2010: 121). It seems that the ACTO does not answer these questions.

In spite of the aforementioned ambiguities of the TCA, at the end of the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s, as Rio 92 approached, the member states of the TCA were forced to act. A determining factor was the intensification of the debate on whether the Amazon should be internationalized, to eventually be better protected¹⁵. For Román (1998), the TCA was reactivated to form a platform that would allow the South American nations to establish a common position regarding the Amazon. In order to prepare the position they would take at the Conference, in February 1992 the Amazonian nations met in Manaus. This meeting ended with a declaration that emphasized the importance of promoting regional cooperation on an equal footing.

Limitations of the neorealist approach to the ACTO and new theoretical perspectives

The issue of the funding of the TCA had been taken very seriously from the Ecuadorian *pro-tempore* Secretariat of Luís Carrera de la Torre, at the end of the 1980s. Carrera began a broad action to negotiate with international organizations, in which he was seconded by Roberto Samanez of the FAO, the United Nations Organization for Food and Agriculture, and by Antonio Braque, of the UNDP, the United Nations Development Programme. Although the Ecuadorian government had shown great disinterest in the *pro tempore* Secretariat of Carrera¹⁶, the diplomat had acted actively with the support of those who had decided to back it up transnationally. Not only had he managed to create

¹⁵ This topic can be read in-depth in Da Silva Guevara (2016).

¹⁶ Carrera de la Torre even had to use his own house for a year due to the fact he did not have a place to practice the *pro tempore* secretariat (Román, 1998).



projects focused on the integral development of the Amazon (Román, 1998), but also he obtained external funding through his transnational contacts and connections, before a rather passive Ecuadorian government. This case shows us that the Complex Interdependence approach applies here.

Young (1989) refers that "non-governmental organizations or individuals themselves can be leaders in efforts to form international regimes¹⁷." (op. cit. 373). Although the topic of whether the TCA, or the ACTO as of 1998, is an international regime falling outside the framework of our work, we can demonstrate, with Young, that at a decisive moment in the development and consolidation of the TCA, transnational networks of contacts and individuals such as Carrera de la Torre, were decisive in promoting the Amazonian pact.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the MAP Initiative was created, which initially sought only to change the use and coverage of Amazonian soils in the Madre de Dios region (Peru), Acre (Brazil) and Pando (Bolivia) (Chávez et. al., 2005). The initiative came from research projects conducted at the Federal University of Acre, in Brazil, and the Woods Hole Research Centre¹⁸ (Sant'Anna, 2009). Based on the knowledge produced by professors and researchers in Brazilian universities, this "was transferred [...] to the delegations of Peru and Bolivia." (Chávez, 2005: 64). For de Brito (2007), the MAP initiative emerged as an alternative to the traditional cooperation model of the TCA, given the lack of effectiveness of the Treaty to promote sustainability in the MAP region.

Ravena (2012) highlights that since at least the seventies, the work carried out by academics on environmental issues was relevant in the implementation of international agreements in this field. With this, environmental problems such as jungle deforestation became more visible, while tools to improve environmental regulation were being refined at the international, national and local levels. In the European Union, as the most relevant example, efforts have been made to incorporate and implement environmental solutions within the framework of multilevel governance in subnational spaces. However, there are still obstacles in this regard (Varas Arribas, n.p.). We highlight two aspects regarding he efforts to regulate environmental issues at regional level:

- 1) The contribution of academics to better study environmental issues;
- 2) The empowerment of subnational regional actors to solve these problems. The MAP, in South America, is part of these efforts.

Despite De Brito's criticism of the selfish interests of the states in the Amazonian area, scholars of the MAP Initiative (Chávez, 2005: 59) state that the TCA was a reference for the MAP,

"Considering that it is a legal instrument signed 30 years ago, it is interesting to note how, at that time, guidelines were defined to promote the harmonious and integrated development of the Amazon

¹⁷ Román defines international regimes as "social institutions composed of agreed-upon principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures that are intended to govern the interaction of actors in specific areas." (1998, p. 65).

¹⁸ Centre located near New York, dedicated to the study and debate of climate change.



*basin as a basis for a regional economic complementation model
[...]."*

Already in 2002, with the MAP III and under a new concept of space that sought to move from "borders of separation to borders of cooperation" (Chávez i.a., 2005: 52), the Initiative began to bring together technicians and researchers, municipal governments, representatives of civil society, in a dynamic that successfully promoted the multidimensional treatment of the problems of the Amazon. Half a decade after the MAP initiative, one can say:

There is no doubt that there was a gradual consolidation of a transboundary social movement whose essence is the conviction that the development of the South-western Amazon can only be channelled through cooperation and the integration of local, regional and national societies [...]. (Chávez, 2005: 56).

The MAP Initiative is a transnational actor that includes NGOs and transnational corporations and less institutionalized movements (Risse-Kappen cit., in Sant'Anna, 2009: 168). Taking into account that the MAP¹⁹ ended up being supported later by the ACTO, the GEF²⁰ (Global Environment Facility) and the UNEP, United Nations Programme for the Environment, regarding the climate adaptation of the region Dios-Acre and Panda, we could affirm that from a state-centred approach, the MAP could reveal the failure of the ACTO. However, if we take into account the Complex Interdependence perspective, the MAP, by uniting efforts and transnational networks of scientists, municipal governments and civil society, supported by organizations such as the ACTO or the UNEP, shows that the neorealist approach excessively limits the study of the MAP to the States, and only to them. Under De Brito's realist approach (2007), the MAP would show that the TCA had failed, but under the Complex Interdependence approach used in this article, by supporting the MAP the ACTO proves to be effective by recognizing non-state initiatives as relevant for the sustainability of the Amazon. There is no doubt that the subsequent support of the ACTO to the MAP demonstrates the potential of the organization. In fact, according to the ACTO, the GEF and the UNEP report:

The pilot project has provided the basis to formulate and implement adaptation strategies for climate variability with the representatives of the governments of the three countries and the local society. With the trinational team of 15 specialists, the technical validation of the

¹⁹ The pilot project that associated the MAP to a more systemic initiative to support the Acre River basin from climate change has the support of Peru, with authorities such as the National Water Authority and the Maldonado local water administration, of Brazil with the National Research Institute, among others, and on the Bolivian side, the Departmental Emergency Operations Centre of Pando, to name some national and local organizations.

²⁰ The GEF was created in 1991 to fund projects whose objective is to protect the environment worldwide. The World Bank manages its resources is the.



vulnerability and risk maps was carried out through a 185 km expedition along the Acre River (November-December 2013)

The aforementioned pilot project allowed, successfully, to implement a trilateral early warning system, which is seen as a model for future expansion to the other Amazonian countries. However, we do not rule out, although we do take them into account, De Brito's criticisms that the TCA should be more efficient and effective regarding the development and implementation of sustainable programmes for the Amazon.

We would not like to stop completing this section without making reference to a survey carried out in 2010 in Colombia on the Amazon. The results were worrisome and show that much more should be done by the ACTO, the civil society and local governments, among others, regarding the backward regional Amazonian areas.

In the aforementioned survey, 67% of the population knew little or nothing about the Amazon. Both the indigenous population and the non-indigenous population consider that this is highly threatened, not only due to deforestation, but also to illicit activities, internal conflict, as well as loss of cultural identity (CEPAL, 2013).

Although it is not the subject of this article to delve into the subject of cultural regions²¹, we consider that Axerod, who mentions that there is an emergence of regions with shared cultures, advances some premises that may be useful for the Amazon. One of them establishes that "Initially, most of the neighbouring places have little in common, and therefore have little probability of interacting with one another. However, when two places interact, they become similar, and thus are more likely to interact with each other." (Axelrod, 1997: 157). In the case of the Amazonian areas, so neglected by the governments and object of all kinds of myths or misinterpretations²², the ACTO should, from our perspective, exercise a pedagogical task that could range from the environmental importance of the Amazon in South America, to its cultural rescue through the demystification of preconceived ideas. But that would be another research.

Conclusions

With our research, we sought to demonstrate that the TCA was an agreement that had innumerable difficulties to be implemented, including the same ambiguity regarding the definition of sustainable development applied to the Amazon. Another obstacle was, as we saw, that initially the member countries had different ambitions in terms of their objectives. Brazil, for example, sought to confer on the TCA a dimension that would make it possible to strengthen military security and monitor its borders, which ended up being rejected by the other member countries. Although the TCA has been usually studied through the realist (or neorealist) approach, we attempted to demonstrate that Complex Interdependence can broaden the knowledge field about this Treaty. We saw that in the several stages of consolidation of the TCA, the interaction of international organizations with the Treaty enabled supporting the funding of sustainable projects.

²¹ Axerod defines a Cultural Region as "a set of contiguous sites with identical culture" (Axelrod, 1997: 156).

²² For the Brazilian Amazon see, for example, Joana Becerra (2011), Ph.D. thesis.



From the various dimensions defined to review the realist/neorealist approach, we verify that there are limitations and biases in the realist or neorealist theoretical approach. Thus, the funding of the TCA was driven by transnational networks of contacts, despite the disinterest of the treaty states in initially funding the projects. On the other hand, by overestimating the role of the hegemon (Brazil) to explain the progress of the TCA/ACTO, the work of transnational actors such as the MAP, which encouraged projects to protect the Amazon, was not taken into account. These projects included contributions from centres, academics and transnational organisations, among others, which promoted a "bottom up" environmental project that led the ACTO to support relevant environmental initiatives. It was also concluded that Keohane's premise that cooperation not only takes into account common interests, but also the states' potential goals and targets, should also be taken into account.

Likewise, the MAP Initiative showed that the scientific community of Brazil, Peru and Bolivia, as well as civil society, received the support of the ACTO, the GEF and the UNEP in a process that was promoted "from the bottom up" and that these processes are more common than one might think. It is still necessary to continue research that more broadly evaluates how the ACTO is interacting with transnational networks, NGOs, and other regional and international organizations in terms of promoting the sustainable development of the Amazon. We consider, however, that this paper can already be a contribution to this topic.

References

Anatol, Adam (2011). *Die Organisation der brasilianischen Grenzsicherheitspolitik*, Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Agenda 21, available at: <http://www2.medioambiente.gov.ar/acuerdos/convenciones/rio92/agenda21/ageindi.htm>

Agenda 2030 para o desenvolvimento sustentável, available at: <http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/pt-BR/politica-externa/desenvolvimento-sustentavel-e-meio-ambiente/135-agenda-de-desenvolvimento-pos-2015>

Arenas, Wendy and Rueda, Catalina (2012). "Un modelo económico sostenible para la Amazonía colombiana", in Ramírez, Socorro (ed.), *La cooperación amazónica. Desafíos y oportunidades de la cooperación amazónica a través de la OTCA*, Bogotá: Gobierno de Colombia/OTCA.

Axelrod, Robert (1997). *The complexity of cooperation. Agent-based models of competition and collaboration*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Banco Interamericano firma acuerdo con la OTCA para fomentar la conservación y aprovechamiento sostenible de la sostenibilidad (2005) available at: <http://www.iadb.org/es/noticias/comunicados-de-prensa/2005-07-25/bid-y-otca-firman-convenio-para-promover-conservacion-y-aprovechamiento-sostenible-de-la-biodiversidad-amazonica,513.html>



Blühdorn, Ingolfur y Welsh, I. (2008). "Eco-politics beyond the paradigm of sustainability: a conceptual framework and research agenda", in Blühdorn, I. and Welsh, I. (ed.), *The politics of unsustainability. Eco-politics in the post-ecologist era*, London: Routledge.

CEPAL (2013). *Amazonía posible y sostenible*, Bogotá: Cepal.

Cervo, Amado Luiz (2001). *Relações internacionais da América Latina. Velhos e novos paradigmas*, Brasília: Instituto Brasileiro de Relações Internacionais.

Chávez, Abdón Ramiro, i.a. (2005). *Pensando la Amazonía desde Pando: el MAP (Madre de Dios, Acre y Pando), una iniciativa trinacional de desarrollo*, La Paz: Fundación PIEB.

Cordeiro da Trindade, Sain Claire (2010). "Pensando a noção de fronteira: um olhar a partir da ciência geográfica", in Nascimento, Durbens (ed.), *Amazônia e defesa. Dos fortes às conflitualidades*, Belém: NAEA/UFGPA, pp. 101-124.

Costa-Filho, Alfredo (2003). "Uma nova "OTCA" sob a velha ótica? In Aragón, Luís E. and Clüsener-Godt, Miguel (ed.), *problemática do uso local e global da água da Amazônia*, Belém: NAEA/UFPA/Unesco, pp. 383-396.

Da Silva, Rudolfo Ilario (2012). *A Cooperação Multilateral entre os Países Amazônicos: Atuação do Tratado de Cooperação Amazônica*, Tesis de Maestría, São Paulo: Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho.

Da Silva Guevara, Gisela (2016). "Intervencionismo y medio ambiente: el caso de la Amazonía brasileña", in *Revista de Relaciones Internacionales, Estrategia y Seguridad*, no. 12 (1), pp. 209-236.

De Brito, Leonardo (2007). *O Tratado de Cooperação Amazônica e a sustentabilidade de região MAP (1999-2002)*, Florianópolis: Universidad Federal de Santa Catarina.

De Lombaerde, Philippe (2009). "The problem of comparison in comparative regionalism", Jean Monnet/R. Schuman, Paper series, vol. 9, no. 7.

Espitia Caicedo, Nesdy (2007). "Caracterización de los conflictos sociopolíticos actuales en la Amazonía brasileira", in Ahumada, Consuelo (ed.), *Movimientos sociales, biodiversidad y libre comercio en la Amazonía*, Bogotá: Universidad Javeriana/Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

Forster, Emily (2013). "Green security" in Shepherd, L. (ed.), *Critical approaches to security*, London/N.Y: Routledge, pp. 37-50.

Guzmán Aguilera, Patricia (2012). *Tratados ambientales internacionales y negocios*, Bogotá: Universidad Externado de Colombia.

Keohane, Robert y Nye, Joseph (1977). *Power and interdependence*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Keohane, Robert (1984). *After hegemony. Cooperation and discord in the world political economy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kohlhepp, Gerd (2018). "O Programa Piloto Internacional de Proteção das Florestas Tropicais no Brasil (1993-2008). As primeiras estratégias da política ambiental e de



desenvolvimento regional para a Amazônia brasileira”, in *Revista Nera*, no. 42, pp. 308-330.

Mearsheimer, John (2001). *The tragedy of great power politics*, N.Y./London: W.W. Norton Company.

Nascimento, Durbens (2010). “Geopolítica e forças armadas na Amazônia: desafios políticos e institucionais para a defesa do século XXI”, in Nascimento, Durbens (org.), *Amazônia e defesa. Dos fortes às conflitualidades*, Belém: NAEA/UFPA, pp. 177-200.

Paasi, Anssi (2011). “The region identity and power governance”, in: *Procedia Social and behavioural Sciences*, no. 14, pp. 9-16.

Proyecto manejado y sostenible de los recursos hídricos transfronterizos de la cuenca del río Amazonas considerando la variabilidad y el cambio climático. OTCA; GEF Y PNUMA. Available at: FNL_MAP_lamina2-revisao4

Ravena, Nirvia (2012). *Os caminhos da regulação da água no Brasil: Demiurgia institucional ou criação burocrática?*, Curitiba: Appris.

Rodriguez Becerra, Manuel (1994). *Crisis ambiental y relaciones internacionales. Hacia una estrategia colombiana*, Bogotá: Fescol/Fundación Alejandro Angel Escobar/Cerec.

Román, Mikael (1998). *The Implementation of international regimes. The case of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty*, Uppsala: Uppsala University.

Sant’Anna, Fernanda (2009). *Cooperação internacional e gestão fronteiriça da água na Amazônia*, Master Degree Dissertation, Universidad de S. Paulo.

Tratado de Cooperación Amazónica available at: www.OAS.org/dsd/publications/Unit/oea08b

Vara Arribas, (s.f.). “Gobernanza multinivel en la Unión Europea y las Regiones, con o sin constitución”, Ponencia, Ph.D. programme, Zaragoza.

Young, Oran (1989). “The politics of international regime formation: managing natural resources and the environment” en *International Organization* 43 (3), pp. 349-375.

COLOMBIA UNDERGOING MUTATION: FROM THE CONCEPT OF POST-CONFLICT TO THE PRAGMATISM OF THE CONFLICT

César Augusto Niño González

cesar.nino@usa.edu.co

Professor at the School of Politics and International Relations of the Sergio Arboleda University (Colombia). Ph.D. in Current Issues of Spanish and International Law of the University Alfonso X el Sabio of Spain. Master Degree in National Security and Defence from the Higher School of War of Colombia. Professional in Politics and International Relations at Sergio Arboleda University.

Daniel Palma Álvarez

palmadap1987@gmail.com

Professor at the Faculty of Government and International Relations of Santo Tomás University (Colombia) Political scientist at the Faculty of Political Science and Government of the University of Rosario. Master of Arts in Political Theory with an emphasis on Political Discourse Analysis from the University of Essex (England).

Abstract

This article aims to generate a critical notion of post-conflict in Colombia to advance the idea of a scenario undergoing transformation. The dynamics of security and conflict in Colombia were defined from the existence of a problem that transcended threat. The FARC-EP were a problem that later became securitized and scaled in the country's security agenda. Consequently, it is necessary to warn, on the one hand, that the conflict does not finish with the end of the FARC-EP process and, on the other hand, there is a secondary effect but not less important: the change of this group gave rise to the mutation of security and conflict issues in Colombia, namely, the markets of violence, the dispute over the power voids in the territory, the armed collectivities arising from the FARC-EP dissidents and the social exclusion that ex-combatants face. Taking into account the above, the "post-conflict" concept is biased, ambiguous and distorted, which in itself represents a threat to the development of conflicts in the country.

Keywords

Conflict, mutation, post-conflict, "farcarización", "post-farcarización", imperfect peace

How to cite this article

González, César Augusto Niño; Álvarez, Daniel Palma (2018). "Colombia undergoing mutation: from the concept of post-conflict to the pragmatism of the conflict". *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, N.º 2, November 2018-April 2019. Consulted [online] on the date of the last visit, <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.9.2.6>

Article received on May 11, 2018 and accepted for publication on September 9, 2018





COLOMBIA UNDERGOING MUTATION: FROM THE CONCEPT OF POST-CONFLICT TO THE PRAGMATISM OF THE CONFLICT¹

**César Augusto Niño González
Daniel Palma Álvarez**

1. Prelude

The narratives around the Colombian armed conflict have turned the contemporary historical development into a single and exclusive actor. The FARC-EP defined Colombia as the centre of gravity and the only scenario of problems and explanations for the endless nation-building discourse. However, the events of the conflict have shown that around the armed confrontation there are actors, phenomena and dynamics that move away from any classic notion in the conception of the "farcarización" of Colombian society, a concept that will be explained here and that is vital for the development of this scientific article. The hypotheses of the gestation of the armed conflict allude to divergent points in their beginning, in their mutability and, of course, in the outcome. Thus, in Colombia, simultaneously, parallel and synchronic conflicts swarm. This thesis is different from the one that tends to point to the existence of a single conflict in whose backbone lies the beginning and end of the FARC-EP.

The conflict is necessary for the culmination of the construction of the nation. So, from the divergence, parameters and guidelines arise, converging in the materialization of nationalism, cultural identity, the exacerbation of progress, and the development of what is defined as the State. This article seeks to critically examine the notion of post-conflict compared to post-agreement, to overcome it and draw attention to the advent of constantly changing scenarios, which must be understood so that the adaptation to new security scenarios by the institutions and society is not traumatic and does not result in new forms of exacerbated violence. For the purposes of this research, the methodology used is based on a qualitative analysis and conceptual interpretation of sociological theoretical approaches. To that effect, the document focuses first on the theoretical distinction and debate between the concepts of "post-conflict" and "post-agreement". Subsequently, a hermeneutic discussion is used on the conceptual and terminological notion of the "farcarización" and the "post-farcarización" under the lens of the "imperfect peace" applied to the Colombian case. On the other hand, a notion of transformation of the conflict and reality is advanced based on the commodification of violence and the

¹ The translation of this article was funded by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia - as part of OBSERVARE project with the reference UID/CPO/04155/2013, with the aim of publishing Janus.net. Text translated by Carolina Peralta.



power void in the territory. Finally, the document closes with a series of conclusions around the question of the new security dynamics that are beginning to be glimpsed in the national panorama: the mutability and the demarcation of the FARC-EP phenomenon that defined the public agenda and the nation during the second half of the 20th century.

2. Between the post-conflict and the post-agreement: a theoretical distinction

As mentioned at the end of the previous section, there is a challenge for Colombian society regarding the understanding of the scenarios that open up with the conversion of the FARC-EP to civilian life. This challenge is based on the need to clarify the difference and, in turn, the relationship between the concepts of "post-conflict" and "post-agreement", which even when treated as synonyms by public opinion and citizens in general, contain different socio-political realities that cannot be equated. Failure to understand this could endanger the peace process with this armed group, the restructuring of the entire Colombian community and the institutional response to the security issues that will remain in force after the end of hostilities with the FARC-EP.

In concrete terms, in order to understand the relationship and the difference between the concepts of "post-agreement" and "post-conflict", it is necessary to explain the political, social, security and temporal implications of the latter, which will be done in this section.

First, in the *political sphere*, the post-conflict is marked by a duality that must be addressed: first, the institutional commitment and that of the armed group in guaranteeing compliance with the agreements signed and the restructuring of the policy in the long term; and second, the change of view with regard to the "other", who no longer can be seen as an *enemy* but as a *political opponent* in the debate and in the electoral process.

As regards the first face of duality, that is, the institutional responsibility and that of the armed group in the observance of the agreements, there is also a double responsibility. On the one hand, the State has the task of guaranteeing the enactment of the agreement through laws, decrees and public policies. On the other, the FARC-EP must maintain the political will to act within the law, so that the possibility of a return to armed conflict is minimized and there is an effective restructuring of Colombian politics in the long term.

As a result, point six of the Havana agreements on "Implementation, verification and endorsement" becomes a priority, given that it proposes, among other things, a Framework Plan with a ten-year validity, which contemplates mechanisms to execute the stipulated, making reference to the legislative process, the inclusion of the points in the Development Plan, the budget items, and the national and territorial political reform, among other provisions (Government of Colombia & FARC-EP, 2016, pp. 196-197).

Likewise, there is the creation of the "Follow-up, Encouragement and Verification Commission for the Implementation of the Final Agreement (CSIVI)", which will also last for ten years and whose objective is "[...] to follow-up the components of the Agreement and verify compliance; encouragement and monitoring of the legislative implementation of the agreements; implementation of follow-up reports; receive inputs from those in



charge of implementation" (Government of Colombia & FARC-EP, 2016: 195-196). In view of this, it should be noted that the agreements are presented as the starting point for a political restructuring and not as the termination of a process. Thus, there is a first difference between the contexts of "post-agreement" and "post-conflict", given that the second has a longer duration in the long term².

As for the other side of duality in the political sphere, one must affirm that it goes beyond institutions and norms, in terms of how those who become legal are seen politically. In this sense, given that the members of the FARC-EP will no longer be armed actors but electoral contenders within the democratic debate, the discursive construction that has been made of their image has to be changed. In other words, the change is the meaning shift from enemies to adversaries of the members of the new political movement. To understand in-depth the importance of this change, we can cite the postulates of Chantal Mouffe (1999) and her "Radical Democracy" theory.

For this author, the meaning of modern democracies is to give rise to conflict, as a peaceful and dialogical confrontation within the political community. For this reason, the ideal stance of current regimes is to allow the passage of *antagonism* to *agonism*, that is, to be the channel through which one goes from a logic of enemies to adversaries (Mouffe, 1999: 13-16). Thus, the first concept (enemy) involves the elimination of the "other", the suppression not only of his ideas but of his existence; while, in opposition to this, the second refers to the legitimacy and right of a person to defend his ideas and to be tolerated. In Mouffe's word, "[...] it means that, within the 'we' that constitutes the political community, the opponent will not be seen as an enemy to be brought down, but rather as a legitimate adversary who must be tolerated. His ideas will be fought vigorously, but his right to defend them will never be questioned "(Mouffe, 1999: 16). The distinction between these words is vital, because in it lies the possibility of building collectivities open to debate and dissent.

Following this perspective, an effective insertion of new actors in national politics can be guaranteed, avoiding future accusations against people who have left their weapons to adopt the path of constitutionality. This is important in the light of Colombian history, which has shown that, even after having become law abiding, over the years, members of former armed groups have been stigmatized as guerrillas or terrorists. An example of this is the references to former M-19members, who today are recognized democratic figures but who have been rejected due to their belligerent past.

Likewise, converting an enemy to be destroyed into an adversary to win over in political fights could prevent an assassination similar to the one the members of the Patriotic Union had to endure during the 1980s. This is in view of the fact that, for Mouffe,

² In fact, this becomes clear when one reads sections of the document in point six, such as: "The day after the signing of the Final Agreement, the "Follow-up, Encouragement and Verification Commission of the Implementation of the Final Agreement (CSIVI) will be created", composed of three representatives of the National Government and three representatives of the FARC-EP or the political party that emerges from its transition to legal life. The duration of the Commission may be up to 10 years, with an initial period of operation being agreed until January 2019, date from which the members of the Commission will decide on its extension" (Government of Colombia & FARC-EP, 2016: 195). In this passage, it is clear that there is a difference between the process subsequent to the signing of the agreements, which does not end with the parties' demonstration of political will but opens the door to joint long-term work for the materialization of the agreement.



individuals cannot be forced to think in accordance with a political faction or to conform to the views of the community as a whole, which renders the idea of "consensus without exclusion" impossible. On the contrary, it is precisely this capacity to dissent that feeds the political element and, even more, the meaning shift of the "other" as an adversary (Mouffe, 1999: 11-12). However, this cannot be seen as an immediate change, but rather as a constant long-term process that becomes part of the post-conflict.

On the other hand, regarding the post-conflict *social sphere*, Colombian society must also undergo a process of reconfiguration, in which there is an effective and peaceful reincorporation of the former FARC-EP members. It should be noted that these logics of acceptance of new members who were previously considered a threat, are not short-term and involve a meaning shift as in the political sphere, since it is about changing behaviour, social norms, beliefs, etc.

In this regard, we can borrow from the field of sociology to size this social transformation. Emile Durkheim coined the concept "social fact" to distinguish everything that is given in society, such as norms, codes and behaviours, among others, which are external to people but govern them - even exert coercion even if one does not realize it - and through which they act and interpret the social environment in which they find themselves. In other words, "they consist of ways of acting, of thinking and feeling external to the individual, and they are endowed with coercion power by virtue of which they impose themselves on him" (Durkheim, 2001: 40-41). Therefore, it can be inferred that in the issue of the reincorporation of ex-combatants, there must be a restructuring of these social norms and, above all, of the ideas that revolve around these individuals, as mentioned in the previous paragraph.

However, the change in the "social facts" that have materialized around the conflict with the FARC-EP for more than half a century will not change in a matter of days or months. On the contrary, the work of the entire current and future generations of Colombian society is needed to break the imagined threat and the behaviour codes the ex-combatants are referred to, so that they are accepted and the stigmatization they are victims of is eliminated. In fact, Emile Durkheim himself is clear in arguing that social facts are not relegated or modified without offering resistance, given their ability to exercise coercion: "even if they are defeated [the rules] finally, they make their coercive power quite felt due to the resistance they offer" (Durkheim, 2001: 40).

So, in the political and social fields, there is a common aspect, which is the time variable that plays a transcendental role. Insofar as the political meaning shift is a far-reaching effort, in the social sphere the joint work of the members of the current Colombian society and of the Colombians who will come is required in order to break paradigms, views and treat the ex-combatants, and the imagined views that people have of the conflict and of the FARC-EP. Here is another expression of the relationship and difference between post-agreement and post-conflict: the first paves the way to the constant process the second implies.

Finally, in the *field of security*, it is also a *sine qua non* condition to understand the relationship and difference between post-agreement and post-conflict, because its misinterpretation may endanger the peace process itself. In this scope, it is important to briefly consider the concept of "collective imaginary". Although the term is ambiguous in terms of the amount of existing definitions (Sola-Morales, 2014: 5), it can be said that



they are "[...] representation schemes, mechanisms or devices, socially formed, which allow members of a community understand the surrounding world" (Sola-Morales, 2014: 8); In other words, individuals make collective everything that allows them to understand their everyday life. Likewise, to this we must add that the words are linked to the aforementioned concept, while the discourses play a role in the construction of these social realities (Palma, 2017: 54).

Making explicit the relationship between imaginaries, discourses and security is significant to interpret the national situation, where there is a media bombardment with the word "post-conflict" as its centre. The fact that this word is used singularly and absolutely gives the feeling that with the peace process with the FARC-EP, all conflicts in Colombia will disappear. This imaginary is reinforced if one examines the same question of the plebiscite for the endorsement of the agreements: "Do you support the final agreement to end the conflict and build a stable and lasting peace?"

However, falling into this imaginary is a mistake that paradoxically could endanger the peace process itself. Contrary to this collective belief that is taking shape, we must listen to sociologist Sam Richards, for whom a conflict "does not really end until its causes are solved" (Richards in an interview to *El Espectador*, 2016), which implies that "stable and lasting" peace will not come with the signing of the agreements, but with a prolonged process in which the structural causes of the social demands that first gave rise to the conflict are addressed, and which require the reconfiguration of the state, the economic model and giving space to reconciliation.

Likewise, believing that the conflict in Colombia came to an end due to the signing of the peace agreement with the FARC-EP is also a fatal error for the State because it would limit its ability to understand and respond to the new threats it faces as a result of the guerrilla's disarmament or stemming from those who remain latent despite the movement's disappearance. Faced with this, one can bring up a fact of recent Colombian history: the process of demobilization of the paramilitaries. While it is true that by 2006 a large number of groups had demobilized, the most important being the AUC, it cannot be denied that not all of them decided to leave the lucrative illegal business, so, from small strongholds and recidivists, the phenomenon that today is known as BACRIM started.

In short, in light of the various implications of the post-conflict concept, the post-agreement is only the first scenario of an introduction to post-conflict, which in turn is a much broader process of collective efforts within the time variable. Not only the agreements signed with the armed group have to be made effective, but also the institutions must be open to the mutation of the security issues that will materialize in the spaces that remain empty, after the relinquishment of weapons and reincorporation of ex-combatants into the civilian life. For these reasons, meanwhile, emphasis is placed on the importance of seeing the new scenarios and realities in Colombia under the magnifying glass of the concepts of "farcarización", "post-farcarización" and *imperfect peace*.



3. From "Farcarización to "post-farcarización" and imperfect peace in Colombia

The mutability³ of the armed conflict in Colombia to unarmed conflict points to a socio-political structural transformation. Then, believing that with the overcoming of the weapons in the Colombian context a plenitude of annulment of rival forces is reached, is, *per se*, a contradiction. In that sense, in the near future and taking into account the social, political, cultural, and security conditions, the confidence building stage starts from a scenario of imperfection.

The FARC-EP defined a large part of Colombia's political and social agenda. For decades, the country was involved in a "farcarización" phenomenon that meant that all explanations about political instability, institutional weakness, problems and threats to security and defence, increased spending in that sector, and the negative macroeconomic factors, were rooted in the FARC-EP. Interestingly, such "farcarización" is understood under the notion of the *Sixth generation of war* (Niño, 2017), trying to understand that the use of force and the exercise of violence were channels of communication and interlocution of society, and that the State loses its capacity to respond to irregular dynamics (Niño, 2017: 38).

According to this argument, one can deepen the explanation of the "farcarización" concept, resorting to the discursive logics that gave rise to the defining role of the FARC-EP as the State and society's greatest threat, against which the institutional image and that of the "other" (enemy) to be destroyed came to the fore. Thus, it is clear that "there is no possible conflict without opponents, they are the construction of an otherness that means, from a real or imaginary point of view, risk and threat, but that at the same time is needed to sustain [...] the very reason for being [...]" (Angarita et al., 2015: 11). Consequently, what is emphasized here is that the *Farianos*, as an armed group, for a long time played that necessary role to affirm the legality.

In fact, the FARC-EP has been seen in different ways in different periods in this almost half century of armed struggle, going from "peasant self-defence groups" in the fifties, to leftist guerrilla in the sixties and drug traffickers in the eighties⁴, each view with a different response from the institutions. According to Angarita et al (2015), this escalated to the point that this illegal group became seen as an *absolute enemy*, that is, one that can only be considered as a threat to be annihilated, removing any quality of *political enemy* (the one that I can tolerate and with whom there can be dialogue) from it, after the El Caguán⁵ failed peace dialogues and with the advent of the two governments of Álvaro Uribe Vélez, when they were no longer a belligerent armed group but a terrorist one (Angarita et al., 2015: 57-59).

According to this logic of "farcarización of society and institutions", the overcoming of the armed conflict with the guerrilla requires a transcendental and urgent change in the

³ Ability to change shape (Oxford Dictionary, 2017).

⁴ For additional information concerning the historical evolution of the FARC-EP, see the bibliography of sociologist and journalist Alfredo Molano, especially the texts: *Los años del tropel* (1985), *Trochas y fusiles* (1994) y *A lomo de mula. Viajes al corazón de las Farc* (2016).

⁵ An area of approximately 42,139 square kilometres between the departments of Meta and Caquetá are cleared and demilitarized by the government of Andrés Pastrana Arango as a confidence measure for the dialogues with the guerrilla. This situation generated the military recovery of the FARC and motivated the establishment of control in that area and its own laws in the region.



collective imagination and building within imperfection spaces of trust as soon as possible, which is part of a post-conflict seen as a long-term process that begins with the post-agreement. As a result, this step depends on multiple factors, one of which advanced by Paul Collier, who argues that the main challenge is the return of many ex-combatants to civilian life as soon possible (Collier, 2004). Likewise, it is necessary to have a prolonged political and social dialogue for the effective incorporation of the armed insurgents into full legal life, and a change in the idea of the FARC-EP as an armed group to a political force within constitutionality.

The great challenge that arises is the "post-farcarización" of Colombian society and institutions, so that the dynamics of prolonged processes are understood and there is a rapid reaction of the State to the new threats that arise from the demobilization of the FARC-EP. In other words, the transformed scenarios in Colombia begin to reveal "post-farcarización" contexts. There is a change, almost mutational, in which the society and the defining construct of the nation itself, stand out in evolutionary terms from the old and erroneous notion of the conflict defined by the FARC-EP. Namely, a plausible scenario identified as the post-war society is acknowledged, which is located above the threshold of overcoming the armed conflict (Niño, 2014) and does not exclude it from being part of another atmosphere in which violence is the centre of gravity in social relations.

Taking into account the above, within the "post-farcarización", it is indispensable to notice a new context: the transformation of the threshold of violence in the State. Based on this, it is understood that violence is a factual communication vehicle in which different dynamics converge in its exercise and that is not directly proportional to a state of security. That is, a full security stage can be permeated by highly violent conditions and vice versa.

In a systemic scenario, the concept is represented in that violence is a relative anthropomorphic category that refers to surplus energy that exceeds the normal thresholds of absorption and mutation of the physical system, or psychic in the case of the individual, and the subsystems of infrastructures in the case of society (García, 2017). In Colombia, violence has been the causal motor of the conflict and not, *per se*, the causal conflict of violence. Consequently, with the "post-farcarización", the redesign of the thresholds of violence is not eliminated but transfigured.

Therefore, the construction of post-conflict spaces provokes an almost paradigmatic change in the understanding of violence. Thus, the possibilities of generalizing and perpetuating themselves in time and the social penetration of rival phenomena seem to confirm the thesis of the structural superiority of violent processes over those of pacification (Waldmann, 1999). It means that violence is located in a broad spectrum in the social life of the State. The tendency after the termination of an armed conflict is a virulent atomization and overflow of violence.

For example, a particular case in El Salvador has to do with the fact that while it is true that the 1992 Chapultepec Peace Agreement ended an internal armed conflict, it was also the starting point for the mutation of civil hostilities into an enclave of violence after the conflict (Niño, 2016). An endemic situation that shows that the new territorial battles involving members of gangs mixed between drug trafficking and extortion (*The Guardian*, 2015) dispute markets, vital spaces and occupy empty places left by the State.



In Colombia, such logic is not unfamiliar. To understand the polyhedron of violence in the transformation of the "post-farcarización", it is vital to recognise that violence is not a derivative of the exercise of the FARC-EP, it is not born with them, much less is it an exclusive credit of the said group. It is a combination of actors, phenomena, responsibilities, policies, opportunities and strategic issues that converge there. Violence in Colombia is constituted under a dynamic of multiple edges that respond to diverse natures.

In light of what has been said up to this point, in order to make the leap from "farcarización" to "post-farcarización", it is necessary to start talking about *imperfect peace* as the concept that will guide post-conflict in Colombia. This concept suggests that the resolution of conflicts is not absolute. On the contrary, it is a matter of internalizing that mutability is a characteristic of human conflict and, in this sense, it is not enough with the "cease-fire" between the parties. The end of a confrontation opens the door to new scenarios in which new problems cannot be excluded. In concrete terms: [...] the recognition of imperfection invites us to consider different favourable solutions for the parties in the context of a conflict that is not resolved completely. The fact of proposing a broad concept of peace based on the nonviolent solutions [sic.] that occur permanently in response to multiple conflicts leads us to think about the possibility of an imperfect peace revealed as a dynamic and perennially inconclusive peace (López, 2011: 90).

As a result of the above, it is an imperfect peace because, in spite of peacefully handling disputes, it coexists with conflicts and some forms of violence (Muñoz, 2004). In other words, imperfection is the perfect way to conceive the transformed scenario that Colombia is beginning to face. Namely, *imperfect peace* does not refer to a situation in which the agreements established between the rival actors are defined from a pejorative or negative angle, rather, it is ascribed to a systemic logic in which the conflict is central and separates the notion that war and conflict are symbiotic. In fact, imperfect peace is the best possible scenario for the consolidation and termination of the evolutionary character of society.

Accordingly, it is imperative to note that almost half of the peace agreements fail during the first five years of implementation (Hudson, 2011). So, the construction of a negotiated or imperfect peace is much more demanding, in political, economic and social terms, than the indefinite prolongation of war or the unilateral imposition of victory (Molano, 2016). Consequently, the need to propose the reconfiguration of Colombian society in the medium and long term (thus returning to the difference between post-agreement and post-conflict).

Finally, the suggestion of establishing the difference between post-agreement and post-conflict, and the construction of the concepts of "farcarización" and "post-farcarización", linked to *imperfect peace*, give rise to the third and last point of this research, which discusses two of the security scenarios that emerge at this crucial moment for society and the Colombian state, apart from the change of the image from *enemy* to *political opponent* that has already been discussed.



4. Pragmatism of the conflict and transformation of realities in Colombia: power voids and markets of violence

The signing of the agreement between the Government and the FARC-EP creates expectations regarding the possibility of reducing the violence associated with the armed confrontation and the illicit activities of that group in border areas (Cabrera, 2016). Under the previous premise, the "post-farcarización" leads to the appearance of empty spaces where ungoverned territories where the FARC-EP was previously present tend to emerge (Rabasa, et al., 2007). They are not, far from it, a kind of "Wild West" where only the law of the jungle rules (Molano & Zarama, 2016). They are dysfunctional territories where the State lacks any title to exercise basic functions, that is, the ungoverned territories reflect the old problem of effective territorial sovereignty (Molano & Zarama, 2016) and the contemporary view of the control of the said spaces by parastatal groups.

Certainly, the Colombian State has always had a problem to exercise control and affirm its presence in some territories within the country, a difficulty that according to Margarita Serge (2011) can be traced back to the colony period when they were treated as "wild areas" related to smuggling, and nowadays as "red zones" where illicit activities such as drug trafficking proliferate. In her words: Colombia appears as a fragmented country. A series of private armies, guerrillas and paramilitary groups dispute the state's territorial control. This situation is not, however, novel: the colonial State never managed to impose its control over the entire territory of what is now Colombia [...] They have never ceased to be "no man's land", "red zones" [...] (Serge, 2011: 15-18).

Based on the above, at first sight it would seem that the typology of "misgovernance" in the border areas proliferates when determining their nature. Namely, volatile zones in the configuration of the State, porosity areas due the natural conditions and adversities due to the geography. Still, although it is true that the extreme areas of the country lack institutional presence, the ungoverned territories can also exist in central areas and centres of power in the country.

Consequently, while it is true that the lack of state presence over vast areas of the territory, where armed actors are present and exercise power, is not a new phenomenon and goes far back in time, we must also be aware that the demobilization of the FARC-EP does not imply directly that the institutions will take those gaps that will remain after the disarmament. In contrast, with the "post-farcarización", one must understand that what will happen is a reconfiguration of the presence of actors outside the law (other guerrillas, FARC dissidents, organized crime, emerging gangs, etc.) to fill those spaces.

In fact, this territorial displacement for the control of the zones has already begun to occur. At the end of 2016, the United Nations Office for Human Rights warned the national government that "as FARC members abandon areas traditionally under their control, the State has not fully assumed its functions, leaving a power void", and, likewise, they pointed out that 61 murders of social leaders took place during that year, mostly in rural areas and after the signing of the final agreements (*El Espectador*, 2016).

On the other hand, the demobilization of the FARC-EP has not been absolute, which has left spaces in the national territory at the mercy of middle chiefs, who are motivated to remain illegal due to the income the activity generates. At the end of 2016, the FARC-EP



expelled five of its commanders⁶ for being against the "political-military" stance of the organization and opposing the peace process, motivated by the pursuit of individual profits derived from illicit activities (*El Espectador*, 2016). Although the number of dissidents calculated by the Ministry of Defence does not exceed 200 militias, the implications in the national geography are worrisome, since much of the Amazon is under control of these structures (which can no longer be considered FARC), specifically the Departments of Guaviare, Vichada, Guainía and Meta (*Semana Magazina*, 2016).

However, the new panorama of power voids in the territory does not stop with denunciations and dissent. In fact, prior to the UN alarms and the expulsion of FARC-EP commanders, in 2015 the Peace and Reconciliation Foundation presented a report entitled "What we have achieved", which presents the Violent Post-Conflict Risk Index (done by the foundation), to "[...] identify municipalities that require greater attention in post-conflict..." (Peace and Reconciliation Foundation, 2015: 57). This index takes into account variables such as violence, social, geographic and institutional indicators, as well as the presence of illegal mining, cocaine crops and rurality index, among others. The results of this analysis are alarming: 87 municipalities are in "extreme vulnerability", 85 are at "High" level and 104 are at "Medium High" level (Peace and Reconciliation Foundation, 2015: 61) (See Map 1).

Based on the fragmentation of the territory Serge emphasizes, and the absence of institutional presence in the peripheral areas of the State, the commodification of violence became a tradable good. In other words, violence in Colombia enters a subterranean "production chain" in which illegal activities largely solve patterns of hostile behaviour that occupy the empty spaces analyzed above.

The markets of violence, for Georg Elwert (1998), generally originate in non-economic conflicts. This is the initial reason why the commodification of the phenomenon has a certain level of attractiveness by taking advantage of institutional gaps and "black holes". In fact, these markets shape fields of action and are circumscribed to physical spaces where an economic dynamic predominates, dominated by players who use violence as a resource to regulate it (Elwert, 2003).

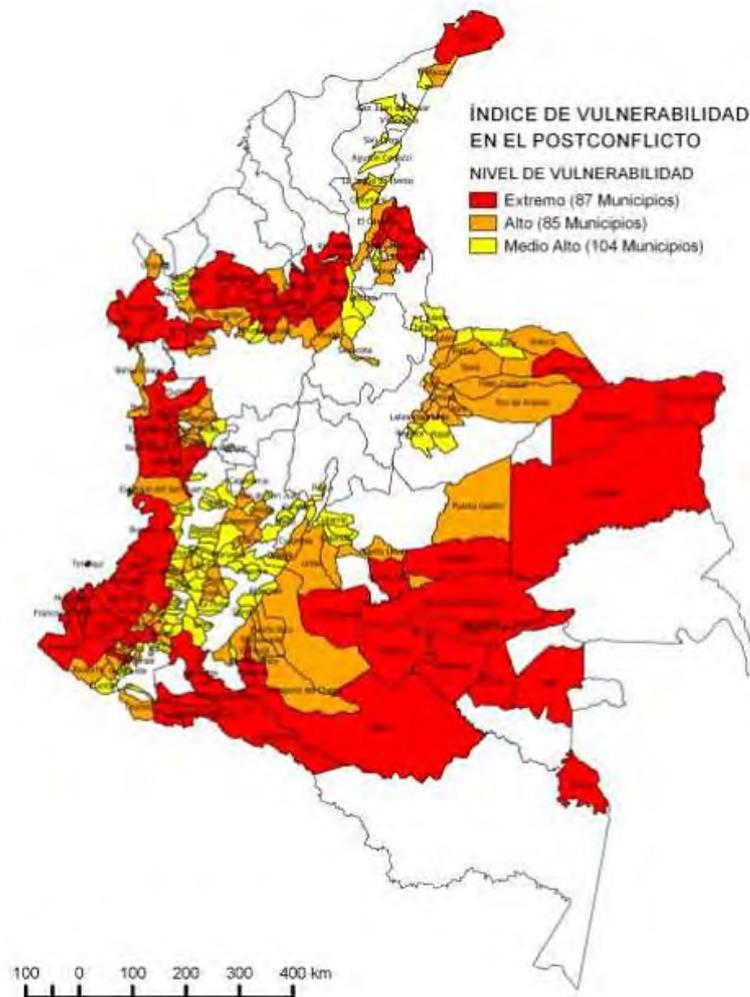
Thus, situations where legal and illegal activities, such as mining or drug trafficking, occur, become a strategic platform and a plausible breeding ground for the origin and empowerment of these markets. One of the main characteristics of violence as a tradable good is that it involves natural factors of extraction of resources without institutional control. This scenario opens the door to irregular transactions that erode beyond the environment to escalated social conflicts. Indeed, according to Michael Reed (2012), the markets of violence create a system of durability, while the economic equation favours those who control violence (Reed, 2012).

According to the above, given the lack of capacity and presence of the State, many agents are willing to use violence as a tool to regulate the supply and demand of goods and services (Reed, 2012), to stimulate social variables and to use violence as a communication medium in an underground social contract.

⁶ The expelled commanders are: alias *Gentil Duarte*, *Euclides Mora*, *John 40*, *Giovanny Chuspas* and *Julián Chollo* (*El Espectador*, 2016).



Map 1: Vulnerability Index in the Post-conflict of the Peace and Reconciliation Foundation



Source: (Peace and Reconciliation Foundation, 2015: 61)

That is to say, the transformation of the scenarios linked to the armed conflict means that contemporary violence is detached from the conflictive logic of the past decades to act in circumstances that have to do with the empty spaces, misgovernments and markets of violence. Although violence is not cancelled off by signing agreements, it does mutate due to the traceability of violence when it acquires an economic component. This violence is linked to the new actors that dispute the control of the dysfunctional territories in the periphery and the centre, the commodification of violent exercise, and the increase of public and urban security issues and problems. These are the neuralgic points of Colombia's reality that are keys to understanding post-conflict pragmatism.



4. Conclusion

To draw attention to the transformations of Colombia after the overcoming of an episode that marked the notion of a country for several decades is an eminent investment on the construction of conceptual and terminological stages. The analysis of the variables of the conflict in Colombia leads to the discovery of realities according to convergent and divergent narratives. This article does not present the conflict as a stain in the history of the country but as a necessary factor for the culmination of the construction of the nation according to its definition.

Consequently, it should be noted that Colombia has been defined by a phenomenon and a highly volatile actor that absorbed a good part of the political, economic, security, social, and even psychological agenda of the State. In other words, Colombia was "farcarizada" and, from that reality, Colombian history was interpreted, as well as the dynamics of the conflict and the institutional responses.

This *farcarización* became the threshold and yardstick of the "things" that provided the explanations about the national situation. Based on the above, what happened between the Government and the FARC-EP, on the excuse of overcoming the armed conflict, has opened a "Pandora's Box" according to the issues that the "post- farcarización" brings with it. Colombia must begin to understand itself without "another" that defines it.

Thus, the aim of this article is to start the debate on the new security dynamics that are beginning to emerge in Colombia, so that the adaptation of the State and society as a whole to these new contexts is not a traumatic and violent step, and peaceful dialogue in the future can be attained.

5. References

- Angarita, P., Gallo, H., & Jiménez, B., et. al. (2015). *La construcción del enemigo en el conflicto armado colombiano 1998-2010*. Medellín: Universidad de Antioquia.
- Cabrera, I. (2016). Conflicto armado, criminalidad y violencia en la frontera colombo-panameña: elementos críticos para buscar una transición. En A. Molano, *Fronteras en Colombia como zonas estratégicas: análisis y perspectivas* (pág. 221). Bogotá: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Instituto de Ciencia Política "Hernán Echavarría Olózaga".
- Collier, P. (2004). El desafío global de los conflictos locales. *The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank*, 39.
- Oxford Dictionary. (22/05/2017). *Diccionario de Oxford*. Definition of Mutability: <https://es.oxforddictionaries.com/definicion/mutabilidad>. Accessed 5 December 2017
- Durkheim, E. (2001). *Las reglas del método sociológico*. Mexico D.C.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- El Espectador. (18 de mayo de 2016). "Un conflicto no termina hasta que sus causas no estén solucionadas": sociologist Sam Richards. *El Espectador*. Retrived from <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/un-conflicto-no-termina-hasta-sus-causas-no-esten-soluc-articulo-632904>. Accessed 14 December 2017



El Espectador. (14 de Diciembre de 2016). Así son los cinco jefes de las Farc que se declararon en disidencia. *El Espectador*. Retrived from <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/asi-son-los-cinco-jefes-de-farc-se-declararon-disidenci-articulo-670457>. Accessed 12 March 2018.

El Espectador. (16 de Diciembre de 2016). ONU advierte de vacío de poder en zonas que abandonan las Farc. *El Espectador*. Retrived from <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/onu-advierte-de-vacio-de-poder-zonas-abandonan-farc-articulo-670697>. Accessed 1 December 2017.

Elwert, G. (2003). Intervention on markets of violence. In J. Koehler, & C. Zürcher, *Potentials of Disorder: Explaining Conflict and Stability in the Caucasus and in the Former Yugoslavia* (pp. 219-242). Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Farc-Ep, G. d. (2016). Acuerdo Final de La Habana.

Fundación Paz y Reconciliación. (2015). *Lo que hemos ganado*. Bogotá: Fundación Paz y Reconciliación. Retrived from <http://www.pares.com.co/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Descargue-Informe-Completo.pdf>. Accessed 29 January 2017

García, A. (25 de Mayo de 2017). *La violencia ni se crea ni se destruye: Teoría general de la violencia natural, política, social y doméstica*. Retrieved from http://perso.unifr.ch/derechopenal/assets/files/tribuna/tr_20080616_20.pdf

Gobierno de Colombia, F.-E. (2016). *Acuerdo Final de La Habana*. La Habana.

Hudson, H. (2011). La violencia de la construcción de la paz neoliberal en África: analizando sus "trampas" a través de un lente de género. *Relaciones Internacionales*, 73.

López, M. (2011). Teorías para la paz y perspectivas ambientales del desarrollo como diálogos de imperfectos. *Luna Azul*(33), 85-96. Retrieved from <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=321727235008>. Accessed 10 December 2017

Molano, A. (2016). Mercados de la violencia en el posconflicto colombiano: escolios a un riesgo implícito. En C. Niño, *Perspectivas y prospectivas de la seguridad en Colombia* (p. 77). Bogotá: Ediciones USTA.

Molano, A., & Zarama, F. (2016). Fronteras: desgobernanza, sesibilidad y vulnerabilidad. En A. Molano, *Fronteras en Colombia como zonas estratégicas: análisis y perspectivas* (p. 19). Bogotá: Fundación Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Instituto de Ciencia Política Hernán Echavarría Olózaga.

Mouffe, C. (1999). *El retorno de lo político. Comunidad, ciudadanía, pluralismo, democracia radical*. barcelona: Paidós.

Muñoz, F. (2004). Paz Imperfecta. In M. López, *Enciclopedia de Paz y Conflictos* (p. 1227). Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada.

Niño, C. (2014). Sociedad posbélica: nuevas amenazas y oportunidades para Colombia. *Revista Fuerzas Armadas*, 26-33.

Niño, C. (9 May 2016). *Foreign Affairs Latinoamérica*. Retrieved from El Salvador: armas y violencia como servicios intercambiables: <http://revistafal.com/el-salvador-armas-y-violencia-como-servicios-intercambiables/>. Accessed 2 January 2018



Niño, C. (2017). La sexta generación de la guerra: entre degeneraciones y violencias en la seguridad internacional. En A. Castillo, & C. Niño, *Nociones sobre Seguridad y Paz en las Relaciones Internacionales Contemporáneas* (p. 37). Bogotá: Ediciones USTA.

Palma, D. (2017). Definición del concepto de discurso político: algunas aproximaciones teórico-prácticas. In Dulfary Calderón, Gina Enciso, & Claudia Árias (Comps.), *Manual de marketing político. Estrategias para una campaña exitosa* (pp. 53-73). Bogotá: Universidad Santo Tomás.

Rabasa, Á., Boraz, S., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., Karasik, T., Moroney, J., et. al. (12 August 2007). *Ungoverned territories: understanding and reducing terrorism risks*. Retrieved from RAND Corporation: <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG561>. Accessed 11 February 2018

Reed, M. (13 de Mayo de 2012). *Desarrollo minero y mercados de la violencia*. Retrieved from http://www.elcolombiano.com/historico/desarrollo_minero_y_mercados_de_violencia-JVEC_181778. Accessed 7 January 2018

Revista Semana. (17 December e 2016). Los disidentes de las Farc. *Revista Semana*. Retrieved from <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/desercion-de-cinco-mandos-medios-de-las-farc-en-el-guaviare/509760>. Accessed 12 February 2018

Serge, M. (2011). *El revés de la nación: territorios de salvajes, fronteras y tierras de nadie*. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes.

Sola-Morales, S. (2014). Imaginarios sociales, procesos de identificación y comunicación mediática. *Prisma.com*(25), 3-22. Retrieved from http://revistas.ua.pt/index.php/prismacom/article/view/3044/pdf_26. Accessed 12 December 2017

The Guardian. (3 June 2015). *El Salvador's 'most violent month': homicide rate hits record high in May*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/03/el-salvador-homicide-killings-gangs>. Accessed 23 January 2018

Waldmann, P. (1999). Sobre la asimetría existente entre la dinámica de la violencia y la dinámica de la paz utilizando como ejemplo las guerras civiles. *Eguzkilore: Cuaderno del Instituto Vasco de Criminología* (13), 201.

TRADITIONAL RELIGION IN GUINEA BISSAU POLITICAL CULTURE

Claudia Favarato

favaratoclaudia@gmail.com

PhD candidate in Political Science at Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas (ISCSP, Portugal), University of Lisbon; Master in African Studies, ISCSP, University of Lisbon; Master in International Politics and Diplomacy, University of Padua; collaborating researcher at Centro de Estudos Africanos (CEAF) of ISCSP, University of Lisbon.

Abstract

The present article aims to unveil the importance of the indigenous animist religious system within Guinea Bissau political culture. By analysing the contrast between the inherent legitimation of State authority and local-traditional ones it is discerned the type of political culture shared by Guinean people.

Taking into account the exacerbation of public responsiveness to symbols manipulation when levels of human security are felt lower by individuals, I discuss the importance of religious symbolic capital inherent in Guinea Bissau national leaders' politics, pinpointing the case of José Bernardino "Nino" Vieira.

These practices enable State authorities to legitimize their authority, to overcome the ethnical heterogeneity impasse and to compensate for loose relationships between the government and the citizens.

Finally, I discuss the manipulation of the religious dimension for political ends as a milestone of the process of *africanization* of power, due to religious and political syncretism typical of traditional African political systems, on the one hand. On the other hand, I question how myths worshipping the national leaders might foster the breakthrough of an authoritarian political regime.

Keywords

Guinea Bissau; political culture; symbolic capital; African political system; African traditional religion

How to cite this article

Favarato, Claudia (2018). "Traditional religion in Guinea Bissau political culture". *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, N.º 2, November 2018-April 2019. Consulted [online] on the date of the last visit, <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.9.2.7>

Article received on December 21, 2017 and accepted for publication on July 1, 2018





TRADITIONAL RELIGION IN GUINEA BISSAU POLITICAL CULTURE

Claudia Favarato

Introduction

Through this article I aim to discern the importance of traditional religion in Guinea Bissau political culture. State coups that sparked throughout the past five decades weakened the State-building process, and the strengthening of a liberal democracy based on the rule of law. For remarkable ethnical heterogeneity, traditional authorities enjoy strong legitimacy hindering the strength of formal State authorities. Moreover, religious values, mostly expressed through the indigenous animist cosmologies, persist strong among Bissau-Guinean.

First, I identify the political culture type prevalent in Guinea Bissau, based on Almond & Verba (1989 [1963]) classification, by unveiling the threefold political structure and by emphasizing patterns of contrast between State authority and traditional-local authorities.

Second, researches (Inglehart, Basañes & Moreno, 1998; Inglehart & Norris, 2011) show that among people living in low income conditions or in failed or poorer States religiosity persist strong. Therefore, public responsiveness to symbols manipulation is lightened when people are personally vulnerable to political-economic distress or when they feel unable to deal with their problems. According to the human security secularization thesis (Inglehart & Norris, 2011), it is discussed the importance of religious-grounded symbolic capital as a tool used by Guinea Bissau leaders to legitimize their authority and overcome the ethnical heterogeneity impasse.

The third part of the article focuses on importance of the religious dimension within Guinea Bissau political culture. Data outcomes are expected to verify postulated hypothesis on the ends of religious values' manipulation. On the one hand, I hypothesised that, whilst the employ of religious based symbols by national leaders is a tool to compensate for loose relationships between the government and the citizens, such practices are part of traditional African political systems. In this sense, their mingling with the State-system marks a milestone in the *africanization* of Power process. On the other hand, due to outstandingly high levels of legitimation and consent they provide, along with a sense of fright among the population, myths worshipping the person of the president endorse the breakthrough of an authoritarian political system.

The discernment outlined in this article is based on data gathered from field work (Biombo region, October to December 2016). Techniques as informal conversations with representative of the local-traditional political system, along with participant observation



within rural settlement daily life and occurrences, furnished the necessary data to chart. A clear as possible account of the prevalent political culture type.

Moreover, the analysis is enriched by categorical discourse analysis of semi-structured interviews, underpinned by an inductive taxonomy. The latter were submitted to a selected, representative corpus, encompassing different age groups. The interviewees are Bissau-Guinean university students and professors who witnessed the three-decades (1980-2009) long era of José Bernardino "Nino" Vieira government. The interviews pinpoint how the President Nino engaged with symbolic capital in the exercise of his power.

Guinea Bissau political scenario

Following independence (September 24th, 1974) from Portugal, Guinea Bissau has been ruled by the former liberation movement, PAIGC (Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde). After the 1980 coup, João Bernardino "Nino" Vieira took charge as president; he maintained his office till 1998. State coups, assassinations and disputes between the politicians and the army have been a hallmark of Guinean political turmoil since the formal institution of pluralistic democracy in 1994. Guinea Bissau is formally a semi-presidential representative democracy; albeit, political activities seldom are not consistent with what stated in the Constitution (1984) provisions.

Nation and State-building processes are at stake due to social, cultural and political legacies. On the one hand, there lacks an open, free-informed system of relation between governed and government. On the other hand, the process of embodying citizens within one national identity is hampered by ethnical heterogeneity (Forrest, 2003). In the country, there are almost thirty ethnicities and none of this has a high prevalence among the population. Balanta (26%), Papel (9.2%), Bijagós (2.1%), Manjaco (9.2%), Mancanha (3.5%) are the most significant animist ethnicities, representative of almost 50% of the total population, whether Fula (25%) and Mandinga are the main Muslim ethnicities (Nóbrega, 2003). There is no predominant ethnical group in the political sphere¹, nor there are any records of political vote in the country. Ethnic identity is not determinative of a given community's political choice (Forrest, 2003: 187). The parcelling off of identities matches identity patterns more tightly with individuals' ethnical group than with the nation.

Ethnical identity patterns are not limited to the cultural cluster but affect the political sphere also. Most of the people refers to local authority rather than to the State (Favarato, 2017); the State is fragile and lacks legitimation among people, especially in the rural realm. Heritage of the former colonial one, current Guinean State is shaped on a European apparatus, which was not able to penetrate and rearrange social, traditional configuration of power (Forrest, 2003).

Portuguese indirect rule system, implemented during the 1800, was based on local committees, called *Comités de Tabanca* (Forrest, 2003: 142). The latter were intended to pervasively spread State power among native people. Although, the colonial ruling

¹ Although, Álvaro Nóbrega refers to "*balantização* do Estado" process. Balanta ethnical group presence is majoritary within the armed forces, hence the increasing power Balanta are gaining in the militar and political sphere (Nóbrega, 2015).



system was corrupted by the locals, who elected people endowed with traditional authority or weak individuals for position in the committee (Nóbrega, 2003). Strength of local, traditional political and social structure prevailed over the colonizer. The independent State ruled by PAICG inherited such structural fragilities; State's capacity is limited to cities and community-based authorities hold power over rural society.

Contemporary structure of African political systems is ontologically composed of three elements: pre-colonial structures, colonial cultural-political legacies, and post-colonial State developments, inherently influenced by the globalization process and the modern neoliberal State model. The three parcels are not exclusive, for they work in reciprocal synergy in the inner social, cultural and political reality. Guinea Bissau political culture is *ipso facto* a heterogeneous cultural mix. The threefold structure provides a sound explanation on the State-traditional powers dialectic. PAICG reiterated attacks against traditional power depicted it as backward, indigenous, uncivilized; therefore, they engendered a backlash, expressed through the recent revitalization of traditional power revitalization (Carvalho, 2004).

Despite State's sovereignty over all Guinean territory, local and traditional authorities² strength is high throughout all ethnical groups. Local leaders' legitimacy is likely due to their political and/or religious role (Bordonaro, 2009).

Importance of ancestors and spirits, along with invention of tradition (Hobsbawm, 2002), prompted the recent revitalization of traditional power in Guinea Bissau. To confirm and through the support of blood-soul legacies with metaphysical forces and the ancestors, the newly appointed *régulo* successfully perform traditional rituals and ceremonies. The latter are a means to assert authority, broaden symbolic capital and strengthen power. Traditional legitimation practices are the hallmark of the syncretism between the secular and religious power: legitimacy, power and authority of traditional leaders (*regulos*) is tightly dependent on their religious force and their commitment with animist "*cerimonia di terra*"³ (Favarato, 2017).

Political culture and importance of traditional religion

Individuals' orientation toward political system and political action are determinant elements to discern local and traditional authorities' legitimacy. Those patterns of orientation are best summed in the expression political culture (Almond, 1956: 396), due to the peculiar epistemological traits the two terms refer to on their own. Together, they define a specific cluster of culture, differentiated and partially autonomous from culture at large.

Culture is a collective phenomenon in which individuals bring together their own set of world outlooks, interpretation of reality, feelings and expectations. Culture is a broad term; it refers to individual (ego-tropic or psychologic traits) and societal (socio-tropic) aspects. Due to institutions, socialization, education and communication media, a culture

² Anthropologist Clara Carvalho (2004) distinguish between local and traditional power. The former is an independent rule structure, historically deep-rooted in customary practices and social habitus; the label of traditional is due to the source of power legitimation. Guinean *regulos* underpin their authority in the self-justifying notion of "tradition".

³ "Di terra" is used to refer to tradition, both in its immanent and material aspect. Therefore it is linked to animist forces, spirits (*irân*) and ancestors.



is “the signifying system through which a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored” (Williams, 1983: 13). Lacking clear boundaries of definition, it includes notions of diverse clusters of knowledge, as anthropology, sociology, psychology, political science, religion, art.

Distinguishable from non-political attitudes, *political* culture denotes how the political system is internalized in form of cognitions, feelings and evaluations. The combination of the terms political and culture refers to people’s psychological orientations toward social objects, or in other words the totality of ideas and attitudes toward authority discipline, governmental responsibilities and entitlements, and associated patterns of cultural transmission (Robertson, 2002).

Political culture can be categorized according to type, subcultures and congruence between political culture and political system. With regard to Guinea Bissau case, it is identifiable a participant type shared by the elite, whilst most of Guinean population is embedded in parochial political culture⁴ (Almond & Verba, 1989 [1963]), insofar traditional authorities are referred to as first legitimate authority rather than the central State. A political orientation does not exclude nor replace the other; there is no homogeneity or uniformity of political culture as such, but a cultural heterogeneity or mix, founded on subcultures cleavages.

Orientation toward political action is deducible by a synthesis of cognitive, cathexis and evaluation elements (Almond, 1956: 396). In terms of affection, evaluation of the State and government present negative traits: little or nothing is expected from the political system and awareness of the government presence tends to be linked to family interests. Moreover, reforms and permanence of change (Bordonaro, 2009), yet not leading to any shifts nor improvements fostered a sense of resignation mixed with hope for the future.

According to Bissau-Guinean, the country’s political structure is inefficient and unable to provide for people’s need, for the State personnel is on average corrupted. Politicians are blamed of corruption and of serving of their position for the sake of personal interests. Such a selfish attitude counteracts desirable features of a political leader: traditional authorities enjoy legitimacy insofar they responsibly rule for the well-beings of the individuals (Monteiro, 2016: 163). A good leader shall use power for the common benefit of the community.

Traditional political titles are a lifelong office, conferred upon criteria of age, wisdom, courage and value. Customary law provisions (FDB & INEP, 2012) appoint a council of elders (*Omi Garandi*) and a committee of counsellors to mentor a *regulo’s* governance. Individuals obey decisions and rules enacted due to their justness; it is very unlikely that violations occur. Most of local authorities’ dispositions are underpinned in indigenous animist foundation, which foster the prohibition. To violate a norm would make one guilty

⁴ According to the parochial type model, political roles are not specialized and there are not separated from religious and/or social orientation. Whether it may occur in larger-scale and differentiated polities, parochial orientation is more common in simpler, circumscribed traditional systems (Almond & Verba, 1989 [1963]: 17).



in front of *irân*⁵, who has no mercy for human beings: punishments often involve death or ceaseless *mufunesa*⁶(Favarato, 2017).

No matter of local political life is kept behind the scenes. Orality is a fundamental communication mean in a context of medium-poor literacy level; lacking printed or IT media resources, meetings under the shadow of the mango trees are the selected spot for political talks and discussions. The quick sharing of oral information (through counsellors' official transmission and mouth-to-mouth talks) and high level of societal consent can foster a leader's positive image as can quickly destroy one's reputation on the basis of tattles. Trust is of utter importance in a political world underpinned on orality.

Whether all citizens are informed on political matters, participation in the political life is casted within boundaries tightly linked to gender and performance of traditional ceremonies. Rituals, not age, define phases of one's life. Boys ought to perform *fanado* (a three-months-long test of resistance) to rightfully become active member of the political community. Who does not perform the ceremony, entirely or partially, is given the depreciating name *blufo* and is not ever eligible for marriage. Women are generally excluded from political life and they are not allowed to cover political offices⁷. Contrarily, no prohibition as such is recorded in the religious system.

Mirroring the family's functioning, the local political structure despises selfishness. A system of reciprocal obligation, thus creating a relational net of interactions stays as cornerstone of the social, political and familiar system. Hence, trust and identification in the local political system is high.

The transplantation of the political orientations referred above to the national system proves therefore unsuccessful. National government practices based on a bureaucratic apparatus are not consistent with patterns of legitimation and identification proper of the traditional system, thus the perceived failure of the deceiving State. As outlined in Almond and Verba analysis (1989 [1963]), political culture and political system are not inherently two overlapping structure, for the degree of their incongruence determines efficiency and participation into forms of political action.

The State apparatus results of colonial legacies, which does not mirror local reality nor African heirloom. The incongruence cause detachment feelings whilst embedding the spreading of participatory political culture. Cleavages in political orientation are shaped by urban or rural settlements' location; the political culture split broaden between the foreign educated elite and the population at large, as the awareness of the significance of the government varies sharply with the level of education (Almond & Verba, 1989[1963]).

Within urban inhabitants and educated elite, political culture leans to the participatory type. In this model, citizens are explicitly oriented toward the system (policy, administration structures and processes) as a whole and feel an active role of their "self" in the polity (Almond & Verba, 1989[1963]: 18). In Bissau and Bafata, levels of political participation are remarkably high and led to the emerge of an articulated civil society, in

⁵ The term *Irân* has no clear definition boundaries. It refers to a metaphysical entity, a spirit, a powerful force. Despite its otherworldliness, is it regarded part of the physical world, its presence is sensed and it is appointed as the last cause of positive and negative occurrences.

⁶ Misfortune.

⁷ Exceptions are foreseen in the case a woman is the head of the family.



line with African associative tradition. It is precisely in Bissau that protests and uprisings in opposition to governmental actions take place, displaying engagement with political life in positive (political debates, political parties' headquarters) and negative (protests, contestation, disagreement) terms. Moreover, urban citizens and educated élites tend to experience an identity incongruence: whilst their participatory political culture is consistent with the formal political system, hardly there will be any identification with politicians' little accountability and with the authoritarian measures enacted.

The cleavages between the diverse political subcultures and the incongruence amidst the political system and the political cultures hinder national legitimacy. Furthermore, the culture-system mismatch along with the variety of subcultures harden the task for the national leader to encompass ethnical heterogeneity and attain nationally recognized legitimacy.

Persistence of religiosity and symbolic power

To achieve legitimation is a tough matter in Guinea Bissau politics: independence propelled by the State and not by the people (Graça, 2005: 22) thwarted the nation-building process. Top-down construction of State apparatus and administration structure did not overcome local and traditional power structures. For the lowering of the revolutionary legitimacy⁸ accorded to politicians, and lacking foundations for national legitimacy, it prompted the appeal to myth and symbols tightly rooted in the traditional religion to foster authority through symbolic power.

An effective alternative to bureaucratic-rational legitimation, symbolic capital provides a generally valid basis to legitimate national political power. Symbolic capital, inherent in social and cultural capital, is the leading force *par excellence* of politics (Bourdieu, 2014: 282; 1989). It is generated by the relation between socio-cultural capital and the agents whom socialization enables them to see and recognize such assets. In other words, it implies that the citizens recognize political authorities as endowed with such symbolic capital.

As a creative, world-making power, symbolic capital provides a base to create legitimacy among people. Many are the forms in which it displays: a language is for instance a structured, normative institution, itself constitutive of reality and a form of symbolic capital.

Symbolic power is not necessarily grounded on proved occurrences nor factual truths. It preferably relies on manipulation of reality, or rather on a manipulation of reality accordingly with one's vision and opinion. Politics is not made by truth, but by opinion, which ultimately identifies with illusion. *Et est*, opinion is one of the indispensable bases of power (Arendt, 1995: 17).

The importance of myths, symbols, values and beliefs does not lay merely in themselves, but in what they evoke, in the meaning they are given. Myths, symbols and rituals are an essential feature of all societies; periodical ceremonies are required to state societal existential needs and moral values with ideological meaning (Fortes & Evans-Pritchard,

⁸ Recognition of one's right to be part of the government due to participation in the fighting struggle for independence.



1981[1940]: 52-56; Hobsbawm, 2002). Their manipulation to serve political aims play a key-function since they are a useful tool to enhance legitimization of the political élite and of the national leadership.

As already noted by Fortes & Evans-Pritchard (1981[1940]: 52), "cohesion and persistence of African [traditional and national] societies depend largely on ability of all members to feel their unity and perceive their common interest in myths and symbols". Religion views, and henceforth the related values and beliefs, play a major role in people political outlook.

Moreover, public responsiveness to symbols manipulation is heightened when people are vulnerable to political-economic distress or when they feel unable to deal with their problems (Hayward & Dumbuya, 1983). Inglehart and Norris (2011) human security (secularization) thesis bridges the degree of religiosity with the level of existential security perceived by the members of a given society. Essential to well-being, human security designates the state of living free from various risks, dangers and vulnerabilities. Religiosity refers, in this sense, to the need of an ultimate source to face life-threatening risks one has to cope with on a daily basis. To believe in a metaphysical being has a functional role for those living in vulnerable condition, since it helps reducing anxiety for survival.

The central claim of the modernization thesis is that economic, politic and cultural changes go together in coherent patterns. There exists a broad range of cultural values closely linked to a given society's level of economic development (Inglehart, Basañez & Moreno, 1998), whilst other factors, such as formal education, mass communication and the structure of work force, are simply influential on cultural changes patterns.

Nevertheless, religiosity is sensible to other societal elements, as religious culture and socio-economic development (Inglehart, Basañez & Moreno, 1998). Furthermore, patterns of cultural changes are highly dependent on a country's economic stage; in other words, the political dimension of culture changes along with the economic system. Political and social expectations of populations living in poorer nations and failed States are primary bonded to claims for security, rather than on pretences for inclusive, participative citizenship, or for rights⁹ of the individual. Among these populations, religiosity persists more strongly, while a systematic erosion of religious practices, values and beliefs has occurred among the most prosperous strata in rich nations (Inglehart & Norris, 2011).

Religion, beliefs, myths and symbols within Guinean politics

Hallmark of Guinea Bissau political culture is the syncretism between the political and the religious spheres. The latter relies the traditional system of beliefs, a heterogeneity of cosmologies falling under the name of animism. Despite identification with one of the revealed religions (Christianism, Muslims) present in the country's threefold religious system, animist beliefs persist as a cultural substratum for all individuals. *Irân* is the main deity; it designates a spirit who can be malign or benevolent. In the traditional

⁹ In this sense, rights refer to first and second generations rights, respectively civic and political, and economic, social and cultural rights.



system, *Irân* agreement¹⁰ is fundamental to legitimize a political role. Moreover, the approval of the elders and of the dead ancestors is fundamental to legitimize one's political function.

At the national level, politicians' symbolic capital rests upon traditional animist values, myths and beliefs. Their manipulation is likely to provide the leader with broad legitimacy, for overcoming the ethnical heterogeneity impasse, yet enhancing the instauration of an authoritarian regime.

To discern the religious dimension in the Guinean political sphere it was applied discourse content analysis on semi-structured interviews submitted to a selected corpus. The analysis is categorical, underpinned by an inductive taxonomy. Units of analysis, then chartered within indexes and categories, are single words, or couplets of words when both needed as concept-referent. Concept resembling a peculiar trait of the Guinean universe will be presented using the original, native word (e.g., *irân*, *djambakus*). The cast follow the presence or absence rule.

The interviews focus on a specific time-frame, ranging from 1980 to 2009. During the three decades, José Bernardino "Nino" Vieira was ruling or tightly engaged with the government. Thereupon the analysis aims to pinpoint use and misuse of religious-related symbolic capital by "Nino" Vieira.

The first cluster (State) includes those elements needed to verify hypothesis on legitimation. The indexes focus on ethnical heterogeneity, national versus local-traditional power structures legitimacy, authoritarian practices and feeling toward the State.

The second cluster (responsiveness to symbolic capital) aims to discern sensitiveness to the religious-related facets of political practices. Indexes aim to ascertain presence of myths, symbols and beliefs within politics and their foundation. Furtherly, the following indexes ascertain which kind of foundations lay underneath the worship of the national leader.

Finally, the third cluster (*africanization* of power) registers the presence of items concerning symbols, belief and religion in the political sphere.

State

The first category deals with the perception of the State among Guinean population. In the specific, patterns of national leader's authority legitimization and the presence of authoritarianism markers are pinpointed.

¹⁰ *Irân's* agreement is asked through a traditional ceremony performed by a traditional religious authority, called *baloubeiro* or *djambakus*.



Table 1

State					
Category: <i>Traditional legacies</i>					
Indicators	Political-religious syncretism	Tribalism	Ethnicity	Traditional specialists - counsellors	Informal court

Source: drafted by the author

The State dimension mingles with the non-State one for including traditional legacies. Narratives and talks on the State recurrently includes references to ethnicities, customary law, traditional authorities in the national political system characterization. Ethnicity is no source of conflict among Guinean people, for it rather is source of pride. The harmonious ethnic integration among Guinean groups is peculiar. Religious difference is also respected. Traditional religion specialists (*régulos, djambakus, balobeiros, mouros*) are given utter importance also in the political sphere: they form an informal court of ministers and counsellors of the president. "Nino" Vieira was said to have a real court living at his residence, the "Palácio", in Bissau. He used to consult with them on a daily basis. Each of the specialists had competence over a specific matter, as in a government asset.

Table 2

State						
Category: <i>"Rogue" State</i>						
Indicators	Fragility	Democratization	Nacional unity	Clientelism	Corruption	Civil society

Source: drafted by the author

At large, the State is characterized by hallmarks of structural fragility. On the one hand, the interviewees characterized it negatively: a system run by clientelism and corruption thus engendering general feelings of mistrust. The State and the government authorities are regarded faraway/distant entities, and on average perceived as ineffective and helpless, not capable of effective action. The general orientation toward the government shows it lacks authority and power, as well as it is given little legitimacy. Furthermore, expectations about the State, democracy, the government and politician in general are low or not existing. There is no or little sense of identification with the apparatus of the bureaucratic modern State. On the other hand, there exist a strong sense of national belonging, to a Bissau-Guinean unity.



Table 3

					State
<i>Category: Legitimation and authoritarianism</i>					
<i>Indicators</i>	Revolutionary legitimation	Head of army profile	Super-natural power and knowledge	Control	Tyrannical

Source: drafted by the author

The characterization of the president "Nino" presents otherwise different traits. Notwithstanding the over-a-decade long semi-authoritarian regime, "Nino" Vieira is depicted as a hero. He enjoyed a broad legitimacy among the population; primarily due to his fame of brave warrior fighting the Portuguese. He was said to be undefeatable, because he faced several life-threatening situations, but was never harmed, nor were his soldiers beaten. Military fame provided the ground for the revolutionary legitimacy he needed to acquire consent. Therefore, his military gestures were coloured with super-natural features, and myths worshipping him as an immortal man, who enjoyed the personal support of one of the most powerful *irân*. He was said to have super natural powers and knowledge.

Nevertheless, "Nino" was a loved and feared leader, for the tyrannical means of control he used. When his authority was questioned, "Nino" exercised brutally repressive measures over his opponents. People feared him due merits on the battlefield, and even more because of the atrocities he was acting.

Responsiveness to symbolic capital

People's reactiveness to symbols manipulation become manifest through the analysis of the figure of the President "Nino" Vieira. His power was grounded on military braveness and on indigenous animist values. Descriptions of "Nino", almost resembling a myth-form, contain recurrent references to supernatural powers and above-human nature, as well as to extraordinary skills of warrior. For the latter merit, he was/is also referred to as the "father" of the nation.

"Nino" was worshipped as a heroic, undefeatable general, whom acts in the battlefield during the independence struggle were super-human. He was also given a warrior Balanta name, *Kabina Fanchamna*. He was said to be immortal, because there existed no weapon that could harm him. This belief was spread within the civil and the military segments of the society, and explain the vivid circumstances of his death. Moreover, he was thought to have the support of a special, personal *irân*, whom favours would accord him protection and power.



Table 4

Categories	<i>Responsiveness to symbolic capital</i>						
	<i>Super-natural myth</i>				<i>War related myths</i>		
<i>Indicators</i>	Super-natural power and Knowledge	Unde-featable	Above-human or divine nature	Nino's death	<i>Kabina Fanchamna</i>	Legendary heroic warrior	Independence fighter social status

Source: drafted by the author

According to popular talks, "Nino" was entitled with super-natural powers that enabled him to know all he wanted. This legend served as deterrent against his opponents, to prevent they organize a coupe, a revolt or a rebellion. Furtherly, it discouraged any form of opposition to his power. The latter are features of authoritarianism rather than resembling symbolic capital patterns toward legitimation. His government was very efficiently organized upon information provided by secret services; with the support of loayl urban and local-rural authorities, he was notified in advance about any subversive movements blossoming in the country. Whether control of information and deterrence were mentioned, narratives on "Nino" Vieira power were ready to make the government controlling capacities look like the outcome of the President capabilities, due to *irân's* influence.

For the high share of traditional animist religion, the utter majority of the people is sensitive to values and beliefs belonging to the indigenous cosmologies. Along with those who plainly have faith in *irân*, most people acknowledge the spirits existence and some even regard themselves as *pauteiro/a* (able to see *irâns*). Therefore, the authoritarian regime ruled by "Nino" Vieira rested on a system of control underpinned on manipulation of religious beliefs and on rational-bureaucratic organized services of information.

Table 5

Categories	<i>Responsiveness to symbolic capital</i>					
	<i>Control and deterrence</i>			<i>Beliefs</i>		
<i>indicators</i>	<i>Irân's</i> protection	To be or to have <i>djambakus</i>	Intelligence service	To have faith in <i>irâns</i>	General beliefs in <i>irâns</i>	<i>Pauteiro/a</i>

Source: drafted by the author

Africanization of power

In traditional African political systems, the use of religion-related myths and symbols is an ordinary feature. Syncretism between religiosity and politic is the norm: roles frequently overlap, the spirits' and the ancestors' approval is fundamental for a leader's approval or to sort out any major political decision of the community.



Table 6

Africanization of Power					
Category: Symbols					
Indicators	Régulo's blessing	Axe	Sacred hand	Chicken's hoof	Muslim dress

Source: drafted by the author

The government of "Nino" Vieira is pictured rich in symbols recalling the animist dimension. Among the most common, there appears the blessing of traditional *régulos*, the sacred hand, the chicken hoof and the Muslim clothing. Nevertheless, the last category of the content analysis considers indicators referring to religiosity. It was applied broadly to all the data set. Analysis outcome shows that the political realm is always depicted with religious or religious-related features. The latter applies both to local-traditional authorities and to national leaders, hence the State political system.

Guinean syncretic configuration of power challenges the modern, bureaucratic State system established after independence, inherited from the Portuguese colonization and influenced by the worldwide globalization process.

Table 7

Africanization of Power								
Category: Religious elements								
Indicator	<i>Irán</i>	traditional	animism	syncretism	(traditional) ceremony	Traditional specialist (<i>djambakos</i> , <i>mouro</i> , <i>régulo</i> , <i>balobeiro</i>)	Catholicism	Islamism

Source: drafted by the author

To Western political science, the manipulation of religious myths and symbols within the political sphere is an abusive means to attain power, legitimation and authority. Albeit, it is needed to consider the specificities of African systems and its politics legacies. Presence of mystique markers is common to all African countries, more intensively in West Africa ones. Hence, presence of symbols of power, religious elements and traditional specialists in the inner paths of national politics might be the hallmark of a peculiar configuration of State, for pinpointing the process of *africanization* of power.

Conclusion

Throughout this paper I aimed to unveil the importance of traditional religion within Guinea Bissau political culture.

The threefold political structure inherent in Guinea Bissau society plays a major role in shaping boundaries of the religious dimension. The strength of local and traditional authorities embeds the power of national ones; prevalence of the parochial political culture type enhances primacy of the former over the latter. Norms enacted are underpinned in both socio-political and metaphysical foundations. The level of people's



identification and trust in the local or traditional authorities is high, and their legitimacy is unquestioned.

When tools of the rational-bureaucratic national structure are not consistent with the desired purposes – legitimacy, power, consent - authorities resort to symbolic capital of power. Religious capital provides a solid base for strong symbolic power, since: 1) metaphysics' beliefs are an utter parcel of symbols, myths and values. As with traditional chiefs, widely accepted beliefs serve as a foundation for authority and legitimation of the president authority; 2) although human security is a determinant, though not deterministic, element to define one's religiosity, perceptivity to religiosity is higher in those societies where individuals are more vulnerable to life-threatening risks.

With regard to the postulated hypothesis, the analysis proves that the pervasiveness of religion-related values, myths and symbols in Guinean politics serves more purposes.

On the one hand, myths worshipping the president "Nino" Vieira supplied him with outstandingly high levels of legitimation and consent. First, they were a means to overcome the ethnic traditional legitimation *impasse*. Second, "Nino" power was underpinned in a mixture of legitimation based upon mythological fame and fright. Myths and narratives endowed him with a *Übermensch* identity, which efficiently provided deterrence against opposition and rebellion upon the established government. "Nino" is both known as the heroic general who freed the country from the Portuguese colonizer, and as the sanguinary president, whom police would pitilessly murder any opponents. The mystique surrounding the figure of the president hence represents the prompt of an authoritarian political system's breakthrough.

On the other hand, the employ of religious based symbols by "Nino" Vieira is a tool to compensate for loose relationships between the government and the citizens. Nevertheless, such practices are part of traditional African political systems, where the religious and the political sphere are interdependent. The use of religion-related values by national leader frames within the political-religious syncretism. The latter is a defining feature of African political systems.

According to Western tradition, life in plurality takes form of politics, an art underpinned in human beings' faculties, whose underneath of power rest upon human beings' societal organization. Contrarily, African politics tightly grounds the ultimate foundation of government on a metaphysical, somehow higher entity. In Guinea Bissau, it is called *irân*. *Irâns* are the real owners of power, whilst traditional, local and – we might affirm – national authorities are means of its will. In this sense, the religious dimension is indivisible from the political one, for they inherently imply one another. Transposition of the use of myths, symbols and religious values into the national political sphere epitomizes the cornerstone for the *africanization* of power process, or rather the construction of a complex State, not underpinned exclusively in the western nation-State model.

References

Almond, Gabriel A. (1956). Comparative Political Systems. *The Journal of Politics*. Vol 18 n 3, pp. 391 - 409



Almond, Gabriel Abraham & Verba, Sidney (1989). *The civic culture*. Newsbury Park (California): SAGE. 1st edition: 1963

Bordonaro, Lorenzo L. (2009), *Guinea Bissau today: The Irrelevance of the State and the Permanence of Change*, African Studies Reviews, vol. 52, n. 2

Bourdieu, Pierre (1989). Social Space and Symbolic Power. *Sociological Theory*. Vol. 7, n. 1, pp.14-25

Bourdieu, Pierre (2014). *Sobre o Estado. Curso no Collège de France (1989-1992)*. Lisboa: Edições 70. Original title: *Sur L'État. Cours au Collège de France (1989-1992)*.

Carvalho, Clara (2004). Local authorities or local power? The ambiguity of traditional authorities from the colonial to the post-colonial period in Guinea-Bissau. *Lusophone Africa: Intersection between the Social Sciences*. Institute of African Studies, Cornwall University

Faculdade de Direito de Bissau & Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa (2012). *Direito costumeiro vigente na República da Guiné-Bissau: Balantas, Fulas, Mancanhas, Manjaco, Mandingas, Papeis*. Bissau: FDB, INEP, Cooperação EU, PNUD

Favarato, Claudia (2017). *This child is not a person. Criança-irân infanticide cultural practices and the challenges to human rights*. Master thesis. Lisboa: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, Universidade de Lisboa

Forrest, Joshua B. (2003). *Lineages of State fragility, rural civil society in Guinea Bissau*. Ohio: James Currey editor

Fortes, Meyer & Evans-Pritchard, E.E. (1981). *Sistemas Políticos Africanos*. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbekian. Original title: *African Political Systems*. 1940. Oxford University Press in behalf of International African Institute

Graça, Pedro Borges (2005). *A Construção da Nação em África*. Coimbra: Almedina

Hayward, Fred M. & Dumbuya, Ahmed R. (1983). Political Legitimacy, Political Symbols and National Leadership in West Africa. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol. 21, n. 4, pp. 645-671

Hobsbaw, Eric (2002). *L'invenzione della tradizione*. Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore. 1st edition: 1983

Inglehart, Ronald; Basañez, Miguel; Moreno, Alejandro (1998). *Human Values and Beliefs: A Cross-Cultural Sourcebook. Political, religious, sexual and economic norms in 43 societies. Findings from the 1990-1993 World Value Survey*. USA: The University of Michigan Press

Inglehart, Ronald & Norris, Pippa (2011). *Sacred and Secular. Religion and politics worldwide*. 2nd edition. New York: Cambridge University Press. (1st edition 2004)

Monteiro, Samory Badona (2016). A Atualidade do Direito Tradicional no Sistema Jurídico da Guiné-Bissau: Perspetivas Sinérgicas à Luz da Reparação Penal. *ReDiLP – Revista do Direito de Língua Portuguesa*. N 8 (July – December 2016), pp. 159 – 196

Nóbrega, Álvaro (2003). *A luta pelo poder na Guiné-Bissau*. Lisboa: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas.



Nóbrega, Álvaro (2015). *Guiné-Bissau: um caso de democratização difícil (1998-2008)*. Lisboa: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas

Robertson, David (2002). *The Routledge dictionary of politics*. London: Europa Publications. 3rd edition

Williams, Raymond (1983). *Keywords. A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. New York: Oxford University Press

Critical Review

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN AFRICA: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS WITH DATA FROM THE GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP MONITOR (GEM)

Renato Pereira

rpereira@autonoma.pt

Researcher from OBSERVARE/UAL. Associate Professor at Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa (Portugal). Guest Professor at ISCTE-IUL. PhD in Management Sciences from Université Paris Dauphine.

Redento Maia

Post-Doctorate from OBSERVARE/UAL. Full Professor at the Faculty of Economics, Agostinho Neto University (Angola). Doctor of Economics from Sofia University of Economics, Bulgaria

This paper presents an exploratory study on entrepreneurship in Africa from data collected under the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM). Starting from a theoretical basis on the relationship between entrepreneurship and economic development, seven dimensions of study in international entrepreneurship are explored: (i) attitudes, (ii) perceived opportunities, (iii) fear of failure, (iv) entrepreneurial intentions, (v) beliefs about entrepreneurship, (vi) initial entrepreneurial activity and (vii) established business rates. Conclusions about the exploration of data and clues for future research in this area are provided.

Introduction

In a very recent research, Adusei (2016) has shown, following a number of other studies on the same problem in other geographies, that entrepreneurship in Africa is also one of the factors that has a positive impact on economic growth - one of the most challenging problems for the African continent in the last century (Ndulu et al., 2007).

Based on a study covering 12 countries and representing a broad geographic and cultural dispersion, although no Lusophone country has been included, there is a positive linear association between GDP growth per capita and the number of new companies registered in the country in a given fiscal year.

By creating self-sustaining economic conditions through self-employment and the formation of sole proprietorship, the simplest form of entrepreneurship, the causal link between economic growth and increased entrepreneurial activity has been established.

If economic rationality imposes on any firm the imperative of satisfying economic needs in the market in which it operates under competitive conditions, then entrepreneurship



in economies where markets are generally inefficient or nonexistent (as are many African economies) fulfils both an economic function - generating added value - and a social function - ensuring that people have access to fundamental goods that would not otherwise reach them, thus also contributing to economic development.

The objectives of this paper are to describe, analyse and explain, in a synthetic way, the theme of entrepreneurship in Africa, both in its theoretical framework and in the empirical context of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM).

The GEM is a British NGO supported by four prestigious academic institutions. It is the most complete and comprehensive database on entrepreneurship. It represents about two decades of data collected, more than 200,000 interviews per year, more than 100 member countries, more than 500 entrepreneurs, is involved in more than 300 academic and scientific institutions, and has more than 200 donor institutions.

From the outset, the purpose of the GEM has been to make a scientific assessment of the entrepreneurial level of the acceding countries so that policies can be proposed to improve the performance of this variable, assuming that the increase of entrepreneurial activity favours the development of countries, as demonstrated in various studies, in time and space.

The African countries that have participated in the annual GEM data collection are the following: South Africa (with 15 participations), Uganda (with 4 participations), Angola (with 4 participations), Egypt (with 3 participations), Burkina Faso (with 3 participations), Tunisia (with 2 participations), Algeria (with 1 participation), Botswana (with 1 participation), Libya (with 1 participation) and Cameroon (with 1 participation).

Thus, we can see that in the sub-Saharan Africa region only one country participated regularly (South Africa), three countries participated occasionally (Angola, Burkina Faso and Uganda) and two participated in a timely manner (Botswana and Cameroon).

1. Entrepreneurship in Africa

1.1. Disciplinary framework

Entrepreneurship is a multifaceted phenomenon that has been the subject of theoretical approaches from several disciplines, the main ones being Economics, Psychology, Management and Finance (e.g., Sarkar, 2014).

Regardless of the approach and its definition, Entrepreneurship is usually measured by the creation or birth of (private) enterprises, often weighted by their survival rate over a given time horizon.

Synthetically, Finance sees entrepreneurship as another opportunity, or alternative, to investment or capital investment. In this perspective, entrepreneurship materialises in an asset or set of concrete financial assets, that is the stocks representing the capital of a given commercial company.

For Management, entrepreneurship corresponds to the first two phases of the life cycle of a company - launch and expansion - usually only applicable to companies with great potential for rapid growth, in principle because they are based on a given technological innovation.



Psychology is probably the discipline that has studied entrepreneurship the most. What is at issue, among other problems, is the understanding of the entrepreneurial personality and the relation of personality traits to the development of the entrepreneurial phenomenon.

Finally, for Economy, there are basically two axes of analysis: (i) a micro, related to the influence of entrepreneurship on the efficiency of markets and (ii) macro, on the cause-effect relations between entrepreneurship and economic growth and development, including institutional and regulatory aspects, the role of the State, economic policies and market access conditions.

However, there is a prevalence of the use of the concept of the "informal economy" when dealing with entrepreneurship (e.g., Lopes, 2007), especially in developmental economics, thus reducing this phenomenon, correctly or incorrectly, to the entrepreneurship of necessity, (overly) neglecting the entrepreneurship of opportunity, also called productive entrepreneurship.

Hilson et al. (2018) confirm that entrepreneurship in sub-Saharan Africa is heavily concentrated in the informal sector, limiting the development of technical skills.

Certainly because of the prevalence of the informal economy in Africa, and the consequent preponderance of entrepreneurship of necessity, Adusei (Op. Cit. : 202) recalls that many authors postulate that "entrepreneurship in developing economies does not have the necessary strength to promote economic growth."

More dramatically, Acs and Varga (2005) argues that entrepreneurship of necessity has virtually no impact on economic development, since it is developed by poor people and therefore has little influence on the productivity of the economy.

The approach followed in this research will focus on an economic approach, focused on the objectives of the GEM itself: to contribute to the "exploration of the impact of national institutions on entrepreneurship as well as the relationship between entrepreneurship and economic development" (Bosma et al., 2012).

1.2. Theoretical characterisation

The relationship between entrepreneurship and economic growth has in fact been widely studied, as previously mentioned, presenting a path of results that are not always convergent.

Ndulu et al. (Op. Cit.: Chapter 2), among other studies, recalls the basis for establishing a causal link between entrepreneurship and economic growth from the relationship between investment and economic growth.

The relationship between investment and economic growth is, under any circumstances, a long-standing and basic relationship known and studied in its two components: public and private.

Also studied is the (significant) relationship between entrepreneurship and economic development, which is established (indirectly) from economic growth generated, job creation, the adoption of technological innovation as well as decreases in poverty, according to Brixiova (2010).



In this context, since the creation of private companies is an internal and/or external investment process, understanding the extent of the impact of entrepreneurship on the economy implies identifying the variables that impact on the development of entrepreneurship itself and its relative influence on the economy.

Ndulu et al. (Op. Cit .: 49) considers the following variables: institutional, political and regulatory framework; legislation on economic activity and its application; adequacy and quality of infrastructures; macroeconomic stability; protection of property rights; functioning of the financial system.

These variables are, in fact, critical for understanding the quality of entrepreneurship since, in combination, they influence the level of risk of the investment, leading in many African economies to a prevalence of replicative entrepreneurship, with lower added value, when compared to innovative, higher-risk and value-added entrepreneurship (Adusei, Op. Cit .: 209).

The main conclusion is that the quality of the investment environment is generally insufficient in Africa, supported in the first instance by the higher cost of "doing business".

The costs of energy, transportation, telecommunications and security are among the most negative for companies. But customs and commercial licensing costs also carry a heavy weight, as does the need for high "informal" payments for trivial administrative processes to be resolved.

Ndulu et al. (Op. Cit .: 68-71) also conducts an interesting study on the origin of African entrepreneurship by comparing "indigenous" (or local) entrepreneurs with "non-indigenous" (or foreign) entrepreneurs, namely Asian, Middle Eastern, or Caucasians (essentially European).

The first finding is that indigenous firms are, on average, smaller than foreign firms and, at the same time, they start operations with a size that is also smaller than that of foreign companies, a trend that tends to become more pronounced over time.

The founders' educational level (or academic qualifications) helps to realise the difference in size between indigenous companies at the time of their formation in a positive linear association. This dimension difference tends to persist over time.

Commercial credit is also more accessible to foreign firms than to local firms, suggesting that they are more difficult to establish a relationship of trust with their suppliers.

These results also indicate the lack of business networks in African local communities. As judicial systems are generally weak, it is extremely difficult for a small African company to develop at the same pace as a foreign entrepreneur, namely Asian, Arab or European.

As a last conclusion, perhaps the most surprising of all, it is observed that the difficulty of access to information has a greater weight for African entrepreneurs, even higher than the difficulty of access to capital, which is contrary to studies carried out in developed countries on the same subject.

Brixiova (2010) stresses the importance of studying how the lack of skills of African indigenous companies, affecting both entrepreneurs and their workers, can be overcome since the other variables with negative impact on entrepreneurship are better known: access to credit, business environment and infrastructure constraints. Poor access to information is also identified as hindering the entrepreneurial phenomenon.



In this context of competences, the quality of human work being the most critical aspect for the development of entrepreneurship of opportunity, Brixiová et al. (2015) also points to the importance of a factor with a high negative impact: an increasing youth unemployment in several African countries, paradoxical in the logic of development that many of these countries have recently presented.

Despite this, Ekekwe (2016) identifies a significant (exponential?) increase in African entrepreneurship, at least in some countries of the continent, such as Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal, Rwanda and Ghana.

Among the main reasons cited is the recent crisis caused by the fall in the price of oil and the consequent need for economic agents and the State to buy products in local currency, given the exchange crisis in which most of the African countries, directly or indirectly, fell into.

Finally, Klingebiel and Stadler (2017) identify 3 factors that should guide the growth of entrepreneurship in Africa: (i) focus on "top of the pyramid" entrepreneurship as opposed to survival entrepreneurship, or the "pyramid base" characteristic of the informal economy: (ii) control over inputs and (iii) innovation in distribution (not products).

Regarding the first factor, the authors advise entrepreneurs to combine African product conception with international (production) quality levels as a means of conquering middle-upper-class consumers. The idea is to "transcend national boundaries" while at the same time creating conditions for future internationalisation strategies, which is very rare in the current context of African entrepreneurship.

On factors of production, the authors emphasize the importance of controlling land and other basic inputs, particularly logistical factors, given the constraints of local production and distribution and increasing import difficulties, especially for exchange rate reasons.

Regarding the third factor, this paper stresses that distribution problems remain the most serious in Africa because of, *inter alia*, dysfunctions or the absence of key infrastructure. It is suggested that entrepreneurs look for innovative ways to use emerging technologies, such as drones, to overcome these limitations.

2. The GEM - Global Entrepreneurship Monitor

2.1. Conceptual Approach

The GEM - Global Entrepreneurship Monitor - is an observatory for entrepreneurship in the world, made from data collected with the same instrument and according to the same methodology in all participating countries, in virtually every country in the world.

Participating countries join the GEM on a voluntary basis and will have to finance all costs related to their participation, usually through sponsorship, which means that many countries participate intermittently and with different teams over time. Others have never participated.

Each country is represented by a national team, usually led by an academic institution responsible for collecting data and drawing up the national report with the conclusions applicable to their country.



The project is overseen by the Global Entrepreneurship Research Association (GERA), a private non-profit organisation based in the United Kingdom, responsible for the consolidated report.

The GEM has been defined by leading academics from leading scientific institutions involved in entrepreneurship, with a dual concern to include the most influential theoretical approaches and measurement indicators that allow for international comparisons under the same methodology.

GEM data are collected through the application of two complementary instruments (i) the Adult Population Survey (APS) and (ii) the National Expert Survey (NES).

- ⇒ The APS studies the attitudes, the activity and the aspirations of the entrepreneurs. It focuses on at least 2,000 adults in each country;
- ⇒ The NES monitors nine factors that are believed to have a significant impact on entrepreneurship, known as the Entrepreneurial Framework Conditions (EFCs). It focuses on at least 36 carefully selected experts in each country.

Data collection is centrally coordinated. The data collection instruments of each country are subject to several checks before the collection process commences. The resulting data is scrutinised repeatedly before being published. This process, developed and tested over many years, ensures that the GEM data is of the highest quality.

In conclusion, the GEM allows us to understand:

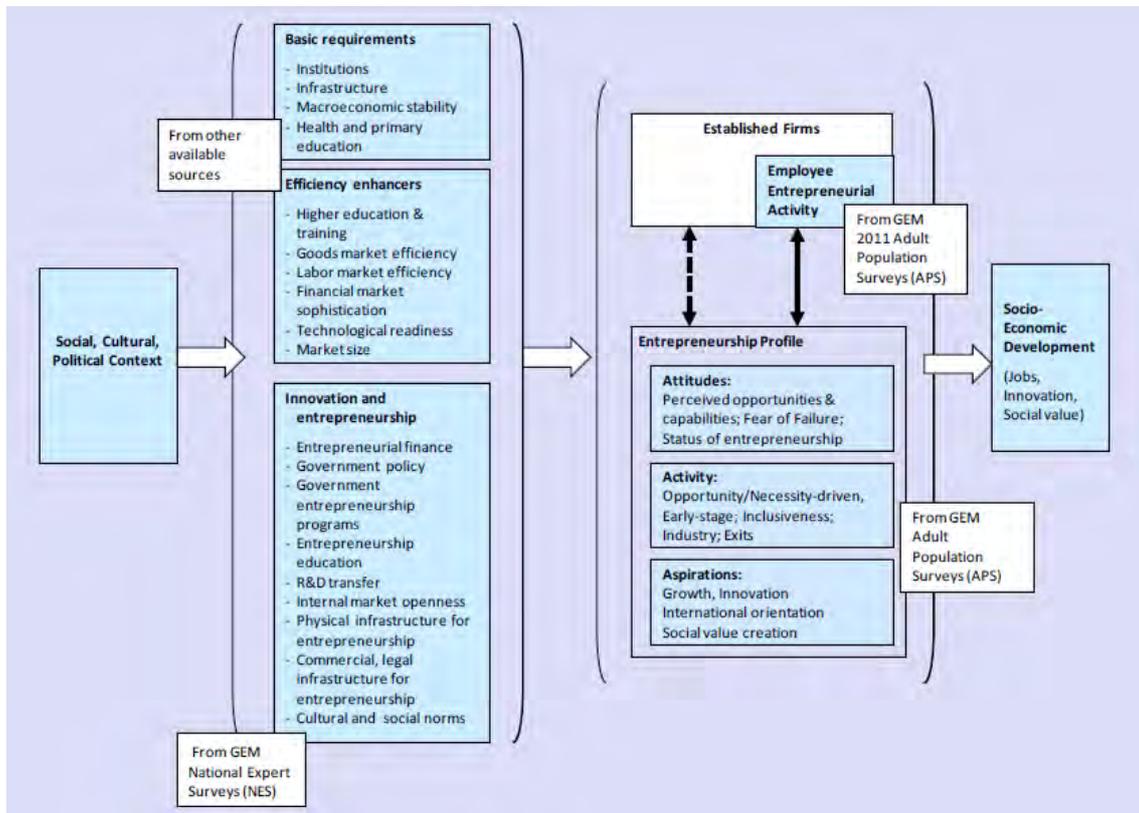
- ⇒ Factors that influence entrepreneurship;
- ⇒ The relationship between entrepreneurship and the economic performance of each participating country (and its various regions);
- ⇒ The interaction between institutions, entrepreneurship and development;
- ⇒ The different types of entrepreneurship and their potentialities.

These factors are considered indispensable for the establishment of public policies that support economic development strategies, especially in developing countries, but also in middle-income countries and, on the limit, all countries that intend to remain competitive and recognise the importance of entrepreneurship for this purpose.

This version of the model was revised aiming at an adaptation to the typology of "Factor-driven economies", "Efficiency-driven economies" and "Innovation-driven economies" proposed by Porter et al. (2002), allowing GEM to better describe and measure the conditions under which entrepreneurship and innovation can develop.



Figure 1 - GEM conceptual model



Source: Bosma et al. (2012: 12)

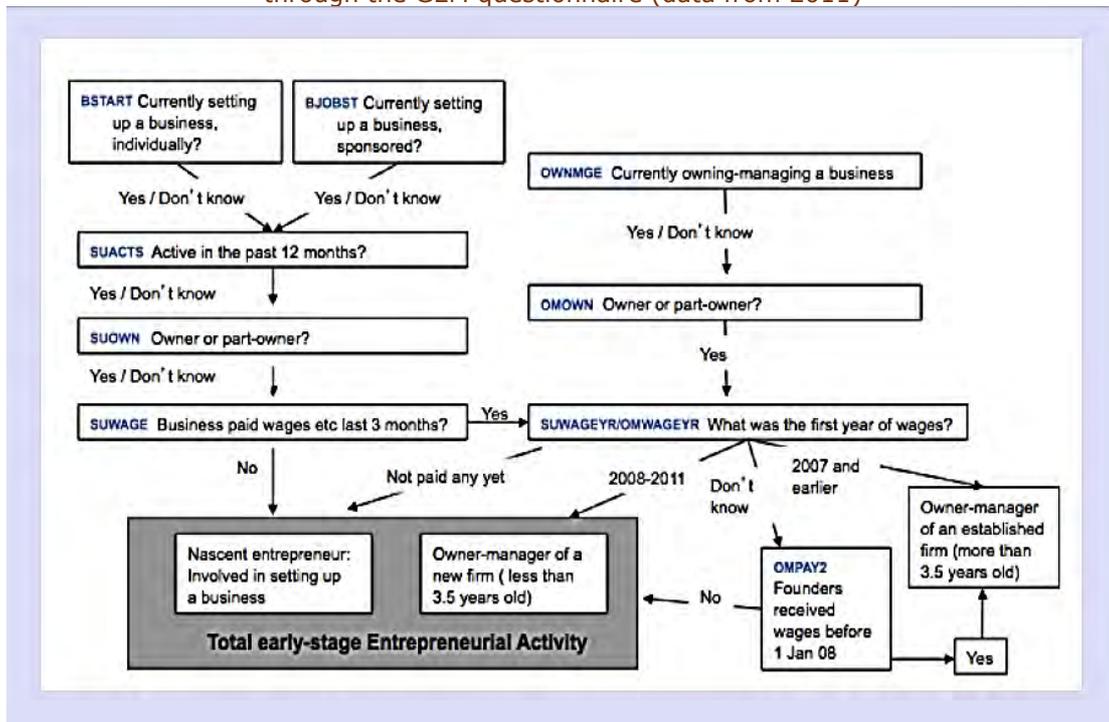
"Factor-driven economies" are countries in the early stages of the development process, usually dependent on agriculture and the extraction of natural resources. In "Efficiency-driven economies" there is already an industrial sector and the consequent gains in productivity resulting from economies of scale achieved as well as a minimally sophisticated financial system. In "Innovation-driven economies" there is a gradual shift to the tertiary sector and to research and development and knowledge generation activities.

2.2. Methodological Approach

From a methodological point of view, the purpose of the GEM is to identify and characterise entrepreneurs throughout the various phases of the entrepreneurial process: opportunity recognition/nascent entrepreneurship; start-up a new firm; owning-managing a new firm. The first two steps together are early-stage entrepreneurial activities.



Figure 2 - Methodological process to identify the various stages of the entrepreneurial process through the GEM questionnaire (data from 2011)

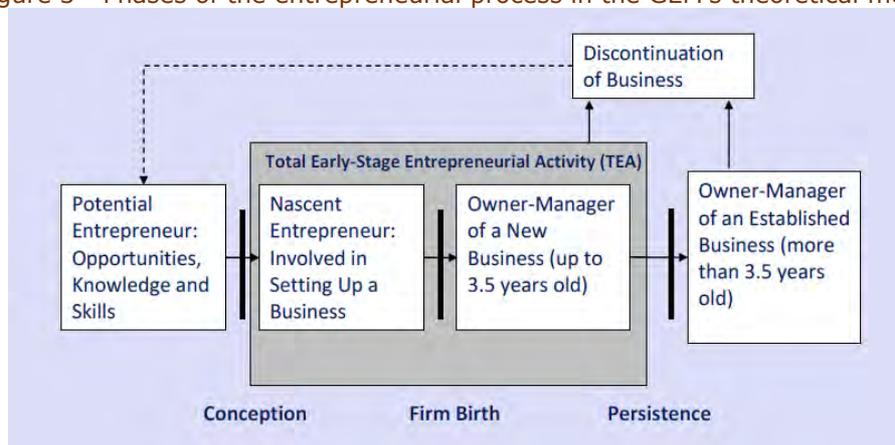


Source: Source: Bosma et al. (2012: 21)

Figure 3 describes the entrepreneurial process as it is conceptually defined by the GEM. But more than separating the phases of the entrepreneurial process, the great methodological contribution of the GEM is to enable the identification of the attitudes that underlie the entrepreneurial activity.

Another important aspect that the questionnaire captures is not only the size of the phenomenon of discontinuity of the companies but also the reasons associated with this stop, whether they start a new business or become economically (and/or financially) infeasible.

Figure 3 - Phases of the entrepreneurial process in the GEM's theoretical model



Source: Source: Bosma et al. (2012: 21)



2.3. Results From Sub-Saharan Africa

Given the weak adherence of the African countries to the GEM, with the (expected) exception of South Africa, the project's coordination has focused on making a sectoral report for Sub-Saharan Africa (Herrington & Kelley, 2012).

Following the same methodology, and the same purposes of the national GEM reports, this work was carried out in a period of 3 years until 2012 and focused on the following sample of 10 countries: Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia.

According to the Porter et al. (2002) typology, South Africa and Namibia are classified as "Efficiency-driven economies" and the remaining countries are "Factor-driven economies". No country in Sub-Saharan Africa belongs to the "Innovation-driven economies" group.

Although the relative lack of timeliness of the data can be seen as a limitation for this work, the period covered in the study corresponds to a triennium of strong economic growth in most of the countries studied, after the effects of the international financial crisis of 2007-2008 and before the status quo created by the fall in oil prices in the second half of 2014.

Thus, it will certainly be interesting to see how entrepreneurship unfolds and is perceived in a time period where countries are experiencing generalised economic expansion.

The most striking conclusions can be synthesised in 7 groups: (i) attitudes, (ii) opportunities perceived, (iii) fear of failure, (iv) entrepreneurial intentions, (v) entrepreneurship beliefs, (vi) initial entrepreneurial activity, (vii) established business rates.

Figure 4 - Entrepreneurial attitudes in Sub-Saharan Africa

Economy	Entrepreneurship as a good career choice	High status to successful entrepreneurs	Media attention for entrepreneurship
Botswana	76% *	73%	79%
Ethiopia	76%	92%	73%
Ghana	84%	91%	82%
Namibia	73%	76%	82%
Nigeria	82%	76%	78%
South Africa	74%	74%	73%
Zambia	67%	79%	72%
Sub-Saharan Africa Average (unweighted)	76%	80%	77%
Latin America and Caribbean Average (unweighted)	75%	71%	67%
MENA Average (unweighted)	76%	81%	56%
Asia Pacific and South Asia Average (unweighted)	59%	65%	70%
European Union Average (unweighted)	58%	69%	50%
Non-European Union Average (unweighted)	62%	66%	52%

Source: Herrington & Donna (2012: 21)



Surprisingly (or perhaps not) the (simple) average of people who consider entrepreneurship as a good career choice (76%) is superior to all other regions in the world, being only matched by the neighbouring Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

In the other two parameters analysed with regard to entrepreneurial attitudes, the relative position is also at the highest level - the case for status - or even above all of them - the case of media coverage achieved in the case of entrepreneurial success.

These results may be explained, in part, by the previously identified lack of opportunities in the labor market, especially among young people, and by a certain mystification of entrepreneurial success leveraged by international success stories, especially by African Americans in the American press.

With regard to the perception of the opportunities available in the market for the development of an entrepreneurial initiative, and the corresponding capacities to follow it up, the results show a pessimism on the South African side and widespread optimism in all other countries, particularly in Nigeria.

When analysing the fear of failure, the standard deviation between the country with the highest and the country with the lowest result is lower. Pessimism about the likelihood of failure is most pronounced in Angola, Namibia and Ethiopia, and optimism about the likelihood of failure is clearer in Malawi, Uganda and Zambia.

Figure 5 - Perceived capabilities, opportunities and fear of failure

Economy	Perceived opportunities	Perceived capabilities	Fear of failure*
Angola	66% **	72%	38%
Botswana	67%	71%	25%
Ethiopia	65%	69%	33%
Ghana	79%	86%	18%
Malawi	74%	85%	12%
Namibia	75%	74%	35%
Nigeria	82%	88%	21%
South Africa	35%	39%	31%
Uganda	81%	88%	15%
Zambia	78%	84%	17%
Sub-Saharan Africa Average (unweighted)	70%	76%	24%
Latin America and Caribbean Average (unweighted)	53%	62%	28%
MENA Average (unweighted)	41%	53%	35%
Asia Pacific and South Asia Average (unweighted)	30%	32%	41%
European Union Average (unweighted)	31%	42%	39%
Non-European Union Average (unweighted)	33%	42%	36%
United States	43%	56%	32%

Source: Herrington & Donna (2012: 22)

Considering the comparison with the results from other regions, there appears to be several bias factors in the entrepreneurs' perception, notably due to the lack of a sufficient sample of reference cases in each country (except for South Africa) to allow for the creation of a balanced perception. This is particularly visible in the issue of competencies, where evaluation distortions seem particularly evident.



Figure 6 - Entrepreneurial Intentions in Sub-Saharan Africa

Economy	Entrepreneurial intentions **
Angola	70%
Botswana	72%
Ethiopia	24%
Ghana	60%
Malawi	70%
Namibia	45%
Nigeria	44%
South Africa	12%
Uganda	79%
Zambia	55%
Sub-Saharan Africa Average (unweighted)	53%
Latin America and Caribbean Average (unweighted)	34%
MENA Average (unweighted)	26%
Asia Pacific and South Asia Average (unweighted)	17%
European Union Average (unweighted)	13%
Non-European Union Average (unweighted)	14%
United States	13%

Source: Herrington & Donna (2012: 24)

In the variable of entrepreneurial intentions among the non-entrepreneurial population, there are significant disparities. Again, and not surprisingly, South Africa has values similar to those in Europe and the United States, and relatively close to those in Asia. The explanation for these values will certainly be linked to the quantity and maturity of entrepreneurship in this unique sub-Saharan country.

Ethiopia, perhaps for cultural reasons, given geographical proximity, presents values similar to those of the MENA region. Angola, Botswana and Uganda all display values of entrepreneurial intent that are absolutely overwhelming, albeit in line with previous indicators such as career opportunities and career prospects.

In the chapter on the level of entrepreneurial activity, South Africa is once again repeating the pattern of a behaviour similar to that of regions whose economic development is superior to that of the region where it is situated, in some cases at the highest level in the world.

Relative to other countries, it seems clear that there are two groups in terms of levels of entrepreneurial activity: Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia, Malawi, Namibia and Zambia have, as one would expect, a rate of established enterprises much lower than the rate observed in previous steps. Nigeria is in this pattern of behaviour but the break is much less pronounced.

Ghana and Uganda, on the other hand, have the opposite behaviour, suggesting a much greater maturity as regards to the entrepreneurial process, which may arise from the type of sectors chosen or the quality of entrepreneurship support in those countries.

The most surprising results come even from the breakdown of entrepreneurial initiatives between necessity-driven and opportunity-driven (or productivity) initiatives.



Figure 7 - Activity levels and entrepreneurial motivations

Economy	Nascent entrepreneurship rate	New business ownership rate	Early-stage entrepreneurial activity (TEA)	Established business ownership rate	Discontinuation of businesses	Necessity-driven (% of TEA)	Improvement-driven opportunity (% of TEA)
Angola	15%	19%	32%	9%	26%	24%	38%
Botswana	17%	12%	28%	6%	16%	33%	48%
Ethiopia	6%	9%	15%	10%	3%	20%	69%
Ghana	15%	23%	37%	38%	16%	28%	51%
Malawi	18%	20%	36%	11%	29%	42%	43%
Namibia	11%	7%	18%	3%	12%	37%	37%
Nigeria	22%	14%	35%	16%	8%	35%	53%
South Africa	4%	3%	7%	2%	5%	32%	40%
Uganda	10%	28%	36%	31%	26%	46%	42%
Zambia	27%	15%	41%	4%	20%	32%	46%
Sub-Saharan Africa Average (unweighted)	15%	15%	28%	13%	16%	33%	47%
Latin America and Caribbean Average (unweighted)	11%	7%	17%	8%	5%	22%	51%
MENA Average (unweighted)	4%	5%	8%	5%	6%	34%	37%
Asia Pacific and South Asia Average (unweighted)	5%	5%	10%	10%	3%	26%	50%
European Union Average (unweighted)	5%	3%	8%	7%	3%	21%	47%
Non-European Union Average (unweighted)	4%	3%	7%	6%	4%	34%	43%
United States	9%	4%	13%	9%	4%	21%	59%

Source: Herrington & Donna (2012: 27)

In this case, apart from Uganda and Malawi in which there is a very slight superiority of necessity-driven entrepreneurship, and Namibia in which there is perfect equality, the percentage of opportunity-oriented entrepreneurs vis-à-vis those who claim to have created their enterprise by necessity is higher in all other countries. In Ethiopia, this difference is more than three times and in Ghana it is almost double. These values are in line with what is happening in the rest of the world and are contrary to theory and several other studies on the subject.

Figure 8 - Reasons for the discontinuation of entrepreneurial activity

	Angola	Botswana	Ethiopia	Ghana	Malawi	Namibia	Nigeria	South Africa	Uganda	Zambia
Opportunity to sell	25%	3%	6%	1%	3%	7%	1%	2%	2%	4%
Business not profitable	22%	38%	23%	40%	39%	19%	20%	34%	36%	23%
Problems getting finance	22%	18%	33%	23%	30%	39%	34%	34%	23%	26%
Another job or business opportunity	10%	9%	10%	6%	7%	11%	11%	6%	4%	11%
Exit was planned in advance	4%	5%	0%	2%	3%	2%	3%	1%	6%	3%
Retirement	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	0%	2%	2%
Personal reasons	14%	18%	27%	18%	11%	17%	26%	23%	16%	20%
Incident	2%	6%	1%	10%	5%	3%	5%	1%	12%	11%

Source: Herrington & Donna (2012: 29)



Finally, analysis of the reasons for ending or closing the deal allows us to identify a large disparity of situations.

However, despite the fact that benchmarks are not presented for other regions, the two reasons most frequently mentioned - lack of profitability and problems in obtaining financing - are also the most common reasons for the discontinuation of entrepreneurial activity in more developed regions of the world.

In Angola, the frequency of business opportunities is curious, well above any other country in the region.

Equally curious is the realisation that none of the respondents in Ethiopia say they have planned a way out of their business, in stark contrast to what is happening in more developed economies.

Even in South Africa, the frequency does not exceed 1%, which allows us to raise the possibility of significant differences, despite the various similarities between the profile of entrepreneurship in this country and the more developed countries of Europe and the United States.

Conclusion

This paper aims to describe, analyse and explain the theme of entrepreneurship in Africa, both in terms of its theoretical framework and in the empirical context of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM).

The theoretical analysis made it possible to clarify, first and foremost, the difference between the informal economy and entrepreneurship in an African context, identifying the first concept, particularly dear to development economists, with the notion of "survival entrepreneurship" and the second concept - more expensive to microeconomists and business scholars - of "opportunity entrepreneurship" (or productivity).

In other words, the informal economy is the prevailing context of survival entrepreneurship in Africa, although much entrepreneurship of this nature takes place in the formal economy context on the African continent and elsewhere.

Another important element that emerged from the theoretical analysis conducted was the discussion of the complex causal links that connect entrepreneurship to economic growth and development.

The positive impact of entrepreneurship on both growth and development is taken for granted with economists and researchers from various quarters, and is sometimes presented in an almost axiomatic (though not dogmatic) perspective.

However, this relationship is more than established and research proceeds at a much deeper level, understanding the different nuances of the same relation, namely having the economic and institutional contexts as moderating variables.

From the point of view of the analysis of the 2012 GEM report on Sub-Saharan Africa, it was possible to draw some interesting and perhaps unexpected conclusions about the entrepreneurial process in those countries.



A first (expected) conclusion is that South Africa presents significant differences relative to the other countries in the sample studied.

What one might not expect is that, although it is classified as an "efficiency-driven economy", South Africa clearly presented some indicators of an "innovation-driven economy".

Another surprising conclusion is the clear prevalence of opportunity entrepreneurship in almost all sampled countries, especially Ethiopia and Ghana.

Is the informal economy an entrepreneurial form of African non-entrepreneurship? Or is there just a bias in the data? A deepening of this issue seems to be a promising research clue.

Finally, it should be pointed out that this work has important limitations of scope. It was not intended, at all, to cover the topic exhaustively, and certain relevant variables remained undeveloped.

In this context, it will be desirable in future work to consider the Sub-Saharan Africa sub-region independently of the African continent. Historical and economic reasons not discussed in this study justify a separation of this geography for the purpose of a more objective analysis of this subject.

References

- Acs, Z. J. & Varga, A. (2005). «Entrepreneurship, Agglomeration and Technological Change». *Small Business Economics*. 24 (3): 323-334.
- Adusei, M. (2016). «Does Entrepreneurship Promote Economic Growth in Africa?». *African Development Review*. 28 (2): 201-214.
- Bosma, N. & Coduras, A. & Litovsky, Y. & Seaman, J. (2012). *GEM Manual – A report on the design, data and quality control of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor*. Disponível em: www.gemconsortium.org
- Braxiova, Z. (2010). «Unlocking Productive Entrepreneurship in Africa's Least Developed Countries». *African Development Review*. 22 (3): 440-451.
- Braxiová, Z. & Ncube, M. & Bicaba, Z. (2015). «Skills and Youth Entrepreneurship in Africa: Analysis with Evidence from Swaziland». *World Development*. 67 (1): 11-26.
- Ekekwe, N. (2016). «Why African Entrepreneurship is Booming». *Harvard Business Review*, 94 (7): 2-4.
- Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2017). *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2016/17*. Global Entrepreneurship Research Association. Disponível em: www.gemconsortium.org
- Herrington, M. & Donna, K. (2012). *African Entrepreneurship – Sub-Saharan African Regional Report*. Disponível em: www.gemconsortium.org
- Hilson, G. & Hilson, A. & Maconachie, R. (2018). «Opportunity or Necessity? Conceptualizing Entrepreneurship at African Small-Scale Mines». *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*. 131 (6): 286-302.



Klingebiel, R. & Stadler, C. (2017). «3 Things Driving Entrepreneurial Growth in Africa». *Harvard Business Review*. 95 (2): 2-4.

Lopes, C. M. (2007). «Comércio informal, transfronteiriço e transnacional: que articulações? Estudo de caso no mercado de S. Pedro (Huambo) e nos mercados dos Kwanza e Roque Santeiro (Luanda)». *Economia Global e Gestão*. 12 (3): 35-55.

Ndulu, B. & Chakraborti, L. & Lijane, L. & Ramachadran, V. & Wolgin, J. (2007). *Challenges of African Growth – Opportunities, Constraints and Strategic Directions*. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, Washington DC.

Porter, M. E. & Sachs, J. J. & McArthur, J. W. (2002). Executive Summary: Competitiveness and Stages of Economic Development. In Porter, M. E. & Sachs, J. J. & Cornelius, P. K. & McArthur, J. W. & Schwab, K. (Eds). *The Global Competitiveness Report 2001-2002*, pp. 16-25. Oxford University Press, New York.

Sarkar, S. (2014). *Empreendedorismo e Inovação*. Escolar Editora, Lisboa.

How to cite this critical review

Pereira, Renato; Maia, Redento (2018). "Entrepreneurship in Africa: An exploratory analysis with data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM)". Critical review, *JANUS.NET e-journal of International Relations*, Vol. 9, Nº. 2, November 2018-April 2019. Consulted [online] on the date of the last visit, <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.9.2.01>

