

## Multilateral Political Governance: A Programmatic Profile

Gobernanza Política Multilateral: Un Perfil Programático

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### SUMMARY

The objective of this article is to apply a triadic analytical scheme to the study of the international system as an alternative to unidimensional and dichotomous approaches. The latter gives rise to reductionist assessments, insofar as they do not reveal the dynamism and complexity of global social reality. The Analysis is qualitative in nature and is used to analyze the international system and establish an assessment of the interplay of forces to which it owes its impulse. This assessment exists as a tool to validate the hypothesis of the potential for change in global economic governance. Based on international system's diagnosis, heuristic approaches look for alternatives to current governance. The main findings are: i) predominance of economic and financial power over political and cultural power in contemporary globalization, which give governance an entropic character; ii) possibility of establishing corrections through the empowerment of multilateral political governance; iii) the need to reform and strengthen the United Nations, as the governing body of multilateral political governance.

**Keywords:** Governance, Globalization, International System, Multilateralism.

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## RESUMEN

El objetivo de este artículo es aplicar el esquema triádico analítico al estudio del sistema internacional como una alternativa a los enfoques dicotómicos y unidimensionales. Lo último da pie a valoraciones reduccionistas, en la medida en la que no revelan el dinamismo y complejidad de la realidad social global. El Análisis es cualitativo en naturaleza y es usada para analizar el sistema internacional y establecer una valoración de la interacción mutua de las fuerzas a las cuales debe su impulso. Esta valoración existe como una herramienta para validar la hipótesis del potencial para el cambio en la gobernanza económica global. Basado en el diagnóstico del sistema internacional, enfoques heurísticos para buscar alternativas a la gobernanza actual. Los principales hallazgos son: i) predominancia de poder económico y financiero sobre poder cultural y político en la globalización contemporánea, que dan a la gobernanza un carácter entrópico, ii) posibilidad de establecer correcciones a través del empoderamiento de la gobernanza política multilateral, iii) la necesidad de reformar y fortalecer las Naciones Unidas, como el cuerpo de gobernanza política multilateral.

**Palabras Clave:** Globalización, Sistema Internacional, Multilateralismo.

## INTRODUCTION

Global governance is a controversial topic, with multiple and somewhat vague theoretical positions. Due to its importance, it has become an object of study for various disciplines that attach specific meanings to global governance giving it a polysemic character (Underhill, 2004; Villamar, 2017). It is plausible to contend that this conceptual ambiguity is related to limitations both in reading the facts and in the proposals to solve contemporary problems. Some are a result of social discontent in many countries, unilateral military interventions, humanitarian crises caused by mass

migrations, persistent intolerance and racism, trade wars, and environmental disasters. It is easy to see that instability of the international system, made up of state and non-state actors (Weiss, Seyle & Coolidge, 2013), has difficulty in operating today in accordance with norms agreed in the past. It would not be unfair to speak of a crisis in international system aggravated by the prevailing type of globalization; a situation that rises the need for governance that is not only effective and legitimate (Clarke & Edwards, 2004, 256), but also viable in the long term.

It is necessary to identify the stands where proposals for world issues are established, insofar as longest-lasting solutions depend on an objective reading and explanation of the facts. This is because transformation of the international system is linked to guiding an epistemological foundation for diagnosis, no less than to heuristic exercise that leads to establishing best alternatives in favor of optimal solutions. Hence, it is a requirement, therefore, to assess variants in analysis and forecast of social phenomenon from a triadic horizon, which can expose typical reductionism in monadic and dyadic approaches (de Gregori, 2002a; Glăveanu, 2015), showing their limitations impacting their respective governance proposals.

The concept of an *international system* refers to network of exchanges interwoven by people and institutions in the global context, in which its dynamism can be understood through the information feed-back, according to cybernetic theory (Wiener, 1948). By processing internal and external information, living beings or automatic instruments establish a relative equilibrium or homeostasis. Equilibria with higher level of complexity tend towards negentropy, and towards disassembly or entropy, in the opposite direction (Bertalanffy, 1968; Wiener, 1948)

This article argues that sustained global governance over multilateral institutional structure is deficient today, and faces the challenge of economic globalization and its propensity to provide resources at its disposal according to the priority given to efficiency and private profitability, thereby accelerating the undesirable effects of social injustice, cultural discrimination and destruction of the ecosystem. Achieving true empowerment of the multilateral political axes demands targeting unlimited accumulation of capital under its control. Today, the greatest challenge to civilization is to redirect international system towards negentropy.

Once reductionism has been discussed in the analyses with its proposals of global governance, an alternative diagnosis of the international system is offered, which justifies the multilateral political regency in contemporary global era.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research presented here followed a qualitative methodology for the analysis and assessment of contemporary global governance. Relevant contributions on the topic

from international relations specialists were taken into account. Based on the diagnosis, the exercise took on a proactive nature to justify the strengthening of multilateral institutions as an alternative to an international system subservient to private corporate interests.

In its epistemological base, the article considers three social forces in permanent tension and cooperation, identified by de Gregori (2002a) as official, anti-official and oscillating. It presents a trialectic reading, to support the idea of global political governance replacing hegemonic economic power in the international system. In general terms, global political governance would consist of authority beyond national borders, with norms and rules consented to by the signatories, to address world heritage issues and transnational problems (Zürn, 2018). Undoubtedly, normative frameworks tend to operate at all levels of human activity (Rosenau, 1995, 2). However, the international system still lacks multilateral courts of last resort in certain subsystems, among which the financial sector stands out. Discrepancies like this underline the importance of building a renewed system of global governance on the political axis.

### **Monadic and dyadic approaches produce limited diagnoses of international system**

As a complex structure, the international system brings together three basic dynamics or cultures, namely, 1) intellectual or scientific, 2) behavioral agency, and 3) emotional or spiritual. The three reveal collective intelligences of explanation, transformation and enjoyment of the world. In turn, these three inputs generate three global forces, specifically, political, economic and cultural-religious. Such inherent triplicity is neither a whim of the author nor mere coincidence. On the contrary, reality is triadic. Triadic mental and social structures amplify the molecular triplicity of energy, according to discoveries of quantum physics (Gell-Mann, 1994). Presenting similar triplicity, microscopic nucleotides of the DNA molecule are structured within a double helix taking the shape of a twisted ladder; while the triune human brain evidences three evolutionary stages of reptilian and mammalian structure prior to primate neocortical complexity (MacLean, 1973; de Gregori, 2002b).

When all three forces (positive, negative, neutral) are not detected in observation of social events, epistemological insufficiencies result. Reductionism in social sciences originates from monadic and dyadic premises, depending on whether the goal is identification of a single triggering principle (cause) for a process or postulating two elements in an eternally antagonistic relationship. Monadic explanations establish the uniqueness, typical of Cartesian inheritance, an incontrovertible unitary self, which has been refuted at different times by the dialectical method, when applied to social classes, psychoanalysis, critique of rationalism and postmodern philosophy.

In contrast to monadic thinking, which is unilineal, dialectical observations of international complexity contrast binary opposites proceeding from dominator-dominated, powerful-powerless, popular-elites, state-economy, subject-object, center-periphery, mind-body, political power-popular power or bipolarity-multipolarity. The dyadic frames of reference show Hegelian famous antagonism between master and slave – two entities that are exclusive and, at the same time, dependent on each other. This opposition or synthesis is temporarily resolved in the mutual recognition position each party occupies in their relationship with one another; a synthesis from which a new bifurcation and confrontation must emanate. The problem with this analytical perspective is that binary series eliminate the element that is object of tension and, likewise, omits integrators of parts, the so called absent third element (Bobbio, 1997), which needs always be included.

When the political-economic dyad enters in mutual governance, an arrangement between both parties is suggested, abandoning their mutual misgivings to give way to a collaborative solution. Such agreement operates according the interest of the two parties, and rises spontaneous disposition of mechanisms and norms for political sphere interdependency within the economic sphere. The system no longer welcomes anarchy but instead adopts innumerable rules, many of them ambiguous or contradictory. In the most representative international studies, political arrangement usually becomes a subsidiary to economic relations, because the rational model of decision making assumes that people will make choices that maximize benefits and minimize any costs. Thus, while in this complementary political sphere realist and neorealist theories see anarchy, liberals find an order protected by institutions – flawed, but always salvageable by the human imperatives of sincere international cooperation (Rosenau, 1995; Nye & Donahue, 2000).

Neorealism opposes the order and security citizens enjoy in domestic domain of states. With the absence of authority there also exists a lack of security in the interstate space. Furthermore, external anarchy is also contrary to hierarchy in internal sphere of States. There are no options proposed for international security - only for mutual containment, activated by improved the development of dissuasive technologies. There is no other greater imperative for the State than to preserve itself. Preservation by self-reliance, in such a way that an escalation in defense and attack capabilities is inevitable, tending towards its maximum expression in mutually assured destruction. The production of goods and services is favored by this competition for survival and power. Hence, arrangements and cooperation in economic affairs have a strategic role in the hands of states (Waltz, 1979).

Where realists see an anarchic situation, liberals find innumerable agreements between states, superior structures in the form of collective institutions, which favor and affirm collaborative tendencies over permanent dispute. Following this line of thought, a coordinated world order is possible, where States give up part of their autonomy to establish normative systems and institutional structures to whose

regulation they are subject. This theory defends the primacy of complex interdependent relationships (Keohane, 1984), without requiring a global political authority. Where world government for realists is unthinkable, for liberals it is redundant, as agreements in a transnational system are already binding.

A binary progression of economic order, on one hand, and political order on the other, advances through the tension between order and contradiction, change and continuity, growth and decline, fixed and variable borders, and old and new norms (Rosenau, 1995). Thus, both schools (realist and liberal) operate dualistic interpretative frameworks, with differences regarding the role of State in society, but where economic structure and its economic domain is unquestioned. Liberals embrace *laissez-faire*, neoclassical economic doctrine of reduced or eliminated customs, while neorealists opt for mercantilism, without any objection to the fundamental value of globalized economy.

This separation of economic and political domains cleared the space to install the idealizing monadic discourse of commercial globalization as a model of organization of world society. Such a perspective holds that movement of all parties under the absolute logic of the market ensures the best use of natural and human resources, due to competition between actors. State mediations are unnecessary, since a superstructure of institutions would feed bureaucratic interests, raising costs of goods and services.

Such unidimensional and bidimensional approaches are problematic for constructivism. In opposition to realistic materialism and methodological subjectivism of liberals, this paradigm understands national social order and the international system as a set of complexities shaped by intersubjective relationships formed by agents with particular value systems. Principles, values, tastes, and other motivations constitute the ideational dimension generating order/disorder and anarchy/harmony in a reality subject to constant transformation (Ruggie, 1998).

The state itself is nothing more than an ideal construct of social exchanges, where individuals and groups establish functional relationships when they discover needs and interests that transcend existing borders. Therefore, perceptions of mutual interest of a transnational type can occur and may lead to regulations and institutionalized relationships among groups; likewise, the deficiencies of nation-states in their response to changes encourage emergence of new actors in global system (Karns & Mingst, 2009). Consequently, global governance is preceded by ideational content – constituted by identity and culture – and projected individually and collectively on a double normative and instrumental dimension, depending on the context.

Thanks to a broader understanding of how international institutions help erect social actors, interests, and purposes, constructivism is able to highlight intersubjective relationships in any global governance scheme. If it had not been for this theoretical

concern, the absent force, culture would not have entered the scene: culture. Such a paradigm overcomes both dichotomy and mechanism, and establishes organic relationships between the parts. Structures are first ideational before becoming factual relationships. What is real becomes the way people and institutions respond to changes by regulating practices that contribute to those changes (Lipschutz, 1996, 365).

However, constructivism appears half-finished when it is deprived of its ability to complete the critique of paradigms and their respective social diagnoses. It turns out to be an oscillating outcome, where there are so many diagnoses of reality depending on various approaches taken, without any progress in discussion of ethical derivations of interpretive frameworks. Epistemological relativism can thus lead to moral relativism. What is more, if unidimensional economic governance cannot be invalidated, the opportunity to postulate global governance from political multilateralism is lost.

### **Econocracy as challenge to democratizing international system**

Anti-official or critical thinking often examines global dominance in detail. Historical conflict between social classes, administrative structures and ideological schemes that protect exercise of power appear in this analysis. In terms of systems theory, the international sphere is constituted not only of social classes, but also by states, institutions, norms, and world management - now globalized, in relations of cooperation and conflict, and in incessant flux. Consequently, transformation proceeds from mutual relations, according to certain rules, converting input energy into a new product, which in turn rises new output that soon becomes input for some next event or people. Determining the interaction of agents or actors and explicit or veiled rules of the game that produce certain results should be the goal of an objective diagnosis of the current international system. Assumptions from which to analyze and assess the system correspond to the triple cognitive, operational, and emotional dynamics indicated previously –basis of triadic political, economic, and cultural power.

To determine capitalist dominance, it is important to clarify how, from the beginning, it managed to dissolve opposing conceptual frameworks. Apology of accumulation with the promise of heavenly reward embraced by Calvinism enhanced universal deployment of English commerce (Weber, 2010). Protestant ethic displaced feudal Catholicism and its allied empires from the Mediterranean. English private accumulation laid foundations for the industrial revolution and the rise of Anglo-Saxon empire. Truce in dispute during the nineteenth century (Gellner, 1983) was nothing more than a decanting phase of imperial rivalries until their new outbreak in the two world wars of the Twentieth century. In these periods occurred the *Great Transformation*, that means commodification of all goods and people, under liberal imperative of self-regulating free market (Polanyi, 2001). European hecatomb of 1945 further paved the way for global market and United States supremacy.

Before that, in 1917, the Soviet economic regulation had contradicted Say's law, according to which every supply of labor creates its own demand. In postwar period, as a measure to counter possible collective eagerness for communism, Euro-American axis introduced the social reforms characteristic of an interventionist State. Workers' rights, trade unionism and the right to strike flourished; the state took responsibility for public education and universal health care, and a pension system was forged, all of which were held by progressive taxation policies. Capitalism reinvented itself with Keynesian policies and the welfare-state.

Although, Japan and the Asian Tigers achieved their industrial miracle based on this conceptual framework, the political turn of the 1970s launched a renewed version of Smith's classic English liberalism that prompted deregulation of markets. The theoretical views of Milton Friedman and Chicago School, as the chosen measure to reactivate profits' downward trend, suggested the possibility of increasing investments with a contractionary fiscal policy. Chile and Great Britain were the first countries to attempt substantial deregulation, a measure that was soon extended to many countries by the multilateral banks. Neoliberalism accelerated after dissolution of the Soviet empire, which had served as a counterweight to capitalism.

Neoliberalism, including *The Third Way* of British prime minister Tony Blair, left individuals and entire societies unable to control an important part of their own destiny. The effects of the liberalization capital markets were particularly disastrous due to an unforgiving commonality – if a presidential candidate in an emerging country was disliked by Wall Street, there was enough reason to launch a capital stampede. In practice, voters had to choose between indulging foreign investment or being plunged into a financial crisis. Even in Middle income countries, campaigns in favor of progressive taxation, social protection, health and public education or wage increases are still attacked under arguments of competitiveness (Rodrik, 2011; Stiglitz, 2019).

Critique of neoliberalism explains the affinities and discrepancies between capital, state, and labor, which, in recent times, evolved towards novel forms of appreciation of capital through the use of cognitive capacities or intellectual work and speculative economies. In its latest evolution, capitalism became financialized thanks to a self-propelling mechanism created by marketing financial derivatives.

In the industrial age, financial systems emerged as a mediator between employer and worker, favoring a salary that would be future irrigator of the economy due to consumption expansion. Recently, left to its own devices, capitalist chose the path of excess. First, by generating profits from knowledge that it itself produced, with no connection to real productive factors. Second, by marketing insurances, certificates, bank obligations and financial derivatives segmented into their elementary components, an innovation that converted small obligations into a global liquidity market. No matter how prudent a government is today in regulating interest rate, its cuts or increases are not necessarily reflected in private loans, which may ignore or



destroy them in order to raise their respective rates. These financial innovations stifle the capacity for domestic governmental controls. And governments are forced to raise interest rates to attract investment, thereby raising their own credit obligations and cutting off the irrigation of credit to productive sector, since investment in stocks and real estate is more attractive than construction or land. For the same reason, governments have reduced social spending, undermining social cohesion and their own legitimacy (Aglietta, 1988, 67-85).

Complete deregulation is sophistry as the ultimate purpose of capitalist accumulation. In practice, what happens is the loss of state control and sovereignty loss. In domestic order, each state has a certain capacity to organize financial markets to protect the rights of creditors and debtors, to guarantee transactional costs, interest rates, terms, and dispute resolution are executed in such a manner that social fabric is preserved. In the external order, governments increasingly commit public resources to assure profitability to foreign capital and its income in various available investment modalities: shares, securities, productive projects, and others.

These are investment promotion and protection agreements. They are signed under the *Legal Framework for the Treatment of Foreign Investment* of the World Bank, available since 1992. Also, since 1995, under guidelines of the World Trade Organization, states sign TRIM agreements to attract investments towards their industrial projects. They contemplate contents of local inputs in products and rules on trade, in order to expand foreign companies and facilitate operation of global production chains. In its most recent form, bilateral investment treaties are incorporated in treaties with provisions on investment. These agreements typically include dispute resolution clauses of the World Bank's Dispute Resolution Center.

Plausibly international agreements for the promotion and protection of investments create legal tensions between the sovereignty of states and external private interests. Ultimately, the binding regime of legal protection and promotion of foreign investment prevails over the states to facilitate free movement of capital (Schneiderman (2004).

Beyond guarantees in place to obtain expected profitability, internal and external investors are rewarded with tax exemptions. As capital moves around the world, it becomes more difficult to tax. To offset deficits, governments have to drain captive sectors such as consumption and labor, and foreign credit. In fact, corporate taxation has dropped in all advanced economies by half since the 1980s (Hacker & Pierson, 2020). The same is true in developing economies and, for both groups, value-added tax increased, which is a regressive tax (Rodrik, 2011).

With reduced customs revenues and the taxation of private capital, a snowball effect of international and domestic credits is largely caused by states that finance their budget deficits with securities. As soon as they resort to public and private foreign credit, they are subject to universal financial rules. There are multilateral providers,

where the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank stand out, with their respective conditions, and private and state banks acquire government bonds. Multistate monetary coordination depends on the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision made up of the central banks of sixty countries. It also has credit functions, in order to sustain global financial stability. There is, therefore, a double contradiction in the narrative of freedom under neoliberalism.

On one hand, financial and commercial deregulation leads to the loss of state sovereignty and its submission to international public and private financial regulations. While on the other hand, resentment and popular mobilization due to decreasing benefits calls for strengthening repression and social control. In fact, budgets for intelligence and social control are multiplying. The state's orientation as an agent of welfare changes to a more repressive role, transitioning from a welfare-state to a police State. The sacrifice of the State's social programs, as a financier of public education, health, transportation systems and other public goods now contrasts with the extension of citizen monitoring and control with intensive use of new technologies and increased investment in defense.

Under such conditions, the tendency economic power to preside over global exchange intensifies. This *econocracy* (de Gregori, 2005) maneuvers international system and arranges its various components how it sees fit, tending towards ultimate goal of infinite accumulation. Neutralized by financial power, political and cultural power end up distorted. In political order, states that do not lend themselves to internal deregulation (which means submission to the whims of foreign investors) are ruined and discredited, while United Nations decisions do not go beyond declarative level. In cultural sphere, ethical objections to overwhelming ecological disasters are disqualified as retrograde and even terrorist.

This capacity for subjugation of political and cultural power by financial power becomes the new face of imperialism (Karatani, 2014). International econocratic governance cannot be reduced to the sum of transactions, it should see as the evolution of its own transformative capacity (Willke, 2007). Redirecting the financial world power from global political power becomes the fundamental challenge of the present age.

## DISCUSSION

From both environmental and social perspectives, calls to correct implosion of the international system are increasingly desperate. Entropy is accelerating, negating a better life for all. Marginalization of countries and entire communities within certain countries is a phenomenon derived from the productive and distributive model that governs the world. Political, economic, and cultural exploitation demand maximum

private return, with minimal (if not zero) responsibility for secondary effects. In this worldview, both callousness and irrationality play a leading role.

The immense contrast in appropriation of goods and services that we collectively produce by a tiny minority was engineered in a very short time period, on an impassive international community. Such an unfair system, where the super-rich pay less taxes than their secretaries, leads Saez & Zucman (2019) to ask when all this happened and where were political leaders who allowed it. After such a painful transition towards rules of social inclusion, respect for human rights, and care for the environment, having reached such a state of prostration for billions of people is truly a global disgrace.

This challenge involves making existing institutions more effective and creating new structures, according to requirements of global governance (Beeson, 2019). Therefore, a joint effort of multilateral institutional leadership, regional bodies, states, and civil society organizations is needed. Any struggle to change world in favor of well-being for all life has to take that political reality into account.

In simple terms, there are main barriers which interfere with actions against international entropy. They are related to explaining the world, mechanisms of administration and control, and low provision of livable alternatives for human coexistence. First, there is the triple effect of interpretation conflicts as an incipient deliberation exercise. On the one hand, the search for consensus on best alternatives and binding commitments must be made (Eriksen, 2007) and not obstructed and sabotaged by *denialism*, which sustains nationalist populism.

This regressive vision adopts a cynical position to not recognize that present exaction of labor and natural resources and does not guarantee production of wealth in medium and long term. On the other hand, it appears that subordination to particular interests of the rentier elites is anti-democratic, opposing the dignity of people and blocking normal aspirations for human fulfillment. There is also official insolence, because it is a moral aberration to sacrifice favorable conditions for self-realization of future generations by excessive appetite of the present.

The second barrier has to do with institutional deficit and its global dispersion. Accountability mechanisms for global responsibilities are precarious or non-existent. In the same way, multilateral entities take refuge in ironclad provisions, without coordination and linkage to turn them into efficient and legitimate multilateral structures. To begin with, it is necessary to prosecute governments and business entities responsible for financial speculation, extortion, international corruption and environmental crimes more decisively, in the same way as the Rome Statute deals with genocides, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and any similar aggressions.

Debate favoring principles of tolerance, respect for human rights, universal justice, and freedoms of thought and expression will only advance when social pressure through

collective protest and mobilization intensifies with an active role for civil society in democratizing multilateral structures (Aksu & Camilleri, 2002; Cooper, et al., 2002).

Third, we can identify local associations, organizations of organic producers, entities engaged in peaceful settlement of disputes, peasant organization, and all popular empowerment initiatives aimed at defending community life and the optimal use of resources. Conservation resources often lack funding, political support, and visibility. Overwhelming power of corporations and their global production chains make traditional forms of food production, clothing, housing, and equipment increasingly obsolete.

Now, it is true that there is a monadic valuation of the international system when someone is attached to the past with nostalgia. Other people embrace conformism, as a result of which humanity has suffered so many wars and catastrophes that current battles will not be the last and, just as it overcame great challenges in the past, it will also overcome present adversities. In this view, world will move forwards in the midst of difficulties. This is a pragmatic consolation, but conformism would be the first step in defeat.

Between nostalgia and cynicism, we find the positive anti-official alternative, which assesses the present situation and offers alternatives for the future. It operates with the criteria of solidarity and fraternity, from which objectives of eliminating affectation of natural wealth and establishing favorable conditions for current and future communities. Rather than destroy or privatize, it is more important to broaden the base of global commons and public goods. Only under that inspiration would the international system recover its negentropic trajectory.

There are several proposals for changing the international system on the negotiation table. A first group plans to correct social *unrest* empowering multilateral economic institutions, binding measures that are enforced within countries. It would encourage a revamped capitalism that starts from trade agreements that legitimize the world economy before public opinion, rather than satisfying corporate interests. In this way, corporate taxation can be prioritized over patent protection policy, improvement of labor standards over court decisions which favor of investors, and increased regulation instead of reduced border controls. This proposal is not seeking less globalization but rather better distribute gains and losses among countries, and thus seeking a sustainable globalization, to the extent that it must be reinforced by social consensus (Rodrik, 2017). In this way, it would not be too late to create a progressive capitalism, which restores prosperity based on innovation, avoiding monopolistic power and excessive exploitation of labor (Stiglitz, 2019).

This proposal carries a partial solution, typical of the oscillating subgroup. First, it intends to regulate one of international capital's faces, linked to industry and commerce, without locating and modifying financial capital behavior as a whole.

Second, it does not establish rules for political empowerment of governments and citizens in a globalized world in a human and environmental sense, which would impose multilateral social rules on public and private banks.

A second line of solutions recognizes state sovereignty and enhances regional integration whereby global governance corresponds to political economic agreements between regional blocs. The multilateral structure has to be woven by regional organizations. This has been the case of strengthening European integration, while waiting for solving escalating competition between United States and China, as a defense of European sovereignty, to transit towards a more collaborative stage of both through global institutions. Therefore, Europe would have to deepen its commitment to offer more effective measures to climate change, epidemics, failed states and nuclear proliferation – core issues that require global attention (Saxer, 2009). Global governance would be given by interregional agreements, based on solid integration processes.

It is undeniable that the European Union stands out in the international arena for having carried out, up to now, the most profound level of regional integration. Unlike anywhere else, internal borders to capital, goods and labor were eliminated. Citizens elect their representatives in the common political space and state-of-the-art standards were imposed on public liberties and respect for human rights. In these features, the European Union fulfills a pioneering function of consultation among states and construction of multilateralism. At the same time, its limitations should not be overlooked. The main challenges to be faced in the future include autonomy and political identity, due to the enormous contrast between commercial, industrial and financial integration and the political fragmentation that made it unfeasible to ratify the Community constitution in Maastricht in 2005.

Added to the political integration deficit is curtailed economic and strategic independence. This space, although unified, is not completely autonomous. Global entities override the policies of national economies. Such was the case of Greece's restructuring plan with the International Monetary Fund, which marginalized the European Central Bank. Decision-making mechanisms and the representation of small countries in the Bank's management or on its advisory council are far from democratic and transparent practices. While in the defense domain, the interference of the United States in NATO is constant. In practice, European security depends on Washington's strategic interests.

A third line of global governance also takes into account the shortcomings of national states, but moves away from regional structures, and instead envisions the composition of a world federation. Here emphasis is placed on the democratic quality of a government that must bring together voices and interests of the international community through, in the first instance, national states and, secondly, international organizations of civil society. Thus, world federative republic is proposed on the

normative basis agreed by states and public powers, with popular participation and fully subject to respect for human rights (Höffe, 2015).

It must be noted that these postmodern proposals dilute State figure so much that it loses its structural function as a mediator between global and local affairs and its associative role in regional integration organizations. For example, Karatani's (2008) reasoning eliminates intermediaries of direct and reciprocal relations between producers and consumers, in the form of a *republican* world run by the United Nations, which replaces the capitalism-nation-state triad.

A fourth line, the one referred to henceforth, seeks to renew multilateral structure or institutional support of the international system. It anticipates a universal normative and administrative structure that organizes interregional and interstate agreement, with the leading role of non-state actors. This means global administration would serve as the fixer of universal principles of human cooperation and as the last resort for governance disputes that are unable to be solved at local or regional sphere.

It is a repositioning and not a total reimagination that seeks to start from scratch. The human family has tracked down and evaluated tragedies from which it has learned portentous lessons. The most important were the disputes for world domination that led to the two great conflicts of the 20th century. The terrible consequences of two wars led to consensus among great powers and the creation of the League of Nations in 1918 and the United Nations in 1945.

The legacy of the second great war resulted in the UN being a legacy, created with purpose of eliminating the curse of war. In effect, direct confrontation among super-powers stopped, although this did not mean an end of wars, since confrontation continued with proxy wars, through which remote agents, countries and scenarios were in dispute such as the Cold War period. This arms race continued its course, and only atomic capacity stood as the main inhibitor of war between certain countries. Likewise, the objectives of the United Nations' most recent agenda, such as those regarding the environment, are not being met, and the destruction of terrestrial and maritime biodiversity and pollution continue unabated.

In the midst of these difficulties, it should not be forgotten that the founding principles of United Nations remain in force. They are: i) maintain international peace and security, suppress acts of aggression, and strive for the peaceful resolution of conflicts; ii) promote friendship, through respect for equal rights and free self-determination of peoples; and iii) encourage international economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian cooperation, "without making any distinction on grounds of race, sex, language or religion." These goals are its *raison d'être* and reason enough to insist on *robust multilateralism* (Narlikar, 2020).

Regarding its mission, the United Nations has fulfilled preservation of peace in some specific places, where it has operated missions approved by the Security Council. This

agenda assumed the global social problems and the leadership of the defense of human rights. In its most recent phase, it has raised the environmental flag. However, its capacities to manage crisis created by economic globalization remain stagnant, as requests from the General Assembly to take protective measures for vulnerable countries have no effect on financial institutions or on court decisions in individual countries. The case of the external debt of developing countries has brought together the voices of the countries in the G7 for decades, where resolution 70/1 was promoted with nine principles of restructuring the external debt: sovereignty, good faith, transparency, impartiality, equitable treatment, sovereign immunity, legitimacy, sustainability, and majority restructuring. Nevertheless, there is no practical formula that binds creditors.

Thus, the core of the matter is exposed. The underlying problem could be embedded in the design of United Nations' design, given that the postwar international system was established as a two-headed and contradictory structure. In effect, the political dimension was built by the winning powers of Second World War and housed the interests of capitalist and communist blocs. However, the economic component was left out of the negotiation and was imposed by the United States, under conditions that would facilitate its world-wide military, economic and political hegemonic interests. It was not an order ratified by all the independent states of the time; yet it would be nonsense to consider United Nations irrelevant and obsolete as a result. However, its survival, amid its shortcomings and limitations, is in itself an achievement, and represents the basis on which the agreements of the world community must be followed.

Multilateral political power contradicts econocracy. A unidimensional financial-productive system is not sustainable in the long term. Driven by its own momentum, it unreservedly commits global public capital and planetary common goods, with goals of maximizing income in ever shorter terms. Political and cultural orientations of humanity, on the other hand, are directed to the medium- and long-term objectives. Capital appreciation increases return time to obtain performance in a matter of seconds, while on the other hand, horizon preserving life on the planet and values of human coexistence are projected centuries ahead. By virtue of this contradictory forecast, in favorable assessment of the long term we find the first element in favor of global economic regulation stemming from political multilateralism.

In this sense, empowerment of the United Nations means advancing in control of world economic power, to have enough ability to manage global wealth, starting with financial capital. It does not project a unilateral government, nor is it a replica of State executive; on the contrary, multilateral level refers to collective structure that encompasses bilateral and regional arrangements, made up of states and spokespeople of civil and religious society. It constitutes a regulatory dimension of political security and human rights, economic-environmental rights, and cultural and religious rights.

In accordance with its principles, the United Nations requires a reengineering that shapes its structure as the determining institution of global governance. In the first place, legitimacy is still provided by the General Assembly, deliberative forum *par excellence* of international community, with participation of governments, ngos, unions, and civil society. Secondly, its effectiveness, efficiency, and legitimacy must come from establishing its triple executive body made up of 3 councils: Peace and disarmament; Economic, social, and environmental; and Cultural-ecumenical.

THE PEACE AND DISARMAMENT COUNCIL carries, among others, the following responsibilities:

- 1) Managing peaceful coexistence among States. This objective was included in the five principles, signed by China and India in 1954, adopted by non-aligned countries, that became the cornerstone of world peace, by calming border conflicts. They record: i) mutual respect for the integrity and sovereignty of the other, ii) mutual non-aggression, iii) mutual non-interference in the other's internal affairs, iv) equality and mutual benefit, and v) peaceful coexistence.
- 2) To administer plans for the elimination of atomic weapons and the prohibition of military nuclear tests. Countries will only have the right to minimal conventional defensive weaponry during a transition phase towards complete disarmament. Stockpile registry will be carried out, in coordination with regional cooperation and integration organizations.
- 3) To intervene through peacekeeping missions in areas of armed conflict between states, where actions of regional organizations have been insufficient.
- 4) To establish institutional reconstruction plans for countries that have suffered internal wars, in accordance with strategies applied by regional organizations.
- 5) To preserve administrative transparency and free exercise of citizens' rights
- 6) To preserve the conditions of universal cosmopolitanism, civil liberties, and truthfulness.
- 7) All of the above is in joint action with regional organizations and ngos with global coverage.

### **Economic, social and environmental council**

- 1) To establish, in conjunction with regional organizations, world food security and universal health and education.
- 2) To coordinate scientific research on matters of human health, production, and environmental preservation.



- 3) To establish world labor parameters.
- 4) To establish parameters and monitor progressive universal taxation, in conjunction with regional organizations. This implies transparency in financial transactions and lifting of bank secrecy in tax havens.
- 5) To establish debt settlement plans for states.
- 6) To establish ecosystem recovery and restoration plans with regional organizations and States. To manage transition to a zero-emission economy.
- 7) To supervise universal basic income with the regional organizations.
- 8) To Guarantee economic freedom, through policies against monopoly and oligopoly.
- 9) To establish world drug control plan.
- 10) To preserve conditions of universal equity.

#### **Cultural and ecumenical council**

- 1) To supervise regional and states plans for promotion of artistic and recreational activities.
- 2) To establish and supervise regional and states plans for preserving diversity of languages and social minorities' identity. For this purpose, Council integrates UNESCO and its network of offices and programs.
- 3) To identify and support preservation of places, monuments and agents valued as cultural heritage of humanity.
- 4) To lead universal ecumenical forum.
- 5) To guide global happiness programs.
- 6) To preserve conditions for universal brotherhood.

Thirdly, international courts correspond to the world judicial body – they are the judges of last resort. These courts settle conflicts between states and judge non-compliance with mandates of international Councils. In political, security and disarmament order, International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court are in force. It is necessary to create the International Disarmament Court to resolve conflicts on the agenda of dismantling atomic and conventional arsenal. Each country is entitled to have a minimal arsenal, as the rest of its security depends on regional forces and the United Nations.

Behind Economic, Social and Environmental Council there are needed three courts responsible for international economic affairs, social affairs and environment

challenges. By the same token, Cultural and Ecumenical Council decisions are executed by cultural and ecumenical court.

Taking the constructivist theory in its most positive sense, none of the reforms will be achieved without the pressure and presence of world society. In light of this approach, international politics is shaped by persuasive ideas, shared values, culture, and social identities; that is, the cognitive structures embodied in a reality that they construct and to which they give meaning (Adler, 1997). However, deliberation that leads to consensus goes in both directions, ascending from local, State, regional and global organizations and descending from the multilateral level to local communities.

Global governance refers to the concerted conduct of the international system by its multiple components. Of the diverse forces at play, those related to knowledge, creation of wealth and cultural representations have special significance, since most relevant powers have been structured around them. In ancient civilizations, a religious and metaphysical order was imposed over political organization and transformative management of nature. With capitalism, the new desire for profit and accumulation took societies in the direction towards private financial gain; that is, it put political institutions, geopolitics, and the value system at its service. The world resistance to econocracy or economic dominance is one of the most suggestive facets for study of present global age.

Social mobilizations that have intensified in 21st century highlighting the crisis of the international system. Exclusion, discrimination, and generalized destruction of the ecosystem are its most pressing manifestations. However, current diagnoses tend to ignore the full impact of this productive economic sector strategy on the system, which worsens every day its entropic career.

Limitations of monadic and dyadic evaluative approaches in diagnosis affect the framework of potential solutions. A complete picture derived from the triadic approach not only explains the intertwining of triple economic, political and cultural power, but also clears programmatic horizon in a better way. Actual global order is presided by economic power, as a negative official power; cultural power acts as anti-official and political power is the oscillating or connecting element.

The triadic perspective justifies empowerment of multilateral political institutions as positive official leadership subgroups. Reforming global governance is not an unprecedented task, but rather an acknowledgement of world-wide efforts since 1945 in the binding agreements around the United Nations. Its redesign includes administration of the decisions from General Assembly in three councils focusing on peace and disarmament, on economic, social, and environmental affairs, and on cultural and ecumenical affairs.

The General Assembly embodies universal legislature, councils are the executive branch, while international tribunals or courts make up judiciary power. The

importance of global coercive instruments as judges of last resort in economic, environmental, and cultural matters is a basic matter.

Multilateral political empowerment connects popular power on an ascending scale through states and regional organizations as mediators with global politics. In turn, they are transmission chains for universal regulations development of agreements in multilateral sphere compounding a triadic system also.

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