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REVISTA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANAS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD POLITÉCNICA SALESIANA



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## Memorial struggles and power strategies of the rights in Latin America today

### *Luchas memoriales y estrategias de poder de las derechas en América Latina hoy*

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#### **Abstract**

Recently, right-wing forces of different origins and types have sprung up in Latin America. In this article, four countries are studied: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Peru. The first two correspond to cases in which the right-wing groups stand in opposition to the so-called progressive governments. The other two correspond to cases in which they stand in a political system with a strong continuity of predominance of right-wing forces. Since there are few studies with an overall perspective, this article seeks to make a contribution in that direction. The objective is to analyze the non-electoral strategies of construction and/or exercise of power implemented by the right-wing groups around the memorial struggles. Based on the review of journalistic sources and speeches of the national right-wing referents, this article analyzes how current right-wing groups have proceeded to the institution of languages and the definition of a field of meanings that dispute the meaning of the recent past. From a comparative perspective, it is argued that in all four cases negationism offers an effective repertoire for these groups, which is used in their non-electoral (as well as electoral) strategies for building hegemony at the cultural level.

#### **Keywords**

Right, non-electoral strategies, Latin America, memory, negationism, cultural hegemony.

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### **Resumen**

Recientemente han despuntado en América Latina fuerzas de derecha de distinto origen y tipo. En este artículo, se estudian cuatro países: Argentina, Brasil, Colombia y Perú. Los dos primeros corresponden a casos en los que las derechas se erigen en contraposición a los gobiernos denominados progresistas. Los otros dos corresponden a casos en los que las derechas se erigen en un sistema político con una fuerte continuidad de predominio de la derecha. Puesto que son escasos los análisis con perspectiva de conjunto, este artículo pretende hacer un aporte en esa dirección. El objetivo es analizar las estrategias no electorales de construcción y/o ejercicio del poder implementadas por las derechas actuales en torno a las luchas memoriales. Con base en la revisión de fuentes periodísticas y discursos de los referentes de las derechas nacionales, el presente artículo analiza de qué manera las derechas han procedido a la institución de lenguajes y a la definición de un campo de sentidos que disputan el significado del pasado reciente. A partir de una perspectiva comparada, se sostiene que en los cuatro casos el negacionismo ofrece un repertorio eficaz para esos grupos, que se valen de él en sus estrategias no electorales (además de las electorales) para la construcción de hegemonía en el nivel cultural.

### **Palabras clave**

Derecha, estrategias no electorales, América Latina, memoria, negacionismo, hegemonía cultural.

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## **Introduction**

Recently, right-wing forces of different origin and type have emerged in Latin America (Giordano, 2019; Rodríguez, 2019). While in Argentina and Brazil the arrival of right-wing governments is directly related to the exhaustion of previous reformist processes, in countries such as Colombia and Peru, current Rights are inscribed in a political system of prolonged predominance of forces of that sign. However, these differences, the Rights of the four countries have in common the deployment of strategies aimed at disputing the meaning of the recent past around dictatorships (Argentina and Brazil) and the armed conflict (Peru and Colombia). The memorial struggles occupy a central place in the issues that inform those non-electoral strategies, whose objective is to operate at the level of civil society via media, organizations and foundations and direct actions (Eaton, 2014). At the level of public memory, this set of actions aims at the politicization of issues re-

lated to an authoritarian and conservative ideology through the construction of a simplifying and polarizing common sense that tends to deny a traumatic past (historical negationism/revisionism). Beyond the diverse intensities with which these strategies have been implemented in each of the national scenarios, in all cases the recent past has become the privileged object of “memorial struggles” in the political field (i.e. bids between different actors for constituting their interpretation in the hegemonic representation of what happened, Jelin, 2002).

The need to analyze the political uses of the past is pressing in times in which, from different areas, it is proposed to make historical memory a “overcame path” to “look to the future” and find paths of “national reconciliation” or “definitively close painful stages” (Ricoeur, 2010). In the rhetoric of the right-wing political forces in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Peru converge, without major contradictions, the exploitation and radicalization of the master divisions that marked the political violence and the latent or manifest negationism of state and civil responsibility in the commission of crimes against the national community. This refers, as Grimson points out (2007, p. 12):

A basic condition of any hegemonic project (...) is to institute the languages of the social dispute, to define the field of meaning where the social conflict develops, to effectively stipulate what are the potentially effective actions, claims and repertoires at a given stage.

Based on the review of journalistic sources and discourses of national Rights referents, this article analyzes how the groups of that ideological sign have proceeded to the institution of languages and the definition of a field of meanings that dispute the signification of the recent past. From a comparative perspective, we argue that negationism is an effective repertoire for current Rights, that they use it in their non-electoral strategies (in addition to electoral ones) for the construction of hegemony at the cultural level.

## **Argentina: “dialogue” and “reconciliation”**

Argentina was the only country that after the fall of the “institutional dictatorships of the Armed Forces” (Ansaldi & Giordano, 2012) began prosecuting the military involved in crimes against humanity. This initiative was

interrupted by the laws of *Obediencia debida* and *Punto Final* (1987) under the Government of Raúl Alfonsín and then by the Indult (1989-1990) granted by President Carlos Menem. However, 2003 the Government of Néstor Kirchner resumed the legal path, even advancing, in subsequent years, in the prosecution of civilians who had acted in complicity with the regime of the dictatorship in the commission of economic crimes and against humanity.

The publication in 1986 of the report prepared by the National Commission of Missing Persons (CONADEP), published under the title *Nunca Más*<sup>1</sup>, inaugurated a “memory regime” (Crenzel, 2008). There, the number of 9,000 disappearances under, the last dictatorship, was established. Based on additional evidence, the human rights organizations assumed the figure of 30,000. And on this basis a consensus was built on the number of victims of state terrorism and a “canonical account” about the recent past (Crenzel, 2008). Although there were attempts to destabilize that consensus at earlier times, it began to seriously break down with the arrival of the PRO, in the Alliance of Change, to the National Executive Power in 2015.

Government officials and even President Mauricio Macri himself argued about the figure of 30,000 vs. 9000 (“Mauricio Macri”, 2016). And so negationism became part of the state (before the controversy around the number had arisen, of course, but not from the power of the State). A more recent episode of open negationism took place at the 2019 Book Fair, when the book by Jorge Di Pascuale, a former repressor condemned for the murder of the daughter of the president of the grandmother of Plaza de Mayo, Estela de Carlotto, was presented. Under the title *Chronicle of a denied war*, Di Pascuale (2019) gathers three volumes of clear negationism spirit, in which it aspires to “shed light on tragic years, during which our country suffered a revolutionary war” and explains the process between 1976 and 1982 as “the victory of the Legal Forces over irregular militias.” The presentation panel was made up of retired military personnel and journalist Ceferino Reato, in a room full of relatives of investigated repressors, charged and convicted of crimes against humanity committed during the last dictatorship (“Carlotto”, 2019).

This negationism fits in with another element that Rights are bearers of: “the utopianism of dialogue democracy” (Hinkelammert, 1988). A key figure to understand the appropriation of this element and the promotion of

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1 Never again.

historical revisionism in the ranks of the PRO is Pablo Avelluto (Safers-stein, 2017). Between 2005 and 2012, Avelluto was Editorial Director for the South Region of Random House Mondadori Argentina, which administers the South American label. In 2012, he entered the world of politics in the hands of the PRO: he was general coordinator of the Public Media System in the Government of the City of Buenos Aires and then Minister of Culture of the Nation (currently downgraded to the rank of Secretariat). At the request of its management, in 2015 the book *El diálogo*<sup>2</sup> was published, edited by the South American label and of which Avelluto was editor and collaborated in the writing (Fernández Mejjide & Leis, 2015). It is a conversation between Héctor Leis (who joined the ranks of Montoneros) and Graciela Fernández Mejjide (mother of a missing person, member of CONADEP and member of the Permanent Assembly of Human Rights, APDH, and became a political leader in the 1990s). In the book (and in the documentary that was filmed from the same material), the notion of “dialogue” refers to a conversation between parties that far from being antagonistic show coincidences. It is a notion of dialogue that is constitutive of the *Change* identity, and that is observed in so many other instances, as indicated by Goldentul and Saferstein (2019).

The community of ideas that structured the “PRO world” (Vommaro, Morresi, & Belloti, 2015) in its escalation to the national State was built on the basis of a close relationship between publishing enterprises (fundamentally, but not exclusively, of the *Sudamericana* Editorial) and the *Pensar* Foundation, the think tank of the PRO (Giordano & Soler, 2016 and Giordano, 2017). In 2015 Iván Petrella, at that time legislator of the City of Buenos Aires and Director of that Foundation, published *Que se metan todos*, also under the *Sudamericana* label (Petrella, 2015). It shows another vein of the “utopianism of democracy dialogue”: the eradication of conflicts. In this case, through the promotion of the notion of “reconciliation,” recovering the model of the Truth Commission of South Africa. In one chapter, Petrella specifically refers to a possible application in Argentina of the South African model of reconciliation as an alternative to the Justice model implemented by previous governments, promoting the way of amnesty to reach the Truth.

From its access to the power of the State, the PRO has tried to implement measures in line with the negationism that was already part of its re-

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2 The dialogue.

pertoire of ideas. Thus, it has sought to reconfigure the field of memory in a meaning operation whereby historical differences are suspended in pursuit of a vocation of coincidence. At the level of rhetoric, for example, on the occasion of the commemoration of the coup on March 24, 2017, the Secretary of Human Rights Claudio Avruj said: “human rights are for everyone” (“The PRO speech”, 2017). On the legal level, the PRO has also made some attempts. The most popular was a ruling by the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation of May 3, 2017 that admitted the computation of the “2x1” in crimes against humanity (double the time in condition of detainees before having a final sentence, a benefit that had been stipulated in 1994 for common crimes and that was repealed in 2001). The measure was rejected and a few days later, Congress passed Law 27,362, which stipulated that this benefit could not be applied in cases of crimes against humanity and that, on the other hand, reaffirmed the validity of the measure for the period 1994-2001. Although there was a reversal, the scope of the government’s negotiation intentions cannot be avoided, which seeks to strengthen itself not only in rhetoric but also in laws.

### **Brazil: “against communism”**

Unlike Argentina, in Brazil there was an Amnesty Law enacted in 1979, during the dictatorship. Although initially this law included the demands of the movements of resistance to the dictatorship that requested amnesty for political prisoners, it was immediately used by the Armed Forces to extend it to the perpetrators of crimes committed under the regime established in 1964, interpreting the terms “political crimes or related “in their favor. Another significant difference is that in Brazil there was no Truth Commission until 2012, when the National Truth Commission of Brazil (CNV) was instituted under the government of Dilma Rousseff.

The CNV established that between 1964 and 1985 there were more than 434 political murders or disappearances, more than 10,000 tortured, and some 8,000 indigenous people killed to carry out infrastructure and agriculture plans in the Amazon region. The serious human rights violations that occurred during the period under investigation, the CNV concludes, “resulted from a generalized and systematic action by the State, configuring crimes against humanity” that were “carried out by the Armed Forces whose

exercise involved chains of command originating in the Cabinets of presidents and military ministers “(CNV, 2014).

The CNV report was published a year before the dismissal of Dilma and the right turn that began with the mandate of Michel Temer that weakened the initiative. In effect, however, despite the CNV’s call for the Armed Forces to recognize their institutional responsibility, the recent trend in both civil and military sectors is closer to the apology of the dictatorship. The arrival of former captain Jair Bolsonaro to the presidency in 2019 has run in parallel with the public dissemination of a discourse that vindicates the actions of the military regime.

In his time as a deputy, Bolsonaro had defended the method of torture, so it is not surprising that in his vote in favor of the “impeachment” against Dilma he made this declaration of principles:

For the family, the innocence of the children in the classrooms, which the PT never had, against communism, for our freedom against the São Paulo Forum, for the memory of Colonel Carlos Alberto Brilhante Ustra, for the fear of Rouseff, the army of Caxias, the Armed Forces, for Brazil above all and for God above all, my vote is yes. (“A deputy”, 2016)

Ustra was the leader of the torture system that many suffered, and avoided repercussions thanks to the Amnesty Act of 1979 that also acquitted the military. After the return to democracy, he published the book *A verdade sufocada: a história que a esquerda não quer que o Brasil conheça* (Ustra, 2006). The book presents a version of the dictatorship from the perspective of the military, and run out of stock in its 14th edition after Bolsonaro claimed that this was his reference book (“I am in favor”, 2018).

More recently, in an interview for the TV channel Bandeirantes, Bolsonaro said that the military regime had “some problems”, but that it cannot be described as a dictatorship: “We have to know the truth. No regimen is wonderful. And where have you seen a dictatorship give up the government peacefully? Then it was not a dictatorship,” said the president (“Bolsonaro denies”, 2019). Next, he urged the main military units to hold celebratory events on March 31, commemorating the coup of 1964. Thus, in March, the Military Command Planalto held a ceremony in which the coup was remembered as a “civic-military moment”, a euphemism that validates the refusal to qualify as a dictatorship the government regime imposed in 1964 (“Military Command”, 2019).

Also known are the statements of former Minister of Education Ricardo Vélez Rodríguez, who proposed that school books teach that in 1964 there was no coup d'état perpetrated by the military but a "sovereign decision of Brazilian society" that deposed a constitutional president to establish "a democratic regime of force" ("The minister fell", 2019). Vélez is a staunch follower of the ultra-right writer Olavo de Carvalho, famous for his conspiracy theories about the infiltration of cultural Marxism in the institutions of Brazil ("Olavo de Carvalho", 2019). Updating the master scission of the dictatorship, Vélez declared that "Brazil, during the governments of the PT, was on the verge of being under the control of totalitarian socialist groups", and today we must "fight for the country where one lives" so that it doesn't happen as in Venezuela that "is a colony of the dictators who control Cuba" ("Cayó el ministro", 2019). The fear of "Castro-Chavism" has the power of simplicity by putting under one umbrella everything that the Right considers bad and dark without too many distinctions or explanations, and at the same time fulfilling the objective of neutralizing symbolic and political capital from the Left and the progressive forces, erecting them as the enemy.

Like the Government of Cambiemos in Argentina, that of Bolsonaro has also entered the legal plane to guarantee impunity for the military. But if in Argentina the attempts to establish laws favorable to the armed forces did not prosper, similar initiatives are being advanced in Brazil. By decree 9,759, of April 11, 2019, the Commission of the Political Dead and Disappeared of the Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights was extinguished, which had the mission of concluding the identification of victims of political repression during the dictatorship.

## **Colombia: hate policies**

In Colombia, peace processes with the insurgency have been the defining axis of the last three presidential elections. In a system of parties traditionally inclined to the right, there are few agenda items that offer nuances in programmatic proposals in social or economic matters. The handling of the armed conflict, on the other hand, has become the main point of polarization between the parties and in civil society.

Álvaro Uribe Vélez (2002-2010 and 2010-2014) was able to capitalize on the generalized rejection of violent actions by the FARC by reducing

the network of political and social contradictions to a game of friends and enemies that assumed the form of an “anti-Farian nationalism” (López de la Roche, 2014). Through a media-ideological operation, he raised his personal hatred for the insurgency to a public-political level and delimited a field of adversity in which, before the great enemy of the FARC, the masses held captive by the “firm hand” discourse, ended up demanding more ideological uniformity, more security and more order, without noticing that they were evicting democratic criticism and opposition.

In addition to the scenarios of armed confrontation, the war declared by Uribeism was settled on the symbolic level. Together with the FARC, other actors were demonized and declared a military target: Human Rights defenders, social leaders, teachers, students and indigenous communities throughout the country, under the accusation of being “guerrilla auxiliaries” (IACHR, 2005). The same qualification was attributed to the Historical Memory Group that published in 2013 *¡Basta Ya! Colombia memorias de guerra y libertad*<sup>3</sup>, a report on the political violence that has occurred in the country since 1958, described by Uribeism as an unacceptable exercise of historical manipulation “based on the hypotheses of radical sectors” (“Min-defensa”, 2013).

In parallel, there was a commitment to the rewriting of national history on a counter-insurgent note, which transcended the criticism of the victims’ memories to actively jump into the production of television fictions “based on real events” where well-known drug traffickers and paramilitary leaders become little less than national heroes (i.e. “*El Patron del Mal*” of the *Caracol* channel and “*Tres Caínes*”, of the RCN Channel, declared ally of the Uribe government). In this version of the past, narco-paramilitarism is presented as the necessary evil to thwart guerrillas, hiding the most sinister side of the Democratic Security Policy: the extrajudicial execution of more than ten thousand Colombians under the figure of “False positives” and the legal, political and economic validation of the paramilitary project through the Justice and Peace Law (Rodríguez, 2016).

When the scandals of the “parapolitics” (López, 2010) and the “false positives” (CorteIDH, 2018) took public knowledge, the national consensus around the effectiveness of the armed solution to the conflict was undermined, paving the way for President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2014 and

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3 Enough is Enough! Colombian memoirs of war and freedom.

2014-2018) to resume the path of dialogue with the FARC. Santos' negotiating attitude marked an important shift in the Uribe era, which transcended internationally (Rodríguez, 2014). Although the legislative reforms promoted during his tenure were timid and difficult to specify, the main contribution was the signing of the Peace Accords in Havana in 2016.

Three years after the agreements were reached, Colombia is far from turning the page of political violence. To the reconversion of the conflicts in the territories are added the difficulties of the State to guarantee the security of the demobilized and of the Colombians in general, evident in the numerous murders of social leaders, human rights defenders and political activists. On the other hand, the crimes committed against members of the demobilized FARC-EP that have been pardoned or that are in the process of reinstatement do not comply with the guarantees agreed in Havana and open the door to the return of arms.

In a pendular movement that goes from war to peace, public opinion bet on warmongering in the last presidential elections. The call to the hard hand against the guerrillas was one of the campaign emblems of the opponents to the peace process that had more receptivity. As in the ineffable triumph of No in the Plebiscite for Peace of 2016, criticisms of the dialogue led by Santos and the insistence on prosecuting ex-guerrillas according to the canons of ordinary justice inoculated in common sense the idea that FARC would suddenly become a sector benefited by all kinds of state gifts. In a country where poverty is around 28%, according to recent ECLAC estimates, the dissemination of false news about the huge resources that demobilized guerrillas would enjoy to the detriment of sectors such as retirees inflamed citizens' sense of injustice and inclined the balance in favor of the uribist candidate Iván Duque.

A new controversy arose under the Duque government (2018-), regarding the appointment of historian Rubén Acevedo as director of the Historical Memory Center, given his resistance to recognizing the existence of the armed conflict and its origin in the land dispute, contrary to the testimonies of the victims and to what is sustained by much of Colombian and international historiography. Acevedo also affirmed that the Truth Commission "is the result of the political interest of the guerrillas to impose a justifying explanation of their adventures and crimes in academic clothing" and expressed their refusal to implement the Special Jurisdiction of Peace (JEP), central axis of the Peace Agreements with the FARC ("Controversy", 2019).

Acevedo's "historical revisionism" coincides with the systematic objections that Duque and his party, the Democratic Center, have made to the JEP, to obstruct the concretion of the transitional justice scheme required in the post-conflict era.

## **Peru: "national reconciliation"**

In a context of state collapse, economic crisis and political violence, the regime headed by Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) operated an authoritarian reconfiguration of order (Burt, 2009). Not without difficulties, he obtained the necessary support to launch a project that sought to restore the social and political order challenged by the armed insurgency, while restructuring State-society relations according to the neoliberal matrix (Tapia, 1997). In 2009, Fujimori was sentenced to 25 years in prison for crimes committed in the exercise of power, including two killings at the hands of the Colina Group in the framework of the fight against the Sendero Luminoso guerrillas.

In 2010 the Popular Force (FP) party was created, and from that moment the Fujimorist story built on the recent past appears unfolded: on the one hand, the strict defense of the actions of the dictator (considered a pacifying hero) and on the other, the conviction of the operation by his intelligence advisor Vladimiro Montesinos (responsible for the multiple cases of corruption and human rights violations) ("Keiko", 2016).

In the 2016 elections there were two right-wing candidates: Pedro Pablo Kuczynski of the *Partido Peruanos por el Cambio*<sup>4</sup> (PPK) and Keiko Fujimori of FP. Then, Keiko began the pressures to achieve freedom for her father, erected historical leader of the FP. Finally, in December 2017 PPK granted the pardon, but his figure was very worn out and in March 2018 he had to resign, involved in accusations of corruption and amid popular discontent over the measure taken in favor of the dictator. However, before his resignation PPK was able to name the year 2018 (it is part of the institutional culture of Peru to give a name to each year), declaring it "Year of Dialogue and National Reconciliation". The concept of "reconciliation" had special

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4 Peruvians for change Party.

resonance because of the recent pardon, a clear concession of PPK to the negationist rhetoric of Fujimori.

Unlike in Argentina where there was a “canonical story”, in Peru fifteen years after the publication of the CVR Report, the meanings of what happened during the armed conflict (1980-2000) have not been established. During the PPK government (2016-2018), the memorial struggles were deployed in three illustrative controversial scenarios.

One of them was the denunciations that swarmed in 2012 for the apology of terrorism from politicians of both Fujimorism and APRA, regarding the decision to include the issue of armed conflict in the teaching of history in the national curriculum design, decision taken in 2004 by the Ministry of Education. As a result of this, the texts in question were officially withdrawn from the schools. In 2012, the Congress of the Republic and the President of the Council of Ministers launched the “Terrorism Never Again” initiative, with the aim of “informing and raising awareness about the implications of terrorism in Peru, as well as promoting the benefits of a culture of peace and democratic coexistence”. In the video - suggested as educational material - the attacks committed by Sendero Luminoso and the MRTA between 1980 and 2000 are presented, without exposing the actions of the Armed Forces, the Self-Defense Committees or other actors (Jave, 2018).

Another scenario was the public disclosure of the involuntary surgical sterilizations of hundreds of Quechua women after the launch of the Registry of Forced Sterilization Victims (Revesfo) created under the government of Ollanta Humala in 2016. In this context, negationism did not wait. In a supposedly academic speech, *La verdad de una mentira: El caso de las 300 mil esterilizaciones forzadas*<sup>5</sup>, a book where the political scientist María Cecilia Villegas, asserts that it is a myth created by feminist organizations in alliance with the Catholic Church and the conservative sectors, to accuse Fujimori (Villegas, 2017).

A third scenario was the conflict over the creation of the script and the functions attributed to the Place of Memory (LUM), a space for pedagogical and cultural commemoration that houses the history of violence in Peru between 1980 and 2000. In August 2017, the LUM was accused by the Fujimorist bench of apologizing terrorism, demanding the resignation of its director Guillermo Nugent, for “allowing” the exhibition of the 1992 *Visual*

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5 The truth of a lie was published: The case of the 300 thousand forced sterilizations.

*Resistance* retrospective, a reflection on this year from the perspective of 36 graphic artists, collectives and activists. It should be remembered that the LUM was inaugurated in 2015 under the Humala government as part of a state policy that sought to respond to the demand of victims and their families to recognize the violent events that occurred during two decades of armed conflict and its consequences for Peruvian society. The facts are told as they were presented in official documents such as the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and ratified by sentences issued by the justice system.

Unlike in Argentina and Brazil, in Peru the most prominent right-wing force that incurs in negationism is not in power. PPK resigned amid scandals. And while Fujimori was the predominant force in Congress until very recently, it was weakened by the decision of the Constitutional Court to review the pardon of their “hero.” Currently, both Alberto Fujimori and his daughter Keiko are being held. For its part, the current president Martín Vizcarra has shown signs of advancing in the institutionalization of human rights policies by creating the Genetic Data Bank in September 2018. However, in the words that he pronounced when he assumed, he read a certain desire to erase conflicts: “What has happened must mark the end point of a policy of hatred and confrontation.” The creation of a specialized agency for the search of missing persons is based on this meaning framework. Moreover, at the time of signing the creation of the aforementioned institution, Vizcarra said: “the years of violence that us Peruvians suffered affected us all” (“President Martín Vizcarra”, 2018). It is that, in Peru, unlike the other two cases analyzed so far, the right stands on a memory of the recent past that, as the CVR Report states in its conclusions, assumes that both the State and the insurgency undermined collective identities, destroyed the material and moral bases required for social organization and inoculated a culture of fear that is still felt in the country (CVR, 2003).

## **Conclusions**

It is possible to group current Rights according to their origin: whether they arise in contrast to previous progressive experiences or in continuity with a right-oriented political culture. Here the analysis has focused on four cases that are registered in one (Argentina, Brazil) and another type (Colombia,

Peru). The memorial struggles are at the center of the non-electoral strategies of building a hegemonic “common sense” in the four cases. In this framework, the Rights have turned to different modalities of action that can be characterized as state negationism and academic negationism (Thus, 2017).

As for state negationism, in all four cases explicit practices are observed through all those statements with which presidents, officials and congressmen intend to relativize, banalize and minimize the cruelty of what happened and the suffering of the victims. The questioning of the number of disappeared from the dictatorship in Argentina has its analogue in the official negationism of cases of forced sterilization in Peru and false positives in Colombia and the presentation of the Brazilian dictatorship as a necessary evil to contain the communist expansion.

State negationism is complemented and nurtured by an academic negationism that, under the guise of a false historical revisionism aimed at “telling the whole story,” seeks to spread a legitimizing counter-discourse of illegal and illegitimate state violence. In all four cases, this has been promoted through various cultural artifacts that operate in the resemantization of the past: books of the best-seller type and books of non-commercial publishers that print on demand, as well as documentary formats and TV fictions. Along the same lines, are the disputes for the guidelines of the places of memory in Peru and the debates for the contents of history to be taught in the schools of Peru and Brazil.

Finally, memorial struggles are based on the law, which, as is known, does not only fulfill a punitive role, but also has an enormous performative capacity as a truth management device. Each law or sentence has the power to affect the narrative structures of national memory, making visible or obscuring the meanings of Justice for victims and victimizers. The attempt to rehabilitate the 2X1 law for the benefit of repressors in Argentina and the pardon of Fujimori (both revoked); the obstruction of the JEP in Colombia and the elimination by decree of the Commission of search for missing persons in Brazil, are examples of a legal modality of rewriting of history by the perpetrators, in which Reconciliation is imposed on the Truth and Justice. At this point, a key difference can be made: in cases where there were significant prosecutions (Argentina and Peru), negationism more prominently adopts the reconciliation formula, while in those cases where memory was less woven around criminal trials against humanity, negationism settled on the idea of war.

However, in the four countries, negationism has articulated new fields of adversity that renew and perpetuate the forms of oppression that were at the origin of the violence (armed conflicts and dictatorships). In general, all these practices have a profound impact on the present, reviving ancestral hatreds and fears for electoral purposes and serve to feed meaning constructions with the aspiration of cultural hegemony.

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## Youth movements and public youth policies in Mexico: a conceptual approach

### *Movimientos juveniles y políticas públicas de juventud en México: una aproximación conceptual*

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#### **Abstract**

*In recent years, new forms of youth political participation have emerged in Mexico. However, youth public policies continue to address the problems of the youth without their participation and in a deficient manner. The main objective of the article is to draw up a conceptual framework that allows us to think about public policies of youth from and for the young Mexicans themselves. The methodology is the documentary analysis and the hermeneutic of the social processes that star young Mexicans in the areas of political participation in recent years, intersecting it with the analysis of the response of administrations in the form of youth policies. The results show the emergence of a more participatory youth that, however, shows more continuities than changes in terms of political culture and that coexists with the persistence of youth public policies typical of previous periods. The conclusion is that moving towards participatory youth public policies is an important objective for the democratization and greater efficiency of the attention and service for young people.*

#### **Keywords**

*Political culture, youth, Mexico, social movements, political participation, public policies*

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### **Resumen**

En los últimos años emergen en México nuevas formas de participación política juvenil. Sin embargo, las políticas públicas de juventud siguen abordando la atención a las problemáticas juveniles sin su participación y de forma deficitaria. El objetivo del artículo es trazar un marco conceptual que permita pensar unas políticas públicas de juventud desde y para los mismos jóvenes mexicanos. La metodología es el análisis documental y la hermenéutica de los procesos sociales que protagonizan los jóvenes mexicanos en los ámbitos de la participación política en los últimos años, entrecruzándolo con el análisis de la respuesta de las administraciones en forma de políticas de juventud. Los resultados evidencian la emergencia de una juventud más participativa que, sin embargo, muestra más continuidades que cambios en términos de cultura política y que convive con la persistencia de políticas públicas juveniles propias de periodos anteriores. La conclusión es que caminar hacia unas políticas públicas juveniles participativas es un objetivo importante para la democratización y mayor eficiencia de la atención a los jóvenes.

### **Palabras clave**

Cultura política, juventud, México, movimientos sociales, participación política, políticas públicas.

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## **Introduction**

This article analyzes the citizen participation of Mexican youth and public policies that meet their needs, that is, that defines them as a social group with their own characteristics derived from their age range, biological motivation, which makes it necessary their subjection to specific actions of government institutions. This is justified by social division by age. This division specifies certain problems that differentially affect young people, adults and older adults. Hence, a specific institutional treatment for young people that is channeled through problematized social subdivisions: sexuality, health, work, leisure, culture and addictions are some examples of this.

The article focuses on young people, their participation and public policy. These three elements serve as a referential framework for the article. Likewise, it is oriented towards the analysis of public policies focused on youth. In this sense, the perspective of governance or network governance is adopted. It starts from the concept of participation, understanding it as any

collective action of individuals oriented to the satisfaction of certain objectives; and public policy, defined as government actions that are the product of a public agenda that emanates from citizen demands. It is also important to note that it is based on participatory and proximity governance, in its normative vision, as a more democratic and efficient way of articulating citizen participation and public policies (Blanco & Gomà, 2003).

First, relevant bibliography on youth participation that has taken place in Mexico in recent years will be reviewed, reflecting on a resurgence of the involvement of Mexican youth with politics. Both conventional (fundamentally electoral) and unconventional participation (especially that which is transmitted through social movements) will be taken into account, in order to detect if there are changes or continuities in Mexican youth political culture and in what sense. This will allow us to develop hypotheses that can be tested in future research. The conceptual orientation chosen by the authors of the article to address the conceptualization of youth is presented. In the second section, there is the emergence of new youth movements such as Yo-Soy132 or solidarity with the forced disappearance of the 43 of Ayotzinapa, as counterpoints to the disaffection towards the mechanisms of traditional representative democracy.

The third section analyzes whether changes in youth participation in Mexico have translated or not into substantive changes in terms of youth political culture.

The fourth section is devoted to addressing Mexican public policies aimed at the youth. In this regard, a historical synthesis is made based on their emergence and analyzing their development from the normative theory of public policy.

The four sections allow a comparative exercise between youth citizen participation and public policies aimed at the youth, on the one hand, with participatory and proximity governance, in their normative vision, on the other. This exercise is taken up in the conclusions.

Regarding the used methodology, the documentary analysis is defined as: "..., a work through which [...] we extract some notions of the document to represent it [...] To analyze, therefore, is to derive from a document the set of words and symbols that serve as representation" (Rubio, n.d). In our article we rely on bibliographic sources, mainly theoretical, and in the following categories of analysis: Youth participation, democratic disaffec-

tion, youth protest movements, YoSoy 132 and public youth policies, all of them applied to Mexico.

Regarding the hermeneutics of social processes, we understand this from a permanent reconstruction of individuals of: “their conditions and their worlds of life, [in which they learn] to recognize and appropriate the infinity of resources built by civilization in the different domains of social life. Resources and technical devices, and resources and symbolic devices” (Vizer, 2007). Here theoretical bibliographic sources were used and the analysis was implemented based on the socio-analysis procedure, which “allows us to understand the territory through a map of relationships and power structures that determine the interactions between the different agents, institutions and social groups” (Villasante, 1999 in Pérez, 2011, p. 26). In this regard, the effort was made to objectify the position of the studied young people with respect to politics.

## **Youth participation in Mexico**

Regarding the conceptual framework of youth participation, the first issue that arises is to define what is meant by youth. In this regard, there are studies that consider young people who are in a post-adolescent stage, a stage in which the individual can begin his emancipation process. In this sense, the border with children is established in the legal age for work and driving, which in Mexico is at 16 years old.

However, to analyze the electoral participation of young people it is necessary to consider, for the lower part of the hairpin, only those who are 18 years old, since before that age there is no political right to vote in the majority of countries, although a debate has been opened on the possibility of the right to vote from the age of 16 (Ruiz de Azua, 2010). Finally, the National Survey on Political Culture 2012 (ENCUP) delimited the range of young people between 18 and 29 years old (Gómez, Tejera & Aguilar, 2012). Taking into account the above, we will use this last rank to delimit Mexican youth in their relationship with politics. In this way, the criterion institutionally used for political participation is that of age range, which contains in itself the legal aspect of starting a political right as important as the exercise of election of representatives in the public sphere.

The above is not an obstacle for us to theoretically position ourselves in this article. There are currently several theoretical approaches to youth, of which we highlight the following, given the importance they have acquired.

- Functionalist transition approach. It is based on life cycles, in which youth is treated “as a social category [delimited by] demographic criteria” (Brunet & Pizzi, 2013, pp. 13-14). It is an approach that allows the administration of youth, by allowing their social categorization, making possible “the institutionalized exercise of singularized public policies in specific age ranges” (Taguenca, 2016, p. 186). Its variant is adult-centric, since it considers youth as a stage prior to adulthood and in which the youth is presented as a kind of incomplete adult, “who has yet to mature”. It is a paternalistic vision that analyzes young people “in negative”, that is, highlighting all those characteristics that they lack to reach adulthood.
- Biographical transition approach. It focuses on the biography of individuals and has a culturalist position strongly influenced by youth identity studies, and with little development on material issues that affect young people. This approach highlights the heterogeneity of youth biographical trajectories, the transitions they face - for example: school-work, parental home-own home - and three dimensions: biographical, institutional and socio-historical, as shown in the works of Coleman and Husen (1985) and Furlong and Cartmel (1997).
- Normalist approach. It collects the previous work of Mannheim (1993 [1928]), in which youth only constitutes a social group when it faces identical events in identical periods of life, and in which social origin acquires special relevance, for example, from social invention (Galland, 2011) or as a socio-historical category (Allerbeck & Rosenmayr, 1979 [1974]).
- Generational conflict approach. Part of Bourdieu’s ideas (2002 [1978]) about the conflict between young people and adults in different social fields, and that is a consequence of different social states that make up different productions of subjects differentiated by age, with the consequent unequal division of power and succession demarcation. A variant of this approach is that of the so-called youth radicalism, which emphasizes generational breakaways and its transformative potential.

From these approaches, we opt for the biographical transition, also known as the life cycle. In this, childhood, adolescence and youth are considered as sections in the biographical process of the subjects towards taking positions in family roles and other vital sections until old age and subsequent decrepitude (Casal, García, Merino & Quesada, 2006). Its specific methodology is that of itineraries and social trajectories that often translates into biographies. It is recognized that the youth section has structural and institutional determinants.

Noting the youth approach that serves as a reference to this article, it is time to place the perspectives of approaching political culture and youth political participation. In relation to this, it should be noted that in recent years the debate on the role of young people in politics has gained unusual interest due to mobilizations such as: 15M, in Spain (Minguijón & Pac Salas, 2013; Romero, 2015), YoSoy132, in Mexico (Brachet, 2014) and the Arab Spring (Blanco, 2011; Roque, 2015), which took place in 2011.

These mobilizations have shown that young people have assumed, in various countries and continents, a leading role in the processes of political change (Gómez, Tejera & Aguilar, 2012), denying the cliché of postmodern young people as uninterested in politics, passive and interested only in hedonism through consumption. This cliché has been gradually abandoned, and has given way to multiple studies on youth involvement in politics (Benedict, 2008; Soler-i-Martí, 2014; Villa, 2015; Taguenca, González, et al., 2018).

Given the above, it is worth asking whether we are really facing a new cycle of youth political participation based on a change in their political culture, more civic in terms of Almond and Verba (1963), and certainly more vindictive in political terms.

There is no doubt that the youth reality before the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) was substantially different from the current one. The consolidation of political neoliberalism and economic globalization, to which new information and communication technologies - the Internet, through social networks, above all - have favored their diffusion on a planetary scale, have radically changed the public and private spheres, and the psychology of individuals, radically transforming, both materially and symbolically as in their principles and values, societies and the young people who inhabit them. To this we must add the loss of centrality in the world of work, which is linked to consumption as a new center for individuals.

The adoption of a post-Fordist production system has resulted in profound socio-economic and structural changes that directly affect youth. We highlight: the delay in youth emancipation, due to the “universalization of higher education”; the change in emotional relationships, which have gone from emotional stability to “fast entry and easy exit” relationships; the increase in labor flexibility, converted into job insecurity and informality; the increase in spatial mobility, for training and labor reasons, especially; the proliferation of new forms of youth participation based on flexibility. However, the most significant change has taken place in the cultural field, and it has to do with the gradual replacement of the traditional relations of production, centered in the labor world, by others related to consumption exercised in leisure time, which has become the backbone of personal and collective identities. It is in this sense that the concept of “idle youth” arises (González et al., 2004), which has been used as a synonym for “apathetic youth”.

All this set of social transformations has brought about important changes in the biographical transition of individuals, which went from being linear and almost deterministic to being open and uncertain. We speak of linear biography to refer to the predominant *modus vivendi* in the Contemporary Age, based on the achievement of more or less common vital stages for all citizens that would be determined by stability (formative stage during adolescence, incorporation into the labor market with indefinite work, mating through a traditional family nucleus). On the contrary, the concept of open biography refers to vital stages that are neither consecutive nor common to the majority (lengthening of the formative trajectories until well into adulthood, sentimental instability and formation of different family nuclei throughout life, constant change of work due to labor flexibility and changes in habitual housing). These open biographies are more common in the Postmodern Age in which we are immersed. In spite of the substantial change enunciated, that of the biographical transition of the individuals, which goes from the closed linearity to the opening that produces uncertainty, we must not forget that the objective conditions of exit remain decisive and that, therefore, the passage of Linear biographies to open biographies do not mean the possibility of a change of status or of a social change by itself (Furlong, 2012).

The opening of the biographical transition can lead to a change in the political culture of young people, making these individuals more participatory and bearers of a social change in which their participation in political affairs is more active than that of previous generations.

The electoral participation of young Mexicans, at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, helps us to corroborate the previous hypothesis. Of course, we must take additional methodological measures, since the indicators we have are not exempt from some problems. For example, more than 70% of the young people surveyed stated that they would vote for one of the candidates in the 2012 presidential election, although its result (with a 63% participation) revealed that this data was somewhat biased (Gomez, Tejera & Aguilar, 2012). Let us not forget that participation in elections through voting is the most common form of political participation of young people.

The electoral participation of young people is important for what we are examining here, because it allows us to observe if it is significantly different from that of other age cohorts and if one opts for different political options, and also what is their tendency.

Regarding the above, the academic literature on political behavior indicates that there are differences in voting by age: young people vote more for new and radical parties. There is also a generational effect on the vote for certain options, which responds to the atmosphere of the moment (Anduiza & Bosch, 2004).

In the case of Mexico, most studies found no relevant differences in the orientation of the vote according to age. However, Moreno (2003) showed that linked to the process of democratic transition we can distinguish between an older, more rural and less educated voter - which would be the electoral base of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) - and another younger voter, urban and with higher levels of education, which would be directed towards the National Action Party (PAN) or the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). The level of income would be a differentiating variable between these last two.

## **Democratic disaffection and new youth protest movements in contemporary Mexico**

In the National Survey of Political Culture 2012, practically 90% of Mexican youth expressed little or no interest in politics. Also 90% said they had never participated in any kind of political organization or social movement, not even in any collective action. The survey cannot measure the

effects that the YoSoy132 movement could have had in 2012 - or only partially - since it was carried out in various phases, although only some of them shortly before it (González & Hernández, 2017). On the other hand, according to the same survey, the family is still the main agent of political socialization of Mexican youth.

In addition, in terms of disaffection and distrust towards the political class, 90% of the young people surveyed consider that there is corruption, economic waste in non-relevant actions and excessive cost of them. The lack of interest in the institutional policy of young Mexicans is evident. For example, in the middle of the 2012 presidential election campaign, only 25% had informed themselves about it. Instead, the young people interviewed had information on the most important topics of the YoSoy132 movement (Gómez, Tejera & Aguilar, 2012).

At this point it is important to introduce what politics means for young people. In this regard, in a 2006 study, Megías distinguishes between different types of youth according to their perceptions and orientation towards politics. It is possible to differentiate two great types of young people, subdivided in turn into sub-groups, which results in five typologies.

In the first place, there are young people who show great disinterest in politics, considering that this is not their business or at least it is not yet because of their young age; a second group shows rejection towards the formal mechanisms of politics and extends it towards everything political; a third shows distrust towards the effectiveness of political action and political actors; the fourth and fifth group show interest in politics, but some with a clear adherence to the status quo (parties, governments and formal institutions) and others, on the contrary, have a strong commitment to social transformation from alternative media to parties, prioritizing social movements and non-formal structures. The young supporters in Mexico are not many. In 2016, of the 8.07 million affiliates to five parties (PAN, PRI, PRD, Citizen Movement and MORENA - National Regeneration Movement -), there were only 15% of young people (Ollin, 2016). As for activists in social movements, although it is difficult to quantify them, we are going to take the movement. YoSoy132 as an example of this type of novel youth participation.

In the context of the electoral contest of the year 2012 - in the month of May - a student movement unexpectedly and originally broke into the Ibero-American University. The trigger for this social outbreak took place in the context of the assistance of the candidate for the presidency of the PRI,

Enrique Peña Nieto to the Universidad Iberoamericana, when at the end of the session he was approached by a group of students who questioned the excessive support that was receiving from the media (in particular from Televisa). Young students from private and public schools joined in the protest and established their demands, while manifesting themselves as an inclusive movement, which refers to the Zapatista principle of forming a “World in which all Worlds fit” (Díaz, 2013).

It can be affirmed that in Mexico there has been a particularly significant emergence of new social movements in recent years, among which we would highlight: the YoSoy132 (Rovira, 2014), the protests for the disappearance of the 43 normalists of Ayotzinapa (Hernández, 2015), the strike of the National Polytechnic Institute and feminist mobilizations against gender violence since April 2016. The success of these movements in the face of the proven failure of traditional participation mechanisms (such as political parties) is especially relevant for analyzing youth participation.

These are movements with a very flexible structure. The absence of rigid structures makes each young person find their place according to their willingness to be involved. Away from the culture of sacrifice, typical of classical social movements and even of the new social movements of the 70s. These movements, like previous ones, such as the Zapatista, work with a system of direct democracy: they have an assembly structure that allows everyone who wants, to participate in the decision-making process. Without entering into the contradictions or problems of this model of direct democracy through the assemblies; at the outset, the perception that those who participate take is that they *can have* a much more relevant role and greater decision-making capacity than in the traditional structures of representative democracy through political parties, which is less flexible and with less capacity for participation in decision making, especially of young people.

They are also movements adapted to the current rhythms and ways of life: the call and information process is done electronically, so there is only presence at the key moments of decision making and collective action. Even the debate and deliberation can also be virtual: through social networks, blogs and virtual platforms (González & Hernández, 2017).

Finally, the current youth movements work based on partial identity processes, without requiring the young person to share with all other members of their society a global and coherent vision of the world, based on which they act, which favors participation. In addition, the fact of raising participation around

specific issues that seek immediate solutions allows people with completely different worldviews, but who share the vision of this specific aspect, share spaces for participation. In summary, as in the traditional mechanisms, the movement itself sought the coherence of its actions and offered individuals a worldview, the new mechanisms offer more partial visions and dilute the traditional collective identities (class, gender, ethnicity, etc.). It is the individual himself who must endow his actions with an internal subjective coherence, and not society through his institutions that will guide them through a holistic globality formed by socio-historically confronted dualities. The important thing here is to emphasize that the individual is organized in his political participation, unlike in the old model in which the agency belongs to very broad and conflicting social subsets, which are also inserted in the logic of representation.

## **Changes and continuities in Mexican youth political culture**

Despite the emergence of novel movements such as the YoSoy132, in Mexico we still find strong continuities in regard to the political culture that relates to the party vote. Even so, it is still too early to know if these movements of criticism of the formal political system can crystallize in new ways of doing politics from the citizenship and at the service of it. In fact, the possibility of presenting citizen candidates, which has barely begun in Mexico, can be a window of opportunity for these experiences. On the other hand, the first analyzes on the spectacular electoral change that has led to the victory of Andrés Manuel López Obrador and MORENA in the 2018 elections, point to an important participation of young people in this political turnaround (Consult Mitofsky, 2018).

In any case, as regards the parties and voting in presidential or legislative elections, in Mexico the parties have adapted to the political culture of the PRI after the changes that allowed competition and electoral alternation. One could say that everyone learned to play with the same rules of culture of the 70 years of hegemonic party (Gómez, Tejera & Aguilar, 2012). Not even the new political formations such as the Citizen Movement, MORENA or the Humanist Party have brought any novelty to PRI's client and corporate practices, to which the PAN and the PRD are also partakers.

In the investigation carried out we find the following paradoxes: although young people mostly distrust politicians and reject intermediation as a way

of solving problems, at the same time they do not hesitate to show predilection for any of the candidates in a presidential election. On the other hand, according to data from the ENCUP 2012, young Mexicans manifest themselves mostly undefined (32%) and right-wing (32%), but instead their political-ideological positions on certain issues (privatization of PEMEX, welfare state, etc.) place them mostly on the left (González & Hernández, 2017).

Mexican youth political culture presents important gaps and not a few contradictions. Young people say they are from the right, but they express opinions from the left; they distrust politicians, but show clear preferences for the various candidates in presidential elections. According to Gómez, Tejera and Aguilar (2012), a possible explanation of these contradictions may be the incidence of family and social networks in the positions on political parties, electoral institutions and the government.

In summary, young Mexicans are not emancipated in terms of political culture and are strongly influenced by previous generations, which reminds us of the hypothesis that socialization is an explanatory variable of political culture. Regarding socialization, Cot and Mounier (1978, p. 280 cited by Smith-Martins, 2000, p. 94) report that:

In the perspective of an established political system, the function of political socialization is to guarantee the continuity of the political system throughout the generations. Through socialization, the system instills the new generations with the values and political behavior of previous generations, in order to guarantee permanent reproduction.

Mexican society experiences more continuities than changes in terms of political culture and youth participation, perhaps because democratic institutional change has not resulted in the corresponding political culture change. It remains to be seen if Mexican student movements, which have historically contributed dynamism and change to the political sphere, can lead to initiatives that overwhelm the dominant political culture, characterized by its authoritarian features (Hernández, 2008).

## **The emergence of public youth policies in Mexico**

The emergence of youth policies occurs in parallel to the imposition of the neoliberal globalization and governance model throughout the world.

But globalization is not a phenomenon that imposes itself in an absolute way, it does not represent a one-way movement, but it provokes contrary movements, which compensate, in some way, for its perverse effects. The first of the movements identified is that of the tendency to strengthen local powers, as a space for the construction of collective projects that deepen citizenship. Some political scientists have referred to this movement as a process of politicization of the local sphere (Brugué & Gomà, 1998).

Local governments seem to abandon their traditional operational roles and their residual position in government processes. On the other hand, local agendas expand to emerging fields of public policy, as in the case of youth, and to more traditional areas, such as education and employment.

The concept of governance expresses a general transformation, that of the ways of articulating government processes in post-industrial society, and the emergence of new ways of articulating social conflict in the local space. This section summarizes the stages of youth policies that arise and develop in Mexico in parallel to these processes.

In Mexico, official programs aimed at youth begin in the first half of the twentieth century, and are due to international conditions referred to: the expansion of the capitalist system, the new world geopolitical system, defined in the two world wars, the demographic explosion and the complex processes of urbanization and industrialization, as well as the social and cultural consequences that derive from all this, and which are closely related to the economic and cultural diversification of Western societies.

The years between the 1930s and 1950s represent the explicit recognition, by Western governments, of the existence of youth as a separate category (with their own issues) of children and adults. This promotes efforts to define it objectively and operatively, in order to establish specific institutional policies (Marcial, 2012).

Various stages of youth policies in Mexico can be established for analytical purposes, taking into account changes in government-youth relations for them. We will go on to synthetically detail them.

*1st stage 1938-1949.* “Emergence of the young.” This first decade was characterized by the reduction of youth policies to educational policies designed to address the problems of university students. In this period, a non-governmental agent, the Catholic Church, stands out, who, from his privileged institutional position with the education and leisure of young people,

fosters a socialization of Mexican youth focused on obedience and subordination to adult-centric values.

*2nd stage 1950-1988.* Integral attention and co-optation. In 1950, President Miguel Alemán promulgated the founding decree of the National Institute of Mexican Youth (INJM), through which it was intended to give labor, cultural, citizen and physical training to Mexican youth (Marcial, 2012). During this period, INJM policies focused mainly on the Federal District (D.F.) and a few rural areas. The INMJ programs were used as a mechanism for the co-optation of young people, pursuing the suppression of the student movement as a specific objective, especially in the 60s and 70s. During the six-year period of Luis Echeverría (1970-1976), the INJM changed its name and was renamed the National Youth Institute (INJUVE). With the change of name, the government's willingness to open up to diverse youth expressions was revealed. Despite these intentions, the reality of government policies continued to be repressive with respect to the student movement and the cultural content itself, as is the case with rock concerts. On the other hand, in this period the city of Guadalajara was the scene of the main confrontations between urban guerrillas and porrile groups - youth clash groups sponsored by governments or even university rectories, cord of those in the case of universities Mexican states- and paramilitaries (Aguayo, 2001, p. 170).

During the six-year term of López Portillo (1976-1982), with the intention of organizing young people "from above", the National Council for Youth Care Resources (CREA) is formed. Despite its hierarchical design, young people are thought beyond the classroom for the first time and a youth social policy is established. With CREA, a governance perspective begins to be adopted, involving civil society and young people (Pérez-Islas, 2000). The 2nd stage ends in 1987-1988 with the state, municipal and regional decentralization of CREA. Emphasize that, throughout this period, sports and tourism act as limits of youth policy; and that, despite the more social agenda and decentralization, the strategy of cooptation of young people by the PRI hegemonic political system remains, as evidenced by the case of the Popular Youth Council of Mexico City (Marcial, 2012).

*3rd. Stage.* 1988-1999. The lost decade. After the electoral fraud of 1988, the Government of Salinas de Gortari imposes the neoliberal doctrine with an iron hand. For youth policies this means sports reductionism and budget cuts. The neoliberalism that is installed in government policy to

this day implies, in practice, government abandonment and disinterest for youth. Despite this general trend, in 1996, already in the Zedillo sexennial, the Causa Joven program implies the recognition of youth diversity. Always from an adult-democratic perspective, control and correction measures are proposed, which correspond to the predominant adult vision that considers young people as a problem. Finally, in 1999 with the birth of the Mexican Youth Institute (IMJUVE), and not by chance in coincidence with the UNAM Strike, youth policies are resumed.

*4th stage.* 2000-2006. Selective attention. In the year 2000 the alternation in the presidency of the Republic takes place for the first time in 70 years, with the electoral victory of Vicente Fox, candidate supported by the PAN. In this six-year period, the aim was to give continuity to the youth policies initiated by IMJUVE. However, it is observed that in the course of it there is a shift towards the neoliberal and globalizing “right” in youth policies (Marcial, 2012). During this six-year period, the National Youth Program begins, a mechanism of centralized and controlled participation “from above”. It also responds to the demographic and social change with the extension - above and below - of the ages included in the concept of youth, which is between 12 and 29 years. Finally, an excellent, though often underutilized instrument, the National Youth Survey also begins during this period.

*5th stage.* 2006-2018. Drifting youth: neglect and repression. Both the Calderón administration (PAN), 2006-2012, and Peña Nieto (PRI), 2012-2018, represent a return of partisanship and the capture of the youth policy network by the Government. The old authoritarian practices of the use of youth organizations, such as the mechanisms of control and repression of youth movements, already used in the seventies, returned; and they did so in the midst of the accentuation of the neoliberal program and its consequent abandonment of structural policies aimed at young people (Macías, 2012).

The profound political change produced in the 2018 elections with the victory for the first time in Mexico of the leftist opposition in almost all areas of government (Presidency, Congress, Senate and most local congresses) open the possibility of a sixth stage, where a priori the participation of young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies, should be more active.

## **Conclusions and proposals. Towards participatory public youth policies**

Most of the history of youth public policies in Mexico has been characterized by youth policies without extensive and qualitative participation of young people. The social and economic changes of the last decades, as well as the emergence of a more active youth with expressions such as the Yo-Soy132 movement, open the possibility of participatory youth policies that are inserted in multilevel government processes, that is, of all Government scales -from the federal to the municipal, and through the state level- with mechanisms of confluence in a good part of the public actions of youth. On the other hand, the involvement of Mexican youth in politics in recent years shows that for there to be youth policy there must be action from and with young people, predominantly technocratic criteria and actions for young people are no longer valid.

The idea and discourse of participation are present in recent times in Mexico, which not in vain presided over the Alliance for Open Government in 2015. However, the implementation of participation has been unsatisfactory, supported by a marginalization of young people in the field of political participation. The model of the Youth Institutes, as a strictly associative or partisan participation scheme, with little influence on the definition of problems and decision-making, and with an intermittent and fairly centralized operation, is a model that must be clearly surpassed. In the context of the participatory reconsideration processes that some municipalities are doing today and in the context of the new instruments of local democratic innovation, it is possible to raise some clues as to where the new youth participation schemes should go.

In this article, new conceptual elements have been raised to think about youth policies focused on the youth subject itself and their capacity for agency. First, the characteristics of youth movements that have emerged in Mexico in the last decade, such as the flexible and predominantly horizontal structure, the use of new technologies or fragmented and partial identities, serve as a conceptual basis for new policies public based on youth participation. Likewise, the sociocultural changes within the framework of post-Fordist capitalism that affect the biographical trajectories of young people — making them flexible, non-linear and continuously adaptable to change — also affect the senses and orientations of public policies of youth in Mexico.

Consequently, youth public policies need to overflow the formal associative and partisan participation to involve unorganized youth and those active in social and community movements. Secondly, they must guarantee their relevance and effectiveness, that is, to become the central spaces for defining youth policies, introducing the participation and use of new technologies at all stages of public policy, from the definition of the problem, to the design, implementation and evaluation of them. Thirdly, they need to be rooted in the dynamics of youth communities, much more flexible and adaptable, far from the rigidity and aversion to the change of institutional centralism. These normative criteria will be elements for future empirical analyzes that do not fit in this article, focused on exposing the topic and providing a conceptual and analytical framework. At the moment, with what has been described, there is much room for improvement for youth policies in Mexico.

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## Right and agribusiness in Argentina and Brazil. Changes and continuities

### *Derecha y agronegocio en Argentina y Brasil. Cambios y continuidades*

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#### **Abstract**

*One of the most expanded forms of accumulation by dispossession in South America is the advancement of agribusiness. This neoextractivist logic has expanded in Argentina and Brazil even in the framework of the political alternations that both countries have experienced in recent years. However, it is possible to notice contrasts in relation to government policies for the agrarian sector according to the political sign that is alluded to: post-neoliberal governments versus the rise of the rights. Hence, the objective of this paper is to characterize the current rights in both countries in what makes the dynamics of agribusiness tending to a comparison with what were the policies implemented during the progressive governments. For such a purpose we resort to a methodological approach of qualitative type based on the bibliographic review specialized in the subject and the analysis of documents.*

*Among the main results, it is noted that although there is a consolidated agribusiness matrix in both countries (and as such it is still preserved in the framework of political alternation); This hegemonic logic of production, however, is deepened with the arrival in the government of Macri (Argentina 2015) and Temer (Brazil 2016). With these governments, state support areas for peasant agriculture are dismantled while stimulating the production of commodities and land grabbing by large landowners.*

#### **Keywords**

*Right, agribusiness, Argentina, Brazil, public policies, inequality.*

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## Resumen

Una de las modalidades de acumulación por despojo más expandidas en Sudamérica la constituye el avance del agronegocio. Esta lógica neoextractivista se ha expandido en Argentina y Brasil aun en el marco de las alternancias políticas que ambos países han experimentado en los últimos años. Sin embargo, es posible advertir contrastes en relación a las políticas gubernamentales para el sector agrario según el signo político al que se aluda: gobiernos posneoliberales versus ascenso de las derechas. De allí que el objetivo del presente trabajo sea el de caracterizar a las derechas actuales en ambos países en lo que hace a la dinámica del agronegocio tendiendo a una comparación con lo que fueron las políticas implementadas durante los gobiernos progresistas. Para tal cometido acudimos a un abordaje metodológico de tipo cualitativo basado en la revisión bibliográfica especializada en el tema y el análisis de documentos. Entre los principales resultados se advierte que si bien existe una matriz consolidada del agronegocio en ambos países (y que como tal la misma se conserva aún en el marco de la alternancia política); esta lógica hegemónica de producción empero se profundiza con la llegada al Gobierno de Macri (Argentina 2015) y Temer (Brasil 2016). Con estos gobiernos áreas estatales de apoyo a la agricultura campesina son desmanteladas al tiempo que se estimula la producción de *commodities* y el acaparamiento de tierras por grandes propietarios.

## Palabras clave

Derecha, agronegocio, Argentina, Brasil, políticas públicas, desigualdad.

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## Introduction

Neoextractivism is presented as a structurally anchored system in Latin American territories. It is a mechanism of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2005) that has an extensive trajectory of exploitation of bodies and territories, that is to say, it is registered as a long-term phenomenon, always to the detriment of the broad social majorities and that of natural goods. In this sense, when we talk about neo-extractivism we refer to a production system characterized by the use of techniques for exploration and exploitation of the environment that have progressively transformed the basic renewable natural assets for life into potentially non-renewable goods, at same time that converts them into commodities (Composto and Navarro, 2014).

Within the framework of neo-extractivism, agribusiness is inscribed as a logic that characterizes the agricultural production of Latin American cou-

ntries, among which are Argentina and Brazil. Thinking about neo-extractivism and, in particular, agribusiness in a political tone requires starting from an interpretation regarding the political forces that govern both countries. A neoliberal wave seems to signal the current Latin American situation dragged by the electoral triumph or the imposition of political forces located to the right of the political spectrum.

The notion of “Right” as a descriptive, classifying and interpretive key of several of the Latin American governments, is not exempt from debates in the academy regarding whether we are facing right-wing forces whose forms and contents are allegedly novel (Giordano, 2014; Natanson, 2017; López Segrera, 2016), or rather, we attend political experiences that, beyond aesthetic/discursive aggrorning, do not differ in essence from the authentic right-wing thinking (Ansaldi, 2017; García Linera, 2016; Sader, 2015).

Within this framework, the present work seeks to characterize these forces that today govern in countries such as Argentina and Brazil, paying primary attention to their policies related to neo-extractive, focusing especially on the agribusiness matrix. This productive system brings together the processes of land grabbing, expansion of agricultural borders, changes in land use driven by the so-called “commodity booms” and in the productive and technological systems (Gras & Hernández, 2013). At the same time, in many cases, it generates collective resistance from the populations that oppose the model.

Given the complex nature of the subject of study, we appeal to a multidisciplinary approach that favored, from the contribution of political science, sociology and economics, a broad approach to the subject in question. To carry out this work we turn to a qualitative methodology where we analyze, in an interpretive way, information from different sources such as official documents, journalistic notes and reports that allow us to address the object of interest from a broad perspective. This will enable us to see changes and continuities at the level of public policies and regulatory frameworks linked to agribusiness in both Argentina and Brazil.

It is important to clarify that this work takes up part of what has been exposed in the 8th Latin American and Caribbean Conference of Social Sciences (CLACSO)<sup>1</sup>, in which we also present the implications that these

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1 The work was titled “Agribusiness after the turn to the right in Argentina and Brazil.” The main objective of this work was to establish the implications that the policies related to agricultural activity unleashed in relation to the social movements responding to agribusiness.

changes in agribusiness generate in the social movements that answer to the hegemonic model of agricultural production.

## **Of governments and production logics**

### **Latin American Rights**

The political turns of recent South America graph, paraphrasing Álvaro García Linera (2016), the development of progressive and conservative waves that have crossed the region. After a first decade of the current century marked by governments with mostly post-neoliberal signs, today's South American societies are largely governed by right-wing expressions.

Even conceiving that the qualifiers "left" and "right" should not be interpreted in the absence of an analytical look in a relational way, especially when it comes to comparing political positions and, in general, public policies, we share that it is possible to distinguish "a priori" peculiarities inherent to each political expression. In other words, although left and right are defined in the plane of otherness ("to the left of" / "to the right of"), there would be "per se" fundamentals that characterize every force of right vis left vis.

We agree with Bobbio (1995) in stating that it is the equality/inequality binomial that distinguishes political forces. While those who strive for greater equality (we are not limited only to the economic orbit) are the leftist forces, the right instead opts for "the conservation of inequality" (Ansaldi, 2017, p. 31).

While the debate about how to characterize the political forces of the beginning of the century failed to be settled (post-neoliberal, progressive, left-wing, etc.), the ongoing governments bring forward new discussions around whether they are indeed new Rights or, in the other hand, they do not distinguish themselves from the Rights of yesteryear (Quiroga & Juncos Castillo, 2018). Even more, the recent regional political course seems to return to the debate over current rights to open the way to discussions about the shift towards extreme rights.

In this paper we will focus on two expressions of the right, that of the two countries of greater relative weight in South America, we refer to the cases of Brazil under the Government of Michel Temer after the dismissal

of Dilma Rousseff in August 2016 and the subsequent Assumption of Jair Bolsonaro in 2019 as well as that of Argentina after the arrival of Mauricio Macri to the National Executive towards the end of 2015. The proposal to inquire about the policies of both governments regarding the agricultural production matrix is a peculiar challenge as long as the characterization of both governments in this area cannot be made without considering the policies of the previous governments in order to reveal, from an exercise comparative analytical, the existence or not of contrasts.

### **Agribusiness, prevailing productive model**

In the current stage of the development of neoliberal capitalism, its predatory nature over underdeveloped countries is exacerbated<sup>2</sup>. Large companies dominate key sectors of production and distribution, as well as the used state-of-the-art technologies. The accumulation is explained by the export of nature and the privatization of common natural goods. It is an organization of the economy based on the dependence of intensive extraction of natural goods, with very low added value, destined for large-scale export and whose price is internationally set.

If we focus on the agricultural production model, it is possible to record, as of the 1990s, changes that imply profound transformations in the actors involved and in the organization processes, granting greater centrality to financial capital and positioning the activity as essentially business which enables economic action in an almost unlimited horizon (Gras & Hernández, 2013).

From the perspective of Gras and Hernández (2013), agribusiness is based on four fundamental pillars: technological, financial, productive and organizational. The implementation of new *technologies* (biotechnology, information and communication) used in agricultural production transformed agricultural production systems, the Latin American region currently is becoming the largest in transgenic crops in the world, with soy being the main crop. Producing under this system leads to an asymmetric dependence on global actors who determine the innovations that comprise the direct sowing

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2 On the predatory and exacerbated character of capitalism in times of neoliberalism see Boron (2004) "Hegemony and imperialism in the international system." Available at: <https://bit.ly/2YhEii0>

system, the transgenic seeds, the agrochemicals, the machinery and equipment, the labor organization and the business management.

The participation of the *financial* capital in the agricultural activity takes place through loans, financing offered by the banks, coverage of climatic risks or future price variations and investment funds. All of this financial activity grew over the years after the liberalization of the regulatory framework and the increase in production volumes from the 1990s. Subsequently, it also grew as a result of the increase in international commodity prices. Through these tools, financial capital speculates and influences the pricing and profitability of the sector in each of the countries of the region, primarily seeking short-term gains.

With respect to the *productive*, agribusiness generates changes in both land and work. The phenomenon of land concentration has deepened in recent decades because the greater efficiency of the productive system is achieved from large scales, the consideration that land is a finite resource and the participation of financial capital in the valuation of this asset.

On the other hand, the work linked to agribusiness has undergone two-way transformations. On the one hand, the outsourcing of some work from the expansion of contractism. On the other hand, each stage of the production process was assumed by a different economic actor establishing a network in the agricultural business. The managers of the network are those whose notion of work is based on cognitive-intellectual practices that require specialized training obtained within the formal education system. In the middle are those responsible for the companies that provide services, the owners or lessees of the lands and the financiers. At the other end of the network are those who perform physical work in agricultural tasks such as the tractor driver, the fumigator, the harvester's machinist, etc.

Regarding the *organizational* aspects, the logic of the family-owned business, has given way to the territory and the global economy that require other scales and knowledge. Family management led to modern management where the entrepreneur moves based on the changing needs of the system and stimulated by marketing, which allows a permanent recomposition of his organization under the business contexts and opportunities. In summary, knowledge and a wide range of competencies related to the global economy, new information, communication and biotechnology technologies, etc. are required.

The development of each of these pillars meant the consolidation of agribusiness as a prevailing production system in the Latin American South.

Likewise, for the strengthening of this productive logic, the deployment of an active construction of legitimacy regarding the benefits of agribusiness as a productive model was fundamental. Both in Brazil and in Argentina it is possible to see institutions that operated in that sense, such is the example of entities such as the Argentine Association of Producers in Direct Sowing (AAPRESID) and the Argentine Association of Regional Consortia of Agricultural Experimentation (AACREA) in Argentina and in Brazil, the Associação Brasileira do Agronegócio (ABAG) and the Federação Brasileira de Plantio Direto e Irrigação (FEBRAPDP).

## **Agribusiness in Argentina and Brazil**

The expression “*República Unida de la Soja*”<sup>3</sup> popularized in an advertising of the transnational Syngenta illustrates the reality of the Latin American Southern Cone and brings up a characteristic of agribusiness: it has no borders. This imaginary “Republic” is made up of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Bolivia.

By 2013, this region covered an area of more than 46 million hectares of transgenic soybean monoculture, fumigated with more than 600 million liters of glyphosate, this process implies the deforestation of at least 500 thousand hectares per year.<sup>4</sup>

Argentina, together with the United States and Brazil, are the three countries with the highest soy production in the world, around 80%. A report prepared by the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA)<sup>5</sup> in 2016 argues that soybeans are Argentina’s main crop not only for production, but for the area occupied. At that time, it represented 55% of the almost 37 million hectares that are sown, followed very far away by corn and wheat crops that, together, accounted for 26%, that is, less than half. In Brazil, meanwhile, the agricultural area monopolized by this oilseed occupies 36.72% while sugarcane (another of the representative crops of Brazilian agribusiness) reaches 13.41% (Guereña, 2016).

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3 United Republic of Soy.

4 Source: “La República Unida de la Soja recargada”, report prepared by GRAIN (2013) Available at: <https://bit.ly/2OwN7Aa>

5 Source: “Soy market statistical report”, report prepared by INTA. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2LTg3jF> (02/10/2018).

Both countries, on the other hand, have high rates of inequality in relation to land ownership. According to the report of the organization OXFAM (Guereña, 2016), the Gini coefficient marks for Argentina 0.83 and for Brazil 0.87. The large agricultural extensions in the hands of few owners registered in these two countries are framed within a subcontinental framework governed by similar patterns.<sup>6</sup>

Although the region has undergone a process of land grabbing throughout its history, it is during the first decade of the 21st century, more precisely since the financial debacle of 2008, that this process is accelerating since the Financial capitals find in the land an area conducive to the reproduction of capital (Frederico & Gras, 2017). The peculiarity of this phenomenon is given by the fact that, in the Latin American Southern Cone, the role played by mega-enterprises of Argentine origin as the gateway for international speculative capital to the region is crucial.

### **Agribusiness in Argentina. From Néstor Kirchner to Mauricio Macri**

Although in the 1970s a process of expansion of soybean production begins due to the preference of this agricultural product to the detriment of others (Giarraca & Teubal, 2013), it is in the mid-1990s when agribusiness begins to consolidate in Argentina when the GMO soy is released to the market. This change in agricultural production includes the implementation of a new technological package based on direct sowing and the massive and intensive use of agrochemicals, causing, at the same time, the expansion of the agricultural frontier and a strong socio-environmental impact - land clearance, loss of native forests, among others— (Gras & Hernández, 2013). This opens the way to the consolidation of agribusiness in Argentina, a system that also favors the control of key sectors of the Argentine agri-food system by large transnational companies. It is important to highlight that the incorporation of these new technologies occurs, according to Basualdo et al. (2013), practically at the same time as in developed countries, which makes Argentina a pioneer in the adoption of the agribusiness technology package.

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6 According to the aforementioned report, 1% of larger farms concentrate more than half of the agricultural area in Latin America. "In other words, 1% of the farms monopolize more land than the remaining 99%" (Guereña, 2016, p. 23).

In the Humid Pampa is where the largest soy production in Argentina is concentrated. This region includes the provinces of Santa Fe, Córdoba, Buenos Aires and La Pampa. Maldonado (2013) presents a series of characteristics of this region: concentration of the economic exploitation of the land; extension of the agricultural frontier through clearing processes; loss of productive diversity; application of technological packages provided by transnational companies that involve direct sowing, transgenic seeds and associated agrochemical packages; increasing prominence of figures of the financial order of association in the sector and decrease of the economically active rural population.

It is important to state that the transformations propelled in the 90s in agricultural matters have not only been maintained but even deepened. In line with the approval of various genetically modified seeds, year after year, the production of transgenics intensified in the area Pampas expanding even to extra-Pampas areas.

The data is not irrelevant when it is possible to verify the political-ideological alternation experienced in the country between a first period with neoliberal signs (governments of Carlos Menem and Fernando de la Rúa) and a political process of postneoliberal characteristics such as the one developed during the Kirchnerismo (governments of Néstor Kirchner and Cristina Fernández). That is to say, even with its economic differences (based on the first in a financial valuation regime in contrast to the internist market bet of the second) and geopolitics (bilateral relations with the United States during the menemism and the search for South American integration under Kirchnerism) The logic of agribusiness not only remained but even deepened. Hence, we agree with Martínez Dougnac (2013) in that:

Despite the novel sign of some of the official policies (...) the essentials of the structural reforms carried out by President Menem would remain. This continuity is particularly evident in the agricultural sector, where much of the inherited trends not only persist, but are also strengthened: agriculture, sojization, economic concentration, predominance of economies of scale (...). (Martínez Dougnac, 2013, p. 334)

In this sense, as the author maintains, in the context of post-convertibility, the characteristics of the dominant agrarian model were deepened. It is that, with a structure of relatively low costs as a result of the recession after the exhaustion of the neoliberal regime, in an international context in rising

commodity prices and a high exchange rate due to the strong devaluation of the national currency (The exchange rate was devalued in a ratio of 4 pesos 1 dollar), agricultural production focused on external demand found the favorable scenario for its expansion.

However, structural continuity regarding the agricultural logic of agribusiness, framed in global patterns of accumulation, should not overshadow public policies implemented during the Kirchnerist governments that enabled the emergence of certain contradictions (or at least tensions) within the hegemony of “Agro as a business”. That is, governmental decisions that, without altering the expansion of a productive logic based on the technological package of transgenics, enabled interpretations regarding conceiving the State in the terms in which Samir Amin (2005) interpreted it, that is, the State not only as the state of capital but also as the result of the dispute between capital and society.

With regard to this, it is feasible to identify at least four legislative provisions whose material scope, although variants, do not cease to mean, at least from the symbolic, controversial decisions for the logic of capital associated with agribusiness:

Law on environmental protection of the native forest (Law 26,331): This law enacted in 2007 establishes the minimum environmental protection budgets for the enrichment, restoration, conservation, exploitation and sustainable management of native forests and the environmental services they provide to the society. It also establishes a system of promotion and criteria for the distribution of funds for the environmental services provided by native forests.

The Agricultural Work Regime (Law No. 26,727) or better known as the “Statute of the Rural Peon.” Among other issues, this law establishes that the remuneration cannot be lower than the current vital and mobile minimum wage; the housing provided to the worker must be solid, built with suitable materials that guarantee an adequate standard of comfort and habitability; the food must be healthy, sufficient, adequate and varied; while the vehicles used for the transfer of rural workers must have been built to transport people. With regards to agricultural work, it must be carried out in adequate hygiene and safety conditions in order to avoid occupational diseases or accidents at work. Finally, this law also prohibits the work of persons under sixteen years of age in all its forms, whether or not there is an employment relationship, and whether it is paid or not.

Law No. 26,737 “Regime for the Protection of National Domain on Property, Possession or Tenure of Rural Lands” that was promulgated in 2011 has as its main objective to regulate, with respect to foreign natural and legal persons, the limits to ownership and possession of rural lands, whatever their intended use or production. Among other provisions, it establishes 15% as a limit to all ownership or possession of rural lands in the national territory to foreigners. This percentage will also be computed on the territory of the province, municipality or equivalent administrative entity in which the rural property is located. Under no circumstances may natural or legal persons, of the same foreign nationality, exceed thirty percent (30%) of that assigned percentage. Rural lands of the same foreign owner may not exceed one thousand hectares (1000 ha) in the core production area, or equivalent area, depending on the territorial location.

In the Law of Historical Reparation of family agriculture for the construction of a new rurality in Argentina (Law No. 27,118) of 2014, family, peasant and indigenous agriculture is declared of public interest for its contribution to food security and sovereignty of people, for practicing and promoting life and production systems that preserve biodiversity and sustainable processes of productive transformation.

This regulation establishes the creation of a Regime of Historical Reparation of Family Farming for the farmer and family farming and family businesses that develop agricultural activity in rural areas with the priority purpose of increasing productivity, food security and sovereignty, value and protect the essential subject from a productive system linked to the eradication of the family in rural areas, based on environmental, social and economic sustainability. In the same way, it establishes the articulation between the national Executive Power and the provinces to favor access to land, considered as a social good, destined for family farming.

Finally, it is unavoidable not to refer to the conflict between agricultural employers and the national government due to the increase in withholdings in 2008<sup>7</sup>. such conflict, as Javier Balsa (2013) points out, reintegrated a long absent debate on the public agenda in Argentina, the agrarian question:

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7 Agricultural employers reluctant to a mobility scheme in the percentage of the rate of export withholdings of commodities promoted by the national government developed an employer lockout of approximately four months to prevent its approval. During that period institutions such as the Argentine Rural Society, Argentine Rural Confederations, CONINAGRO and the Argentine Agrarian Federation carried out various protest actions to prevent the implementation of the resolution.

(...) it was only at the juncture of the conflict that emerged in public debates, that the discussion on the desirable agricultural development model for a democratic country was promoted, more collaterally than directly. Thus, ways of segmentation of withholdings were discussed according to the size of agricultural holdings, a lease bill that would slow down the concentration process and, among other issues, the rights of producer families, peasants and native peoples to access to land (Balsa, 2013, pp. 374-375)

Given that one of the first measures of the Government of Mauricio Macri was the reduction of withholdings on agricultural exports by 5% for soybeans and elimination for corn, wheat, meats, we at least allowed ourselves to ask if the debate around appropriation of agricultural income does not in itself constitute anything more than a quantitative variation of profitability within the agribusiness or if, on the other hand, state appropriation does not imply a constitutive tension with respect to the agricultural logic in question, especially when what defines it the current agricultural logic is the “business” (through private appropriation) over food production.

As of the rise of the *Cambiamos* Alliance, some laws and public policies promoted during the Kirchner government were modified. One case is that of Law 26,727 of Agricultural Work. In November 2015, just three days after the presidential election, the Supreme Court of Justice ruled in favor of a presentation made years earlier by UATRE (Argentine Union of Rural Workers and Dockers), led by Gerónimo “Momo” Venegas, who argued for the annulment of two articles of the new law that implied the creation of the state agency RENATEA (National Registry of Agricultural Workers and Employers) and the liquidation of the non-state public law entity RENATRE (National Registry of Rural Workers and Employers); and the transfer of functions, assets and personnel from the second to the first. After the dissolution of RENATEA, the Government re-established the old National Registry of Rural Workers and Employers (RENATRE), so that it can work again as of January 1, 2017. Given this at the end of 2016, 800 employees were dismissed at RENATEA. In this way, the decline in the rights of rural workers is evidenced.

In 2016, under the pretext of “enabling foreign investments” the Government made more flexible the acquisition of land by foreigners. Through decree 820/2016, he defined that a holder of “more than 51% of the share capital of a legal person” is considered a foreign holder. This changes the

norm that was in force, which defined as a foreigner who owns “a percentage greater than twenty-five percent (25%)”.<sup>8</sup>

As we said before, in 2014, the Family Agriculture Secretariat was created under the Ministry of Agriculture, on which the Undersecretariats for the Execution of Programs for Family Agriculture and Institutional Strengthening depended. In 2017, by decree 302/17, the president proposed a redefinition of the organizational chart of the Ministry of Agribusiness in which the elimination of the former Secretariat of Family Agriculture was formalized, which merges with that of Territorial Coordination and Development and, in fact, it tends to disappear.

Finally, under the government of Mauricio Macri the project has regained strength by the approval of a new seed law aimed at favoring the interests of the large companies that concentrate the production and commercialization of seeds worldwide; this to the detriment of the ancestral forms of agriculture in which the seeds constitute a common good therefore not subject to privatization. In this regard, recently, within the framework of the First National Agrarian Forum (May 7 and 8, 2019) hundreds of peasants and small producers questioned the progress of agribusiness and proposed agroecology as a superior alternative vis a vis the impulse of a comprehensive agrarian reform. The latter explains that the deployment of agribusiness is not free of conflicts and resistance by various groups that face the political decisions that deepen the dispossession mechanisms.

## **Agribusiness in Brazil. From Lula to Temer**

Broadly speaking, we could say that the general characteristics of agribusiness in Brazil bear marked similarities with what happens in Argentina. As we said before, Brazil is one of the most important agricultural producing countries in the world besides being the country with the largest area in Latin America, occupies approximately 8516 million km<sup>2</sup>.

According to the Agricultural Census conducted in 2006, of that total area 330 million hectares were used by the agricultural sector during the period 1996-2006.

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8 Source: <https://bit.ly/2LRUTSU> (10/10/2018).

In the 1990s, two important social conflicts occurred (Corumbiara, Rondônia, in August 1995 and Eldorado de Carajás, Pará, in April 1996) which, in the words of Lauro Mattei (2018), made the agrarian question take hold of the national political agenda at the end of the 20th century. From this it is that the then president Felipe Cardozo, creates the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) to meet the needs of the sector. But it is only from the government of Luis Ignacio “Lula” Da Silva (Workers’ Party) that policies of real scope in order to try to modify the agrarian structure of the country will be implemented.

During the Government of Lula (2003-2010) “the largest number of rural workers settled, representing 52% of the total historically made in the country” (Mattei, 2018, p. 296) responding to the demands of organizations and social movements regarding the need to democratize access to land.

Some of the largest programs under the government management of the Workers Party in terms of the powers of the Ministry of Agrarian Development were the programs of: Rural Worker Documentation (2004); Rural Women Productive Organization (2008); Agrarian and Funding Credit Reorganization (2003); Food acquisition (2003); Food and Nutrition security (2003).

Even within the framework of a notable expansion of agribusiness during the first decade of the 21st century, the aforementioned programs, framed in II National Agrarian Reform Plan (PRNA), meant a qualitative and quantitative contribution to a type of agriculture that endowed the Brazilian countryside of greater sustainability, of incentive to family agriculture and agroecological production.

On the other hand, during the Government of Dilma Rousseff (2011-2015), although it is possible to highlight, as Miguel Altieri points out, the importance of the creation of the National Policy of Agroecology and Organic Production,<sup>9</sup> the truth is that there was a slowdown in the number of settled families, drastically reducing the distribution of land for agrarian reform: “(...) throughout its management, approximately 25 000 families per year were settled on average, compared to a average of 76 700 families per

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9 Art. 1 The National Policy of Agroecology and Organic Production-PNAPO is established, with the objective of integrating, articulating and adapting policies, programs and actions that induce the agroecological transition and of organic and agroecological production, contributing to sustainable development and the quality of life of the population, through the sustainable use of natural resources and the supply and consumption of healthy foods. Source: <https://bit.ly/1hKM06C>

year during the two previous administrations of Lula (2003-2010) “(Guereña, 2016, p. 13).

This phenomenon, however, cannot be fully interpreted unless an integral analysis in relation to the future of the PT’s exercise of political power is carried out. As we have analyzed on another occasion (Forlani, 2019) there was indeed a shift in the economic policy of the government of Dilma Rousseff from a heterodox policy inaugurated by “Lula” Da Silva towards a certain orthodoxy of neoliberal characteristics. We assume that the Rousseff government considered that, by restarting a cycle of greater accumulation for the private sector (via rising interest rates, fiscal adjustment and guarantees to legal security), the pressures of the conservative sectors would cease and, in the heat of an increase in private investment, workers affected by the policies of transfer of resources would benefit from the spill of future economic growth. In other words “the neoliberal policies carried out after the electoral triumph undermined the bases of popular support for the PT while exalting the concentrated sectors of Brazil (...) which, seeing the weakness of the Rousseff government, finally arranged her dismissal” (Forlani, 2019, s/n).

After the coup towards the legitimate president of Brazil, the Government of Michel Temer operated in agrarian matters, dismantling the institutional framework that, beyond its objective limitations, sought to protect the logics and dissenting actors from the agribusiness model. This is illustrated by the destructuring of the food acquisition program and of the technical assistance and rural extension (Mattei, 2018).

Among the most important consequences we can observe, on the one hand, a deepening of violence and, on the other, a greater inequality: “(...) only in 2016 were killed 59 people involved in the struggle for agrarian reform in the country, a number that has not happened since 2003, when 71 people were killed “(Mattei, 2018, p. 305, own translation).

Likewise, the historically vulnerable sectors of Brazilian agriculture were not found in the priority agenda of public policies linked to the sector. Even more, official policy tended to further deepen their exclusion situation. In fact, during 2016 and 2017, no new family was settled, while no agrarian settlement project was created (Mattei, 2018). The administration during the Temer interval meant the destructuring of the state institutional orbit aimed at reducing inequalities in Brazilian agriculture. Programs, areas and technical bodies of assistance to small peasant units and/or small producers were emptied and dismantled, all as a result of a marked budget reduction.

During the first months of the Government of Jair Bolsonaro (took power on January 1, 2019) the situation regarding agrarian reality seems to express more continuities than ruptures. In fact, shortly after, the Ministry of Agriculture fell to Teresa Cristina da Costa who presided over the agribusiness bench in the Chamber of Deputies.

Concomitant with this, one of the first presidential decrees established the transfer of the main activities carried out by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) to the Ministry of Agriculture, activities that included the identification, delimitation and demarcation of indigenous lands. This would imply that these could end up under the ownership of large landowners to the detriment of the original peoples, expanding the structural inequality that this Latin American country suffers.

## **Conclusions**

In this work we made an overview of the policies related to agribusiness as productive logic promoted both in Brazil and in Argentina. For this, we turned to the main measures implemented by the governments linked to the Latin American progressive wave (Néstor and Cristina Kirchner in Argentina and Lula Da Silva and Dilma Rousseff in Brazil) and compare them with what happened with those policies when governments positioned to the right of the political spectrum (Mauricio Macri and Michel Temer) assumed the national governments of both countries.

The neo-liberal public policies promoted by right-wing governments in Argentina and Brazil enhance and deepen social and economic inequalities in both countries. These are decisions that favor the interests of large companies and landowners over peasants and small producers.

The right-wing policies of the analyzed countries in this work intensify the extractivist matrix of the development projects promoted during the “progressive decade” in both countries. However, unlike what happened in recent years, the income generated by the minimum withholdings imposed on these activities does not seem to be used in programs that favor the internal logic of production and consumption, nor for the generation of new sources of work or policies public that benefit the most vulnerable sectors of society. On the contrary, the measures adopted lead to a greater widening of the inequality gap in both countries.

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## The Left in the postmodern storm: The pitfalls of thinking about a policy of more social justice in the era of post-factualism

*La Izquierda en la tormenta posmoderna: Los escollos para pensar  
una política de más justicia social en la era postfáctica*

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### **Abstract**

*There is a strong political malaise in what refers to the Left. This feeling of confusion can be explained by the advent of postmodernity and the numerical disruption that have transformed society and subjectivities. The post-truth politics of the so-called post-factual shows a loss of ethical values, replaced by discourses based on emotionality and imaginary identifications. The transhumanist vision of the world, supported by cybernetics and above all genetic engineering, promotes the idea of a quantified being, freed from the social bond. It points to a model of atomized and inequitable society, and to the accentuation of the ecological crisis. The Left has not reflected on these transformations and does not offer alternatives to counteract the societal destructuring due to neoliberalism. The struggle towards the collective reappropriation of human life and nature could open the way to a new ideal of the Common Good.*

### **Keywords**

*Common good, inequality, monetization, post-factualism, post-truth politics, transhumanism.*

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### **Resumen**

Existe un fuerte malestar político en lo que se refiere a la Izquierda. Este sentimiento de confusión puede explicarse por el advenimiento de la posmodernidad y la disrupción numérica que han transformado la sociedad y las subjetividades. La *post-truth politics* de la llamada era postfáctica muestra una pérdida de valores éticos, remplazados por discursos fundados en la emotividad e imaginarios identificatorios. La visión transhumanista del mundo, apoyada por la cibernética y sobre todo la ingeniería genética, promueve la idea de un ser cuantificado, liberado del lazo social. Apunta a un modelo de sociedad atomizado y desigualitario, y a la acentuación de la crisis ecológica. La Izquierda no ha reflexionado sobre estas transformaciones y no ofrece alternativas para contrarrestar la desestructuración societal debida al neoliberalismo. La lucha hacia la reapropiación colectiva de la vida humana y de la naturaleza, podría abrir el camino hacia un nuevo ideal de Bien Común.

### **Palabras clave**

Bien común, desigualdad, monetización, política de la posverdad, postfáctico, transhumanismo.

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In this brief essay, we have chosen to talk about the Left in general, as far as what is proposed is valid for a large majority of Lefts, from the most centrist to the most radical. It should be added that this reflection is essentially based on political situations in Europe and Latin America, which present essential similarities despite very different contexts. Finally, the field in which this work is inscribed could be called 'Political Psychoanalysis', a thematization of Lacanian psychoanalysis but which already has famous representatives such as Slavoj Žižek, for example.

### **Disorientation**

At present, it is very common to hear that there are no differences between the Left and the Right, a comment that is directed above all to the Left parties. It is revealing of the deep malaise that permeates political life in today's world and, especially, the difficulty that the Left has to propose alternatives to the increasingly large inequalities in the socioeconomic order because it feels unarmed at the time of responding to societal changes that have accompanied postmodernity and the cyber and digital revolution. Nor

has the Left questioned the evolution of the social bond and the subjective sensitivity that have accompanied these transformations. It looks like a ship in the middle of a storm that does not find a direction to guide its navigation.

Since the birth of capitalism, profound divergences have divided the main political currents of modern countries between left and right. For the Right, entrenched in the principles of capitalism, the programmatic guidelines are clearly defined by macroeconomic objectives, the safeguarding of the means of production by private hands and the maintenance of the banking system, with the idea that the tranquility and stability of the dominant class is the best guarantee of employment and, therefore, of decent living conditions for the rest of the population. In return, traditionally, the parties that claim a position of the Left have given the preeminence to the people who make up the community, so that social and redistributive purposes have prevailed in their programs, with policies that put the welfare of citizens and citizens social justice above financial and economic development.

To these, we must add parties organized around nationalist values that have resurfaced after a certain lethargy; they have no programmatic proposals beyond ethnic and religious salvation, with a superficial ideology glorifying race and *Heim*, to which disadvantaged indigenous classes are easily identified, despite the fact that they generally maintain strong ties with economic elites of your country.

As for Communism, often equated with totalitarianism, it has fallen into “misfortune” and has been removed from the politically correct vocabulary. For the most part, the parties related to this line have disappeared from the world stage, leaving the word almost exclusively linked to countries with regimes that no longer maintain anything of communist values, as is the case of China, instead of opening the space to the analysis of ‘the communist idea’, as Alain Badiou (2009) suggests.

Finally, the term ‘populism’, an empty signifier, as defined by Laclau (2004, 2005), applies to very diverse and opposite political models, which are far-right or more radical lefts, or the so-called Latin American ‘populisms’ that have implemented important social reforms. This lack of definition accentuates the feeling of current programmatic undifferentiation. Historically, there has been a radical difference in the way society is conceived between Right and Left. As Jean-François Lyotard explains in *The Postmodern Condition* (1979), for the first, society constitutes a ‘whole’, a ‘self-regulated’ set in which technocrats, with the help of cybernetics, play a deci-

sive role in ensuring proper functioning and performative efficiency based on competitiveness, with the aim of improving ‘the life of the system’ and, therefore, that of its members (pp. 26-27). While, until recently at least, the Left, heiress of Marx’s capitalist ‘political economy criticism’, was based on the idea of a society divided and encouraged by the class struggle, based on a critical analysis, reflective or hermeneutical ‘that interrogated the’ values’ and the ‘ends’ employed to achieve economic goals (pp. 28-29).

But, at the end of the twentieth century, the process of accelerated digitization has drastically changed the scenario; and, in political discourses, the gap between one and the other was narrowed, with the diffuse feeling that there is only one path for humanity. Lyotard writes: “The alternative (between two models of society) still belongs to a thought by oppositions that does not correspond to the liveliest modes of postmodern knowledge” (p. 29), and does not allow us to understand what is happening, “what some analyze as the dissolution of the social bond, with the passage of social collectivities to the state of a mass composed of individual atoms thrown into an absurd Brownian movement<sup>1</sup>” (p. 31). The truth is that, since the publication of *The Postmodern Condition* in 1979, the numerical maelstrom has extended to almost the entire planet, transforming societies into sums of isolated individuals represented by statistical graphs and, right around the corner, over the entire population thanks to the *big data* that seek to produce accurate information about each individual. What is worrisome is that, with the support of transhumanism, a futuristic ideology according to neoliberal ambitions, the structure of the human subject’s thinking is changing in depth, a change that crosses all spheres of sociocultural life.

In this context of numbers and technology, traditional politics appears as a parasitic activity that undermines social coexistence. Which explains the strong disaffection suffered by politicians, considered as incompetent, without authentic representation, usually deaf and, above all, corrupt. How often do you hear a rookie candidate, often well known in the world of sports, entertainment or an entrepreneur, boasting about not being ‘political’, as if it were proof of personal value not stained by commitments and dark interests. What makes said candidate attractive seems to be his distance from traditional parties and, moreover, the rejection of any political project

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1 The ‘Brownian movement’ is the random movement that is observed in the particles that are in a fluid medium (liquid or gas), as a result of collisions with the molecules of said fluid (Wikipedia).

that proposes greater justice and social changes; as if occupying a place of power was essentially a matter of image and casting, while the discussions around the actions necessary to improve the well-being of the population and achieve equitable redistribution do not interest anymore, since, supposedly, traditional politics should be replaced by a 'rational administration' carried out by technocrats (Zizek, 2015, p. 351).

The problem that corrodes the socialists as well as the communists, is that their object of attention and the axis of their programmatic construction have become invisible as society has changed its face and that the idea of a community united by symbolic and ethical values has vanished under a lot of numbers. And they don't know how to elaborate political proposals, since there are only individual actors freed, according to what they believe, from the sociocultural tradition experienced as an outdated conventionalism. The movement of the Yellow Vests in France that refuse to gather around any flag, clearly reflects the political disorganization and the ideological malaise of the current world.

From there, the uneasiness of different wings of the left that do not find a grip, nor do they offer the time to reformulate proposals based on the new subjectivities. There are no more militants committed to action on the ground, and no one pays attention to their speeches, so many left-wing politicians no longer speak out on international issues - the case of Venezuela is particularly striking in this regard - and, when not they can do something else, they just appear on the public scene without giving their opinion about the moral aspects that could compromise their politically correct image. Moreover, the word 'progressive', another empty signifier in the sense of Ernesto Laclau (2004) if one does not analyze to what progress it is referring to, becomes the alibi against any deeper elaboration. In fact, for many, to be progressive is to adhere without hesitation to the promotion of a digitalized society under the transhumanist ideal, with the conviction that there is no other option than Development, with a capital D.

This situation shows that the discourses promoted by the numerical society also cross the Left and justify much of the desert of political thought evident in the traditional parties; which does not represent a stumbling block for the Right when this theoretical fog favors its sidereal navigation based on numbers more than human experiences.

## A digitized and monetized society

The numerical revolution shapes postmodernity, but understanding it implies going back to the birth of statistics. In a book whose title can be translated “When the world became a number” (2016), Olivier Rey explains: “The presence of statistical thought finds its origin [...] in a transformation of the ways of being a collective”, as a result of the social social misery ‘and the loss of common symbolic references at the end of the 18th century’ (p. 16): “The social mutations, induced by the industrial and political revolutions, were decisive in the ‘great leap forward’ of statistics in the nineteenth century,” in particular ‘the social issue’ (p. 17). It was then that statistics gradually transformed into a way to quantify reality to offer a graphic description of the main societal problems or, at least, of those that interested the researchers. Associated with cybernetics and computer science, they led to a numerical interpretation of life and a numerical view of the world that reduced the speaking being to a simple accounting individual. Because due to digitalization, everything human, and also the material, became measurable and susceptible of transforming into statistical indicators; to the point that: “It is no longer personal experience, but statistics that we must rely on from now on to know what to think about reality” (p. 9).

In this way, statistics have become ‘a total social fact’, according to Marcel Mauss’ expression, “a fact that concerns the whole of society and its institutions, and affects [...] all aspects of social life” (p. 15). In parallel with the statistics, monetization seized social life; As Georg Simmel wrote in 1900, quoted by Rey (p. 16): “Monetary economics (...) has introduced the ideal of numerical expression into practical life”; everything can be transformed into money, a phenomenon inherent to neoliberalism, with reducing effects on morality and justice in a society of pure numbers.

The new computer logic and the quantification that accompanies it have affected institutional discourses and their legitimacy, by implying a new grammar of the social order without reflection on the ethical principles that support it; and the community is diluted in a sum of individuals and statistics that transform everything into numbers, needs, occupations, complaints, diseases, etc., so that the subjects once subject to the same laws and the same cultural values, are increasingly dispossessed of their symbolic identity and the features that specified and distinguished them from others, while gradually losing their *ethos*. In this context, the relationship with the other,

the one belonging to the same group or the foreigner becomes fragile to the extent that collective values erode and lose their cohesive force, so that the person, deprived of symbolic references, seeks desperately speculative and imaginary identifications, while fiercely rejecting those who do not seem like it, without the possibility of creating a social bond of exchange and reciprocity - it is the typical problem of postmodern nationalisms resulting from the disaggregation of the social bond and that, at In spite of being limited in an offer of a superficial imagery such as the type of clothing or the cut - or the color - of hair, they allow the individual to feel part of a group and therefore recognized among peers.

## **Postmodernity and other post**

Postmodernity is undoubtedly the origin of the many “post” of today’s world, although it does not refer to the disappearance of a previous time but rather to the evolution of modernity increasingly distant from the past from which it was born: “Designates the state of culture after the transformations that have affected the rules of the games of science, literature and arts since the end of the nineteenth century”; with “disbelief in front of meta-narratives” (Lyotard, 1979, p. 7). The advent of postmodernism reflects the introduction of a new logic of thought and a new subjective grammar due to the rapid extension of the process of digitalization and computerization of daily life, that leads to the decomposition of the social bond, correlative with worldwide expansion of neoliberalism (Dupret, 2018, p. 35).

In postmodernity, the registration of the Symbolic, as Lacan puts it, loses its socializing value due to the tendency to discredit the great cultural, religious or secular traditions, and with the bracketing of the principle of reality, so that the relationship between the individual and the collective, the singular and the plural is disrupted and the ideal of common good and social justice crumbles. This structural change, at the level of both sociocultural and subjective *ethos*<sup>2</sup>, results in the fading of the feeling of being part of a community of thought and life. In fact, this evolution is reflected in the discursive landscape with the appearance of some new expressions such as

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2 Although *ethos* is not yet widely used word, it seems very appropriate to talk about what some like Lévi-Strauss have called collective unconscious.

post-truth or post-factual, which clear the everyday scene to give way to transhumanism, a millenarian myth that deludes the human being with the idea of an eternal life. exempt from suffering, though, it should be specified, for those who have the means to acquire this luxury...

The truth is that, in this last decade, the signifiers starting with ‘pos(t)’ have multiplied<sup>3</sup>, postmodern, post-factual, post-truth, but also post-populism, post-philosophy, or even post-history, the latter with a semantic weight that has not yet been calibrated. The question is to understand what the insistent use of this prefix reveals. It is loaded with meaning and sometimes refers to what is behind in opposition to what is ahead in the space plan but, also many times, refers to a before compared to a later, a temporality that results from a succession of moments, or even a closure, in which case the ‘post’ would come to reveal something past, a time out of order, something that is no longer valid, an outdated thought without legitimacy to deal with current phenomena. This *post-mortem* value is presented as a declaration of death with respect to the foregoing, underlining the lack of interest in the past with an affirmation of a present without debt to the past. Understood in this way, the post cancels the dialectic as a constructive principle of thought and wipes the slate clean of the idea of stages and moments of reflection, especially ethics, in scientific processes. Likewise, the idea of ‘post-history’, a variant of the end of History that Francis Fukuyama announced, and, therefore, the end of dialectical materialism and class struggle; that is, the appearance of a world in which the human being becomes an extraterrestrial without roots, immersed in the immediacy of the present, without the possibility of projecting into a future; because without a past, there is no imaginable future. But also, almost insurmountable structural difficulties so that a social group can consider actions to open a path to less oppressive destinations.

## Post-factual and post-truth

Other pos(t) are less disturbing at first sight, such as post-factual and post-truth, although they bring to light the change in subjectivity they highlight, as well as the new ways of thinking about the world that gradually infiltrate current rationality, in accordance with the neoliberal model and the promo-

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3 Another increasingly fashionable prefix is ‘trans’ with its conscious and unconscious values...

tion of consumerism, and with imaginary science fiction and technological advances without limits sustained by the mirages of cybernetics at the service of the market. The phrase ‘post-truth politics’, made fashionable in 2010 by David Roberts in a blog for Grist magazine, dedicated to the defense of the environment, was recognized in 2016 as neologism of the year by the Oxford English Dictionary. Since then it has spread, associated with the expression post-factualism and in relation to fake news. The term “post-truth” contains some ambiguity to the extent that it gives the impression of validating what, precisely, is denouncing, a “post-factual” policy that does not take into account the criterion of truth; and indeed, it gives the impression that it no longer needs to be based on the truth of the facts. The question is to know to what extent the dimension of the idea of truth can be dispensed with, in order to maintain a minimum of order and a peaceful coexistence. It is worth asking to what extent a human ‘society’, etymologically a society of people who “have consented to go together ‘ad symbolum’” (memory around shared symbols), (Legendre, 2001 p. 47, note 1, citing Isidoro of Seville), by accepting a common Reference, can they do without the function of truth?

To speak is to implicitly recognize the existence of a truth value in terms of words and discourses, and includes the option of lying. The criterion of truth — *adequatio intellectus cum rem* — allows judging the validity of the relationship between words and things and has to do with the content of the sentences and the coherence of the sentences and the discursive structure. In this sense, the truth (or falsehood) of assertions goes through all human constructions, as well as the subject’s ability to relate to the reality that surrounds him and, therefore, to other human beings.

Nor can the concept of truth be dispensed with when talking about justice. When questioning a witness in court, he is required to say “the whole truth and only the truth,” that is, describe the reality of the facts as accurately as possible; lying would mean a punishable transgression and would consist - or did it consist? - in a major ethical fault. One cannot corner the truth principle with impunity; and the myth of the tower of Babel illustrates the sociocultural collapse when each opts for their own linguistic ‘truth’. Therefore, the bracketing of the truth creates uneasiness, confusion and distrust of politics and any future projects.

The truth is that the lack of love for the truth produces a strong discomfort in relations with the next as well as with the other when replacing the pact of the word with imaginary identities characteristic of nationalisms.

Undoubtedly, the threatening perception of the migrant has a lot to do with uncertainty about the way in which new arrivals will behave, since they have other customs, other beliefs that are assimilated to wrong and sometimes dangerous social values.

The Oxford Dictionary defines the post-truth predicate as follows: “Relating or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief”. The ‘post’ attached to the word truth indicates not so much an evolution of meaning, but the denial of its moral and pragmatic value in social structure. And post-truth politics, by nurturing the imaginary to the detriment of the accuracy of the word, encourages an adulteration of the facts and a programmed misinformation at the service of hidden interests, with major consequences on the orientation of the policies within a country or even worldwide. It is no accident that the expression was born on the subject of Watergate; and spread with Brexit and the electoral campaign of Donald Trump, both linked to popular voting (a referendum and a presidential election, respectively). Katharine Viner, in an article entitled “How technology disrupted the truth”, published in *The Guardian* of June 2016, drew attention to the collusion of post-truth with fake news, explaining the political impacts of the use of information distortion that, far from being innocent, respond to precise motivations and objectives. Because the manipulation of public opinion in order to obtain their support is intended to deceive and confuse. But the truth is that disinterest in truth is not limited to electoral campaigns as shown by the world of lobbying and influencers. There is no doubt that Venezuela is an exemplary case of fake news and post-truth politics with more lying information than proven facts.

Around the word post-factualism, composed with a ‘post’ added to the word factualism, a new ethic has been developed that detracts from the concordance between words and facts. In the Oxford Dictionary, factual thinking of the early twentieth century is defined as: “Any theory that treats facts as being of prime importance, originally especially in moral matters; the theory that moral conclusions can be drawn from factual data alone”. Gilles Gauthier comments on this regard:

We have entered a ‘post-factual era’ in which the consideration of reality would have become an accessory [...]. The widespread use of lies and emotions by political actors seems to be the most obvious illustration and,

without a doubt, one of the causes of the suppression of the consideration of the facts in the public debate. (2018, p. 2)

To explain this unprecedented situation in its current dimension, Gauthier emphasizes that, despite being related, the concepts of information and communication are distinguished in terms of the apprehension of the reality of the facts referred to. The information, he writes, “has as a condition of possibility the recognition of a reality” (p. 2), so that from “this formal subordination of information with respect to (this) reality the question of truth “(id.); it is true or false according to whether or not it offers an exact representation of reality. On the contrary, when it comes to communication, “its relationship with the real is secondary” (p. 3); “What is important is the interrelation, sharing, dialogue” (p. 3), it is less about “really than ‘truthfulness’: its criteria of appreciation are sincerity and authenticity rather than accuracy and adequacy to the real “(p. 3), and revolves around the fact of” sharing opinions and emotions “. The reality vanishes, the truth loses its importance and in return, it grows “an intersubjective relationship between journalists and their audiences, a more conversational and fun way of press discourse, as well as a larger space for comments” (p. 3). C. Bybee and J. Ettema, two authors to which Gauthier refers (p. 4) “had described the post-factual age as the emergence of the mixture of genres between journalism, fiction, entertainment and advertising”, which implies a “Distance from the facts [the factual] in the political discourse and the press”; “Communication produces a representation that institutes/presents as real; it is a place of co-construction of a new reality” (p. 3). The post-factual is related to the very powerful anti-realist philosophical point of view in our days” (p. 3), therefore, “the existence of an outside world and the ability to produce knowledge are in doubt, or even radically denied” (p. 3). This departure from factual reality is very congruent with the transhumanist worldview in which the postmodern discourses of unlimited progress rest.

## **Transhumanism and the genetic modification of the human being**

Transhumanism is a new current of thought (The World Transhumanist Association was created in 1998 and is studied in several universities) that advocates the creation of a new individual, freed from its natural bonds and limi-

tations imposed by reality, through state-of-the-art techniques, particularly genetics. For Olivier Rey (2018), the idea of transhumanism expresses the desire that “humans give rise to more effective/performative beings” (p. 9):

The technological development was first oriented towards the outside world. But the time has come when it is thinkable, not only to transform the world but to humans themselves - be it by interventions on their biological constitution or by hybridization with the machine [...]: Humans thus improved, augmented, would no longer be precisely humans but beings of another order, post-human. (pp. 14-15)

According to the great voices of transhumanism, this transformation will become possible thanks to a conscious and provoked human biological evolution that neglects ‘natural selection’ (p. 8). ‘In the intellectual and cultural plan’, it maintains “the desirable of a fundamental improvement of the human condition through new technologies” and in practical terms, proposes “to study and promote all the technologies that can serve this objective — among others —, orienting public policies and financing in this end” (p. 15). In summary, it is about ‘modifying human’ existence with ‘incremental’ innovations (which modify what already exists), but above all with ‘disruptive innovations’ that break with the past (p. 16).

Transhumanism is not presented as a science and its statements are not intended to account for a state of the world, nor to elaborate a theory; but it maintains an intrinsic relationship with neurosciences and artificial intelligence; and it is based on a maximized technological development without ethical considerations. In appearance, it is not an ideology either, in the sense of a system of ideas that inspire a government, a party, or that offer guidelines for social and economic decisions (Rocher, 1977, p. 475); however, it guides and even encourages the political options related to its vision of humanity, which corresponds to the definition of ideology as “set of ideas, beliefs of a certain epoch, a society, or a class” (Le Robert). Above all, it plays a decisive role in determining the axes of future research, precisely those that will benefit from very high funding. It is not intended to be a philosophy or a reflection on human nature, and its relationship with the world, but it is based on a vision of the human as defective, “a state that must be overcome” (p. 15), a weak being that It must be transformed.

Therefore, the most appropriate word to designate transhumanism is that of cosmology, although a particular cosmology in that it is not about con-

temptation, but proposes to modify reality and recreate the cosmos. In this sense, it has many of the ingredients of a religion whose object of worship would be a futuristic technology at the service of infinite progress towards the liberation of the individual from his natural constraints, a world of fiction and fantasy, far from pain and death. However, on the horizon of this myth, some disturbing aspects are drawn with greater consequences for the thinking subject and the social bond, among which the issue of subjective ethics, the socioeconomic plan and, finally, the ecological environment have a special relevance for any political project of the Left.

Indeed, transhumanism not only gives technological advances a central role, but also presents its dictum as to the form of future life. In the field of genetics, innovative manipulation capabilities become necessities, so that the discourse of technology without contextualization can serve alarming purposes, far beyond concrete proposals, insofar as it excites with the idea that there are no limits to the fulfillment of the most foolish desires - let's think about male pregnancy. Everything seems possible without being accompanied by a reflection on the moral consequences of interventions that modify the physiological nature of the human being. When one speaks of the right to have children or of cloning, the ethical question becomes inescapable, however, in fact, it is increasingly obliterated for ideological and economic reasons. There is much more money for research on fertility methods even after menopause than for psychological support for damaged childhoods.

Of course, these budget allocations have major political consequences.

Technology in effect, as it becomes more complex and the pace of innovation increases, marginalizes and necessarily eliminates democracy. The more technology is sophisticated, the more democracy must yield to technocracy. (pp. 122-123)

In any case, the transhumanist ideal rests on technological treatments only available to the richest and is intimately linked to consumerism without looking at its societal consequences. And in fact, it takes into consideration the isolated person, unconcerned with collective and environmental interests:

Those who announce the advent of artificial super intelligences and cyborgs are founded, to justify their prophecies, in prolonged technological development curves [...]. But [...] they ignore other curves, which allow us to foresee that the material conditions necessary for the continuation of this development will no longer be met. (King, 2018, p. 170)

The production of an egotistical superhuman, that is a ‘quantified self’ (p. 8) measured according to its consumption capacity, has the price of ‘subject dehumanization’ and the end of the social bond.

Despite these findings, many leftist parties applaud the idea of ‘Progress’ sustained by transhumanism, and value technological advances as such, instead of facing them critically, based on a more just, equitable and solidarity social project to counteract ecological storms. Already in his time Trotsky wrote: “Man will rise to a higher level, create a higher biological and social type or, if they want, a superman” (quoted by King, p. 168). What is usually forgotten is that only the most powerful will be able to benefit from these advances and protect themselves against the devastating effects of “our dependence on nature” and “the increasing precariousness of our condition” (p. 171).

This enthusiasm is explained because transhumanism supports the idea of a being freed from earthly bonds, a superman without castration in psychoanalytic terms. But its seductive effect and the credibility on which it rests can only be explained by the spectacular successes of cybernetics and digitalization. Planetary networks of communication, genetic engineering, artificial intelligence: progress is immense; and the promises of a virtual world away from suffering and death, encouraging; But it’s a farce. Bernard Stiegler (2016) writes:

It will not be possible to combat transhumanist discourse if it is not repolitized - if the issue of disruption does not appear in it as a mismatch between technical system, social systems and biophysical systems, and, consequently, as the need for a new public power (p.151)

It is what the Left still does not seem to have heard.

## **The Left in search of a new paradigm**

This journey of words and discourses typical of the post-factual era and the digitalized society traces the landscape of postmodernism and brings to light some causes of the disorientation of the Left in the face of the destructuring of human communities, gradually reduced to myriad of beings isolated in their egocentric bubble and connected by virtual networks. The Left no longer knows, in whose name is it talking? nor in favor of what social

ethics is fighting for? For which it usually aligns with the policies of a United Right around its mercantile concerns and its transhumanist ideal of privatization and monetization of the individual and the planet. It has forgotten the axial values that served its as goals, such as social justice or equality, and also fails to get rid of nationalist claims conceived by post-truth policies with its answers, by the way, superficial and emotional, but effective in appeasing the human need of feeling protected by glorious identifications.

At the end of this essay, here are some suggestions of topics and elaborations necessary for the Left if it does not want to get lost in the path of uncertainty. First, it cannot do without the hard work of rethinking itself: In today's world, what does the 'Left' signifier from a political perspective cover? a reflection to which all parties that recognize themselves under this name should participate. Secondly, it is convenient to analyze, in the face of disaggregation and socio-cultural dispersion, what constitutes a Society and a Community today. A pause time to examine what so-called 'Progress' means is essential and requires adequate studies in terms of what are the elements of this Progress that can create more humanity? And what are those who atomize social life and enclose the subject in a bodily self, detached from others? This aspect is particularly relevant when it comes to genetic manipulation, artificial intelligence and cybernetics. Likewise, the responses to the ecological challenge require limiting development and technical advances based on sustainable and renewable proposals, designed within a humanistic dimension. In this way, the Left will be in a position to offer a political framework to citizen solidarity initiatives and to the actions of associative movements, often orphaned by support, at the same time, economic, social and cultural. In summary, the reappropriation of the symbolic and ethical values that form the background of a coexistence based on a minimum of harmony around the idea of a Common Good, could be a paradigm for the Left to redefine its projects and programs around some axes consistent with their initial societal proposals.

It should be noted that, in this text, no reference has been made to some valuable attempts to promote policies clearly geared towards improving the living conditions of the community. However, even in these exceptional cases, there is a lack of sufficient work of reflection and theoretical and pragmatic elaboration to counteract the devastating effects of numerical disruption in society, so that the changes carried out hardly resist the aggressive return of the neoliberalism.

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**Abusive Constitutionalism  
and Effective Judicial Protection.  
The Beginning of Institutional Shutdown  
in Venezuela**

***Constitucionalismo abusivo y tutela judicial efectiva  
El comienzo del quiebre institucional venezolano<sup>1</sup>***

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### **Abstract**

*During the last two decades Venezuela has been subjected to a process of very important political changes. In this period, surged New the Constitution in 1999 and there have been different attempts to reform and amend it. In addition, its text has been interpreted through the different mechanisms of constitutional control that it foresees. In addition to the above, the Venezuelan Supreme Court of Justice has produced at least one hundred sentences in its different Chambers in which the powers of the National Assembly have been directly influenced. This investigation seeks to determine specifically if the judicial decision 001 of its Electoral Chamber of December 7, 2016 and those related to it constitute a case of the so-called abusive constitutionalism violating the judicial and effective protection of those who were the recipients. This article will argue the former by analyzing: (i) the background of the above-mentioned judicial decision; (ii) The subsequent violation of the following rights: to be heard, due process and effective judicial protection; (iii) If the judicial decision 001 (2016) is the starting point of “abusive constitutionalism” in Venezuela; (iv) The challenges of ‘abusive constitutionalism’ in the enhancement of Venezuelan democracy. Finally, the paper will end with a section of conclusions.*

### **Keywords**

*Constitutional democracy, due process, autocratical regime, Supreme Court of Justice of Venezuela, right to be heard.*

### **Resumen**

En las últimas dos décadas Venezuela ha estado sometida a un proceso de cambios políticos muy importantes. En tal lapso se ha aprobado la Constitución de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela (1999) y luego han tenido lugar diversos intentos orientados a reformarla y enmendarla. Además, su texto ha sido interpretado mediante los diferentes mecanismos de control constitucional que ella prevé. Sin embargo, el Tribunal Supremo de Justicia venezolano desde el 2015 ha producido, en sus diferentes Salas, al menos cien sentencias en las cuales se ha influido progresivamente sobre las competencias o atribuciones del poder legislativo; es decir, la Asamblea Nacional. Este trabajo examinará si la sentencia 001 de la Sala Electoral del Tribunal Supremo de Venezuela, del 07 de diciembre de 2016 y sus subsecuentes resoluciones judiciales, configuran un caso del llamado ‘constitucionalismo abusivo’ que desembocó en una afectación sustancial al derecho fundamental a la tutela judicial y efectiva de las personas afectadas por el citado precedente constitucional. Así, el presente artículo se estructurará de la siguiente manera: (i) se examinarán los antecedentes de la referida sentencia judicial; (ii) la consecuente vulneración a los derechos al debido proceso, derecho a ser oído y derecho a la tutela judicial efectiva; (iii) La sentencia 001 como puntapié inicial del ‘constitucionalismo abusivo’ en Venezuela; (iv) Los retos que plantea el constitucionalismo abusivo para la consolidación democrática en Venezuela. Por último, el trabajo finalizará con un balance conclusivo.

### **Palabras clave**

Democracia constitucional, debido proceso, régimen autocrático, Tribunal Supremo de Justicia de Venezuela, derecho a ser oído.

## Introduction

It is important to highlight that this work is developed from the violation of the right to jurisdiction, the right to defense and due process of some deputies to the National Assembly of Venezuela, who were elected in December 2015. The historical evolution of the rights involved in such a case makes it possible to illuminate an answer to the challenging question: is the Venezuelan State a democratic regime? A solution to this question could be negative if the behavior of the Supreme Court of Justice of Venezuela was observed. In fact, that court seems to go through the path of the so-called “abusive constitutionalism”; that is, constitutional changes have been introduced - in this case through precedents of the highest Venezuelan court - that undermine the fundamental pillars of democracy (Landau, 2013).

What has been said above places us in a perspective that will allow us to understand not only how effective judicial tutelage is lived in the life of Venezuelan citizens involved in agonal politics, but also in the broadest level of all ordinary people. In this way, for example, any citizen who contracts according to civil law, or who obtains a public office by means of an opposition contest, another whose father or mother dies, are situations that attribute individual subjective rights. These factual situations generate an accumulation of rights that affect the fundamental core of the constitutional freedoms of each individual. Now, how fragile is their legal situation? Do people have appropriate or suitable procedural actions to demand compliance with their subjective rights? Although these issues are of the utmost importance for each individual, it is a point that acquires the highest institutional relevance when it comes to national deputies.

The National Assembly - legislative body - turns out to be, in essence, since more than three centuries ago, the epicenter of the politics of any State. In fact, whatever the system of government in question -i.e. presidential, semi-presidential, parliamentary, presidentialism; In all cases, parliamentarians have some characteristics and elements that are common to them. More specifically, the parliamentary immunity of members of the legislative branch is presented, with its various nuances or intensities, as a common feature of any minimally democratic political system. And, in general, the constitutional practices usually assign to that power of the State not only the work of dictating legal norms of a general nature, but also a function of control of the other powers. This is particularly reflected in the Venezuelan case.

In fact, the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela assigns the National Assembly certain control functions over both the Judiciary and the Executive Power (Aguilar Blancas, 2017).

At the present time, it is considered that the democratic element of every State predominantly rests in the Legislative Power. And, when it presents imbalances, a sick legislative body ends up affecting the political health of the rest of the branches of public power (Aragón Reyes, 1986). Therefore, the sickness of a branch of state power is spread to the rest. The Venezuelan Republic, then, is seriously threatened precisely because its legislative body - National Assembly - has been severely curtailed in the capacity to exercise its constitutional powers through various Sentences of the Supreme Court of Justice. This has been another case of those named by the doctrine under the name of “abusive constitutionalism” (Zúñiga Urbina & Cárcamo Tapia, 2015).

Located in this context of ideas, the present investigation will address the study of one of the sentences of the Venezuelan Supreme Court of Justice, which refers to the electoral process by which deputies of the National Assembly were stripped of their status as parliamentarians in order to break the legislative majority in charge of opposition parties to the government of Nicolás Maduro. Indeed, it will be argued that the right to defense, due process and effective judicial protection would have been progressively disrupted which ended up impacting the heart of Venezuelan democratic institutions. More specifically, it is intended to show that the emergence of the aforementioned Sentence of the 2016 Supreme Court turns out to be the consequence of a progressive deterioration of Venezuelan democratic institutions. Finally, the main results of this work will be presented in a section entitled ‘conclusive balance’.

## **Background: Sentences of the Supreme Court of Justice that originate the unconstitutionality, object of study of this investigation**

One of the antecedents of this investigation goes back to the year 2004, when the reform of the Organic Law of the Supreme Court of Justice published in Official Gazette No. 37,942 of May 20, 2004 was approved, of which the content of the article 2 stands out, which established the integration of that high court and divided it into different chambers according to various

subjects: Civil Cassation, Electoral, Constitutional, Social Cassation, Criminal Cassation, among others, seven in total of different composition. Thus, for example, the so-called Plenary Room is composed of all the magistrates of all the rooms; that is, it is composed of 32 magistrates, but the rest has five magistrates; except for the Constitutional Chamber that has 7 (Official Gazette No. 37,942, May 20, 2004).

On the aforementioned provision, from the constitutional point of view and from the perspective of democratic theory, there is a clear connection with the problem under study. Even so, the reasons for the modification in the number of magistrates that make up each chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice, although not explicit, rely on reasons that go beyond the technical or academic. Indeed, it is about the subjection of the political power of the judicial function through the control of the highest Court of the Republic. The objections to the aforementioned norm, then, are based on ethical or moral reasons that should not be discarded. In fact, the institutional relevance of this issue is evident by virtue of the fact that the number of magistrates has been expanded so that the incorporation of the new ones produces a favorable balance for the person making the appointment; that is, the National Executive Power.

A similar situation, which is also an antecedent of this investigation, occurred when on August 12, 2005, citizens Jesús Manuel Méndez Quijada and Henry Ramos Allup attempted a constitutional protection action (TSJ Venezuela, Constitutional Chamber, Sentence 2996/2005) who filed the aforementioned writ of protection argued that the violation of various articles of the Constitution (62, 63, 67 and 293) had taken place by the National Electoral Council (CNE) and its authorities. It was also argued that the nomination for deputies to the National Assembly was carried out in an electoral system called “the morochas” - which will be explained below - and that, in effect, such a system violated multiple constitutional provisions, which implied an Authentic constitution fraud.

More specifically, the writ of protection under study prompted a ruling on the challenge of a mechanism that was used in practice by all competing political parties in the legislative elections of December 2005 (opponents and officialism), called “the case of morochas”. The particularity of this system allowed to circumvent the constitutional mechanism to determine which legislators had been elected and which were not, but without mediating the application of an arithmetic operation of the so-called D’Hont system.

This also caused the rupture of the principle of proportional representation that was expressly recognized in the Constitution, in its article 63. At that time, the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice held, in the presentation of magistrate Luis Velázquez Alvaray, that as there was no rule prohibiting this circumvention, since the departure from the electoral system d'Hont was legitimized. In other words, since the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela does not expressly prevent the principle of proportional representation from being set aside, then such separation is allowed.

The ruling that resolves the writ of protection reduced the controversy to the absence of a legal provision prohibiting such conduct, therefore, it was allowed. The possibility of harmonizing the general principle of the law “everything that is not legally prohibited is legally permitted” had not been taken into account, on the one hand, and with the principle of proportional representation mentioned in article 63 of the constitutional text, on the other (Sánchez, 2014). This evidently violated not only the Constitution, but the fundamental postulates of the democratic system.

Because, in effect, it ended up reforming a central point of the Venezuelan constitutional regime - its electoral system - through an *ex nihilo* creation of its highest court. The sentence mentioned in this section was a true precedent that was consistently applied on several occasions during the decade from 2000 to 2011. Moreover, such events continued to be repeated after 2011, which led to the erosion of the values and principles embodied in the Constitution and the country's own democratic health.

### **Violation of due process, right to defense and justice: the beginning of the institutional debacle**

The nature of the right to due process implies a set of legal acts aimed directly at the formation or application of legal provisions, whose purpose is based on the collaboration of interested persons together with one or more impartial persons such as the judge or a collegiate court (Carnelutti, 1989). The emergence of the process, in effect, is due to the need to solve problems among the people who make up the population of the State, in an orderly and fair manner. In fact, as Calamandrei states, the very heart of the science of procedural law is based on the right to due process, understood as one of

the most basic rights of ordinary citizens, while the end of the process demands going through a path to peacefully materialize justice in human co-existence (Calamandrei, 1962). In other words, the supreme realization of justice is the most important aspiration of the science of procedural law.

Moreover, the process is an instrument immediately ordered to the realization of justice, even higher yearning that allows the solution obtained through the process to seek peace in social relations by attributing the rights that correspond to each party. In fact, the development of due process in legal disputes between people manages to articulate the two fundamental material conditions - peace and justice - so that the political community is effectively ordered towards the common good. In this way, it is possible to ensure the set of conditions necessary for each of the members of the community to achieve their own goals, in accordance with their own life plan (Finnis, 2011).

Thus, both Carnelutti and Calamandrei's positions indicate that there is an intrinsic relationship between due process, right to defense and justice. In that sense, when referring to the right to defense we are assuming that it is one of the minimum necessary guarantees that are required before a judicial process, whatever its type -criminal, civil, administrative, labor, etc. - so that our dignity as human beings remains untouched and we have been able to counteract that of which we are accused or charged. In such a way that we are facing a right that implies demanding the possibility of being heard with due guarantees and within a reasonable period of time by a competent, independent and impartial judge or tribunal, established previously by law in the substantiation of any criminal accusation against someone or for the determination of his rights or obligations of civil, labor, fiscal nature, by case.

An additional issue that must be added to the right to defense and due process is its complement with the notion of effective judicial protection as regards administrative acts. In fact, making direct reference to the case under study, the original administrative action that gives rise to the sentence mentioned below, was the National Electoral Council - maximum electoral instance in Venezuela - that occurs after the legislative elections in December of 2015, since all the administrative acts in each of the phases of that electoral process concluded in the act of proclamation of the candidates for deputies of the Amazonas state (province). It should be clarified that we are facing a typical case of intervention of judicial control in administrative acts, since it is an administrative act in which recursive instances of an

administrative nature were exhausted, but whose final resolution affects the subjective legal sphere of individuals (Urosa Maggi, 2003).

In fact, in the language of Venezuelan administrative law, it should be pointed out that we are facing a “precautionary protection”; that is, a precautionary procedural measure; that is, a ruling aimed at preventing damage caused by the administrative activity of the State, in which a constitutional right is affected, which takes place while the judicial process aimed at expelling a certain administrative act from the existence of the Law is substantiated by a writ of annulment. The very meaning of this precautionary measure is that the main claim would be impossible if it were expected to substantiate the final Sentence upon which the lawsuit falls.

However, until the moment in which this investigation is carried out, several years have elapsed and the judicial process after the injunction has not been substantiated, nor has any decision been made regarding the merits of the matter. Moreover, there has only been that precautionary decision and no other procedural act. This in itself constitutes at first sight a transgression to the most basic procedural guarantees of those to whom the contested judicial decision is addressed.

### **Sentence 001 of the Electoral Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice (07/01/2016): The annulment of proportional representation based on a “constitutional” decision**

As has been said, the appeal that originates the decision under analysis was lodged against the voting act of the parliamentary elections held on December 6, 2015. Because according to the plaintiff there were vices of absolute nullity, being the product of the manipulation of the free and secret vote of the electors of the Amazon State and that, as a whole, resulted in a massive and structural fraud that would have affected the entire Venezuelan electoral system.

Once the appeal was filed there was a precautionary decision; that is, a judicial resolution prior to the process itself that seeks to protect any possible damage that may occur in advance. One of the foundations of such a precautionary decision argued that the principle of freedom of suffrage, understood as the absence of any conditioning, was violated by the delivery of

economic benefits in exchange for citizens voting for a particular political option. The latter was naturally alleged by the applicant for the “precautionary protection” and the Electoral Chamber accepted it.

In the sense previously expressed, the Chamber went on to pronounce itself asserting that it had been evidenced, through different means of proof, that the violation of the rights of the electors had taken place through the sale of votes and their respective payments. The Electoral Chamber, in effect, mentions the names of several people and states that held management positions in the governorship of the Amazonas state. However, the court also determines that the imprisonment of these officials for the aforementioned events turns out to be a notorious fact (National Assembly of Venezuela, 2015).

In fact, it follows that the only evidence that supports the precautionary measure turns out to be recordings disseminated through the media in which an “alleged official of the Amazon Governorate said she was buying votes and was paying for them.” Thus, one might ask: how was it determined that whoever speaks in the broadcast recordings was a government official in the Amazon? Well, it was not determined in any way and, in addition, it is not established how the recordings were made and where they emanated from. Consequently, facts based on a fairly weak probative reasoning in which they do not realize the premises that justify the reached conclusion are assumed to be proof.

In fact, the only factual support noted in the precautionary decision is based on the fact that the recording was disseminated by various media outlets. The latter alone was enough to configure the “notorious communicational fact”, which supported the probative plexus of the mentioned precautionary decision. And finally, it should be noted that the resolution contained in the precautionary decision was addressed to the National Electoral Council and its subordinate bodies, but not to the National Assembly. In accordance with the provisions of the Supreme Court of Venezuela, this prescribed the suspension of the totalization, adjudication and proclamation of the elected candidates, even when those acts had already materialized and those affected had their proclamation credentials, by virtue of the electoral acts that were intended to be suspended. In other words, such persons had already achieved their status as deputies and individual subjective rights had been generated.

Now, once a citizen reaches a subjective legal situation, the only way to deprive him of this situation is not with a precautionary measure, but with a final sentence that is the result of a judicial process in which a contentious

process has occurred, in which evidence, legal arguments are debated, by conducting a process by impartial magistrates, all in order to reach a final resolution. However, this never occurred. Therefore, the violation of the right to defense and effective judicial protection of deputies deprived of their investiture is relevant. We are, therefore, in the absence of a final decision or judicial sentence that is produced following the formal channels, respecting procedural guarantees and applying the substantive law that corresponds to the case, as the Constitutional Court of Colombia has held (Sentence C -426 of 2002 and Sentence T-599 of 2009).

The Venezuelan precedent that is commented, in effect, reveals the ineffectiveness of judicial control of administrative action. In fact, mere developments of a doctrinal, legislative or jurisprudential nature are no longer sufficient, but it is essential that the constitutional and administrative jurisdictions enjoy autonomy and independence, particularly due to the fact that their decisions always involve facing the current power, especially the executive power. Thus, as Brewer Carías maintains, “if that autonomy is not guaranteed nor independence is shielded, the best administrative contentious justice system will be nothing but dead letter” and that is precisely what is happening in the administrative contentious system in Venezuela, as it has been happening in recent years during the authoritarian government that has developed in the country since 1999 (Brewer Carías, 2015).

Although the sentence analyzed above produced the results that were studied, because the deputies had a declaration of proclamation that instituted them as such and created individual subjective rights, they took their oath in the legislative body. The first decision analyzed is complemented by a second decision dated January 11, 2016. On that occasion, decision number 260 of December 30, 2015 was reaffirmed, in order that it should be complied with by those against whom it is directed, but also adds an element when determining that the legislative body - National Assembly - was in contempt of the precautionary measure as well as the members of the Board of Directors of this body and the deputies against whom the decision with which such investigation was initiated (Supreme Court of Venezuela, Electoral Chamber, 2016). This judicial decision also prescribed that the National Assembly render the oath of deputies without effect and forced them to be disincorporated from the chamber, also affecting all those legislative actions in which they participated.

Everything said above contrasts with some articles of the Organic Law of Electoral Processes (2009), especially regarding the proclamation of elected candidates. In effect, Article 153 stipulates the following:

The National Electoral Council, the National Electoral Board and the corresponding Electoral Boards, as the case may be, shall proceed to proclaim the candidates who had been elected in accordance with the totalization and adjudication procedure, issuing the corresponding credentials.

The deputies who were subject to the precautionary measure in December 2015, received their act of proclamation and, consequently, as established in article 153, they were entitled to the right from of article 14; that is to say, they were invested with parliamentary immunity and, therefore, the applicable procedure was that established in article 266 of the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which states, among others, the following attribution of the Supreme Court of Justice:

To declare whether or not there is merit for the prosecution of the Executive Vice President, of the members of the National Assembly or of the Supreme Court of Justice, of the Ministers, of the Attorney General (...).

The procedure outlined in the aforementioned legal provision was not applied in any case, even when it is current law in the Venezuelan legal system. Indeed, both sentences violate in a very significant way one of the most important functions of any Constitution in the world. More specifically, the function of parliamentary control is affected, also producing the consequent deprivation of one of the essential elements of democracy such as the separation of powers. Likewise, it is impossible for the Constitution to be materially carried out when the right to defense and due process of three legislators who would not be present in the voting of the decisions of the collegiate body and, above all, not if parliament is not present as an institution, it ends up being irremediably affected. So much so that the National Assembly was not and will not be the same after the judicial decision that fell on it.

Thus, the Electoral Chamber of the Venezuelan TSJ, when establishing the obligation to comply with this precautionary decision and consider the National Assembly in contempt, violates the letter of article 187, numeral 20, which states that:

Corresponds to the National Assembly: (...) Qualify its members and know their resignation. The temporary separation of a deputy may only be agreed by the vote of two thirds of the present deputies.

This means, without the need to elaborate complex interpretations, that if the citizens elected as deputies had, as it was, the act of proclamation, they had parliamentary immunity, and the only body with competence to qualify them as deputies was the National Assembly.

We are therefore faced with a situation that constitutes a manifest violation of the Constitution by the Electoral Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice. Of course, after all this analysis, the importance of the Legislative Power in relation to democracy that requires bodies such as Parliament that are part of the democratic game through checks and balances and that, in addition, limit the possibility the exercise of power in an abusive manner.

Indeed, the National Assembly was stripped of political control over the other powers, one of the functions of the social and democratic State that modeled the last constitutionalist waves in Latin America. In fact, as Aragón maintains, at the present time “neither Parliament is already the power of management nor the government of mere execution. Now the essential distribution of the political functions of the State is quite different: Government directs the policy and the Parliament controls it” (Aragón Reyes, 2009). Thus, the principle of separation of powers, an essential element of all democracy, shines by its absence in Venezuela.

## **Abusive constitutionalism as a challenge of democracy**

Venezuelan democracy is seriously affected by abusive constitutionalism. Indeed, democratic legitimation, as Sartori has pointed out at the time, limits power in situations of an autocratic regime (Sartori, 1993). More specifically, the aforementioned Italian author emphasizes that we are in the presence of “non-democracy”, when the degeneration of power reaches such a point that neither the dignity (*dignitas*) of the *auctoritas*, nor freedom is present. And it is here that it is noticed that the Venezuelan path that has been traveled to reach such an extreme has deployed abusive constitutionalism. Now, what does such constitutionalism mean? It is the increasingly widespread phenomenon by which mechanisms of constitutional change are

employed, whether these are channeled through formal or informal channels, to erode the democratic order (Landau 2013).

The sentences that have been commented on in this work fit into this concept of abusive constitutionalism. Indeed, through the jurisprudence of the Venezuelan TSJ, those constitutional changes that undermined the pillars of democracy took place. Such anti-democratic changes were made through the violation of effective judicial protection and the right to defense of the deputies, who are affected by the decision of the aforementioned court, who could not enforce their rights and the legislative body saw their conformation modified. Moreover, the decisions of the Supreme Court prescribed the invalidity of the decisions of the legislative body. We are, therefore, facing the closing of the parliament by force of resolutions of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Thus, abusive constitutionalism is but a way of exercising a policy tinged with authoritarianism; that is, we are facing an autocratic regime of different political sign, which uses the tools of constitutional, traditional or nineteenth-century law and neo-constitutionalism to manipulate power and gain more public power (Zúñiga Urbina & Cárcamo Tapia, 2015). Indeed, it is a question of using the own tools of correction of constitutional law, which in different states has taken different channels - diffuse constitutional control or by way of action, constitutional sentences that imply binding precedents - in order to pervert the legal order and thereby achieve the purposes contrary to law and, more broadly, of constitutional democracy.

In fact, as Higuíta Peña points out, abusive constitutionalism affects the constitutional system particularly when it comes to presidentialist or, rather, hyper-presidentialist systems of government. The latter usually captures the entire political power through the extension of the presidential term (usually carried out through plebiscitary constitutional reforms). And from this, the nominating power of the president expands and, therefore, his interference in the formation of other organs or powers of the State, including those of political and judicial control (Higuíta Peña, 2017). In any case, whatever the definition of democracy or 'non-democracy' is adopted, the remarkable thing about linking the definition of democracy and abusive constitutionalism is that it highlights its intrinsic relationship with political power (Rojas Bernal, 2016). It is, therefore, a new version of a tyrannical regime that does not lack a pinch of originality to ideologically upset what protects the

human person, to turn against himself as is the order and control of constitutionality (García- Pelayo, 2009).

This modality of the exercise or practice of political power has at its starting point an important quota of legitimacy, but it ends up materializing through authoritarian, autocratic and abusive practices that use the mask of constitutional law. It is therefore imperative to encourage interpretive practices that apply the Constitution in a way that revises and uses those necessary remedies and corrects such distortions. In other words, it is essential to rethink constitutional practices that pervert the very reason of institutions such as the judicial control of constitutionality of decisions taken by other branches of public power.

Thus, it could be considered that what has been described in the previous narrative is not enough. Indeed, it is observable that the Judicial Power intervenes directly in the performance of the Legislative Power in Venezuela, first cutting off the right to effective judicial protection and the right to the defense of the deputies on whom the analyzed decisions fell and on the Venezuelan legislative body, specifically regarding its competences; this is why they have turned their system into ‘no democracy’. In fact, the Venezuelan Supreme Court of Justice has issued multiple sentences on issues such as states of exception, of February 11, 2016 (TSJ Venezuela, Constitutional Chamber, Sentence 0038/2016), the Venezuelan patrimonial economic regime (TSJ Venezuela, Constitutional Chamber, Sentence specifically in sentence 1269/2011), the Central Bank of Venezuela (TSJ Venezuela, Constitutional Chamber, Sentence 2016/0279).

## **Conclusive balance**

According to our analysis, the decisions of the Venezuelan Supreme Court studied affect the minimum content of the right to effective judicial protection, the right to defense and due process. Therefore, the case in which Venezuelan deputies (2016) were stripped of their investiture represents a case of “abusive constitutionalism”. In effect, the aforementioned case involved a process in which initially the defendants did not have the opportunity to carry out the preliminary control of the evidence on which the precautionary decision was based; that is, the recordings disseminated by the media. This possibility of control, being a precautionary measure, did not

operate until after the order entered into force. However, the subsequent exercise of the right to defense was entirely unsuccessful. During the course of the process there was no response on the opposition to the precautionary measure, which leaves unanswered the exercise of the right to defense by the subjects to whom the decision was directed.

To recapitulate, it can be gathered that, until the date on which the results of this investigation are presented, a procedure that resulted in a final and firm decision was not substantiated. In fact, the only decisive procedural element with which it is counted regarding the factual analyzed situation was the precautionary protection measure that is still in force. The defendants carried out different means of defense and proceedings aimed at ensuring that their version of the facts and the law were embodied and exposed; however, it does not appear in the analyzed process how the Supreme Court dismissed these proceedings.

The aforementioned allows to establish that the human rights of those affected (deputies to the National Assembly) were violated, since the silence before the allegations and not taking into account their considerations and defenses was done to completely silence their voices. Also, situation of being “put to trial”, state in which the deputies subject to the analyzed sentences were placed, carries an additional meaning. The National Assembly would go from being the opposition to the ruling regime, to not having a qualified majority of two thirds. Such a majority is of the utmost importance for making major decisions, such as the call for a National Constituent Assembly provided for in article 348 of the Venezuelan Constitution currently in force.

The course of subsequent events demonstrates that these events were aimed at diminishing the legal and political powers of the National Assembly. Indeed, the aforementioned legislative body through other Sentences was completely decimated, without the possibility of carrying out any kind of legal or political control over the decisions of the other organs of the State. It ended up thus reaching the state of affairs to which abusive constitutionalism points through a violation of the fundamental right to effective judicial protection by deputies who had sworn before the National Assembly.

The chronology of the analyzed facts could be summarized as follows: at the beginning the Electoral Chamber produced a ruling against the National Electoral Council and prohibited its proclamation even though it had already been carried out. Then the National Assembly swears in the deputies affected by the decision and recognizes their subjective status as deputies,

by the way, qualifies them as such in compliance with the same Constitution as the National Electoral Council had already proclaimed them, and the Electoral Chamber of the TSJ, by this action, declares the National Assembly in contempt.

The situation affecting the deputies resulted in the national legislative body, in accordance with other decisions of the Supreme Court of Justice, that were also analyzed, losing its legitimacy. This caused, in turn, that actions in which the National Assembly was involved and that were part of its powers such as, for example, accountability by the Executive Branch, the process of formation of laws and many others were also affected.

Finally, powers were taken from the National Assembly through the sentences that have been studied and so far, the state of defenselessness is maintained, but now not only of the deputies, but of the organ. In this way, it can be affirmed that this work includes a single legal aspect referred to a specific situation as indicated by its course of work. An analysis that includes greater scope could determine that the Supreme Court of Justice not only violated the effective judicial protection and due process of the deputies, but also dismantled constitutional institutions of all kinds to derive, in broad terms, in a “non-democratic regime”.

In summary, in the Venezuelan State there is no democratic regime according to the analyzed definitions, because the separation of powers is lacking and human rights such as the right to effective judicial protection are not respected. These rights of the deputies elected by the popular vote were violated.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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MISCELÁNEA



## Public banking, social security and access to house financing in Ecuador

### *Banca pública, seguridad social y acceso a financiamiento de vivienda en Ecuador*

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#### **Abstract**

*Social Security in Ecuador is not universal. The Ecuadorian Social Security Bank (Biess) was legally established in 2009, and began to operate formally one year later. The Biess uses social security resources to offer housing mortgages to its members: obtaining financial returns up to three percentage points higher, while at the same time offering more benefits to its affiliates. Loans are insured through income and asset guarantees.*

*The policy boosted housing construction, increased liquidity in the real economy and reduced interest rates on housing loans by 2.2 percentage points, as direct provision by Biess produced more competition and social security affiliates were able transfer their privately financed mortgages to the Biess. House ownership among social security affiliates increased by almost four points between 2007 and 2018. The households who most changed their participation from owning their own homes were located in quintiles 2 and 3.*

*The presence of the Biess and its portfolio purchases modified financial regulation in the housing sector. This article takes stock of the results of direct provision by means of a public operator as an alternative form of financial regulation and of interest rates in particular.*

#### **Keywords**

Housing finance, social security, alternative financial regulation, finance, financial policy, economic policy, direct provision.

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## **Resumen**

En el Ecuador, la seguridad social no es universal. El Banco de la Seguridad Social (Biess) se creó en 2009 y entró a operar formalmente un año después. Este Banco utiliza recursos de las reservas de la seguridad social para otorgar, entre otros, créditos hipotecarios para la vivienda de los afiliados. De esta forma, las reservas obtenían un mejor rendimiento que los obtenidos en títulos valores de hasta tres puntos y se otorgaban más beneficios a los cotizantes.

Esta política impulsó la construcción inmobiliaria en el país, incrementó la liquidez en la economía real y redujo las tasas de interés en el crédito de vivienda en 2,22 puntos porcentuales debido a que la provisión directa por parte del Biess generó mayor competencia y además los cotizantes podían pasar su crédito privado al banco de los afiliados. La vivienda propia entre los afiliados de la seguridad social aumentó en casi cuatro puntos entre el 2007 y el 2018. Los hogares con personas afiliadas que más cambiaron su participación en la tenencia de vivienda propia fueron los quintiles 2 y 3.

La presencia del Biess y la compra de cartera modificó la operación crediticia en todo el segmento de vivienda. Este artículo realiza un balance de los resultados de la provisión directa a través de un operador público como forma alternativa de regulación financiera y a la tasa de interés en particular.

## **Palabras clave**

Financiamiento de la vivienda, seguridad social, regulación financiera alternativa, finanzas, política financiera, política económica, provisión directa.

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## **Introduction**

Social security systems represent huge resources whose well-channeled investment can serve redistributive, economic and social purposes. After the global crisis of 2008, the fragility of the financial systems and the need for their regulation became evident.

Although the presence of public operators in the financial markets had been the subject of controversy, it remains clear that it improves the efficiency of private banking and can reduce the procyclicality of credit (Micco, Panizza, & Levy, 2007).

Ecuador in the first years of dollarization, maintained an economic policy of non-intervention in the markets. Within that framework, the country in

2007 takes up the planning processes that were discredited since the 1990s and builds a first development plan for the 2007-2010 period (Senplades, 2007) and after the Constitution has been approved, by means of a referendum, established another plan for the period 2009-2013. The two plans include objective 11 “Establish a social, solidary and sustainable economic system” (Senplades, 2007, p. 254; 2009, p. 329) and in the second Plan, policy 11.13 “Promote savings and national investment, consolidating the financial system as a public order service, with adequate functioning and complementarity between its public, private and popular solidary sectors” (2009, p. 339) to which the first institutional strategic plan of Biess was directly articulated (Biess, 2011, p. 3) and more referentially in the second (Biess, 2017, p. 3).

In the new Constitution (Assembly, 2008, pp. 38-39) social security appears as a fundamental right and duty of the State, article 34 defines that it is guided by the principles of solidarity and universality.

Esping-Andersen (1990 cited in Cichon et al., 2006, p. 167), classifies regimes of welfare states into three, liberal, conservative or corporatist and social democratic. Both the liberal and the social democratic offer universal coverage while the conservative does so only to employed persons. Ecuador would be in the second type of welfare regime and the Constitution proposes to go to the third. This article is part of a broader investigation and begins with a study of some Biess’ results based on the available information that will be detailed later. The use of their reserves is key for their role in the economy.

The Constitution also established in article 372 (2008, p. 211) that social security investments will be conducted through a financial institution whose owner will be the IESS to “generate employment and added value” (2008, p. 253).

Consequently, in May 2009, a few months after the global economic crisis, in Ecuador the Law on the creation of the Social Security Bank (Biess) or Bank of the Affiliates (DNTI, 2009) is approved as a public financial institution that can perform investment banking operations and offer the following specific financial services, including mortgage loans to its affiliates and “rediscount operations of the mortgage portfolio of financial institutions [IFI’s]” (2009, p. 2).

The creation of Biess was part of the new financial architecture (Senplades, 2009, p. 78) without an explicit regulatory role. However, after almost ten years, there is no research regarding the role it played in the financial

market because it was not expected to work as an alternative financial regulation device.

Within this framework, this article seeks to cover this flaw and it is hypothesized that the presence of Biess in the financial system introduced an alternative form of regulation that reduced the interest rate of the mortgage segment and increased the percentage of households with their own homes in the country.

The article is organized in five sections, the first, in which we find ourselves, which introduces the theme and the legal framework for creating the new institutionality. The second, which performs a state of the art about Biess, describes the theoretical framework and used methodology. The results are presented in the third section. In the fourth, this form of alternative regulation in the financial system is discussed. In the fifth and last section, the conclusions are presented.

## **Theoretical framework and methodology**

As introduced in the previous section, the emergence of a new public financial institution in Ecuador by constitutional mandate generated a change in the national financial spectrum through the composition of the mortgage market, the effective interest rate and access to the house ownership.

There is some research on Biess, one from Carrillo (2013) on the influence of mortgage loans with social security resources in construction in the period 2008-2012, finding causality at 90% between loans and the projection of buildings in m<sup>2</sup> (2013, p. 110). Ordonez (2015) uses the same time period to perform a time series analysis of construction permits and concludes that without the presence of Biess, construction would have been more dynamic without determining causation and without denying the “contribution of BIESS to growth of the real estate sector” (2015, p. 95). Serrano Cueva and Naranjo Peñaherrera (2014) chronicle the creation of Biess and its management from 2009 to 2014.

Deere and Catanzarite (2017) analyze the relationship between credit sources and their purpose as a means to perpetuate inequality in Ecuador. This study is carried out for 2010 based on a specific survey and it is concluded that the credit system reproduces conditions of inequality and considers Biess as the largest public bank in loans to individuals (2017, p. 124).

On the other hand, CAF in a report prepared by Sanguinetti et al. (2011) following the role that public banks played in the global economic crisis, discuss the elements that justify their intervention and some factors that could define their success. It emphasizes the institutions of development banking which is the category to which Biess belongs, as well as, corporate governance as a success factor.

After almost ten years of the implementation of Biess, it is possible to carry out an analysis of some results in the mortgage segment where the institution acted in two ways, as a direct operator and through rediscount operations in the purchase of portfolio to private IFIs. However, rather than talking about the Biess as institution, the objective of the article is to investigate alternative forms of regulation based on this Ecuadorian experience with a direct operator with resources from social security reserves.

This article represents, in the words of Stiglitz (2000, p. 107), a positive investigation of the consequences of this policy. The mechanisms of public intervention according to Subirats, Knoepfel, Larrue, and Varonne (2008, pp. 158-159) are grouped into four main ways: regulatory, incentive, persuasive, as well as direct provision. By regulatory means, it is sought to generate behavior changes in the target groups, this path includes obligations or prohibitions subject to sanctions in case of non-compliance. The incentive path raises a more indirect intervention that operates through transfers to influence the behavior of the target groups through taxes or subsidies (2008, p. 158). The persuasive path seeks to convince the target groups to adopt a behavior in the sense that the policy pursues. While the direct provision shows and induces the expected behavior of the target groups (2008, p. 159).

In the regulatory path in the financial sector there are several ways to regulate a market, through administrative acts that define general guidelines or specific parameters for the quality of the offered services, the adoption of a set of international regulations such as the Basel Agreements that mark some measures of leverage, liquidity and capital, among others, or establishing maximum prices that guarantee a “fair” rate of return. If these rules are not met, control by the supervisory bodies is required. This implies having human resources that possess the skills to cope with the abilities of the regulated. Despite being the most common regulation, in practice it is not expedient and effective in detecting or preventing malicious behavior, since the moment rules are created, the institutions under control already begin to study how regulations can be avoided.

In economic terms, an alternative and less common form of intervention is through direct provision with one or more public operators that in turn influence the market and stimulate competition. Obviously, the public operator (s) must change the prevailing behavior in the market, otherwise they would become one more and the conditions of that market, in this case the financial one, would not change.

In the case of Biess, it has a long-term funding, that is, it counts with technical reserves that must be returned in an extended period, which creates ideal conditions for the granting of a long-term loans such as mortgages.

The principles on which the investment of social protection reserves should be based are security, performance and economic and social utility (Cichon et al., 2006). Security is indispensable in the management of third-party resources, avoiding speculative elements (2006, pp. 460-461). In terms of performance, “the benefit offered should govern the choice of comparable assets in which to invest the social security reserves” especially for technical reserves (2006, p. 461).

Regarding the third principle, it is recalled that:

Pension funds (...) can contribute to promoting national production, since, unlike other investors, they have at their disposal not only a large volume, but also a long-term horizon for their investment. If these means are used strategically, they can help ensure a high-income base of the economy. (2006, p. 461)

The objective in the use of reserves is to find a fair balance between maximizing yield and minimizing risk, optimizing the time horizon between the two (2006, p. 462).

The methodology of this article is explanatory and inferential, which is valid for a scarcely studied subject (Hernández Sampieri, Fernández Collado, & Baptista Lucio, 2010, p. 97). The research instruments will be the employment surveys of the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC), the supply and demand of credit of the Central Bank of Ecuador (ECB), as well as the portfolio records and interest rates of the same institution. The limitation is in some gaps in the Biess information series.

It is necessary to clarify that the article will make comparisons with private banks but always taking into account that the objectives pursued by each one are different; the private one seeks financial profitability and the public or development one, does not omit it, but prioritizes social profitability, by example, with access to housing.

## Results

In 2009, the Ecuadorian economy was affected by the global economic crisis and, therefore, private banks restricted their supply of credit by maintaining procyclical behaviors in the low phase of the economic cycle (Allen & Saunders, 2004), while public banks increased credit options. Biess started operating in October 2010 but IESS had already started its lending activity a few months before. These two events increased competition in the banking sector and generated concern in private IFIs (2013, pp. 95-96). The concerns came from the long-term funding of Biess, as well as the fact that it was going to stop buying financial papers.

The fundamental advantage of breaking into direct placements and not just being a second-floor bank is that Biess could obtain greater profitability than it had with the purchase of private and public papers in the stock market and, in addition, it can charge fees more easily in discounts on paroles for the repayment of such placements.

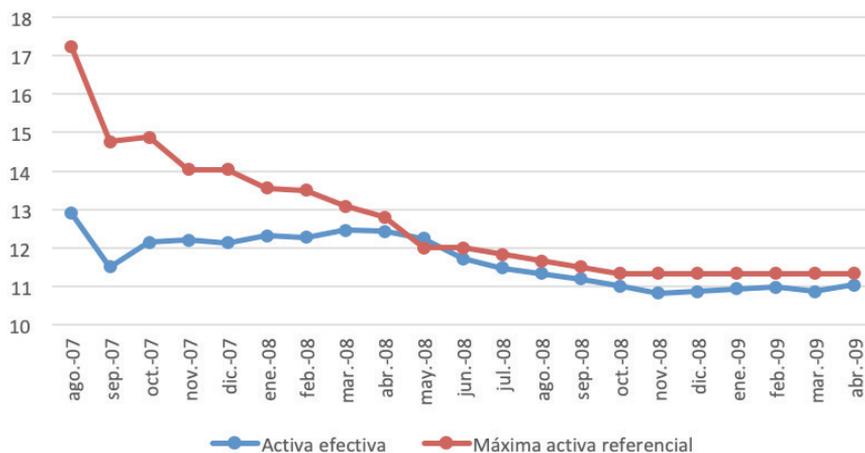
To properly place ourselves in the context of the time, another important fact occurred in August 2007, when the “Financial Justice Law” was passed to set ceilings on active interest rates. Although the Law was declared unconstitutional in this part, the board of the Central Bank defined maximum reference ceilings by segments (Astorga & Morillo, 2010, p. 6).

Figure 1 shows the evolution of the maximum effective active rates due to regulation. These are defined according to the BCE (2010a) as those that the Board of Directors of the Central Bank allows based on a factor that multiplies the rate of the last four weeks at the date of the regulation.

While the reference rate is defined as the weighted average by amount of the operations carried out by the private financial system in the last four weeks (ECB, 2010a).

Then, before the official approval of the Biess Creation Law, there was a reduction in the maximum active rate allowed for the housing segment. In August 2007, it was 17.23%, the following month it went to 14.77% and it was gradually reduced until, as of October 2008, the maximum reference rate for mortgage credit remained at 11.33%. In this same period, August 2007-October 2008 the effective active rate went from 12.9% to 11%, that is, there was a reduction of almost two points.

**Figure 1**  
**Maximum active rate and reference rate for the housing segment**  
**between August 2007 to April 2009 (in percentage)**



Source: BCE (2010a).  
 Own elaboration.

The policy of setting ceilings in interest rates by credit segment generated strong criticism from private banks, arguing that financial repression would occur (Astorga & Morillo, 2010), that is, credit would be reduced in the economy, something that did not happen as will be seen later.

In the first quarter of 2010, a third of the IFIs had less restrictive conditions in housing loans (ECB, 2010b). Among these, was the *Banco del Pacífico* that operates as a private bank but at that time was owned by the Central Bank and had specific housing loan programs such as the *Hipoteca Pacífico*<sup>1</sup>, which increased housing financing options.

All this was gradually revitalized mortgage credit in private and public operators and, at the end of 2011, Biess registered a 62% stake in the generation of the total mortgage portfolio (ECB, 2012, p. 46), situation that went hand in hand with economic growth in those years.

1 Name of ortgage program of the bank.

In addition to the direct placement by Biess, home mortgage portfolio purchases were made to private banks, which gave it more liquidity to place this or other types of loans. On the other hand, this was convenient for affiliates because they received better conditions than those already obtained in private banking, with an effective annual rate between 8.19 and 9.04 (Biess, 2018) and for Biess it meant improving the yields obtained in public papers or in the stock market.

In 2008, IESS purchased 44% of financial obligations such as certificates of deposit, investment certificates and credit securitizations and allocated 42% to public papers (Superintendence of Companies, 2008, section 37). A certificate of deposit, the main fixed-income title purchased by the IESS, has a current return of around 6% in the longer term, that is, only in those papers could an increase in gross profitability of 3 points be obtained. While the state bonds that were issued in December 2008 and purchased by the IESS, had a yield of 6.63% (Ministry of Finance, 2008, p. 5).

This policy boosted the real estate market in housing construction; between 2008 and 2012, there was a growth of 134% in the number of homes to be built (Ordóñez, 2014, p. 17).

These changes in the mortgage market aroused another alert by a member of the Association of Banks, when in March 2011 they declared the danger of a possible real estate bubble in the country (EFE, 2011). The arguments made gave account of the concern generated by the new actor and that could flood the economy with credit, as well as the fact that 100% of the value of the home was granted as credit. In this case, the person of the banking union explained the bubble for the increase in house prices but not for problems in the granting of credit.

Ecuador, was aware of the mortgage experience that caused the global economic crisis and the conditions in granting credit were not relaxed. What was true is that the Biess stopped using resources from the reserves for the purchase of financial instruments and that generated discomfort in the banks.

It should also be noted that economic conditions were changing in both supply and demand. In 2015, there was a significant reduction in the price of oil that affected the liquidity of the economy, as well as fiscal accounts, a year later, in 2016, there was an earthquake in Manabí that had a negative impact on the economic activity of the country. In that year there was also the announcement of two laws, the one of capital gains, approved in December 2016

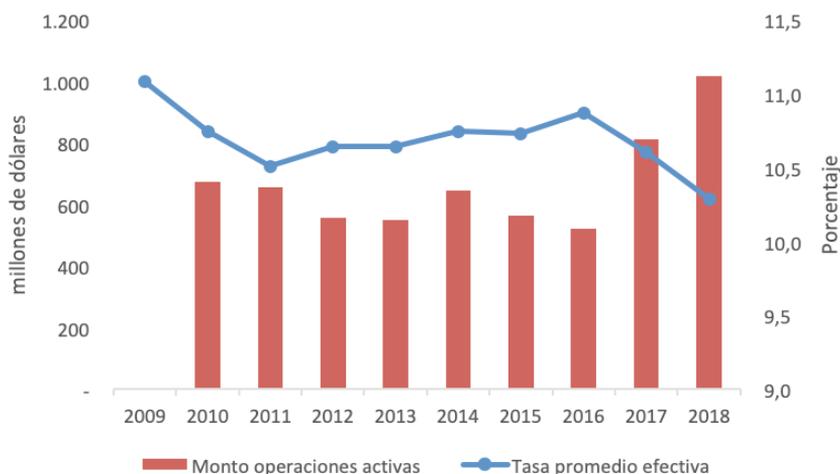
and the one of inheritance, for which only an anti-elusive norm was approved in June 2016. These announcements influenced the activity in the construction sector. The capital gains Law was repealed in 2018. It is necessary to indicate that Biess grants financing not only for first housing, but also for: finished housing, housing construction, remodeling and expansion, mortgage substitution, land and construction, other real estate and mortgaged housing.

Below are some of the results following the appearance of Biess:

### Increase in the private mortgage portfolio

The first effect, contrary to what private financial actors warned, has to do with the fact that the private mortgage portfolio remained and even grew as of 2017. Figure 2 shows the total amount of active operations of the private IFI's and the respective effective average rate.

**Figure 2**  
**Annual amount of active private mortgage operations**  
**and active annual average rate between 2009 and 2018**  
**(in millions of dollars and percentage)**



Source: BCE (2019).  
Own elaboration

Private banks did not fail to maintain a mortgage portfolio, part of this portfolio was purchased by Biess and retained annual placement amounts of more than 650 million dollars between 2010 and 2011. Between 2012 and 2015, the portfolio originated by private IFI's was reduced and had an oscillating behavior until 2016 with the lowest level due to the economic problems described above.

In the chart above, it is notable as the moment when private IFI's increase the amount of active operations as of 2017, the average effective rate is reduced. Therefore, in addition to the reduction of the rate for the effect of the ceilings until 2008, there are three periods in the evolution of the effective rate: first reduction until 2011, second growth between 2012 and 2016 and third reduction from 2017. In the first and third periods it is observed that the higher the amounts of active operations on the part of the private institutions, the lower the rate. This is most evident with the increase in the portfolio in 2017 and 2018 that could be explained for political reasons in a period in which the IFIS maintained a better relationship with the government in office and received some benefits (King & Samaniego, 2019). In these years, Biess reduced its participation from 66% to 43% between 2016 and 2018 and the mortgage substitution was at low levels, which is logical because the rate of the mortgage segment was lower and there was less interest in replacing mortgage than when the Biess just started operating.

### **Reduction of the rate in the mortgage segment**

Based on the above, the evolution of the rate in this segment is summarized in two moments, a fall of 1.87 percentage points between August 2007 and April 2009 due to the policy of ceilings at interest rates. The other moment occurred with the presence of Biess, in which the rate between May 2009 and December 2018 had a decrease of 2.22 percentage points with erratic behavior in the interim, as explained above.

In the second moment the reduction was greater despite the fact that the real estate sector went through a bad time in 2015 and 2016, due to the economic recession, an earthquake and the announcement of measures with an impact on the sector. This occurred without financial repression in the total portfolio and less in the lower income segment that is not of interest to private banks for which another measure was proposed that will be mentioned in the following section.

## **Effects on the real economy of reserves by the Biess**

This is based on the principle of social security sufficiency, since it represents a notable source of savings in the economies and, therefore, they are resources that are appealing for their magnitude and for the characteristic of temporary funding.

The alternative uses of the social security technical reserves are of special importance because of their effects on the real economy and will define the political priority in their allocation. Savings are also a necessary variable at the macroeconomic level to boost investment. Social security collects contributions and has lower obligations. This is the accumulation phase of the system, before it matures when the population ages and the obligations with retirees increase or the number of active members decreases (Cichon et al., 2006, p. 523).

## **Access to home ownership**

Access to adequate housing is considered a fundamental human right since 1948 (Habitat, 2010). In terms of access to homeownership, as of December 2007, 65.9% of the homes were in a regime of own ownership and 18.9% for lease in which there were almost no differences between households with an affiliated person and without any. While, among households with their own homes, the percentage was 68.2% for those who had an affiliate and 64.5% for those who did not. Households with ceded housing were lower among those with an affiliated person, 10.5% compared to 14.2% who did not. For this same year, 75% of households in the first decile by income had their own homes and 73% for the second decile, with deciles having higher percentages and these percentages are higher among unaffiliated households. Likewise, the percentage of leased housing was 8% in the first decile and 9% in the second (own calculations based on INEC, 2007).

That is, although Biess could grant loans only to its affiliates, the difference in families with their own homes was 3.7 points and the first two deciles had lower percentages of leased homes. By 2018, on the other hand, it is found that at the national level, the percentage of households with their own homes rose to 69.5% and that of lease fell to 17.5%. In these years, there were also specific programs that provided homeownership to the lower strata.

ta, so it is important to separate the results between households with some affiliated person and those that do not (own calculations based on INEC, 2018).

By disaggregating housing ownership information between affiliates and non-affiliates for 2018, it is found that households with some affiliated person increased their homeownership more, with 71.9% compared to 66.6% they did not have.

The changes between 2007 and 2018 are presented in Chart 1, in which it is observed that households with some affiliated person reduce the percentage of rented homes by 1.7 points, in those ceded by 0.9 and increase by 3.7 in homeownership.

**Chart 1**  
**Change in homeownership of households due to social security affiliation between 2007 and 2018 (in percentage points)**

	Unaffiliated	Affiliated
Lease	-1,0%	-1,7%
Own	2,1%	3,7%
Ceded	0,3%	-0,9%

Source: INEC (2007), INEC (2018).  
Own elaboration

The quintiles that most increased their participation among households with their own homes and some affiliated person were 2 and 3, which is also explained by the increase in people with affiliation in these income strata.

### **Negative results, lack of collection management and adverse economic situation**

Finally, one of the problems that Biess has faced has been late payment in recent years in which economic activity has been affected, mainly since 2016.

**Chart 2**  
**Default rate on BIESS mortgage loans between 2012**  
**and 2018 (in percentage)**

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
1,0	1,7	2,0	2,9	5,3	6,1	6,5

Source: González, J. (2019).

Own elaboration

The information available is less extensive in this area, so it is unknown if this default rate is a specific phenomenon in a geographical area or is wider. It is clear that, in the face of adverse economic situations, people lose their jobs and stop paying loans. Apparently, there have also been problems in the granting of the credit quota (González, P., 2019b) that was due to the interference of some developers to facilitate the purchase of their properties.

The default rate (Chart 2) is above 6% in 2018. This indicator cannot be compared with that of private banks because it is known that BIESS has not punished its portfolio and therefore, its rate includes portfolio that should be punished (Biess, 2019). In the case of private banking, default rates exclude the punished portfolio. It is known that no portfolio punishment procedures have been carried out “due to operational and accounting limitations” (Biess 2019) to which political reasons can be added to carry out collection and risk management of the portfolio at risk, as well as the interference, mentioned above, in the determination of the quota.

### **Possible real estate bubble**

Macías Rendón, Guzmán Sigiüencia, and Ramírez Delgado (2015) find that between January 2008 and October 2014 there was an increase in the house price of 1.68% annual average (2015, p. 60) and it is identified that the price of housing grew more than the rent prices. However, the authors find that the variations in the price of housing are explained in 93% by fundamental variables of supply (offer of wages and construction costs) and demand (for economic activity), therefore discard that there is there was a real estate bubble in Ecuador (2015, p. 62).

## Discussion and progress

The presence of Biess and the initial purchase of the portfolio modified the financial and real estate market in Ecuador. Different financial regulation measures were applied in the housing segment. The first of maximum ceilings had an initial effect of reduction in the average mortgage rate that fell from 12.9% to 11.03% between August 2007 and April 2009, that is, 1.87 points.

Once Biess enters into operation, the rate continues to decrease to 9.55% in January 2019, breaking the 10 percent floor for the first time. Thus, between May 2009 and December 2018, the rate in this segment had a decrease of 2.22 percentage points with erratic behavior in the intermediate.

It should be noted that this article does not consider direct provision as an end in itself, since Biess, as the Law of its creation states, sought to generate employment and added value, but also generated the conditions for the rate to be reduced in the mortgage segment.

The use of social security technical reserves in the local mortgage market has some advantages for the same sustainability of social security by obtaining better returns (around three points) and in timing of installments through long-term housing loans with funding in the same period.

The direct provision boosted the real economy through the boost to the real estate market, unlike what happened in the past when the resources of the reserves were used in the purchase of fixed-income financial papers with shorter terms that did not translate into better financing conditions.

It is important to highlight that a public operator can be promising if this operator becomes a competitor of private banking offering better financial conditions, as was the case with Biess.

However, it is necessary to mention some problems of the policy since not all the credit went to the first home and the first quintile was not one of the biggest beneficiaries due to the same social security structure and its relationship with the formal labor market. That is why, in August 2015, the public interest housing segment is created, which is granted to loans “with mortgage guarantee to natural persons for the acquisition or construction of single and first-use housing, granted for the purpose of transferring the portfolio generated to a securitization trust” (ECB, 2019).

The real estate bubble alerted by the banks did not exist because the offer increased significantly, although in some places the value of the m2

did increase and one should not forget to take into account experiences of speculative bubbles in the real estate market (Harvey, 2014, p. 92).

There is a positive balance, not perfect, in the policy of direct provision with the use of social security technical reserves. This generated changes in the mortgage market, a policy that remains up to date with certain modifications in the calculation of the quota of credit according to lower percentages of income and appraisal (P. González, 2019b). These reforms could be justified within the framework of the reasonable capacity to pay the income (Hudson, 2018, p. 383), however, they should also be read as a way to free up resources to finance the stock market (J. González, 2019) and unsecured loans (Lizarzaburu, 2019). The latter do not have a direct impact on productive generation and could end up in the hands of private banks to pay previously contracted consumption obligations.

Obtaining long-term resources is crucial for the real economy, especially for a structural change strategy that requires a long time to occur (Mazzucato, 2013, p. 51). Housing has been analyzed in this article, but there may be other sectors with greater multiplier effects in the long term that could be analyzed.

## **Conclusions**

The direct provision in Ecuador has been one of alternative regulation in order to improve financing conditions in the mortgage segment. This involved moving from an inefficient situation in which the resources of the reserves were invested in financial products that did not improve credit financial conditions.

Before the emergence of Biess, in Ecuador maximum prices were defined by credit segments that reduced all active rates. The implementation of a public bank that operates with social security resources was based on a constitutional and legal change with resistance from private operators. It should be mentioned that, given changes in the financial market, private banks put pressure and exaggerate on the possible negative effects as exemplified in this article.

Throughout the mortgage segment there was a notable reduction in the rate due to their control and the appearance of Biess in the market. Also, affiliates improve the conditions of their credits. This had a social effect on access to homeownership, more pronounced for quintiles 2 and 3. In economic

terms this represents an increase in liquidity that is channeled into the real economy with long-term funds. As a disadvantage is the injection of real estate developers and default rates that despite not being comparable with those of private banks should be taken care of.

Although there is no detailed information on average returns per product of the Biess, in the papers in which the Biess invested there is a better gross return with better guarantees and deadlines.

The hypothesis with regard to the reduction of the rate in the mortgage segment is fulfilled, however, the effects of the regulation on maximum prices and the new public operator feed each other. With regard to homeownership, it increased by 3.6 points nationwide and 3.7 percentage points for households with affiliated persons, therefore, the hypothesis is met.

Pro-market policies make alternative experiences invisible by emphasizing only difficulties. This article contributes to the practical discussion of the legacy of alternative regulatory policies with public operators based on the available information.

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## Social representations in the economic elites of the city of Lima, Peru

### *Representaciones sociales en las elites empresariales de la ciudad de Lima, Perú*

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#### **Abstract**

*This article exposes the representations of the social actors that make up the nation among a group of businessmen and executives belonging to various business associations in Lima. In that way, this work recollected narratives of their personal lives inside the social context. For that reason, the objective of these research was sharing the economic elite representations in the perspective of narratives and testimony instead of structure studies.*

*These representations were around businessmen, the government and different social groups. In addition of this, the research is born from the need to study the most privileged sectors from anthropology because it helps to understand how in Latin American societies power is exercised. Finally, we exposed the case of study, the methodology used and the researches about economic elites in Peru.*

#### **Keywords**

*Representations, economic elites, nation, narratives.*

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### **Resumen**

El presente artículo expone las representaciones de los actores sociales que componen la nación entre un grupo de empresarios y ejecutivos pertenecientes a diversos gremios empresariales de Lima. En ese sentido, el trabajo recoge una serie de narrativas de los entrevistados en donde hacen un recorrido entre su trayectoria personal junto con el contexto que les tocó vivir. De esa forma, el objetivo del presente estudio es compartir las representaciones de las elites económicas más desde la narrativa y el testimonio que desde la estructura.

Estas representaciones giran en torno a la representación sobre empresarios, el Estado y distintos grupos sociales. Así, la investigación nace de la necesidad de estudiar a los sectores más privilegiados desde la antropología porque ayuda a entender como en las sociedades latinoamericanas se ejerce el poder. Por ese motivo, exponemos primero el caso de estudio, la metodología empleada y los estudios realizados sobre elites económicas en el Perú.

### **Palabras clave**

Representaciones, elites económicas, nación, narrativas.

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## **Introduction**

This article aims to expose the representations of the actors that make up the nation among businessmen and executives in Lima. These were developed within a chapter of the thesis “Analysis of the discourse on Peruvian society in the main business associations of Lima” presented at the UNM-SM in April 2019. It is framed within the need to study the business sector from anthropology because it implies understanding how power is exercised within Latin American societies.

The information was obtained after a series of conversations with businessmen and executives affiliated with different business associations in Lima, Peru. In them, the interviewees were asked to draw a parallel between their professional lives along with the political context they had to live and develop a narrative. Thus, it was possible to know how the leaders of the main economic unions nationwide at the beginning of this century conceive the Peruvian nation and the representations of other groups.

The document is divided into three parts. The first provides general information about the case study, describing the used methodology and providing contextual data of the group in order to locate the reader. Afterwards, the studies that have dealt with businessmen and the nation of Peru are reviewed, consisting of a bibliographic review of economic elites, as well as what is being said when we refer to reflexivity, narratives and nationalisms with the purpose of providing analytical tools. And thirdly we expose what was said in the conversations regarding representations on three topics: State and politicians, businessmen, and representations on the different social movements with which they interacted.

I want to finally mention that we believe that anthropology has much to say about the most privileged groups of our societies. This is because it has a qualitative methodology capable of understanding the actor. Thus, the purpose of this article is to open a research agenda that allows new contributions to the discipline.

## **Case study: Lima businessmen**

In this work, we spoke with various members of the Lima business sector to learn about their professional careers within the social context that they had to live. Some can be described as life stories and others as in-depth interviews if we take into account the duration. We share the most general characteristics of the interviewees to provide the reader with characteristics that will help them contextualize.

A total of twenty interviews with businessmen and executives were conducted. The duration of each one depended on the dynamics, where some topics were deepened. All respondents live in Lima, the conversations being mostly in the districts of San Isidro, Miraflores and Surco. As for the type of places, these were cafes, offices and private homes.

Of the 20, six belong to industry, four to commerce, four to mining and the rest are in fishing, agriculture and marketing. In industry, the branches of textiles, clothing, metalworking, beverages and food were covered. Then, on the commercial side, most of the people belonging to this sector held managerial positions.

Taking the property as reference, there are two groups: those who are linked to the ownership of the companies and the managers in charge of cor-

porate governance. The location they have within it affects the type of decisions and the capacities to carry them out. On the other hand, the owners are considered those people who make the final decisions. They or their family ultimately maintain ownership and control of a company.

Depending on the case, the control is delegated to a third party for the administration of the business. As one interviewee comments, they are considered the true businessman. We have to remember then that there is a very close relationship between both groups, being even members of the same family.

Executives are any professionally employed person who occupies the highest positions in decision making within a corporate governance scheme. They have no ownership of it, they are hired by the owners, but they are professionally trained to administer. This is reflected in, for example, that all executives interviewed have masters and graduates in Senior Management.

Regarding their study centers, most attended private universities in Lima or a United States College. There is also another group that studied in public institutions such as the National Engineering University. While all have graduate degrees, an interesting group has master's degrees, obtained in the United States, Europe or Latin America.

And finally, regarding their links with the public sector, 5 of the 20 respondents held high positions from the periods of Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000) to Ollanta Humala (2011-2016). Then, 2 interviewees are part of law firms that collaborated with the State in modifications of laws and privatizations. In addition, there is a group that stands out for its experience both in the private sector (companies and unions) and in the public sector. They, rather than belonging to certain professional associations or chambers, have been trained in certain universities in law, economics, administration and industrial engineering. That is, their body spirit is born from the educational trajectory.

In that sense, the testimony selection criterion was based on the search for the greatest diversity of possible perspectives taking into account professional trajectories. General characteristics such as age, sex or sector were also considered, which, we believe, has a significant influence on the formation of representations. On the other hand, when we talk about companies, we refer to the main Peruvian capital companies in their nationwide sector. This together with executives who have made their career in multinational companies. Thus, both these demographic characteristics and the bibliography provided below would help to understand the representations we found.

## **Economic elites and nation**

### **Studies on economic elites in Peru from the social sciences**

The importance of knowing the studies that worked on businessmen and nation is based on observing how other researchers talked about the subject, assuming that all research must take into account what has been worked by other researchers. This issue is not new, but has always been present in the Peruvian intellectual tradition. In the case of the social sciences, it has been recurring to think about how the most privileged sectors think.

According to what was found, research on businessmen and social sciences in Peru had a militant purpose in its beginnings. The objective at that time was to recognize the nature of the ruling class in order to delimit a revolutionary strategy (Malpica, 1964). In that sense, businessmen were associated with oligarchy because they had wealth and power (Cotler, 1978). Being constituted by family groups, the idea of an oligarchy with a dominant but not leading position was formed (Rénique, 2008). With the end of the military government (1980) it was no longer the oligarchy, but the term of ‘economic group’ to study businessmen (Alcorta, 1989). This is due to the influence of the departments of economics, which sought to study the development of their wealth. This occurs between the late eighties and early nineties, coinciding with the introduction of neoliberal reforms in our country (Anaya, 1990). Thus, the objective was to know the impact of these economic policies on Peruvian economic life.

Then, during the new millennium new themes are developed, ranging from gender relations to informal lobby networks (Ramos, 2014). This is because business groups are seen as part of the most privileged sector of society: a “high class” (Kogan, 1999). In general, the central problem addressed in the investigations was the impact of economic, political and social inequalities, as well as the capture of the State by economic power (Campodónico & Durand, 2018).

Then there are the studies prepared by the same business associations. Although in many cases they are laudatory, they constitute a valuable contribution because they show a story about the role played by businessmen in the construction of Peruvian nationality (Reyes, 2008). It should be noted that most of these works were carried out in two places: 1. Elite universities

such as the University of the Pacific or the PUCP and 2. NGOs dedicated to the study of inequalities (Durand, 2016).

Therefore, we appreciate that the issue of nation is found indirectly in most of these works. Although their central object of study was the exercise of power from or for the State, they leave some loose ideas about their vision of society. This implies the representation of a political community, which is the nation. Thus, thinking of a nation is a first step to work on representations.

## **Reflexivity, narratives and nation in anthropology**

The importance of talking about reflexivity, narratives and nation is that they are useful categories to understand how representations are part of a way of conceiving the world. That is, provide reference categories that provide conceptual support for empirical research. Thus, before talking about what was said by the interviewees, we must understand that, in everyday social life, the reflexivity of the actor is born and it arises as a result of it.

In social groups, together with their perception and appreciation schemes, there is a struggle within the social space to impose a certain vision of the world (Bourdieu, 2011). According to our subject of study, the interviewees generate their perceptions largely in the interaction offered by the unions as spaces of socialization and product of their own personal stories, forming a “body spirit”.

In that sense, we must appreciate the need for narratives since they are part of how a social group sees the world and acts on it (Jimeno, 2016). These should be studied according to the meaning of the messages that the subjects seek to transmit within the place where the discourses are enunciated, taking into account how the categories and subcategories are related. Therefore, the narratives are a way of seeing the social reality on the part of the interviewees who, due to their relationship with the State, have become hegemonic because it has become common sense, within the entire business sector and is transmitted in social communication media, giving the idea of common sense (García-Huidobro, 2016).

One of the ways in which these hegemonic narrative manifests itself in the sense of Gramsci has to do with the discourse about nation. This is because he articulates his discourse in a coherent way in the future of the

nation, bringing together other social groups outside the businessmen and sectors of Peruvian society in the narrative around a common discourse on social reality. In this way, the narrative about nation is important because it constitutes a way to gain legitimacy in front of other groups to have greater leadership in public decision making.

It is useful to talk about a nation because it leads the political community to think and the role that respondents play in their formation. On the other hand, the influence of the representations resides in that they become part of the way in which the actors conceive their community, being part of the narrative. Talking about a nation helps us understand the ways of thinking about the management of society and the types of leadership that may exist, better understanding power relations.

The nation and nationalisms are thus an imagined community (Anderson, 1993) that is born within the context of the formation of the world economy (Wallerstein, 2006) and the emergence of mass politics (Hobsbawm, 1997). This should be studied from the agents' reflexivity, as well as in the construction of narratives within a heterogeneous time, in which historical narratives are filled with content and where there is content arising from power relations (Chatterjee, 2002).

In Peru, according to what was found, the most privileged groups did not develop a political program and neither did they have a project around which to group the other classes, so they did not worry about constituting an organic group of intellectuals that would help their class domination (Burga & Flores, 1980). It ended up building, then, a mythified image of Peruvian history in which the Hispanic elements were exalted, but more as a way of seeing the unconscious world. At a general level, the Peruvian State based itself on the clientele relations that the different oligarchic groups had established with both the subordinate population and foreign capital (Cotler, 1978).

In that way, the nation can be seen as an imagined community that is contextualized within the world economy. In parallel, mass politics generates a popular nationalism, which must be analyzed from the perspective of *demos* (political community) and *ethnos* (cultural community), instilling in the reflexivity of the agents (Balibar, 2003). This constitutes one of the forms of manifestation of the representations of the other social groups. Therefore, in parallel to the history of nationalisms there must be a history of the history of nationalisms (Palti, 2003) because it implies a construction

and reconstruction of social groups from the elites, attributing characteristics and functions within the imagined community.

In conclusion, it is possible to affirm the following. 1) People generate their perception and appreciation schemes because of their interaction in everyday social life. 2) These schemes of thoughts born of reflexivity generate different conceptions of social reality. 3) The nation and nationalism is a certain form of those schemes of representation of a collective that revolve around the political community and the cultural community, which is built and crossed by power relations. Therefore, these categories help to understand that actors are conceived as part of a larger community, in this national case, and form a discourse that allows them to integrate into it.

## **Results of the investigation**

### **State and politicians**

First, the public is seen as bureaucratic, with delays and corruption is needed to move the process forward. Something common about politicians, public officials and bureaucrats is that they are despicable because that person's mediocrity is assumed by not being able to form something independently. In most stories, the State is portrayed as unreliable, lacking seriousness and unable to understand the complexity of the corporate world.

For those interviewed, relations with the State are personified in terms of who occupies their post. That is to say, one cannot speak of a "relationship with the State" but of relations with certain governments and individuals. This is particularly explained by the need for business associations to be close to power. In that sense there is no relationship with the State but with the government of x or z.

Taking this into account, they remember more the relations regarding the companies and the government according to three periods. In that sense, the main stages were the military government (1968-1980), the crisis of the APRA government (1987-1990) and the Fujimori regime (1990-2000). Each of them has a particular representation because it implied a totally different relationship with respect to each other.

The period of military government was seen as poorly organized and arrogant. On the other hand, the APRA government is remembered as times

of economic crisis and terrorism. Finally, the Fujimori government is seen with ambiguity: terrorism is eliminated, but it ends up with corruption and electoral fraud.

In particular, there is a special representation with politicians who define themselves as from the “left.” While it could be associated with social resentment, stronger is the perception that the “leftist” are unpleasant and feed of the university environment because their ideology is more attractive when one is young. The central idea about their proposals is the following: there is an idealistic vision and little feasibility in reality, therefore, they end up generating more problems.

The strongest criticism is on their double discourse: they talk a lot about the need for economic equality among people, but they are the first to show off luxuries. In that sense, they say one thing, but they do another. Finally, everyone considers that communism fails because when there is no difference between the worker and the lazy, the worker ends up lazy.

While they talk about other political parties, the greatest importance is given to the Left. This is because they considered that resentment and conflict are promoted. In that sense, a radical turn is thought of as something that threatens people’s property. On the other hand, it is assumed that this occurs because the Peruvian Left has never reached the Government.

## **Businessmen, sectors and unions**

Within the characteristics of all businessmen, they are thought of as a fighter who generate real wealth for their community. There may be differentiations, but it is at a general level, a pragmatic person who wants to earn money legally and to the extent that he fulfills his ambitions, does good to society in general.

During the conversations, the most frequent idea refers to companies as generators of wealth and governments as generators of poverty. Basically, “giving work” would allow them to gain legitimacy vis-à-vis other actors and position themselves as the agent that should take the leadership in decision making, their criteria being the most adequate.

Entrepreneur is, then, defined as a person who performs a lawful business, generates wealth and labor. In the process it produces material, cultural, social and economic transformation. His way of doing things is pragma-

tic because he is always looking for ways to solve problems. It is generally thought that his duty is to make business, good products to sell, earn money honestly and on the way, he generates employment for others. With that, he already does good for the community. In that way, he believes that doing his job is contributing to the community. However, this can be circumstantial and very context dependent.

Then, there is the widespread idea that the Peruvian businessman makes cartels through business associations and law firms, oligopolies to defend each other and compete under certain margins. He lives regularly in the short term because he is entrenched, thinking about avoiding the government attack. In addition, there is a slow transformation of the business sector in Peru due to a generational change. This is because the business world has become more complex and as a company becomes bigger, it is becoming increasingly difficult to know the decision makers.

The main difference between businessmen is in the sector where one is working, business associations and generation. Thus, the representations, as we have seen, start from everyday experiences of social life. In that line, there are the “liberal” businessmen, who, unlike the protectionists, are more ambitious because they wanted to go out to the open sea, catch the big fish. Who identifies with this idea, would be the people who really think about the best for the country, unlike protectionists who simply see for their interests.

A sector that defines itself as private is the industrial sector. This is represented as innovative, although many businessmen are unwilling to change because of their merchant mentality. To run an industrial company efficiently, one must privilege the long term and not so much immediate profits, as people dedicated to buying and selling do.

Industrialists are attributed virtues such as creativity, giving good jobs and be persevering. An industrial entrepreneur is in his factory, not in an office. In addition, they would be very creative and enterprising, with the ability to adapt to different economic contexts.

On the other hand, according to other businessmen, the industrialist has been caricatured as a protectionist, who did the least possible effort, overprotecting his small market niche because he only cared about his interest and earned at the expense of another. They all used the same discourse around protecting the national industry, even if it was really protecting themselves.

Afterwards, the merchant is credited with a short-term vision and a frequent search to increase profit. This is because he is used to constantly bu-

ying and selling, with the goal of finding similar profit margins. This observation has been more frequent by older industrialists because “many who are now called industrialists have never left their merchant mentality.”

Another group are mining businessmen, who consider their work fundamental in the development of the country. These are considered as agents of progress themselves because they give growth possibilities to the most remote areas of the country. That way, “we go to the highlands, where the real poverty is.” However, from his point of view, this is not communicated despite having many things in favor: he provides good jobs, pays high taxes and brings development to the highlands. In the case of the unions, these are made up of companies and companies must work. One already devotes enough time to solve problems proposed by the State to be talking to everyone. In that sense, the representation of these refers to a group that is exclusively dedicated to defend their interests.

In the case of business associations, these are portrayed as clubs of friends where businessmen are. More than the unions, it is the law firms who impose agendas because they are in charge of grouping companies and taking laws forward. In addition, another characteristic of these lies in the unity of its members: all know each other and form a “body spirit.”

The management of a union can be a very complicated task and for this, there are the managers. There one acts as a hinge, being able to reach a certain type of balance when one works independently. The point would be to try to reach objective decisions: this is the right thing and this is not the right thing. Regularly, when there are rivalries, they mention that some act on principles while the other defends only his interests.

On a general level, then, agreements within a union are “sweetly forced consensus.” This is because one must first locate where one is: that is, be aware of everyone’s needs. Then, the work performed must take into account Peruvian and international companies, make proposals that represent the common good.

In conclusion, the main characteristic of the entrepreneur is his ability to adapt to the context and generate wealth. Then, the representations together with the forms of interaction would be explained if one works in a certain sector. That is why we appreciate a story full of varieties and fissures, which do not conform single block. Then, the unions would be spaces where they form a body spirit for the rest of society, generator of solidarity.

## **Social movements and civil society**

Other groups that were mentioned in the interviews have been varied, ranging from foreign colonies to social movements such as syndicates and peasant associations. This is explained by the particular history of each one, where a certain interaction was established and, with it, certain representations. Thus, the industrialist describes syndicates much better than a merchant while a miner knows peasant communities better than a banker.

First, there are foreign colonies. According to their descendants, these could be integrated through their work and their values. For the Italo-Peruvians, immigration was very positive for Peru because many integrated into national life and succeeded. In the case of German descendants, values such as honesty and righteousness are present generation after generation.

On the other hand, the most mentioned civil society groups refer to social movements with whom businessmen such as unions and peasant associations have interacted most in their daily lives. Afterwards, everyone mentions organizations such as NGOs, but from very ambiguous positions: they range from admiration to contempt. In addition, there is an ambivalent representation regarding academics.

The relationship with the workers has changed, before they were stronger than all social organizations. The most typical thing is to remember syndicates as protected by the State, very politicized, with tensions and strikes. However, over time one should educate syndicalists because, in the end, it is of common interest that the company subsists because when one treats people well and pays people well there are no problems.

There is the idea that labor problems arise if there is no adequate treatment and fair payment. Labor disputes are very feared because nobody likes to work with problems. In that sense, the commitment they claim to have with employees is almost written in stone, in the sense that treating the employee badly can be considered taboo.

The older ones remember bad relationships at the beginning, but in everyday life, one had to have a good relationship with the workers. In the case of the youngest, there is representation of the syndicates as a hindrance since they do not allow for better decisions. This occurs because, with neoliberalism, collective bargaining has disappeared in such a way that younger managers simply don't know how to talk to other employees.

It is the miners who see the peasant communities as those who have suffered the abandonment of the State and are often manipulated by leaderships,

producing false expectations. They can be very hard to negotiate with and their internal problems are strong. Therefore, many rely on their ignorance.

That toughness when negotiating is explained because they are manipulated by people who take advantage of them, using them as “cannon fodder”. In that sense, the most critical position on NGOs sees them as mechanisms for seeking employment, being unprofessional and living off people’s resentment. However, a kinder position informs their role in accompanying state leadership in the search for development, being agents of progress.

The conflicts that develop between companies and civil society have often revolved around labor issues and more recently, socio-environmental conflicts. In that sense, everyone emphasizes not generalizing; that is, it is some businessmen and executives who have conflicts, while the vast majority do not. Many times, it is thought that there are people who stir up conflicts and take advantage of people who are not properly informed, but also recognize one’s responsibility in the sense of “form, but not substantive” errors.

In the mining case, false expectations are generated in the population. According to many, NGOs do not know the dynamics of the market and it is difficult to understand that companies are key actors for the country’s development. They think, they see them as the “bad guys in the movie” or as a group of insensitive millionaires who only think about making money.

Regarding the academy, there is a certain respect for the research work that is carried out. That is to say, being a person with degrees has a halo of legitimacy that emphasizes knowledge, making the comparison with an artist: a person who has no material ambitions but whose work is important because it provides things that make society think. In that sense, an intellectual is a person who must be respected: although he would not have the same money, he has knowledge and education that makes him “an equal”.

However, there is also another image. This has to do with the issue of utility, under the premise that those who have dedicated themselves to these types of activities are jealous of the executive world because despite the knowledge they have, they don’t earn the same. In this way, the political militancy of many intellectuals starts from social resentment towards the corporate world.

We appreciate then that the representations found are very ambivalent. In the case of the public sector, the predominant image is that of the bureaucrat: indolent, corrupt and inefficient when doing things. While the executive world has all the opposite characteristics: practical, efficient and that provides benefits for society. Finally, the general consensus on other social groups

is that they fail to understand and value the importance of companies in the welfare of society, being judged as people who only think about money.

## Conclusions

First, representations arise from the interaction of business groups within their associations. When businessmen meet with businessmen, they produce images about other actors, attributing certain behaviors. This is because these institutions constitute a matrix on where they perceive themselves as a group and form solidarity. We must remember that these representations are not homogeneous, but that there are specific fissures of the particularities of each interviewee. That is, a story is not just a block but an amalgam of ideas articulated around a larger one.

Then, all these representations are structured according to characterizations. These form frames of reference that indicate the behaviors that certain individuals may have, with the purpose of providing security over future action. While they mention that the goal is not to generalize, it is assumed in everyday life as such.

On the other hand, the representations fulfill the function of differentiating. It is through characterizations that respondents can identify their own attributes and those of others to have tools that guide their interaction. In that sense, unlike the classic nationalist ideologies where the end is inclusive, under neoliberalism the function is to separate social groups in the sense that: “we are all Peruvian, but you are not equal to me because everyone lives from my work”.

In accordance with everything described, there is a very negative representation of the State. This distrust has its origin in the last military government (1968-1980) where there was a lot of “hostility” towards the private sector as a result of the nationalizations. This was further reinforced by the emergence of neoclassical thinking in economic management, consolidating throughout the nineties. That is, the State is impractical, corrupt and indolent with the needs of others. Regarding the corporate world, businessmen and companies are represented as those who generate work, are fighters and are accustomed to permanently solving problems, who truly risk betting on their country because it makes their capital available to the rest. However, they believe that the rest of society sees them as insensitive, ambitious and despotic.

On the other hand, the representation of other groups is very ambiguous. It can range from respect (academy, unions) to contempt (social movements,

leftist groups) although they consider that society does not understand or value the role that businessmen play in the generation of wealth. In that way, they consider their role to be important because, in a way, they “maintain” the entire Peruvian society. It is through this representation that they seek to justify privileged treatment.

Finally, we can conclude that representations are part of the ways in which economic elites have constituted the nation since the 1990s. Thus, the most important influence comes from neoliberalism, which has been introduced into the mentality of executives and businessmen as a common sense. On the other hand, it is mixed with a feeling of belonging where everyone believes and identifies with the country because they were born here and because the idea of a nation has been instilled by their family throughout their lives. This would be a beautiful country, with many conditions to get by and where a person who truly loves his country stays to fight from within creating things.

In summary, it can be seen that most of the interviewees conceive Peruvian nationality on the basis of Creole liberalism, that is, the adaptation of classical neoliberal thinking to the Peruvian context. It argues that a community is made up of individuals who, in order to progress, must enrich themselves, being the only possibility of “progressing in life” doing productive work within a free market. In that sense, businessmen are those who generate wealth and employment, giving people real well-being and deserving privileged treatment. It is within this form of conception that the representations of other actors arise in order to develop a political project that is capable of bringing together all those who identify themselves as Peruvians.

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## The most influencer instagramers from Ecuador

### *Los instagramers más influyentes de Ecuador*

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#### **Abstract**

*Instagramers in the context of media literacy is a booming theme, of which little has been written among the scientific community but gradually is taking greater importance because in a short term Instagram aims to be one of the most used and favorite social networks. Through this research, it is intended to determine which are the most influencer instagramers in Ecuador, as well as to study their profiles according to content analysis (production and technology), analysis of language (language) and feedback / interaction (diffusion) generated since their profiles. The methodology used has been qualitative and quantitative through non-participant observation, Alianzo Ranking tool and a semi-structured interview applied to an expert in the study. The results show that the level of response to the comments of the followers, the publications that generate self-identification and feeling of closeness to the audience, the photographs of pets (dogs) posted by the successful instagramers are accepted by the community of followers and generate more “likes”. The analysis of successful instagramers in Ecuador serves to make an evaluation and detect what interests to people in a particular social environment and thus the causes that lead to one instagramer to succeed over another.*

#### **Keywords**

*Instagram, instagramers, media literacy, followers, audience, success.*

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### **Resumen**

Instagramers en un contexto mediático es un tema en pleno auge, del cual poco se ha escrito entre la comunidad científica pero paulatinamente está tomando mayor importancia dado que a corto plazo Instagram apunta a ser una de las redes sociales favoritas y más utilizadas. A través de esta investigación se pretende identificar cuáles son los instagramers más influyentes en Ecuador, así como analizar los perfiles de los mismos en función de un análisis de contenidos (producción y tecnología), análisis de lenguaje (lenguaje) y el feedback / interacción (difusión) generada desde sus perfiles. La metodología empleada ha sido cualitativa y cuantitativa, a través de observación no participante, la herramienta Alianzo Raking y una entrevista semiestructurada a un experto en el tema de estudio. Los resultados muestran que el nivel de respuesta a los comentarios de los seguidores, las publicaciones que generan auto-identificación y sentimiento de cercanía con las audiencias, las fotografías de mascotas (perros) publicados por parte de los Instagramers exitosos son aceptadas por la comunidad seguidores y generan mayor cantidad de “me gusta”. El análisis de los instagramers exitosos dentro de Ecuador sirve para realizar una evaluación y detectar qué interesa a la gente en un entorno social determinado, además de las causas que llevan a un instagramer tener mayor éxito sobre otro.

### **Keywords**

Instagram, instagramers, competencia mediática, seguidores, audiencia, éxito.

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## **Introduction and state of the art**

Communication, by its nature, has been present with human beings since the beginning of time and has gradually evolved along with the technological advances of such a globalized world in which we live. If we previously communicated through smoke signals, physical contact or guttural sounds now communication has taken a total turn to the point that the distances are just one click away. Now it is possible to visualize people from the other side of the world in real time as well as share moments through images, as is the case with social networks.

Thus, Lacoste (1998) affirms:

(...) The Internet is a source of information resources shared worldwide. It is a means of communication to establish cooperation and collaboration bet-

ween communities and interest groups on specific topics, distributed throughout the world. (p. 182)

In fact, when we enter the World Wide Web we connect with people from all over the globe, regardless of their geographical location, and then through the network connections made, we can establish contacts that may well be useful for forming social relationships, to meet past friendships, to develop projects and even to work and study.

Social networks in recent years have had a boom of great magnitude and now have become part of our daily social life, and are a fundamental pattern of life (Castells, 2009), because every day the number is increasing of global users who create, interact and share their experiences every second through their network of preference. Some perform them for the purpose of visually transmitting unique profiles through the photographic language, others for the fact of wishing to be more popular or make social comparisons (Utz, Tanis, & Vermeulen, 2012) and there are those who, through image-based platforms, such as Snapchat and Instagram manage to reduce their loneliness and increase their levels of happiness and satisfaction with life (Pittman & Reich, 2016).

In this environment emerges Instagram, social network and application to upload photos and videos Frommer (cited by Sheldon & Bryant, 2016), but on the site, additionally, the individual can edit the photographs with different filters, frames, colors, and infinite resources available to the user according to their tastes and more varied preferences. Then, once the photographs are edited, they are uploaded through the same network and are shared with virtual friends who provide some feedback to the published photographs either with comments or by clicking on the “Like” button.

Who is credited with the fact of the creation of Instagram is Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger in 2010, and since then, the gradual success that this network has had is increasingly on a larger scale, and everything suggests that its growth will continue day to day. For example, we can mention the data on the Shareaholic page, where reference is made to the fact that during the period from July to December 2017, the amount of traffic that Instagram contributed to web pages worldwide gained notable importance: from 0.1% to 0.7%.

This social network/application is a clear example of the progress of social networks and 2.0 technologies. because virtual communities have been created that feel the need to share and communicate. Thus, these new networks have brought with them the need to use new languages that involve

much more of the user, who is no longer a passive but active entity, capable of producing content, sharing them and making them known to their virtual environment as can be evidenced later.

Instagram is a social network that as mentioned above allows many forms of participation by users, who can reflect through this network their ways of thinking, acting, skills, abilities, among others.

In this section, some lines will be dedicated to explaining the results of several investigations around this theme, which will allow us to have a clearer picture of what is happening around this social network. It will be explained, for example, the way in which inserting photographs on Instagram can lead to promoting narcissistic behaviors and how it can cause people to feel influenced by how other people perceive and judge them (Jin & Muqaddam, 2018) and in a similar way, it is explained that users of this network use it to monitor, document and learn about others and demonstrate their creativity, travel and leisure activities (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

On the other hand, it will be observed how after an investigation carried out among young adults it was possible to determine that with the use of Instagram this group that has been classified as the loneliest of the generation manages to reduce their levels of loneliness and their levels of happiness and satisfaction with life increases gradually (Pittman & Reich, 2016). If instead, we analyze the behaviors of adolescents during their interactions on Instagram, we manage to determine that some of them seek the approval of their peers and share content in order to appear attractive and interesting and prior to the publication of photographs on Instagram they must follow, according to them, what seem like “norms” for which, in certain cases, they are in need of asking for help (Yau & Reich, 2018).

Similarly, we will briefly review the influence that likes have on Instagram at the brain level, in a study through which it was observed that certain brain areas are activated based on the feedback received by the subject with the “likes” given by their virtual peers (Sherman, Greenfield, Hernandez, & Dapretto, 2017). Additionally, it will be observed how the way of presenting the images on Instagram can imply credibility or it is possible that it encourages users to buy (Colliander & Marder, 2018) or even more so how women increase purchase intentions through the viewing of celebrities on Instagram (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

**a) Instagram and narcissism:** Jin and Muqaddam (2018) in their study demonstrate through two experiments how the fact of inserting photographs

on Instagram, specifically selfies (photographs of themselves) implies that the user wishes to self-promote. It is indicated as well that selfies can reveal narcissistic emotions in the subject, who also shows the need for popularity. On the other hand, the personality of the subjects is taken into account, which is a key factor in narcissism, which is defined according to the number of views of the photographs posted and the number of followers.

**b) Instagram to monitor and document:** Sheldon and Bryant (2016) explain in their study that Instagram is the fastest growing global social network and they manage to determine that the main reason for users to use Instagram, which differs from similar social networks, is “surveillance/knowledge” on the others. It was also found that women are more active on Instagram than men, and that they communicate more with their friends than the opposite sex. Additionally, the authors explain that when women comment on their friends’ photographs, they are sending a message that they “care”. Similar to the study cited above, it was determined that Instagram is very attractive to develop narcissistic attitudes and that different social and psychological circumstances (social satisfaction, social activity, narcissism) can reinforce different behavioral trends that in turn trigger different behaviors (number of hours on the site, photo editing, use of hashtags).

**c) Instagram to reduce loneliness and increase happiness levels:** Pittman and Reich (2016) through their research demonstrate how image-based social networks such as Snapchat and Instagram contribute to reducing loneliness in people, in a society where the population of young adults suffers the strongest loneliness of all time. As long as a social platform is more image-based than in the text, users will feel happier, more satisfied with life and he or she will feel less lonely. The images facilitate social presence, the sense that communication is established with a person rather than with an object. The photo of a friend eating or making a funny face - or even if it is a video and his voice can be heard - it is more likely that this is a signal to the brain that the friend is there, effects that are not caused by social networks based on the text.

**d) Instagram as a mirror of the person. Do I look attractive?:** Yau and Reich (2018) sought through their study to determine the rules of presentation that adolescents follow before “posting” through the social networks Facebook and Instagram. The results indicate that the adolescents prior to posting in the networks in question, seek the approval of their peers to be attractive and interesting. Even in the case of adolescent girls, it is

mostly marked that they ask their friends about their criteria about a certain post prior to publication, but it has been observed that what was initially an entertainment activity, in certain cases can be tedious. Teenagers consider that it is of great importance to follow some rules of online behavior prior to posting posts, which requires some social competence.

**e) Instagram and the influence of likes on the brain:** Sherman, Greenfield, Hernandez, and Dapretto (2017) indicate in their study that one of the main characteristics of social networks is the possibility of placing “likes” in the content posted by virtual peers, so this group of researchers examined the behavioral and neural responses of individuals (adolescents and young adults) observing their photographs and those of others while undergoing functional magnetic resonance imaging. The participants felt a special attraction for those photographs that had received a greater number of likes, and the most popular photographs caused more activity in multiple brain regions, including the nucleus accumbens, which is attributed an important function in pleasure, including laughter and reward, as well as fear (Schwienbacher, Fendt, Richardson, & Schnitzler, 2004), for which it is involved in the reward circuit. The response level of this brain nucleus was activated mostly according to the age of the participants.

**f) Instagram as a consumption motivator:** Colliander and Marder (2018) explain in their study that they used two probabilities a) show individuals photographs without greater aesthetics, which could well have been captured by an average user and b) place photographs worked with greater aesthetics, in both cases related to a fashion brand during the span of a week. As a result, it was obtained that the mostly elaborated images captured the attention of the users to a greater extent, who in turn recommended others to follow the Instagram account in question and in turn increased, by the aesthetics of the image, the credibility in the source. Similarly, Djafarova and Rusworth (2017) corroborate with other authors that on Instagram most of their users are young women and, in their study, they determine that celebrities on Instagram are influential in the buying behaviors of this group of women.

All these changes entail new words that are gradually being inserted in our daily communication, such is the case of the term infoxication, which “arises from the union of the words information plus intoxication” and refers to the idea of the overload of information that a user receives, especially from the internet, in all its forms, which in turn can cause the sensation of not being able to cover or manage it, and therefore generate great anguish (Toffler, 1970).

Romero-Rodríguez and Aguaded (2016) define infoxication as “an excess of consumption of unnecessary information for decision making - mostly entertainment content - that is, supersaturation of the cognitive capacity of an individual that leads to distraction from the issues of importance and its own rational alienation”.

Based on the context of media competence, the question arises, are instagramers prosumers? A prosumer is a person who “creates goods, services or experiences and is simultaneously involved in their production and consumption” (Toffler, 1970). As one can see, the term prosumers has been used for a long time and has taken even more force with the proliferation of the Internet, which highlights “prosumption”, where Web 2.0 is conceived as a new social factory (Ritzer, Dean, & Jurgenson, 2012). If we take the social premise as a point of analysis of prosumism, the basic premise is to create and share, so if the person does not share, the social network does not flow, it makes no sense.

Users carry out the process of consumption and production through new technologies, blogs and social networks where there are dynamics of reading, feedback and content production. Berrocal, Campos-Domínguez, and Redondo (2014) explain that:

Social networks are clearly a means of ‘prosumption’ where prosumers become speakers that produce conversations with and for a consumer audience (...) it means that any activity in the off-line world can have transcendence in the online world, forming a ‘space of autonomy’. (pp. 65-72)

The arrival of the smartphone completely changed the digital landscape, mention can be made of Wang, Xiang, and Fesenmaier (2016) who, in their research on the subject, determine that smartphones are used for communication purposes (calls, text messages, emails), entertainment (music, books, photographs and games), online social networks (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), information search and acquisitions (news, weather information, restaurants, shopping, travel ideas and searches in general), and with personal organization tools (bank, alarm, calendar and navigation).

In the aforementioned study, it was also determined that smartphone owners used them all day long, that is, they were part of their daily lives to the point that many of the respondents mentioned that they woke up in the morning with phone alarms and they opened their eyes from time to time at night to observe some notifications of social networks and emails, then during the day they used it to find places to eat food, make purchases, among others.

Based on the criteria and bases of study proposed, this research work aims to determine which are the five instagramers with the greatest impact in Ecuador, as well as to study their profiles according to the activity carried out here.

## **Materials and methods**

The methodology used for this research work will be qualitative and quantitative, through non-participant observation and using a semi-structured interview with the expert in media competencies, Dr. Joan Ferrés, focused on the media competencies that the successful Instagramers possess and that are object of study of the present investigation.

For the quantitative analysis of the instagramers profiles and the selection of the samples of the present investigation, the five successful instagramers of Ecuador were taken as reference. How to determine their success? To achieve this, we chose to use the well-known Alianzo Ranking, which uses a score between 0 and 100 which is the result of combining different measurement parameters for each of the social profiles to which each user belongs. Among the indicators for an instagramer to appear in the ranking of another user are the number of followers and the interaction with users.

The followed criteria for choosing the Alianzo ranking have been the following:

- It allows to select the profiles of successful instagramers by filtering by categories (Country, social network, language, among others).
- It is a weekly updated ranking that provides real data of the person being analyzed and shows progress in terms of followers by lapses from one week, one month, three months, six months, one year and globally.
- This ranking has been used in several scientific investigations, given its reliability in data and its great value. For example, we can cite the works carried out by Santoveña (2011), Moya-Sánchez and Herrera-Damas (2016), Tejedor et al. (2009), among others.

With the help of Alianzo Ranking, a selection of the five most successful instagramers in Ecuador was made taking into account their influence given by the number of followers and the interaction generated with them.

For the analysis of the profiles of the instagramers that are the object of the study, it was carried out based on the established dimensions of the media competence that a successful instagramer possesses through their publications and based on the opinions expressed by the expert. We proceeded to perform data analysis with the following sections: content analysis, language analysis and feedback. Additionally, the content of the semi-structured interview was a fundamental basis both for the theoretical support in the variable of media competencies, as well as for the elaboration of the discussion of this research work.

## Analysis and results

Through the Alianzo Ranking, the five instagramers that generate the greatest impact in Ecuador are determined and through non-participant observation, it is possible to establish their content, language used during publications and the interaction they engage with the followers who participate in their content.

**Chart 1**  
**Instagram account María Teresa Guerrero**

María Teresa Guerrero	Number of followers	Followed	Publications
	911 000	2753	8247

Source: Alianzo Ranking

**Content analysis:** According to Alianzo Ranking, María Teresa Guerrero is the one who leads the list of instagramers with the largest number of followers and activity in the social network. She has a total of 911 000 followers, 2753 followed and 8247 publications. The main topic on her Instagram profile is her day to day in the USA.

**Language:** The language used in the publications made by this Instagramer is quite clear, concrete and concise, so that it can be understood by the followers of her social network. The hashtags mostly used by this Instagramer are #Nilos, #Pinchi - the names of her two dogs, # tsxflacaguerrero - her sportswear line.

**Feedback:** One of the positive aspects that was evidenced in the data collection is the great interaction that María Teresa Guerrero maintains with her followers. Thus, in the publications that refer to her line of sportswear, followers get answers from the successful instagramer, but not only when it comes to sells, but also in other types of publications.

**Chart 2**  
**Instagram account #ChocoTrip**

#ChokoTrip	Number of followers	Followed	Publications
Viajando por Ecuador	26 500	6907	4161

Source: Alianzo Ranking

**Content analysis:** Christian Echeverría (chokoec) is the one who ranks second in the Alianzo ranking, with a total of 26,500 followers, 6907 followed and 4161 publications. The main topic in his Instagram profile are photographs of his travels and adventures in the places he visits. Thus, for example, he shows his taste for the most varied and even strange landscapes.

**Language:** In the different chokoec publications it can be shown that the language used is quite understandable for the audiences that follow him, especially for travel and adventure lovers. In his publications he uses hashtags in which #ChokoTrip is self-mentioned and also refers to the country he is visiting.

**Feedback:** As in the previous case, it can be said that the interaction that this individual performs towards his followers can be one of the keys to success, given that the user who observes that his comment has a feedback feels satisfied, motivated and with some importance because your message has had an answer and therefore stands out among the group.

**Chart 3**  
**Richard Salazar Barona Instagram Account**

Richard Salazar Barona	Number of followers	Followed	Publications
	55 800	234	362

Source: Alianzo Ranking

**Content analysis:** The case of Richard Salazar Barona can be seen that his target audience are teenagers and that is why his publications are based on photographs of himself, in many cases selfies in which he appears very attractive with quite youthful clothes. In the publications he shows his day to day and transmits affection, love and empathy to his followers, who are mostly women.

**Language:** In the point of analysis is the language used in the publications of Richard Salazar Barona we realize that it is that of a teenager who seeks to capture the attention of the followers, since he uses phrases such as: “Today I removed my brackets and I cut my hair Do you want me to upload a picture of how I look like now? #RompeElHielo.”

**Feedback:** YouTube is another of the means used by Richard Salazar in addition to the Instagram account and through his posts he calls for interaction by the followers, mostly female followers. In the publications the instagramer writes messages like: “We are going to pursue our dream to the end, there is only one life”.

**Chart 4**  
**Dalo Bucaram Instagram account**

Dalo Bucaram	Number of followers	Followed	Publications
	362 000	4071	4099

Source: Alianzo Ranking

**Content analysis:** Abdalá Jaime Bucaram Pulley is a renowned Ecuadorian politician, a native of Guayaquil, who in the Alianzo ranking ranks fourth because of the number of followers that reaches a total of 362,000, 4071 followed and 4099 publications. In his publications it can be evidenced that they are mostly photographs of his private life, he photographs his children, wife and takes selfies.

**Language:** Through the publications of Dalo Bucaram it is very noticeable to realize that he is a very loving person to his family and a believer in God, this can be evidenced by the hashtags he uses in his publications such as #fuerzayFe, #lafuerzadelamor.

**Feedback:** Unlike the instagramers mentioned above, it can be mentioned that Dalo Bucaram does not maintain interaction with his followers and

in front of the comments written by his followers does not provide any response and although some individuals allude to it with questions or mentions daloxhecho does not respond to the followers; however, a large number of followers is observed.

**Chart 5**  
**Guillermo Lasso Instagram account**

	Number of followers	Followed	Publications
Dalo Bucaram	362 000	4071	4099

Source: Alianzo Ranking

**Content analysis:** Guillermo Lasso, Ecuadorian politician and former candidate for the Presidency of Ecuador according to Alianzo Ranking occupies the fifth place of the most successful Ecuadorian instagramers. On the other hand, he demonstrates through images the public appearances he has in the media or when he has meetings with citizens. In previous publications when Ecuador was going through an electoral period, publications with campaign themes, videos, interviews, among others are observed.

**Language:** Although it is true Guillermo Lasso is a politician who aspired in his time to occupy the Presidency of Ecuador, according to Instagram publications it can be evidenced that the politician in question still aspires for a political position. Thus, for example, the language used in his publications has a tone oriented to this end: “I tell young people to participate in politics, do not leave the chair empty, and if it is full of indecent people, we must take them out with the force of our Ideas and our decency. Long live an #EcuadorLibre!”

**Feedback:** When analyzing the publications of Guillermo Lasso, it is notorious to show that in the comments there is very little interaction compared to other analyzed instagramers. However, despite this fact, the number of followers of Lasso is quite considerable.

Joan Ferrés, a leading doctor and expert in media competency issues states:

I would talk about balances. It has always been said (and I agree) that quality is more important than quantity, but you cannot provide a public service if you are not able to reach as many people as possible. It is repeated with the

new technologies and with the new communicative practices what happened with the classic ones. A high-quality television that interested very few viewers did not provide a public service, because it did like banks, it only gave culture to those who already had it. The same criteria apply to Instagram and social networks (...).

It is possible to coincide with Joan Ferrés in the fact that a balance point must be sought because to have a large number of followers it is necessary to know what that group of followers would be interested in knowing or observe in their news feed of their Instagram account. That is where the importance of an instagramer possessing mastery in media competencies lies. Through this research, each successful instagramer was analyzed under the following criteria, each corresponding to a dimension of media competence: content analysis (production and technology), language analysis (language), photography (aesthetics), transmitted values (ideology and values), feedback / interaction (diffusion).

## **Discussion and conclusions**

The instagramers, who were subject to analysis, through their posts on Instagram sought to generate closeness with their followers in all cases, by showing photos of their daily lives, trips, family, pets, passions, hobbies, entertainment, advice and even including something in a humorous way, they look for the followers to observe that they are people like them who can fall and get up that despite enjoying fame they also have a home, a hobby and are someone other than what is seen on television or in the media in general.

The language used by the analyzed instagramers in most cases is natural, clear and with short phrases, the use of hashtags # with words that refer to travel, clothing stores or simply their life slogans is observed. In other cases, they make use of humor to accompany their photographs and thus capture the attention of their followers.

If it is about calling for the participation of their followers, the analyzed instagramers know how to do it, because they capture the attention of their audience to like and comment on their photographs in exchange for giving them a response “hello” to their comments. In addition, they raise questions such as: “What do you think of my new look? Do you want my new album to come out now? How do i look today Comment...”, “I will like the

last like on this post,” among many others. And the followers look for their name to appear among the list of comments of their instagramer of preference. This pleasure of receiving a feedback may be due to the influence of Instagram’s likes in the brain as demonstrated by Sherman, Greenfield, Hernandez, and Dapretto (2017) in the study in which participants felt a special attraction for those photographs who had received a greater number of likes, which caused more activity in multiple brain regions.

One of the main problems encountered was determining the most successful instagramers at the Ecuador level because there were some tools used for the acquisition of automated data in social networks; However, the tools were not free, therefore an intense search was carried out on the Internet and data were obtained from some prestigious rankings on social networks and blogs such as Alianzo Ranking, which has been the main data collection tool. It is considered that if the economic limitation had not existed, it would have been of great interest to be able to use some other tool to measure instagramers success in order to determine the possible existence of deviations between them.

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## Citizen participation in community radio in the central region of Ecuador

### *Participación ciudadana en la radio comunitaria en la región central de Ecuador*

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#### ***Abstract***

The article analyzes the work done by community radio stations in the central region of Ecuador in order to promote social progress through the promotion of participatory processes that guarantee the empowerment of the community in the administration and creation of radio content. In this way, qualitative methodologies are used through interviews applied to 12 directors and 36 broadcasters in order to identify the management model of community radio stations, how the staff working in these stations are linked, the types of financing with which they are financed, the various strategies for participation in radio programming and the actions undertaken by the Government of Ecuador in favour of the radio stations studied. Finally, it is determined that added to the well-known economic problem, it is evident that there are no horizontal communication strategies that facilitate the empowerment of citizens around the media. The Organic Law on Communication does not diversify community radio stations so that, depending on their differences, an equitable intervention in the radio spectrum is promoted. Likewise, it does not promote the empowerment of people as volunteers. The issue of training is a need that can be satisfied from the academy.

#### ***Keywords***

*Community radio, management, organization, Law of communication, citizen participation.*

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### **Resumen**

El artículo analiza la labor que cumplen las radios comunitarias de la región central de Ecuador a fin de promover el progreso social, mediante el fomento de procesos participativos que garanticen el empoderamiento de la comunidad en la administración y creación de contenidos radiofónicos. De esta manera se utiliza metodologías cualitativas a través de entrevistas aplicadas a 12 directores y 36 locutores, con el fin de identificar cuál es el modelo de gestión de las radios comunitarias, cómo se vincula al personal que labora en dichas emisoras, las tipologías de financiamiento con la cual se solventan, las diversas estrategias de participación en la programación radial y las acciones que ha emprendido el Gobierno de Ecuador en favor de las radios estudiadas. Finalmente, se determina que sumado al conocido problema económico se evidencia que no existen estrategias de comunicación horizontal que faciliten el empoderamiento de los ciudadanos alrededor del medio de comunicación. La Ley Orgánica de Comunicación no diversifica a las radios comunitarias para que en función de sus diferencias se impulse una intervención equitativa en el espectro radioeléctrico. Así mismo no impulsa el empoderamiento de la gente como voluntarios. El tema de capacitación es una necesidad que puede ser satisfecha desde la academia.

### **Palabras clave**

Radio comunitaria, gestión, organización, Ley de comunicación, participación ciudadana.

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## **Introduction**

Communitarian, alternative or citizen media arise from the need to democratize the word in search of a more just, equitable and supportive society, therefore, they are “a critical tool for the social control of traditional media powers and for citizen empowerment and active participation in the public sphere” (Cerbino & Belotti, 2016, p. 50). A discourse management contrary to the dominant power, which empowers “the emancipation of the lowest strata of the population against the domination of the upper strata” (Beltrán & Reyes, 1993, p. 19), through participatory and inclusive communication that enables the colloquium of knowledge for common welfare. Seen in this way, a community media “cannot exist if it is not based on the social dynamics in which it develops” (Gumucio, 2005, p. 8). In fact, the media is involved in the social context to transmit a local reality on the

air, “valuing the own, the place, the identity, the culture as a political and tool to promote change, and promoting the collaborative and basic education, the own languages, the original forms of organization and, in turn, opening up to an increasingly connected world” (Ramos, 2018, p. 34). In summary, “community media are punctual responses to social needs” (García & Ávila, 2016, p. 278). And within the various types of alternative media, radio stands out, as an ideal space for the democratization of communication, through the oral participation of social actors. At the same time, the economic feasibility of the entire population to access radio receiving devices stands out.

Community radio stations are created to stimulate the participation of a large representative sample of the different socio-economic levels, organizations and minority groups that exist within the community. The mission of these radios is to facilitate the free circulation of information by stimulating freedom of expression and dialogue within the community. (Unesco, 1999, p. 152)

According to the World Association of Community Radio (Amarc, 2010), community radio and television are:

Private actors that have a social purpose and are characterized by being managed by social organizations of various nonprofit types. Its fundamental characteristic is the participation of the community both in the ownership of the media and in the programming, administration, operation, financing and evaluation. (p. 51)

From the perspective of the Cuban José Ignacio López, a community broadcaster:

Promotes citizen participation and defends their interests; when one responds to the tastes of the majority and makes good humor and hope our first proposal; when we report truthfully; when it helps solve the thousand and one problems of everyday life; when all ideas are discussed in our programs and all opinions are respected; when cultural diversity is stimulated and not commercial homogenization. (1995, p. 54)

In other words, a citizen radio must always be open to its audience and cannot dispense with its community, since “it always points towards the

democratization of communication and makes citizen participation a primary element” (Pincheira, 2013, p. 184). Always favoring a horizontal communication that “must be articulated in the sense that the listener demands his gratification, wants to be a producer and recipient of the information” (Abreu et al., 2010, p. 22). Thus, promoting the well-being and development of the community.

Looking back at the past, in Latin America community radio stations appear in the “first half of the 20th century, under the protection of social and political movements, linked to unions and progressive Catholic movements” (Ramírez, 2014, p. 119) that gave step to a great process of educational media construction that was born in Colombia, through the Hertzian waves of Radio Sutatenza. Project that “for more than 50 years, between 1948 and 1990, benefited about eight million illiterates, managing its five essential axes (health, alphabet, numbers, spiritual work)” (Arnedo et al., 2014, p. 242). Similarly, in the 50s, Bolivian stations close to the mining trade union movement appear. Radio proposal that was born by the decision of a “group of priests committed to the sector. It consisted of launching a radio station - which would become several - in which the voices of the miners and their families could be heard” (Villamayor, 2014, p. 91).

Later in the 60s the Popular Radiophonic Schools of Ecuador (ERPE) emerged, which generated “the creation of about half a thousand stations, dedicated to popular education, mostly sponsored by the Catholic Church” (Beltrán, 1996, p. 9). Finally, ERPE “in the 80’s abandoned its educational origin and linked to the idea of changing the structures of society and the search for a just society, with solidarity and equity” (Villamayor, 2014, p. 91). Obviously, community radio is exposed as an emancipatory proposal of the peoples, which opens communication channels for the dialogue of knowledge “from a political perspective that involves the community and not the interests of the market or the hegemonic powers” (Lizondo, 2018, p. 64).

In this way:

Actors can legitimately appropriate information that they themselves build with the demands and experiences that start from their social reality, and that is not imposed by media that build the news from other areas. (Navarro, 2017, p. 11-12)

A communication that stands in the local, in the everyday, for that reason “is considered as a close and emotionally charged medium” (Martínez & Ortega, 2018, p. 87). Regarding the presented ideas, this work aims to analyze the work that community radio stations in the central region of Ecuador fulfill, to promote social development, through the opening of participatory processes that allow social actors to engage in the administration (management model), operation (personnel working), financing (economic sustainability) and programming of the community environment (strategies for participation in content creation). Finally, the state support that community radio stations have received will be investigated in order to determine the actions undertaken by the Ecuadorian Government in favor of broadcasters.

## **Citizen participation in community radio**

Social participation is a fundamental key for the construction of a community radio, this is evident from the first Latin American initiatives. Such is the case of the mining radio, which promoted participation through “its ‘open microphone’ strategy, they put workers and their families to talk freely about all the topics of their interest, to make claims to the authorities and even to criticize union leadership” (Beltrán, 1996, p. 9). Hence, the community broadcaster is a means that engages with its community, to tend to dialogue that fosters a critical society against the power of the day, so that it is not only “a channel of transmission to people, but also a means of receiving them” (Milan, 2006 p. 272). In this way, citizen participation in community radio “must be seen in the analysis of public space as the capacity and possibility of people and social groups to influence the transformation of conditions that affect one’s life” (Martínez, Yaguana & Rencoret, 2018, p. 19).

There are various types of participation in community radio, however, all are focused on the democratization of the media. Participation from management encourages the community to be involved in decision making in the administration of the station. For this purpose, a horizontal communication is executed for the hiring of staff, the appointment of the administrator or director, the maintenance of equipment and facilities, among others. Another priority task at this level of participation is the contribution of the community to the economic sustainability of the broadcaster.

Therefore, a community radio must “generate spaces for citizen participation from management, co-management and self-management, such as the highest levels of commitments to plurality and freedom of expression to achieve the best interests of communities (Mora, 2011, p. 140). Meanwhile, the participation from the field of content management implies the elaboration of the communication project and the decision making regarding the topics that will be transmitted in the programming grid. For this, the media must generate strategies that allow the town to be linked in the production and broadcast of radio programs that contribute to social development and intercultural promotion.

Finally, participation in the reception and feedback of radio programs, “through the expression of opinions, the generation of questions that broaden the understanding of the facts” (De la Noval, 2018, p. 36), are fundamental elements for the subsistence of the media. That the inhabitants of the community listen to the radio makes it possible to strengthen the *raison d’être* of the media. A station born from “a specific need of the community, or as a logical step in a community development process, will be a station in which the community participates” (Álvarez, 2008, p. 68). Participation is therefore a bidirectional commitment, on the one hand, the media has the responsibility of supporting its community to popularize the word, while the community maintains the duty to support the media in the administrative management, issuance and reception of the communicational product. In this perspective:

The radio must become a space for community participation and only the effective relationship with them will guarantee the necessary support for these communities to defend their radio as a communication tool for the development of their capacities and for the improvement of their own community life. (Romero & Artigas, 2013, p. 77)

The advantage of the community media lies not only in its geographical proximity to the community, but also in a communicational proximity that allows radio transmitters to listen and be heard by society. Hence, that success is achieved:

To the extent that the peoples and organizations are the protagonists in the production and circulation of messages, which break the canons established by the business media, which reproduce in their agendas, the pyramid

of the domination, where politicians, artists and athletes are important. (Galán, 2015, p. 30)

In other words, community media do not use the people, on the contrary, they serve the people by “accommodating new problems and profiles of participants, being the groups and collectives that suffer the most from exclusion, or with greater difficulties in the exercise of their rights, those that show greater interest in participating” (García, 2017, p. 40). Finally, it is convenient to note that, community radio stations are the calls to take the first step to create links that allow the cooperation and commitment of the population to work for the media, recovering “the role of citizens in the communicative process, including the elaboration of contents and the management of the media itself (Martínez, 2018, p. 271).

In this way, communities will be empowered by local community radio and will strengthen their social development through communication processes. In fact:

When communities appropriate the means of communication, they discover how useful they can be to weave their processes more solidly and make their reality and context visible in their own terms. (Peña, 2012, p. 200)

## **Community radio and its legal framework in Ecuador**

The first community radios arise without a regulatory framework of the State and thanks to the support of the Catholic Church. In 1950 by the hand of Reverend Manuel Moncayo, Apostolic Administrator of the Vicariate of Zamora, the Voice of Zamora was founded, in the province of Zamora Chinchipe, which was created for the service of faith, and the increase of justice and the dissemination of culture (<http://lavozdezamora.com.ec>). Similarly, in 1962 and at the initiative of Monsignor Leonidas Proaño, the Popular Radiophonic Schools of Ecuador (ERPE) arose in Riobamba, a radio project that was framed in liberation theology and that sought social justice for the indigenous peoples of the region. Through the impulse of:

Literacy, evangelization and education programs of indigenous peoples and peasants not considered by the State. The program promoted the mobiliza-

tion of Ecuadorian peasants towards the defense of their identity and the fight against inequality and poverty. (Sanmartín et al., 2017, p. 101)

Subsequently, in the province of Morona Santiago, located in the Amazon region, *La Voz de Arutam* radio arises. “It began in 1964 with the Salesian mission, and in the 1970s it developed the Shuar Intercultural Bilingual Radio Education System for the primary level” (Acosta et al., 2017, p. 7). Years later in 1972, the *Fundación Adelanto Comunitario Ecuatoriano* undertakes the creation of Interoceanic radio, “institution of communication and community service marking a model of life in the faith and commitment of the people” (Cerbino, 2018, p. 121). As of 1975, the broadcasting and television law was established that recognized only two types of media, public stations and private commercial stations. Therefore, from this regulatory framework, community radio stations that were in operation and new proposals would emerge as private broadcasters.

Subsequently, although with certain limitations, in 1995, community broadcasting concessions are finally implemented, for legally constituted organizations, in accordance with the Law of Organization and Regime of the Communes. For the year 2013 the Organic Law of Communication (LOC) would be created, which recognizes three types of social communication media, these being public, private and community. According to section III on community media, the LOC in its article 85 defines community media as “those whose ownership, administration and direction correspond to non-profit social groups or organizations, to communes, communities, villages and nationalities. Community media are not for profit and their profitability is social” (p.15). Within this perspective, the problem arises. How could they afford the expenses of maintaining a radio station and its social mission, if they are not for profit?

On the other hand, article 110 of the LOC states that the community media must compete with the private media to be able to acquire a frequency of the radio spectrum, complying with requirements such as the communication project, technical study and management and sustainability. Which would demand a strong economic investment for a community, people or nationality. To this is added the complexity that the volunteers of the communities themselves have to collaborate in the journalistic activities of the community media, since according to article 42 of the LOC, to work in a social commu-

nication media one must be a journalist or communication professional with the exception of collaborators who carry out programs in native languages.

Community radios are a tool to promote the participation of peoples and communities:

Because through it they will have the possibility to influence public and private decisions in the community (family and school) and local, promoting and demanding the fulfillment of their rights, through organization, mobilization, communication and training. (Barragán, & Garzón, 2017, p. 290)

Without doubt:

There is a lack of communication and work integrated with the community sectors in the construction of laws, which does not allow the State to understand the implications, needs and characteristics of the community radio stations. (Galarza & Culqui p. 1405)

And it is in these “differences where one must work to achieve the democratization of the media to give voice to those who have traditionally been excluded from public debate” (Barragán & Garzón, 2016, p. 212).

## **Materials and methods**

The study is carried out on community radio stations in the central region of Ecuador, which include the provinces of Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Chimborazo and Pastaza. The methodology used for the data collection process is qualitative, using the semi-structured interview technique to 12 directors and 36 radio speakers of said media. On the following study variables: a) Management model of the radios; b) Personnel who are part of community radio stations; c) Economic sustainability in the radios; d) Strategies for participation in radio programming; e) State support for strengthening community radio.

The management model of the radios is analyzed, in order to identify to whom the radio medium belongs to. The people involved in the administration of community radio, and the objective of programming as such. Then the personnel that is part of the stations, with the purpose of establishing how people who work in the radio station are hired and linked. Likewise, the number of people who work voluntarily in the media. Mean-

while, the economic sustainability of community radio stations is examined with the intention of knowing the different types of financing with which the radios operate.

Subsequently, the various mechanisms used by community broadcasters to promote community participation in the communication project are analyzed. Finally, the state support for strengthening Community radio is investigated with the objective of determining the actions that the Government of Ecuador has undertaken in favor of these stations. Regarding the use of the proposed methodology, it has certain limitations, such as subjectivity in qualitative results, since it is taken as a reference to community radio in the central region of Ecuador from the criteria of its directors and broadcasters.

## **Analysis and results**

### **Management model of the studied radios**

To understand the management model of community radios, interviews are conducted with 12 directors based on the following categories:

- To whom does the radio station belong.
- The people involved in the administration of the radio and the programming objectives of the stations.

#### *Identify to whom the radio medium belongs*

The study determines that seven stations belong to religious organizations, two to a private non-profit foundation, and five to indigenous peoples and nationalities. However, of the community radios that were investigated, only nine are in operation. As Chart 1 illustrates.

#### *The people involved in the administration of community radio*

When analyzing the dynamics with respect to the administration, the findings determine that the stations under the tutelage of religious groups have administrators and coordinators appointed by the authorities of said com-

munities, while, in the stations that belong to indigenous groups and private foundations, the administrators are elected by a General Assembly.

### *The objectives of community radio programming*

Regarding the objectives that govern the programming of community radio stations, according to the study, it is determined that these are harmonized to the social reason of each one, that is, they focus on evangelizing, satisfying the social needs of the marginalized population, and strengthening communication in the political, cultural and social aspect within the community. For broadcasters, sustainability is a sensitive issue, it is clear from the interviewees that those who closed had to do so due to the lack of financial resources to face expenses such as energy payments and rental fees.

**Chart 1**  
**Community radio stations in the central region**  
**of Ecuador registered in CORDICOM**

Social reason	Name of the radio	Frequency/ channel	Province	On air
Federación de iglesias indígenas evangélicas de Cotopaxi	Radio Runatacuyac	1160 AM	Cotopaxi	Yes
Fundación ecuatoriana Juan Pablo II	Radio católica Riobamba	105.7 FM	Chimborazo	Yes
Asociación de comunidades indígenas de Arajuno	Radio Jatari kichwa 92.3 FM	92.3 FM	Pastaza	Yes
Nación Sapara del Ecuador	Radio Sapara 92.7 FM	92.7 FM	Pastaza	No
Nacionalidad Andwa de Pastaza Ecuador	Radio Andwa la voz de la frontera	95.9 FM	Pastaza	No
Nacionalidad Waorani del Ecuador	Wao apeninka 91.1 FM	91.1 FM	Pastaza	No
Nacionalidad Shiwiar del Ecuador	Radio Tarimiat 93.5fm	93.5 FM	Pastaza	No
Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares	Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares	710 AM	Chimborazo	No

Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares	Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares	91.7 FM	Chimborazo	Yes
Diócesis de Latacunga	Radio Latacunga FM	102.1 FM	Cotopaxi	Yes
Vicariato apostólico de Puyo misión dominicana	Radio Puyo	89.1 FM	Pastaza	Yes
Asociación indígena de la iglesia de cristo en Chimborazo	El Prado	980 AM	Chimborazo	Yes
Confederación de pueblos organizaciones comunidades e iglesias indígenas evangélicas de Chimborazo	La voz de AIIECH	950 AM	Chimborazo	Yes
Confederación de pueblos organizaciones comunidades e iglesias indígenas evangélicas de Chimborazo	La voz de AIIECH	101.7 FM	Chimborazo	Yes

Source: Own elaboration

## Community radio staff

According to the 12 directors and 36 presenters of the community broadcasters in operation, the staff working and collaborating on the radio is linked through verbal and written contracts and agreements. The contracts are duly legalized in the Ministry of Labor Relations. Meanwhile, written or verbal agreements are made with collaborators or volunteers who support all types of communication activities, serving as speakers and community reporters. It should be noted that volunteers are people who belong to the community, foundation or organization that owns the station. In this way the radio is transformed into a space that does not generate economic returns, but satisfies support for the community. Hence the high number of volunteers in several stations is understood. This is illustrated in chart 2.

**Chart 2**  
**Personnel who are part of community radios**

Radio	Number of collaborators	Number of volunteers:	Number of people hired:
		Through written or verbal agreements	Through remuneration
Radio Runatacuyac 1160 AM	5	3	2
Radio católica Riobamba 105.7 FM	14	12	2
Radio Jatari kichwa 92.3 FM	10	10	
Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares 91.7 FM	59	50	9
Radio Latacunga 102.1 FM	11		11
Radio Puyo 89.1 FM	17	13	4
El Prado 980 AM	10	10	
La voz de AIIECH 950 AM y 101.7 FM	20	17	3
Total	146	115	31

Source: Own elaboration

## **Economic sustainability in community radios**

Economic sustainability is a sensitive and transcendental issue for broadcasters, according to the 12 directors, keeping a community radio operational requires an approximate monthly investment and expense between US \$ 5,000 and US \$ 10,000.

The financing for payments of basic services and to the personnel that collaborates in the radio, is sustained by the publicity of public and private institutions among others. However, some stations restrict advertising content that contains messages against their religious beliefs or ethical and moral principles. Consequently, they seek to generate economic resources through socio-productive enterprises or event transmission services, as well as international projects.

On the other hand, donations are made by people from the organization, foundation or community to which the station belongs. Donations from

other countries, which at a certain time were a great contribution of the broadcasters, have been limited by the bureaucratic procedures imposed by the Ecuadorian state. Next, chart 3 shows the main sources of financing for community radio stations in the central region of Ecuador.

**Chart 3**  
**Economic sustainability in community radio stations**

Radio	Main sources of financing		
	Advertising	Donations	Other
Radio Runatacuycac 1160 AM		X	
Radio católica Riobamba 105.7 FM	X		
Radio Jatari kichwa 92.3 FM	X		
Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares 91.7 FM	X		Income from an agricultural farm and organic shop
Radio Latacunga 102.1 FM	X	X	Live broadcasts of events
Radio Puyo 89.1 FM	X		
El Prado 980 AM		X	
La voz de AIIIECH 950 AM y 101.7 FM		X	Live broadcasts of events

Source: Own elaboration

## Strategies for participation in radio programming

With reference to the radios of Pastaza province. Both Radio Puyo and Jatari Kichwa promote the participation of people in the community through the transmission of local information and cultural tradition. In this way, they seek to encourage the feedback of the listeners, so that they emit their criteria around the disseminated information, using telephone calls, messages to WhatsApp or social networks. Previously, programs were carried out with the community, but, due to lack of financial resources and journalistic and voluntary personnel, this work was suspended. Meanwhile, in the province of Cotopaxi. Radio Runatacuycac maintains spaces for days of praise and reflections of Christian doctrines, with the participation of the parishioners that make up the Federation of indigenous evangelical churches of Cotopaxi. For its part, Radio Latacunga conducts surveys in the communities to establish the contents required by the population. At the same time, it invol-

ves people from the same community to be community reporters or correspondents and report on the various activities or needs of citizens. Finally, in the province of Chimborazo. Radio ERPE, gets involved with the community to meet the various information and educational needs that the population requires. Then diversify them in the design of the programming grid. In addition, they prioritize spaces for vulnerable sectors. Therefore, people with disabilities and students in educational units keep programs on the air.

With regards to El Prado radio, participation strategies are framed in the micro-social life of rural sectors, that is, local information is sought by community leaders, and then generate feedback from the population, through telephone calls or written communications. Radio Católica, has a policy of opening microphones to those who need to express themselves. They do not generate their own cooperation processes from radio transmitters. Finally, Radio AIIIECH's voice creates participation methods, including broadcasters belonging to the congregation that owns the station. In this way, pastors, leaders and members of the various churches participate, who, then, disseminate programs of religious doctrine and educational content. This is stated by the directors and broadcasters of the stations studied.

## **State support for strengthening community radio**

For the analysis of state support for strengthening community radio, it is necessary to divide the community media into:

- Community radios of indigenous peoples and nationalities
- Radios of religious communities
- Community radios belonging to foundations of social interest.

In the findings it has been verified that state support for community media of indigenous peoples and nationalities has two specific moments: The first, the economic contribution of the government of former President Rafael Correa with the purpose of acquiring technological equipment for the operation of the stations, and on the other hand the training in the field of communication to the representatives of the indigenous communities who collaborated at the beginning of the communication project. A second moment is the current one, in which community media have not received state support in the economic, administrative and communication training field. To

this is added, the resignation of the first community members who were trained, who decided to abandon the project due to the lack of financial resources that would allow them to cover the basic needs of their families. As a result of these difficulties, most of the community media of the indigenous nationalities have closed or suspended their transmissions. From the perspective of the directors and broadcasters of the community media of religious communities and foundations of social interest state support has existed through few advertising contracts with government entities, which have meant limited economic support for the sustainability of the community environment. Regarding the contribution for professional development, it is indicated that there has been no support for the training of radio media collaborators.

## **Discussion and conclusions**

In the central region of Ecuador, most stations belong to religious organizations and only in the province of Pastaza, indigenous peoples and nationalities have managed to access a radio frequency. These media have faced economic and training difficulties, which has resulted in only five of the community broadcasters still operating. Thus:

Communities remain oblivious to state and media action as long as they have not been invited to this decision-making process, from which they can encourage policies to consolidate their forms of existence, training and media training, and those laws that dignify their existence. (Tamarit, Cevallos & Yépez, 2014, p. 21)

Although a large part of the indigenous population of Ecuador is based in the provinces of Cotopaxi, Tungurahua and Chimborazo, there are no stations owned by indigenous nationalities. In this regard, Sánchez (2013) states that “in the Ecuadorian case, the 34% Bolivian model was taken for non-profit communication, but without influencing the differentiation between non-governmental organizations and nationalities or native peoples” (p. 166). Economic sustainability is one of the main problems facing community broadcasters. In a way, the essence and objectives of radios have restricted access to profitable advertising guidelines, which could undermine their beliefs or moral codes.

On the other hand, it should be analyzed that companies seek to advertise in the media that capture the attention of target audiences with purchasing power. On the other hand, community media are part of historically excluded communities, whose purpose is common welfare. Another element to take into account is the linking of the staff that collaborates in the community media. Since, unlike private or public media that hire professional staff, community media relies primarily on empirical volunteers.

Likewise, there is no community participation and commitment in the radio, specifically in the administrative, financial and communicational field. The people involved in the administration and financial management of the stations are appointed by authorities of the organizations or communities to which the station belongs. Meanwhile, the construction of the contents for the programming grid is decided through population surveys and under the criteria of authorities, in conjunction with the directors of the media.

In a certain way, in the majority of the stations, the population stays out of the communicational proposal. Reality that agrees with that presented by Viviana Galarza and Belén Amador in the research “Community radio in Imbabura: stations, programming and engagement with the audience” in which they conclude that “Community Radio in the province of Imbabura is a media with potential, but the main objective of the media, community participation, has been forgotten” (2018, p. 76). Therefore, there is a vertical participation, where the radio transmitter proposes when and why the population will participate. However, we must highlight initiatives such as Radio Latacunga and the *Escuelas Radiofónicas y Populares del Ecuador*, which have allowed the community members themselves to be involved in communication work, from their realities and in their own language. At the same time, they have allocated spaces for vulnerable sectors historically excluded from radio spaces.

Consequently, it is necessary to resignify the communicational proposals of the communities and social organizations:

From a regression exercise that takes the Community Radios to the starting point, of valuing a purposeful, critical audience, with points of convergence and disagreements, grown, diverse, with worldviews and particular identities, with different contradictions and cultures, praying to the God of one’s choice, supportive, conflicting, passive, active, poor, rich. (Paiz, 2016, p. 104)

In another order of ideas, it is essential that the Organic Communication Law of Ecuador establishes a clear difference between religious community radios, non-profit organizations and community broadcasters of indigenous communities and nationalities. So that, depending on their differences, an equitable participation in the radio spectrum is encouraged. Likewise, from the legal framework, the collaboration of the community members themselves as volunteers must be promoted, in order to promote citizen participation and fulfill the social mission of the radio media. In addition, the State must create tangible policies that empower the economic sustainability of broadcasters. Hence, this type of media has an economic purpose to solve social purposes. Similarly, leaders of communities, organizations or nationalities must create horizontal communication strategies that allow citizens to be involved in the dialogue of knowledge for the common good. Finally, the Ecuadorian Government must rely on universities, so that through linking processes, technical, administrative, financial and communicational training is generated not only for the personnel of the media, but also for the entire population to the that the frequency be awarded. So that they can understand the benefits of communication in favor of local development and empower themselves with their processes of economic, social and communicational sustainability.

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**Communication and symbolic borders.  
Popular religiosity in the fishing village of Santa Rosa**

***Comunicación y fronteras simbólicas. Religiosidad popular  
en el pueblo pesquero de Santa Rosa***

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### **Abstract**

*In the fishing port of Santa Rosa de Salinas, possibly the largest nautical procession in Ecuador occurs. There is a symbolic border formed by images, religious rites and a complex communication system, where official religion interacts with popular religiosity, and important changes take place in the meanings and in the reality they represent. The objective of the work was to establish the symbolic limits and the changes of meaning, that the religious images produce and experience, both in the context of the official religion, as well as in the scenario of the popular religiosity of the fisherman. Qualitative ethnographic research allowed the interpretation of meanings, participating in the experience and systematizing the process. In-depth interviews were carried out during the activities, prior to the nautical procession, in a period of two years and the nautical voyage was carried out for its subsequent description. The results were: knowing a cultural phenomenon and its frontiers of significance. Understand the functioning of the communication system and its religious symbols; and, understand the functioning of the symbolic borders in the interstices between the official religion and popular religiosity. In conclusion; acts of devotion and playfulness coexist in the phenomenon and although they fracture the structure of the official communication model, they validate the liturgical message and reproduce hybrid expressions of popular culture through unstable symbols in their meaning.*

### **Keywords**

*Religiosity, communication, popular, culture, ethnography, symbols.*

### **Resumen**

En el puerto pesquero de Santa Rosa de Salinas, posiblemente ocurre la procesión náutica más grande del Ecuador. Existe una frontera simbólica conformada por imágenes, ritos religiosos y un complejo sistema de comunicación, donde interacciona la religión oficial con la religiosidad popular, y se producen importantes cambios en los significados y en la realidad que estos representan. El objetivo del trabajo fue establecer los límites simbólicos y los cambios de significado, que las imágenes religiosas producen y experimentan, tanto en el contexto de la religión oficial, así como en el escenario de la religiosidad popular del pescador. La investigación cualitativa etnográfica permitió la interpretación de los significados, participando de la experiencia y sistematizando el proceso. Se realizaron entrevistas a profundidad durante las actividades, previas, posteriores a la procesión náutica, en un lapso de dos años y se realizó la travesía náutica para su posterior descripción. Los resultados fueron: conocer un fenómeno cultural y sus fronteras de significación. Comprender el funcionamiento del sistema de comunicación y sus símbolos religiosos; y, entender el funcionamiento de las fronteras simbólicas en los intersticios entre la religión oficial y la religiosidad popular. En conclusión; los actos de devoción y lúdica coexisten en el fenómeno y aunque fracturan la estructura del modelo de comunicación oficial, validan el mensaje litúrgico y reproducen expresiones híbridas de la cultura popular a través de símbolos inestables en su significación.

### **Palabras clave**

Religiosidad, comunicación, popular, cultura, etnografía, símbolos.

## **Introduction and state of the art**

Faced with the problem of knowledge and functioning of the symbolic borders of communication in the cultural context, the event “Procession (Nautical) of the Christ of the Fisherman was identified, which takes place in July every year at the fishing port of Santa Rosa de Salinas, on the peninsula of Santa Elena in Ecuador. This cultural event has the characteristics required for ethnographic research of its communication processes, in order to establish its systems, uses and symbolic interpretation of the religious images used in Catholic rites. The research objects were constructed: 1) communication systems of the official religion and the expressive forms of popular religiosity; and, 2) functioning of communication in the cultural context of the religious rite. The symbolic borders represent the fissures between contradictory scenarios, where the meaning and sense of the symbols are modified as the communication actors confront the ways of representing and interpreting reality, in a debate to determine it. The Catholic religion historically established with its symbolic system of communication the meanings and controlled the representation scenarios, until different interpretations were elaborated and ambiguous and hybrid manifestations to represent the religious symbols and their ritual practices, in different scenarios to the traditional ones for the liturgical rites, were developed. In this case, the church and its manifestations on the mainland ceased to be the stable scenario, replaced by a symbolically and physically unstable one (Solís & Martínez, 2012, p. 10).

The forms of expression and symbolic representation occur in a time-space system, where there are subjects and objects acting in everyday practices, different from those of other social groups. In this environment, the ways of establishing and controlling the significance of the symbols and the interaction between the subjects are manifested, using images that configure the senses of reality (Rizo, 2004, p. 5). Symbols are signs produced in culture to establish conventions and meanings of something and whose learning implies their shared understanding (Lotman, 2002, p. 89). They make up systems of meaning that allow interpreting the world, articulated by regulatory codes of people’s daily behavior. The observed day-to-day is not a theoretical space, but is the scene where the practices, resistance and operations of cultural artifacts such as religious images occur, whose production we are not interested in, but ritual uses; as well as the popular cultural operations of

communication, its movements and its unpredictable trajectories. (De Certeau, 2000, XVIII). By achieving the understanding of these elements, an intercultural visual dialogue is established that represents in terms of communication and symbolic boundaries, frictions and confrontations, as an effect of an approach “to the other” and their daily ways of articulating objects and subjects to build their representation of reality. As ways of understanding cultural diversity are known, spaces of tolerance and coexistence of diversity will be established. Therefore, the purpose of the present work has been to establish the symbolic limits that occur between the official and the popular of a religious phenomenon, through the study of the production and control of the meanings of the predominant symbols in the Catholic liturgy, in a scenario of cultural conflict, which unites and separates actors.

## **Materials and methods**

Qualitative research is characterized by providing rich and deep information about social and cultural phenomena through the analysis of content, languages, symbols or daily operations, since social reality is understood from intersubjectively shared meanings and expressed in practices and languages. These meanings cannot be considered as subjective beliefs and assessments, but as constitutive elements of a reality that are understood and interpreted to achieve the description of cultural complexity. Beltrán (in Berganza & Ruiz) says: “social reality is completely different from the physical-natural reality; it is full of meanings (more exactly, it is largely meanings) that must be understood to explain it” (2005, p. 31).

This work seeks to approach the living spirit of cultural manifestations by interpreting their meanings, to know the everyday interiorities where they are formed, participating in the experiences, to interpret and systematize them. The information was collected *in situ*, where the meaning of the analysis group’s action was manifested. Several actors were identified who expressed reasons, emotions and feelings to participate in a popular manifestation of religiosity in an open and spontaneous way. The research was carried out within a logic of understanding, whose essential component was the interpretation of the messages, of the devices and of the cultural artifacts used as mechanisms of interpretation, to understand the motives, meanings and emotions of the actions and interactions of the communication actors (Schwartz & Jacobs in Berganza & Ruiz, 2005, p. 32).

The techniques used were direct participant observation and in-depth interviews conducted during 2015 and 2016. They sought information on the relationships and interactions of the communication actors and their communicative behavior through opinions, feelings and motivations, to clarify the complex meanings of the studied cultural manifestation. Unstructured interviews were applied in informal environments, with dialogues initiated from a list of topics around the observed phenomenon, but without a defined questionnaire, for which prior contact with the environment and the people with whom it would be carried out was required. 56 people with some of the required characteristics were selected, since they should be bearers of knowledge. (From Miguel in Berganza & Ruiz, 2005a, p. 255). The territory was recognized, so that researchers could become part of everyday life. The territory subject to reconnaissance, so that researchers could become part of everyday life. In the sampling, a group of people carrying knowledge and experience related to the cultural manifestation were selected, which were classified by groups into: fishermen participating in the procession, cultural and community organization managers, authorities, priests and faithful representatives of the church.

The interviews were conducted in the places determined by the informants. Some did not culminate in a single meeting since more data, documents, images, names, dates, and others had to be recovered. Once the information was gathered it was interpreted and this generated categorical units to write this report, determining the construction processes of meanings, as well as the actors and their communication devices. The procession was carried out twice to observe the events, take photographs and understand directly, the emotional and ludic sphere that is formed during the journey. All information was recorded in audio files and photographs and transcripts were made to later prepare the final report.

## **Analysis and results**

The “Procession of the Christ of the Fisherman” is promoted and organized by the community of the parish of Santa Rosa, and is celebrated in the month of July. It is preceded by festive events, which extend until August for its convergence with the parish-foundation festivities. It is an event where nautical skill, the ornament of the boats, the temporary conformation of plat-

forms by tied up ships, where the party takes place, where dance, drinks, food is shared and the presence of family groups and fishermen guilds is exalted, are appreciated. In this procession the popular religiosity is revealed, and on its success (according to the magical thinking of the fisherman) will depend, life and death, the abundance of fish, the economic bonanza, the ways of becoming, the places to do, the calm of the seas and the life of fishermen, as well as the health of the family, the growth of children and peace in the fisherman's home. Among the results of the study we may include: 1) description of the functioning of communication, its devices and channels in the conceptual scenario of the symbolic boundaries of culture and its mechanism of significance. 2) identification of resistance, hybridization and fracture practices of the official communication model (of the Catholic religion). 3) identification of the model of organization, visibility and political participation of the community in the celebration. 4) Identification of the main symbols, artifacts and aesthetics of the religious and popular combined in the celebration. 5) identification of the actors and scenarios (time/space) of the communication.

## **Discussion and conclusions**

### **Historical and geographical context of the fishing port of Santa Rosa de Salinas**

Santa Rosa is one of the parishes of the Salinas canton in the province of Santa Elena. It is located 144 km from Guayaquil. It has a boardwalk, beaches, hotels, hostels, restaurants, and a central park. It presents important cultural diversity of customs and religions; It has accessibility and connectivity with communication technologies and paved roads. There is historical and archaeological evidence (Marcos, 2005, Ontaneda 2007)<sup>1</sup>, that the pre-Columbian cultures of the Santa Elena peninsula, sailed with skill on the high seas 4000 years ago. The fishermen of Santa Rosa consider themselves descendants of these cultures. On April 14, 1942 by Executive Decree No. 560, the current territory of Santa Rosa was determined, relocating the re-

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<sup>1</sup> Data obtained from: [ballenitasi.org](http://ballenitasi.org) and <https://bit.ly/2Yjyqoz> related to Ecuador. Milestones of a pre-Columbian past of Santiago Ontaneda, published by the Central Bank of Ecuador.

sidents of “La Ensenada”, as a result of the expropriation of the land occupied on January 16, 1942, by American troops to build continental defense works during World War II (Paredes, 2004, p. 282).

## **Images and religious symbols**

The symbols of religion have been inserted, so that they are positioned in the memory of the faithful as codes of behavior and practices that allow the exercise of the hegemonic power of some groups over others, as well as the awakening of the struggle for the rights of cultural diversity (Yúdice, 2002, p. 37). The symbols and images form a link with forms of religious expression, whether official or popular, since they teach and learn content with the power of cultural transformation (Lira, 2016, p. 299). The importance of religious images goes back to Council II of Nicea in 787, where they were defined as teaching guides of the Catholic church tradition, which, with accuracy and care, should be exposed in a life-giving way in the church, both painted as in mosaics and sculptures; placed on the walls of the rooms, houses and roads; both those of the Savior (Jesus Christ), and those of the virgin, angels and saints. Aramoni, 2012, p. 103) Between 1545 and 1563 the Council of Trent was held whose decrees determined that the images should be used to request the intercession of the saints before God, who should be invoked and worshiped. They should be kept in temples, being recipients of honor and veneration. It is decreed to instruct, through painting and other reproductions, on the mysteries of the sacred and the divine (Aramoni, 2012, p. 104). Religious images are symbols that connect metaphysical content with real physical experiences that occur in people’s daily lives. They are significant that refer to realities and concepts related to morality, life, death, the divine and the profane, with which parishioners are educated and press to resign a life whose possible changes depend on faith.

The perceptual influence of the image is profound. It works through the sense of sight, within a reverential aesthetic system that facilitates contemplation and allows the observer to transport himself to remembrance, desire, and worship of God, and combines with aromas, candles and lights, creating a “Decosphere” of intimacy between the image and the faithful (Aramoni, 2012, p. 104). In summary, they are the symbolic vehicle between myth and the concreteness of life. They are plastic, carved and printed representations; produced and reproduced in all possible technological, artisanal and

artistic forms. According to Pérez (2016), religious images leave the territory of present-day Ecuador from the port of Seville, stopping at the New Kingdom of Granada, to reach the Royal Audience of Quito, in the midst of political, religious and civil transformations and in company of institutions such as the Inquisition, the councils and provincial synods, which struggled to homogenize religious practices and establish direct control over the cult of images, which had undergone modifications due to the different cultural contexts of their practice. In America they adopted indigenous or mestizo characteristics and local narratives that contributed to the construction of a social sense of identity and action. Their production, meaning and understanding materialized in the cultural practices of the subjects who carry out social operations with them, in accordance with the meanings of their symbolic world (Castro, 2013, p. 10).

## **Communication, culture and symbolic borders**

For Solís and Martínez (2012), the cultural experience is constituted by the daily practices carried out in contexts that shape them, in co-dependence with a significant, singular and different framework to other practices and other contexts. These manifestations occur in a specific time and social, historical and cultural space and have objective and subjective characteristics, which allow the formation of symbolic borders or contact areas, where, as a result of heterogeneity, tension, conflict and confrontation occurs.

Culture as described by Tylor (cited in Solís & Martínez, 2012, p. 12), is a whole composed of articulated symbols that constitute a system made up of individuals, processes, objects, beliefs and other elements, located in an abstract structure, in a territory of functional logic, where meanings of language, values, worldview, becoming, tradition, heritage, and others are shared; and where an element is understood and explained in strict axiomatic relationship with the other elements of the system.

Religion acts through symbols and communication processes, as a model of reality and provides elements to live it as a social “ethos” of existence, which makes everyday life understandable and explainable. People with their religious and secular ritual practices, are those who have built the border areas of interaction, where religion has been blended with culture by fostering new symbols, or transforming the meaning of existing ones (Solís & Martínez 2012, p. 13).

Communication involves the multiplicity of messages and diverse forms of interaction between individuals and groups. It is literally the interpretation of cultural functioning, its construction and its transformation. Communication actors share the experience and awareness of their daily actions in an exchange between subjects and objects in which individual experiences are linked to collective ones inside and outside their borders. This symbolic and material link is a dialogue that starts from the introspective of the individual, towards the symbolic construction of the collective, and that results in a thought, an archetype or a symbolic system shared between the participants of the communication (Amodio, 2005, p. 27). In short, communication is the result of the symbolic interaction between individuals, in their borders of construction of reality and their way of sharing and experiencing it, through cultural artifacts.

## **Images and symbols of Christ of the Fisherman**

The celebration and nautical procession of the “Christ of the Fisherman” is a cultural manifestation of popular religiosity, where solemnity and celebration are combined by Catholic symbols, which are mixed in the celebration, where the scenic “Ethos<sup>2</sup>” is at times the sea and other times the earth, in a physical and symbolic border. It is a period of exaltation of the “Nous<sup>3</sup>” that celebrates life and the fight against the fear of death, coming to take on characteristics of “Hibrys<sup>4</sup>” (Morin, 2006, p. 14). For Echeverría (2010, p. 40), the accessory is indispensable for the essential, since, in real life, where the institutional, technical and normative forms determine the culture, there are magical and ludic practices of resistance and rupture that dissolve them. Among these practices is popular religiosity, which creates ambiguity in the understanding of the mythical foundation of religion and its institutional communication practices. In culture, knowledge and ways of doing are created and communicated, either at the edges or the center where the symbolic tension between the official and the Dionysian is generated.

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2 Habits, daily lifestyle and scale of values that a group creates and learns.

3 Spirit, living form of cultural exaltation.

4 Excessive or “demens.” One of the characteristics with which Edgar Morin categorizes the anthropology of human barbarism.

The Feast of the Christ of the Fisherman is a process of significance that is deposited in stories, images and symbols shared by the actors of the celebration, to reproduce ideas, concepts, events, and ways to recreate reality. On the boardwalk of the port of Santa Rosa, there is a sculpture that symbolizes the presence and permanence of the Catholic religion in the parish. This describes a scene of Jesus with a fishing net, in which several marine specimens are trapped (not necessarily biblical passage), and is related to the Christian metaphors of fishing, the fisherman and the fish, connected with the teaching of the faith, abundant physical and spiritual food and the work of the fisherman and his way of life, creating the link between the real and the imaginary. In addition to the aforementioned, there are others used as a symbol of the celebration. One introduced by Santiago Tigrero, Alberto Medina, José Vera and others, around 1970<sup>5</sup>, replaced by a crucified Christ about three meters high, which due to its large volume was changed by the current sculpture of the Heart of Jesus, introduced from Salinas by the Josefin priests. There is the initiative to commission the production of a definitive image as a stable symbol of the Fisherman's Christ, since in its absence the meaning contingently transits from one image to another.

## **The official communication system**

In principle the procession was planned and executed by the Catholic Church, but management passed to the Parish Pro-Improvement Committee. The festivities start with a Friday proclamation in the presence of queens, candidates, the president of the party, the president of the Committee, local authorities and residents. On Sunday, the election of the Queen of Christ of the Fisherman is carried out, whose task is to support the collection of donations to carry out the events and the procession of the following Saturday, as well as the closing event of the last Sunday. The procession is always a Saturday morning and the faithful transport the image of the Christ<sup>6</sup> from the church to the port, where they will embark it. The first route goes south (na-

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5 Data provided by the leader of the Santa Rosa Pro-Improvement Committee, Amador Reyes Láinez, in an unpublished interview, held in March and April 2016.

6 To which good fishing and the care of the life of the fishermen are attributed, as well as good health and family happiness.

val base) and makes a port<sup>7</sup> turn to the coast of La Libertad; and then, after a second trip, to settle in the port of Santa Rosa where the image is unloaded and transported to the church. The journey takes about four hours with approximately 800 ships, in which about 8,000 people are embarked. It is the largest religious and cultural event in the parish, and perhaps in the province, although not the only one. During the time of navigation, the image is accompanied by a band of popular music that sings all the time and that includes a repertoire of fishery narrative, catholic praises, *sanjuanitos*, *pasillos* and Ecuadorian passacaglia and more popular music. The boats join together forming platforms so that people can be close to the “living Jesus who is in the sky and the sea”, and celebrate the work of fishing. Beyond religious dogma one can deeply live the feeling and emotion. Ocampo says that “man has the ability to know and love, feel and enjoy in splendor (...) that is known as beauty” (2009). Drunkenness is observed in some fishermen and the celebration ends when approaching the port, where thousands of people quickly disperse upon landing, as a result of fatigue.

The church is not part of the celebration, because this popular manifestation is not considered a liturgical celebration. The manifestation of the fishing village is an amalgam of enjoyment, drunkenness, redemption and faith, whose scenarios, languages and artifacts are juxtaposed. The church defends its separation since its role is to work in evangelization, and “announce Christ as the architect of salvation and as a source of life that transforms the human being with the power of his spirit.”<sup>8</sup> Due to the symbolic burden that this mission represents, it is not a simple task, so it requires specific scenarios and specific processes such as those explained below. People go to the church in search of a funeral, memorial, marriage or other religious service; then the priests spread a sensitive and emotional message with symbolic charge and achieve an emotional impact.

There is also the tool of catechesis, so that children and young people come to a confirmation of their Catholic faith, therefore they must receive the contents of the Christian doctrine and learn symbols and rites. People who have already learned Christian symbolic content go to Mass, where messages of mythical-religious character are repeated. To that is added the

7 Left side of the ship, looking from bow to stern.

8 Reflections of Father Josefino Alberico Zanella in an interview about the procession of Cristo del Pescador.

rhetorical work of the previously indoctrinated family, whose role is to influence young people and children, to concentrate them again on the Christian message. The device closes the circuit with the cultural offer aimed at young people, who in the absence of secular aesthetic and leisure activities, come to the church to fill the void with dynamics directed towards the reproduction and practice of pastoral discourse whose symbolic load is transmitted through inspiring metaphors. The cross is the main symbol that represents the faith of the Catholic spirit that motivates the person.

The faithful who participate in the celebration are more linked to the church than to the procession; and are families that perform acts of faith with offerings and masses of thanksgiving for life, for the fishermen's economy, for their fleets and their families. The church and the devotees participate with the religious services of the masses and the rosary of the novena. The fisherman offers the Holy Mass for the unity of the family and his children. He proposes his intentions and thanks for life, food, fishing and illumination during the day.

According to Zanella, in the popular imaginary there are contents that are related to the Catholic doctrine that teaches identity and religious mission through the images and symbols of the "Fisherman Christ", the official account tells that Jesus chose four fishermen as His apostles and spent a lot of time with them in the Sea of Galilee fishing. In choosing them Jesus said; "I will make them fishers of men" and, therefore, Jesus was considered a fisherman. The fish is another symbol of the first Christians, with which the identity and mission of Christ was transmitted, considered the sign privileged by Jesus as a representation of faith and acceptance of him in his followers.

There are exegetical narratives that escape the popular domain because of their abstract and complex content, but which, in ritual practice, are replaced by pieces of prosaicisms (popular aesthetics) to achieve their understanding. Zanella narrates that the language of the church in the first three centuries was Greek, in which "fish" is written "ICSUS", and with the five letters of the word the acrostic is formed: "IESUS CRISTOS SEO UIOS SOTER" "(Jesus Christ Son of God the Savior), establishing a relationship of significance between the symbol" fish "and its liturgical meaning. Despite the symbolic relationship between the fisherman and the church, the parish priest believes that the procession of Santa Rosa is not an act of deep faith, since it does not honor Christ who saves and frees men from sin. According to him, the liturgical message must circulate clearly in the procession and

the act of faith of the believer must be visible, and that occurs when the procession is on the ground. The procession at sea is, in his opinion, festive and folkloric, where the message does not clearly circulate. Therefore, the nautical procession and its festivities are a cultural act and a practice inscribed in popular religiosity as a result of a tradition.

The church has a communication device with messages that circulate through a synchronic emission directed to its audience, whether in catechesis, mass or procession. The symbolic message seeks an emotional and moral effect and a change of behavior in individuals. There is no evident appropriation of communication technologies. Communication in its official model is difficult when the scenario varies, messages issued on land have a different form of circulation to those at sea. The church has a guiding role of faith and offering religious services, so its language and code are limited to it. It develops a work of evangelization so it must achieve an act of deep faith and not of a natural, popular or folkloric order. Another form of circulation of messages of the church is Catholic education, where young people learn Christian life issues, an exercise that is complemented by a previously indoctrinated family that reproduces the message, generating a rhetorical reinforcement.

## **Resistance and rupture from the official message**

When we refer to the sea as a form of nature, we speak of the most powerful symbol in the context of the fisherman, not as a sublime landscape seen from the shore at sunset, but, rather, the most violent nature that does not admit aggressive men who want to phagocytize it (Zecchetto, 2002, p. 25).

Finding the meaning of the celebration is to understand the web of meanings that fishermen give to their lives and their trade. It implies understanding their daily functioning, finding the way in which the playful and liturgical aspects of popular religiosity interact in time and space of the celebration, to identify the imaginary, the practices, the memory and the transformation of reality around them once we understand it (Guerrero, 2002, p. 28). Meaning implies understanding and representing something through practice. In this case, the manifestation has a complex meaning where factors such as realization scenarios (physical boundaries), the purposes and ways of understanding and practicing them (symbolic boundaries) are linked.

The celebration is organized with a logic of popular celebration that lasts nine days. Those responsible are members of the Parish Pro-Improvement Committee, among which there are practitioners of Catholicism and other religions. The organizers assume, in front of the demanding community, the responsibility of carrying out a ludic-liturgical celebration in two scenarios (sea and land), in one of which fishermen dominate the conditions, and the authorities, except the naval ones, are forced to follow its rules, as they depend on the expertise of fishermen in navigation.

Among the organizers, paradoxically, several of them have stopped fishing or have never practiced it. Among them are teachers, craftsmen and small merchants; these execute events whose predominant symbols are fishing and religion expressed in the images of Christianity. Several objects are articulated that reference different ways of perceiving reality through concepts such as life, death, danger, money, work, party and family. In Santa Rosa, the meaning of “deep” religious faith can be found in practicing people, who are firmly convinced of Catholic rites. Through the dialogues we found the basis of their acts of faith, which in some cases are the result of the doctrinal process, and in others of experiences of emotional intensity of extreme events that occurred in fishing operations or in daily life.

It was observed that in the procession there is no participation clearly directed towards faith; It is not an environment of reflection but ludic. However, there is no moral denial to its participants, as there are people who feel identified with this manifestation that merges the religious with the secular, where religious content and intense ludic practices are shared. This cultural hybridization has allowed the production of popular artifacts made to exalt the divinity of the Christ of the Fisherman, who do not officially belong to the church; but if they project the moral force and a religious aesthetic made from the prosaic and day-to-day (Praises created to the Christ of the Fisherman).

In official terms, the procession is a practice generated to justify interest and fear, since fishermen face many risks at sea (fear-death) and many needs on land (hunger-poverty), and seek a benefit for their work (fishing-money) and survival (life-family), through the festive act. The difference observed between popular and official religiosity is that the second accepts and practices rites committed to the doctrinal contents of the church. Popular religiosity, on the other hand, is an accessory of everyday life, where it is not faith that motivates people to practice Christian rites, but need and fear, and this practice is hybridized with religious, aesthetic and ludic experiences of

its practitioners. A contradiction that arises in this scenario is that deep faith arises from popular religiosity (according to the cleric himself). “Religion must go to man and accept it as it finds it to take it to the level of deep faith that is manifested by its approach to religious content,” that is, it should co-opt it and apply an indoctrination process to understand the liturgical symbolic system and its practices; but in reality things happen in a different way, since the popular religiosity of the fisherman, seek in God a personal “advantage” (without moral sacrifice) in a transactional way and allows a life without severe moral norm.

At sea the message circulation device is limited, therefore the circulation is minimal and does not achieve a large spread. Ships are mostly narrow “fibers” (boats), for few crew members and with limited cargo capacity. They are manned by ten or more people and do not carry a greater load, but the noise of the engines and music does not facilitate the organization and circulation of a specific message, which would require technology, as well as organization for its circulation. The fishing town probably set up a paradoxical and ambiguous religious message, at the time that the church had no capacity to achieve a clear significance on the sea stage, or perhaps it applies religious symbols, devices and artifacts, such as a creative pragmatism that goes beyond the limits of the meaning that religion assigns to faith (Echeverría, 2002, p. 24); and apply it in a practice of libertarian evasion.

## Conclusions

The procession of the Christ of the Fisherman of Santa Rosa de Salinas (Santa Elena), is a manifestation of the popular culture and religiosity of the fishing town of the coast of Ecuador, where acts of devotion and fun coexist at the same time fracturing the communicative structures of the religious model, but validating the liturgical message. This procession is a journey of emotional intensity that facilitates the magical, folk and cultural experience, with combined nuances of religious and popular aesthetics.

For the organizers it represents a social, cultural and political task, since its management will be evaluated and discussed by the population. This exercise gives visibility and legitimacy to the community. The Catholic church in Santa Rosa has an official communication device, which is overwhelmed by the break in the way of practicing communication, where

devices are imposed and communication artifacts are created from the popular and the resistance.

The messages, symbols and meanings that intervene in this communicative, social and cultural phenomenon, circulate through official and unofficial channels, and their contents are adapted to the demands or needs of the different actors in two physical and symbolic scenarios. There are three communication actors that operate from communication: the fishing village, the managers and the church with their representatives.

Symbolic boundaries allow the determination of time/space action, in an objective, subjective and intersubjective scenario.

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EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

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NORMAS EDITORIALES



## *Publication guidelines in «Universitas»*



REVISTA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANAS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD POLITÉCNICA SALESIANA

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Texts will be presented in Arial 10 font, single line spacing, complete justification and no tabs or white spaces between paragraphs. Only large blocks (title, authors, summaries, descriptors, credits and headings) will

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For those works that are empirical investigations, the manuscripts will follow the IMRDC structure, being optional the Notes and Supports. Those papers that, on the contrary, deal with reports, studies, proposals and reviews may be more flexible in their epigraphs, particularly in material and methods, analysis, results, discussion and conclusions. In all typologies of works, references are mandatory.

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**Journal article (author):** Valdés-Pérez, D. (2016). Incidencia de las técnicas de gestión en la mejora de decisiones administrativas [Impact of Management Techniques on the Improvement of Administrative Decisions]. *Retos*, 12(6), 199-2013. <https://doi.org/10.17163/ret.n12.2016.05>

**Journal Article (Up to six authors):** Ospina, M.C., Alvarado, S.V., Fefferman, M., & Llanos, D. (2016). Introducción del dossier temático “Infancias y juventudes: violencias, conflictos, memorias y procesos de construcción de paz” [Introduction of the thematic dossier “Infancy and Youth: Violence, Conflicts, Memories and Peace Construction Processes”]. *Universitas*, 25(14), 91-95. <https://doi.org/10.17163/uni.n25.%25x>

**Journal article (more than six authors):** Smith, S.W., Smith, S.L. Pieper, K.M., Yoo, J.H., Ferrys, A.L., Downs, E.,... Bowden, B. (2006). Altruism on American Television: Examining the Amount of, and Context Surrounding. Acts of Helping and Sharing. *Journal of Communication*, 56(4), 707-727. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00316.x>

**Journal article (without DOI):** Rodríguez, A. (2007). Desde la promoción de salud mental hacia la promoción de salud: La concepción de lo comunitario en la implementación de proyectos sociales. *Alteridad*, 2(1), 28-40. (<https://goo.gl/zDb3Me>) (2017-01-29).

#### BOOKS AND BOOK CHAPTERS

**Full books:** Cuéllar, J.C., & Moncada-Paredes, M.C. (2014). *El peso de la deuda externa ecuatoriana*. Quito: Abya-Yala.

**Chapter of book:** Zambrano-Quiñones, D. (2015). *El ecoturismo comunitario en Manglaralto y Colonche*. En V.H. Torres (Ed.), *Alternativas de Vida: Trece experiencias de desarrollo endógeno en Ecuador* (pp. 175-198). Quito: Abya-Yala.

## DIGITAL MEDIA

Pérez-Rodríguez, M.A., Ramírez, A., & García-Ruíz, R. (2015). La competencia mediática en educación infantil. Análisis del nivel de desarrollo en España. *Universitas Psychologica*, 14(2), 619-630. <https://doi.org.10.11144/Javeriana.upsy14-2.cmei>

It is prescriptive that all quotations that have DOI (Digital Object Identifier System) are reflected in the References (can be obtained at <http://google.com/gfruh1>). All journals and books that do not have DOI should appear with their link (in their online version, if they have it, shortened by Google Shortened: <http://google.com>) and date of consultation in the format indicated.

Journal articles should be presented in English, except for those in Spanish and English, in which case it will be displayed in both languages using brackets. All web addresses submitted must be shortened in the manuscript, except for the DOI that must be in the indicated format (<https://doi.org/XXX>).

### 3.3. Epigraphs, Figures and Charts

The epigraphs of the body of the article will be numbered in Arabic. They should go without a full box of capital letters, neither underlined nor bold. The numbering must be a maximum of three levels: 1. / 1.1. / 1.1.1. A carriage return will be established at the end of each numbered epigraph.

The charts must be included in the text in Word format according to order of appearance, numbered in Arabic and subtitled with the description of the content.

The graphics or figures will be adjusted to the minimum number required and will be presented incorporated in the text, according to their order of appearance, numbered in Arabic and subtitled with the abbreviated description. Their quality should not be less than 300 dpi, and it may be necessary to have the graph in TIFF, PNG or JPEG format.

## 4. Submission Process

Two files must be sent through the OJS system of the journal:

**1) Presentation and cover**, in which the title in Spanish and English will appear, names and surnames of the authors in a standardized form with ORCID number, abstract in both Spanish and English, descriptors and ke-

ywords and a statement that the manuscript is an Original contribution, not sent or in the process of being evaluated in another journal, confirmation of the signatory authors, acceptance (if applicable) of formal changes in the manuscript according to the rules and partial transfer of rights to the publisher (use official cover model).

**2) Manuscript** totally anonymized, according to the norms referred in precedence.

All authors must register with their credits on the OJS platform, although only one of them will be responsible for correspondence.

No author can submit or have in review two manuscripts simultaneously, estimating an absence of four consecutive numbers (2 years).



# NORMAS DE PUBLICACIÓN EN «UNIVERSITAS»



REVISTA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANAS DE LA UNIVERSIDAD POLITÉCNICA SALESIANA

ISSN: 1390-3837 / e-ISSN: 1390-8634

## 1. Información general

«Universitas» es una publicación científica bilingüe de la Universidad Politécnica Salesiana de Ecuador, editada desde enero de 2002 de forma ininterrumpida, con periodicidad fija semestral, especializada en Ciencias Sociales y Humanas y sus líneas interdisciplinarias como Sociología, Antropología, Estudios Políticos, Estudios del Desarrollo, Estudios Latinoamericanos, Estudios de la Cultura y la Comunicación, entre otras.

Es una revista científica arbitrada, que utiliza el sistema de evaluación externa por expertos (*peer-review*), bajo metodología de pares ciegos (*double-blind review*), conforme a las normas de publicación de la American Psychological Association (APA). El cumplimiento de este sistema permite garantizar a los autores un proceso de revisión objetivo, imparcial y transparente, lo que facilita a la publicación su inclusión en bases de datos, repositorios e indexaciones internacionales de referencia.

«Universitas» se encuentra indizada en Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) de Web of Science, el catálogo LATINDEX, Sistema Regional de información en Línea para Revistas Científicas de América Latina, El Caribe, España y Portugal, forma parte del Directory of Open Access Journals-DOAJ, pertenece a la Red Iberoamericana de Innovación y Conocimiento Científico, REDIB, Red de Revistas Científicas de America Latina y el Caribe, España y Portugal, REDALYC, además conforma la Matriz de Información para el Análisis de Revistas, MIAR y está siendo evaluada en mediano plazo para pasar a formar parte de SCOPUS.

La revista se edita en doble versión: impresa (ISSN: 1390-3837) y electrónica (e-ISSN: 1390-8634), en español e inglés, siendo identificado además cada trabajo con un DOI (Digital Object Identifier System).

## 2. Alcance y Política

### 2.1. Temática

Contribuciones originales en materia de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales, así como áreas afines: Sociología, Antropología, Psicología Social, Desarrollo Social, Comunidades, Estudios Latinoamericanos, Estudios Políticos, y todas aquellas disciplinas conexas interdisciplinariamente con la línea temática central.

### 2.2. Aportaciones

«Universitas» edita preferentemente resultados de investigación empírica sobre Ciencias Humanas y Sociales, redactados en español y/o inglés, siendo también admisibles informes, estudios y propuestas, así como selectas revisiones de la literatura (*state-of-the-art*).

Todos los trabajos deben ser originales, no haber sido publicados en ningún medio ni estar en proceso de arbitraje o publicación. De esta manera, las aportaciones en la revista pueden ser:

- **Investigaciones:** 5.000 a 6.500 palabras de texto, incluyendo título, resúmenes, descriptores, tablas y referencias.
- **Informes, estudios y propuestas:** 5.000 a 6.500 palabras de texto, incluyendo título, resúmenes, tablas y referencias.
- **Revisiones:** 6.000 a 7.000 palabras de texto, incluidas tablas y referencias. Se valorará especialmente las referencias justificadas, actuales y selectivas de alrededor de unas 70 obras.

«Universitas» tiene periodicidad semestral (20 artículos por año), publicada en los meses de marzo y septiembre y cuenta por número con dos secciones de cinco artículos cada una, la primera referida a un tema **Mono-gráfico** preparado con antelación y con editores temáticos y la segunda, una sección **Miscelánea**, compuesta por aportaciones variadas dentro de la temática de la publicación.

### 3. Presentación, estructura y envío de los manuscritos

Los trabajos se presentarán en tipo de letra Arial 10, interlineado simple, justificado completo y sin tabuladores ni espacios en blanco entre párrafos. Solo se separarán con un espacio en blanco los grandes bloques (título, autores, resúmenes, descriptores, créditos y epígrafes). La página debe tener 2 centímetros en todos sus márgenes.

Los trabajos deben presentarse en documento de Microsoft Word (.doc o .docx), siendo necesario que el archivo esté anonimizado en Propiedades de Archivo, de forma que no aparezca la identificación de autor/es.

Los manuscritos deben ser enviados única y exclusivamente a través del OJS (Open Journal System), en el cual todos los autores deben darse de alta previamente. No se aceptan originales enviados a través de correo electrónico u otra interfaz.

#### 3.1. Estructura del manuscrito

Para aquellos trabajos que se traten de investigaciones de carácter empírico, los manuscritos seguirán la estructura IMRDC, siendo opcionales los epígrafes de Notas y Apoyos. Aquellos trabajos que por el contrario se traten de informes, estudios, propuestas y revisiones podrán ser más flexibles en sus epígrafes, especialmente en Material y métodos, Análisis y resultados y Discusión y conclusiones. En todas las tipologías de trabajos son obligatorias las Referencias.

**1) Título (español) / Title (inglés):** Conciso pero informativo, en castellano en primera línea y en inglés en segunda. Se aceptan como máximo 80 caracteres con espacio. El título no solo es responsabilidad de los autores, pudiéndose proponer cambios por parte del Consejo Editorial.

**2) Nombre y apellidos completos:** De cada uno de los autores, organizados por orden de prelación. Se aceptarán como máximo 3 autores por original, aunque pudieren existir excepciones justificadas por el tema, su complejidad y extensión. Junto a los nombres ha de seguir la categoría profesional, centro de trabajo, correo electrónico de cada autor y número de ORCID. Es obligatorio indicar si se posee el grado académico de doctor (incluir Dr./Dra. antes del nombre).

**3) Resumen (español) / Abstract (inglés):** Tendrá como extensión máxima 230 palabras, primero en español y después en inglés. En el resumen se describirá de forma concisa y en este orden: 1) Justificación del

tema; 2) Objetivos; 3) Metodología y muestra; 4) Principales resultados; 5) Principales conclusiones. Ha de estar escrito de manera impersonal “El presente trabajo analiza...”. En el caso del abstract no se admitirá el empleo de traductores automáticos por su pésima calidad.

**4) Descriptores (español) / Keywords (inglés):** Se deben exponer 6 descriptores por cada versión idiomática relacionados directamente con el tema del trabajo. Será valorado positivamente el uso de las palabras claves expuestas en el Thesaurus de la UNESCO.

**5) Introducción y estado de la cuestión:** Debe incluir el planteamiento del problema, el contexto de la problemática, la justificación, fundamentos y propósito del estudio, utilizando citas bibliográficas, así como la literatura más significativa y actual del tema a escala nacional e internacional.

**6) Material y métodos:** Debe ser redactado de forma que el lector pueda comprender con facilidad el desarrollo de la investigación. En su caso, describirá la metodología, la muestra y la forma de muestreo, así como se hará referencia al tipo de análisis estadístico empleado. Si se trata de una metodología original, es necesario exponer las razones que han conducido a su empleo y describir sus posibles limitaciones.

**7) Análisis y resultados:** Se procurará resaltar las observaciones más importantes, describiéndose, sin hacer juicios de valor, el material y métodos empleados. Aparecerán en una secuencia lógica en el texto y las tablas y figuras imprescindibles evitando la duplicidad de datos.

**8) Discusión y conclusiones:** Resumirá los hallazgos más importantes, relacionando las propias observaciones con estudios de interés, señalando aportaciones y limitaciones, sin redundar datos ya comentados en otros apartados. Asimismo, el apartado de discusión y conclusiones debe incluir las deducciones y líneas para futuras investigaciones.

**9) Apoyos y agradecimientos (opcionales):** El Council Science Editors recomienda a los autor/es especificar la fuente de financiación de la investigación. Se considerarán prioritarios los trabajos con aval de proyectos competitivos nacionales e internacionales. En todo caso, para la valoración científica del manuscrito, este debe ir anonimizado con XXXX solo para su evaluación inicial, a fin de no identificar autores y equipos de investigación, que deben ser explicitados en la Carta de Presentación y posteriormente en el manuscrito final.

**10) Las notas (opcionales)** irán, solo en caso necesario, al final del artículo (antes de las referencias). Deben anotarse manualmente, ya que el sis-

tema de notas al pie o al final de Word no es reconocido por los sistemas de maquetación. Los números de notas se colocan en superíndice, tanto en el texto como en la nota final. No se permiten notas que recojan citas bibliográficas simples (sin comentarios), pues éstas deben ir en las referencias.

**11) Referencias:** Las citas bibliográficas deben reseñarse en forma de referencias al texto. Bajo ningún caso deben incluirse referencias no citadas en el texto. Su número debe ser suficiente para contextualizar el marco teórico con criterios de actualidad e importancia. Se presentarán alfabéticamente por el primer apellido del autor.

### 3.2. Normas para las referencias

#### PUBLICACIONES PERIÓDICAS

**Artículo de revista (un autor):** Valdés-Pérez, D. (2016). Incidencia de las técnicas de gestión en la mejora de decisiones administrativas [Impact of Management Techniques on the Improvement of Administrative Decisions]. *Retos*, 12(6), 199-2013. <https://doi.org/10.17163/ret.n12.2016.05>

**Artículo de revista (hasta seis autores):** Ospina, M.C., Alvarado, S.V., Fefferman, M., & Llanos, D. (2016). Introducción del dossier temático “Infancias y juventudes: violencias, conflictos, memorias y procesos de construcción de paz” [Introduction of the thematic dossier “Infancy and Youth: Violence, Conflicts, Memories and Peace Construction Processes”]. *Universitas*, 25(14), 91-95. <https://doi.org/10.17163/uni.n25.%25x>

**Artículo de revista (más de seis autores):** Smith, S.W., Smith, S.L. Pieper, K.M., Yoo, J.H., Ferrys, A.L., Downs, E.,... Bowden, B. (2006). Altruism on American Television: Examining the Amount of, and Context Surrounding. Acts of Helping and Sharing. *Journal of Communication*, 56(4), 707-727. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00316.x>

**Artículo de revista (sin DOI):** Rodríguez, A. (2007). Desde la promoción de salud mental hacia la promoción de salud: La concepción de lo comunitario en la implementación de proyectos sociales. *Alteridad*, 2(1), 28-40. (<https://goo.gl/zDb3Me>) (2017-01-29).

#### LIBROS Y CAPÍTULOS DE LIBRO

**Libros completos:** Cuéllar, J.C., & Moncada-Paredes, M.C. (2014). *El peso de la deuda externa ecuatoriana*. Quito: Abya-Yala.

**Capítulos de libro:** Zambrano-Quiñones, D. (2015). *El ecoturismo comunitario en Manglaralto y Colonche*. En V.H. Torres (Ed.), *Alternativas de Vida: Trece experiencias de desarrollo endógeno en Ecuador* (pp. 175-198). Quito: Abya-Yala.

## MEDIOS ELECTRÓNICOS

Pérez-Rodríguez, M.A., Ramírez, A., & García-Ruiz, R. (2015). La competencia mediática en educación infantil. Análisis del nivel de desarrollo en España. *Universitas Psychologica*, 14(2), 619-630. <https://doi.org.10.11144/Javeriana.upsy14-2.cmei>

Es prescriptivo que todas las citas que cuenten con DOI (Digital Object Identifier System) estén reflejadas en las Referencias (pueden obtenerse en <http://goo.gl/gfruh1>). Todas las revistas y libros que no tengan DOI deben aparecer con su link (en su versión on-line, en caso de que la tengan, acortada, mediante Google Shortener: <http://goo.gl>) y fecha de consulta en el formato indicado.

Los artículos de revistas deben ser expuestos en idioma inglés, a excepción de aquellos que se encuentren en español e inglés, caso en el que se expondrá en ambos idiomas utilizando corchetes. Todas las direcciones web que se presenten tienen que ser acortadas en el manuscrito, a excepción de los DOI que deben ir en el formato indicado (<https://doi.org/XXX>).

### 3.3. Epígrafes, tablas y gráficos

Los epígrafes del cuerpo del artículo se numerarán en arábigo. Irán sin caja completa de mayúsculas, ni subrayados, ni negritas. La numeración ha de ser como máximo de tres niveles: 1. / 1.1. / 1.1.1. Al final de cada epígrafe numerado se establecerá un retorno de carro.

Las tablas deben presentarse incluidas en el texto en formato Word según orden de aparición, numeradas en arábigo y subtituladas con la descripción del contenido.

Los gráficos o figuras se ajustarán al número mínimo necesario y se presentarán incorporadas al texto, según su orden de aparición, numeradas en arábigo y subtituladas con la descripción abreviada. Su calidad no debe ser inferior a 300 ppp, pudiendo ser necesario contar con el gráfico en formato TIFF, PNG o JPEG.

#### 4. Proceso de envío

Deben remitirse a través del sistema OJS de la revista dos archivos:

**1) Presentación y portada**, en la que aparecerá el título en español e inglés, nombres y apellidos de los autores de forma estandarizada con número de ORCID, resumen, abstract, descriptores y keywords y una declaración de que el manuscrito se trata de una aportación original, no enviada ni en proceso de evaluación en otra revista, confirmación de las autorías firmantes, aceptación (si procede) de cambios formales en el manuscrito conforme a las normas y cesión parcial de derechos a la editorial (usar modelo oficial de portada).

**2) Manuscrito** totalmente anonimizado, conforme a las normas referidas en precedencia.

Todos los autores han de darse de alta, con sus créditos, en la plataforma OJS, si bien uno solo de ellos será el responsable de correspondencia. Ningún autor podrá enviar o tener en revisión dos manuscritos de forma simultánea, estimándose una carencia de cuatro números consecutivos (2 años).



# GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWERS OF «UNIVERSITAS»

The **Council of External Reviewers of «Universitas»** is an independent collegiate body whose purpose is to guarantee the excellence of this scientific publication, because the blind evaluation - based exclusively on the quality of the contents of the manuscripts and carried out by experts of recognized International prestige in the field - is, without a doubt, the best guarantee for the advancement of science and to preserve in this header an original and valuable scientific production.

To this end, the **Council of External Reviewers** is made up of several scholars and international scientists specialized in **Education**, essential to select the articles of the greatest impact and interest for the international scientific community. This in turn allows that all the articles selected to publish in «**Universitas**» have an academic endorsement and objectifiable reports on the originals.

Of course, all reviews in «**Universitas**» use the internationally standardized system of double-blind peer evaluation that guarantees the anonymity of manuscripts and reviewers. As a measure of transparency, the complete lists of reviewers are published on the official website of the journal ([www. http://Universitas.ups.edu.ec/](http://Universitas.ups.edu.ec/)) los listados completos de los revisores.

## 1. Criteria for acceptance/rejection of manuscript evaluation

The editorial team of «**Universitas**» selects those that are considered more qualified in the subject of the manuscript from the list of reviewers of the Council of Reviewers. While the publication requires the maximum collaboration of reviewers to expedite the evaluations and reports on each original, acceptance of the review must be linked to:

- a. **Expertise.** Acceptance necessarily entails the possession of competences in the specific theme of the article to be evaluated.
- b. **Availability.** Reviewing an original takes time and involves careful reflection on many aspects.

- c. **Conflict of interests.** In case of identification of the authorship of the manuscript (despite their anonymity), excessive academic or family closeness to their authors, membership in the same University, Department, Research Group, Thematic Network, Research Projects, joint publications with authors ... or any other type of connection or conflict / professional proximity; The reviewer must reject the publisher's invitation for review.
- d. **Commitment of confidentiality.** Reception of a manuscript for evaluation requires the Reviewer to express a commitment of confidentiality, so that it cannot be divulged to a third party throughout the process.

In the event that the reviewer cannot carry out the activity for some of these reasons or other justifiable reasons, he/she must notify the publisher by the same route that he/she has received the invitation, specifying the reasons for rejection.

## **2. General criteria for the evaluation of manuscripts**

### *a) Topic*

In addition to being valuable and relevant to the scientific community, the topic that is presented in the original must be limited and specialized in time and space, without excessive localism.

### *b) Redaction*

The critical assessment in the review report must be objectively written, providing content, quotes or references of interest to support its judgment.

### *c) Originality*

As a fundamental criterion of quality, an article must be original, unpublished and suitable. In this sense, reviewers should answer these three questions in the evaluation:

- Is the article sufficiently novel and interesting to justify publication?
- Does it contribute anything to the knowledge canon?
- Is the research question relevant?

A quick literature search using repositories such as Web of Knowledge, Scopus and Google Scholar to see if the research has been previously covered, may be helpful.

*d) Structure*

Manuscripts that refer to «Universitas» must follow the IMRDC structure, except those that are literature reviews or specific studies. In this sense, the originals must contain summary, introduction, methodology, results, discussion and conclusion.

- The ***title, abstract, and keywords*** should accurately describe the content of the article.
- The ***review of the literature*** should summarize the state of the question of the most recent and adequate research for the presented work. It will be especially evaluated with criteria of suitability and that the references are to works of high impact - especially in WoS, Scopus, Scielo, etc. It should also include the general explanation of the study, its central objective and the followed methodological design.
- In case of research, in the ***materials and methods***, the author must specify how the data, the process and the instruments used to respond to the hypothesis, the validation system, and all the information necessary to replicate the study are collected.
- ***Results*** must be clearly specified in logical sequence. It is important to check if the figures or charts presented are necessary or, if not, redundant with the content of the text.
- In the ***discussion***, the data obtained should be interpreted in the light of the literature review. Authors should include here if their article supports or contradicts previous theories. The conclusions will summarize the advances that the research presents in the area of scientific knowledge, the future lines of research and the main difficulties or limitations for carrying out the research.
- ***Language:*** It will be positively assessed if the language used facilitates reading and is in favor of the clarity, simplicity, precision and transparency of the scientific language. The Reviewer should not proceed to correction, either in Spanish or English, but will inform the Editors of these grammatical or orthographical and typographical errors.

- Finally, a thorough **review of the references** is required in case any relevant work has been omitted. The references must be precise, citing within the logic of the subject at study, its main works as well as the documents that most resemble the work itself, as well as the latest research in the area.

### 3. Relevant valuation dimensions

«*Universitas*» uses an evaluation matrix of each original that responds to the editorial criteria and to compliance with the publication normative. In this sense, the reviewers must attend to the qualitative-quantitative assessment of each of the aspects proposed in this matrix with criteria of objectivity, reasoning, logic and expertise.

RESEARCHES	
Valuable items	P.
01. Title and abstract (clarity and structure)	0/5
02. Thematic relevance 03. Originality of the work 04. Review of the literature	0/10
05. Structure and organization of the article 06. Argumentative capabilities 07. Redaction	0/10
08. Methodological rigor 09. Research instruments	0/10
10. Research results 11. Advances 12. Discussion 13. Conclusions	0/10
14. Quotations (variety and richness) 15. References	0/5
Total	50

If the original is a review of the literature (status of the subject) or other type of study (reports, proposals, experiences, among others), the Editorial

Board will send to the reviewers a different matrix, including the characteristics of Structure of this type of originals:

REPORTS, STUDIES, PROPOSALS, REVIEWS	
Valuable items	P.
01. Title and abstract (clarity and structure)	0/5
02. Thematic relevance	0/10
03. Review of the literature	0/10
04. Structure and organization of the article 05. Argumentative capabilities and coherence 06. Scientific redaction	0/10
07. original contributions 08. Conclusions	0/10
09. Quotations 10. References	0/5
Total	50

#### 4. Ethical Considerations

*a) Plagiarism:* Although the journal uses plagiarism detection systems, if the reviewer suspects that an original is a substantial copy of another work, he must immediately inform the Editors citing the previous work in as much detail as possible.

*b) Fraud:* If there is real or remote suspicion that the results in an article are false or fraudulent, it is necessary to inform them to the Editors.

#### 5. Evaluation of the originals

After the quantitative-qualitative evaluation of the manuscript under review, the reviewer may make recommendations to improve the quality of the manuscript. However, the manuscript will be graded in three ways:

- a. **Acceptance without review**
- b. **Conditional acceptance** and therefore review (greater or lesser). In the latter case, it is necessary to clearly identify which review is necessary, listing the comments and even specifying paragraphs and pages suggesting modifications.
- c. **Rejection** due to detected deficiencies justified and reasoned with quantitative and quantitative assessment. The report should be longer if a score of less than 40 of the 50 possible points is obtained.

## INDICADORES PARA REVISORES EXTERNOS DE «UNIVERSITAS»

El **Consejo de Revisores Externos de «Universitas»** es un órgano colegiado independiente cuyo fin es garantizar la excelencia de esta publicación científica, debido a que la evaluación ciega –basada exclusivamente en la calidad de los contenidos de los manuscritos y realizada por expertos de reconocido prestigio internacional en la materia– es la mejor garantía y, sin duda, el mejor aval para el avance de la ciencia y para preservar en esta cabecera una producción científica original y valiosa.

Para ello, el **Consejo de Revisores Externos** está conformado por diversos académicos y científicos internacionales especialistas en **Ciencias Sociales**, esenciales para seleccionar los artículos de mayor impacto e interés para la comunidad científica internacional. Esto permite a su vez que todos los artículos seleccionados para publicar en «**Universitas**» cuenten con un aval académico e informes objetivables sobre los originales.

Por supuesto, todas las revisiones en «**Universitas**» emplean el sistema estandarizado internacionalmente de evaluación por pares con «doble ciego» (doble-blind) que garantiza el anonimato de los manuscritos y de los revisores de los mismos. Como medida de transparencia, anualmente se hacen públicos en la web oficial de la revista ([www. http://Universitas.ups.edu.ec/](http://Universitas.ups.edu.ec/)) los listados completos de los revisores.

### 1. Criterios de aceptación/rechazo de evaluación manuscritos

El equipo editorial de «**Universitas**» selecciona del listado de revisores del Consejo de Revisores a aquellos que se estiman más cualificado en la temática del manuscrito. Si bien por parte de la publicación se pide la máxima colaboración de los revisores para agilizar las evaluaciones y los informes sobre cada original, la aceptación de la revisión ha de estar vinculada a:

- a. **Experticia.** La aceptación conlleva necesariamente la posesión de competencias en la temática concreta del artículo a evaluar.
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## **2. Criterios generales de evaluación de manuscritos**

### *a) Tema*

La temática que se plantea en el original, además de ser valiosa y relevante para la comunidad científica, ha de ser limitada y especializada en tiempo y espacio, sin llegar al excesivo localismo.

### *b) Redacción*

La valoración crítica en el informe de revisión ha de estar redactada de forma objetiva, aportando contenido, citas o referencias de interés para argumentar su juicio.

### *c) Originalidad*

Como criterio de calidad fundamental, un artículo debe ser original, inédito e idóneo. En este sentido, los revisores deben responder a estas tres preguntas en la evaluación:

- ¿Es el artículo suficientemente novedoso e interesante para justificar su publicación?

- ¿Aporta algo al canon del conocimiento?
- ¿Es relevante la pregunta de investigación?

Una búsqueda rápida de literatura utilizando repositorios tales como Web of Knowledge, Scopus y Google Scholar para ver si la investigación ha sido cubierta previamente puede ser de utilidad.

#### d) Estructura

Los manuscritos que se remiten a «**Universitas**» deben seguir obligatoriamente la estructura IMRyD, excepto aquellos que sean revisiones de la literatura o estudios específicos. En este sentido, los originales han de contener resumen, introducción, metodología, resultados, discusión y conclusión.

- El **título, el resumen y las palabras clave** han de describir exactamente el contenido del artículo.
- La **revisión de la literatura** debe resumir el estado de la cuestión de las investigaciones más recientes y adecuadas para el trabajo presentado. Se valorará especialmente con criterios de idoneidad y que las referencias sean a trabajos de alto impacto —especialmente en WoS, Scopus, Scielo, etc. Debe incluir además la explicación general del estudio, su objetivo central y el diseño metodológico seguido.
- En caso de investigaciones, en los **materiales y métodos**, el autor debe precisar cómo se recopilan los datos, el proceso y los instrumentos usados para responder a las hipótesis, el sistema de validación, y toda la información necesaria para replicar el estudio.
- En los **resultados** se deben especificar claramente los hallazgos en secuencia lógica. Es importante revisar si las tablas o cuadros presentados son necesarios o, caso contrario, redundantes con el contenido del texto.
- En la **discusión** se deben interpretar los datos obtenidos a la luz de la revisión de la literatura. Los autores deberán incluir aquí si su artículo apoya o contradice las teorías previas. Las **conclusiones** resumirán los avances que la investigación plantea en el área del conocimiento científico, las futuras líneas de investigación y las principales dificultades o limitaciones para la realización de la investigación.
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rencia del lenguaje científico. El Revisor no debe proceder a corrección, ya sea en español o inglés, sino que informará a los Editores de estos errores gramaticales u ortotipográficos.

- Finalmente, se requiere una profunda *revisión de las referencias* por si se hubiera omitido alguna obra relevante. Las referencias han de ser precisas, citando en la lógica de la temática a estudiar, sus principales obras así como los documentos que más se asemejen al propio trabajo, así como las últimas investigaciones en el área.

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INVESTIGACIONES	
Ítems valorables	P.
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02. Relevancia de la temática 03. Originalidad del trabajo 04. Revisión de la literatura	0/10
05. Estructura y organización artículo 06. Capacidad argumental 07. Redacción	0/10
08. Rigor metodológico 09. Instrumentos de investigación	0/10
10. Resultados de investigación 11. Avances 12. Discusión 13. Conclusiones	0/10
14. Citaciones (variedad y riqueza) 15. Referencias	0/5
Total máximo	50

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03. Revisión de la literatura	0/10
04. Estructura y organización artículo 05. Capacidad argumental y coherencia 06. Redacción científica	0/10
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Una vez realizada la evaluación cuanti-cualitativa del manuscrito en revisión, el revisor podrá realizar recomendaciones para mejorar la calidad

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- a. Rechazo debido a las deficiencias detectadas, justificadas y razonadas con valoración cualitativa y cuantitativa. El informe ha de ser más extenso si obtiene menos de los 30 de los 50 puntos posibles.
- b. Aceptación sin revisión.
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		Value 0 to 5
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03. Review of the literature	Mandatory comments:	
		Value 0 to 5
4. Structure and organization of the article 5. Argumentative capabilities and coherence 6. Scientific redaction	Mandatory comments:	
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9. Quotations 10. References	Mandatory comments:	
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01. Título y resumen (claridad y estructura)	Comentarios obligatorios:	
		Valore de 0 a 5
02. Relevancia de la temática	Comentarios obligatorios:	
		Valore de 0 a 10
03. Revisión de la literatura	Comentarios obligatorios:	
		Valore de 0 a 10
4. Estructura y organización artículo 5. Capacidad argumental y coherencia 6. Redacción científica	Comentarios obligatorios:	
		Valore de 0 a 10
7. Aportaciones originales 8. Conclusiones	Comentarios obligatorios	
		Valore de 0 a 10
9. Citaciones 10. Referencias	Comentarios obligatorios:	
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# PRESENTATION

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# PRESENTACIÓN

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Leída la normativa de la revista «Universitas» y analizada su cobertura, área temática y enfoque, considero que esta revista es la idónea para la difusión del trabajo que le adjunto, por lo que le ruego sea sometida a la consideración para su publicación. El original lleva por título “\_\_\_\_\_”, cuya autoría corresponde a \_\_\_\_\_.

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***Call for papers for the Dossier “Territories and interculturality:  
analysis and experiences in contemporary research”***

**Coordinators**

Dr. Luis Herrera Montero. University of Cuenca, Ecuador

Dr. John Duchesne. University of Pittsburgh, USA

Dra. Paola Gramaglia. National University of Córdoba, Argentina

**Call for Papers**

By referring to concepts of territory and interculturality, in Latin America, it is possible to identify theoretical elaborations that maintain a close relationship with social praxis and civilizational transformation. There is no doubt that these efforts have attempted to avoid both pure theorization and the pragmatic reductionism of political and administrative exercise. Therefore, the main purpose of this dossier is that different researchers from the social sciences and the humanities share their analysis and research experiences on territories and intercultural processes, which outline innovations of epistemic-methodological approach and political-technical perspectives, to through articles close to academic rigor.

With regard to territorial issues, the number of contributions that specialize in areas of geopolitics is increasing, articulating areas of globalization with regional, national and local processes (Harvey, 2007). Hence, one of the patterns of reflection has focused on the glocal (Beck, 1993) to discuss interpretations committed with a single perspective that end up justifying the unipolar hegemony of the planet and the predominance of homogenizing modernization dynamics of sociocultural spatialities and identities which can only be very heterogeneous. The concept of territory, however, has also served to highlight political resistance regarding the global domination of the capitalist system. In this direction, there are reflections from territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization processes, which assume the cartographic indetermination, treated in the philosophy of Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (2007). Here converges a practical theoretical branch of social movements that create counter-hegemony, represented in participatory and emerging geopolitical and socio-political insurgency maps (Ten, 2018). The objectives of such contributions are, in turn, varied, but coincide in recognizing

greater prominence to the peoples in the processes of territorial planning; in open opposition to the perspectives of contemporary capitalism, led by world-wide oligopolistic interests and replicated by weak national institutions and accomplices of such interests.

Consequently, the dossier that we propose focuses on approaches that legitimize the social struggle, as well as a theoretical research denunciation of ordering processes, beyond trends that unduly simplify the territorial issue in aspects of public administration. We intend, with this call for papers, to share research proposals and results that reveal the complex relations of the territory around: the accumulation of resources; the extensive cords of poverty - extreme poverty; environmental damage and proliferation of risks (Beck, 1998); the generation of violence, displacement and death of populations; the epistemicide and reduction of the territories of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples and communities, among other priorities.

Interculturality contains experiences that reinforce the legitimate need for a new social order, based on respect for population diversity in different territorial configurations (Herrera and Torres, 2017). In this proposal, long processes of colonization, of racist exercises of power, of evident deterioration of nature and its life-generating sources, of the violent and denigrating predominance of patriarchal, adult-centered and heterosexual supremacy of the world, among other issues, are questioned. Unlike what is proposed by the decolonial turn, from the intercultural new civilizational and ethical agreements are proposed, which also include the hegemony disputes in the West and in modernity (Tubino, 2015). Another difference is marked by the multiculturalism proposed from Europe and the United States, because unlike it, interculturality strengthens the multiple, in attachment to the coexistence dialogue between peoples, where it is possible to coexist in consensus and dissent; In short, where power is shared and not imposed (Fornet-Betancourt, 2009). The recognition of cultural diversity cannot be diverted in mercantile and folkloric treatments towards peoples and populations whose differences and identities are manipulated as advertising that annuls human beings and cultures as clients and exotic subjects. However, from the intercultural one cannot fall into uncompromising ethnicisms, although the leadership has been exercised by indigenous movements. Nor is it about positions that reproduce dual and fractional logics (indigenous versus western, ancestral knowledge versus science), nor about covering up practices of violence and denigration towards women, children, the elderly and GLBTI populations. In this perspective, we

conceive timely the contribution of Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2010) regarding the multicultural conception of rights.

In summary, the topic requires greater epistemic, theoretical and methodological deepening, sustained in sociocultural and/or popular reflexivities, that project utopias of change (Houtart, 2010) with events, where thinking is becoming (Prada, 2015). In this way, interculturality can be articulated by relating territorial areas and territories to contemplate efforts that strengthen the cultural diversity already existing in them, respecting heterogeneity. There are experiences in this regard, but it is clear that the theoretical-practical challenge must be deepened. Therefore, the following thematic axes are proposed in this issue:

- **Regional and grammatical geopolitics of counter-spatial power:** (Territories and global domination: the capitalist logic in the geopolitical conduction of social processes in Latin America).
- **Post-extractivism, post-development: problems and challenges.** (Territorialities as sustenance of the emerging and counter-hegemonic; experiences of political struggle and other views of the identities-differences spatialities)
- **Intercultural narratives, against epistemic hegemony and heterotopic citizenship.** (Territoriality as an intercultural perspective; debates about utopias and events in socio-political management and mobility in Latin America).
- **Territories-territorialities from cartographies and experiences of critical research:** Participatory action research (PAR) and feminist participatory action research (FPAR).
- **Epistemic-epistemological diversities in the territorial construction of Latin America;** new indigenisms, new blackisms, decolonialities, generational, feminisms and QUEER perspectives.

**The deadline for submitting articles through the journal's OJS is October 31, 2019.** <http://revistas.ups.edu.ec/pdf/docs/universitas/NORMATIVAUNIVERSITAS.pdf>

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## ***Convocatoria del Dossier “Territorios e interculturalidad: análisis y experiencias en la investigación contemporánea”***

### **Coordinadores**

Dr. Luis Herrera Montero. Universidad de Cuenca, Ecuador

Dr. Juan Duchesne. Universidad de Pittsburgh, USA

Dra. Paola Gramaglia, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina

### **Convocatoria**

Al hacer referencia a conceptos de territorio e interculturalidad, en Latinoamérica, es posible identificar elaboraciones teóricas que mantienen estrecha relación con la praxis social y la transformación civilizatoria. No cabe duda que estos esfuerzos han procurado evitar tanto la teorización pura como el reduccionismo pragmático del ejercicio político y administrativo. Por lo mencionado, el propósito central de este dossier es que distintos investigadores de las ciencias sociales y las humanidades compartan sus análisis y experiencias de investigación sobre territorios y procesos interculturales, que perfilen innovaciones de enfoque epistémico-metodológico y de perspectivas político-técnicas, a través de artículos ceñidos al rigor académico.

En cuanto a la temática territorial, es creciente el número de aportes que se especializan en áreas de la geopolítica, articulando ámbitos de la globalización con procesos regionales, nacionales y locales (Harvey, 2007). De ahí que una de las pautas de reflexión se haya centrado en lo glocal (Beck, 1993) para contrarrestar interpretaciones comprometidas con una sola perspectiva que terminan por justificar la unipolaridad del planeta y el predominio de dinámicas de modernización homogeneizante de espacialidades e identidades socioculturales que no pueden ser sino sumamente heterogéneas. El concepto de territorio, sin embargo, también ha servido para destacar resistencias políticas respecto de la dominación global del sistema capitalista. En tal dirección, se cuenta con reflexiones desde procesos de territorialización, desterritorialización y reterritorialización, que asumen la indeterminación cartográfica, según tratada en la filosofía de Giles Deleuze y Félix Guattari (2007). Aquí converge una vertiente teórico-práctica de movimientos sociales creadores de contrahegemonía, representados en cartografías participativas y geopolíticas emergentes y de insurgencia sociopolítica (Diez, 2018).

Los objetivos de tales aportes son, a su vez, variados, pero coinciden en reconocer mayor protagonismo a los pueblos en los procesos de ordenamiento territorial; en abierta contraposición a las perspectivas del capitalismo contemporáneo, lideradas por intereses oligopólicos a nivel de mundial y replicados por instituciones nacionales débiles y cómplices de tales intereses.

Consecuentemente, el dossier que proponemos se centra en planteamientos que legitiman la lucha social, como también de denuncia teórico investigativa sobre procesos de ordenamiento más allá de tendencias que simplifican indebidamente el tema territorial en aspectos de administración pública. Pretendemos, con esta convocatoria que se compartan propuestas y resultados de investigación que develen las complejas relaciones del territorio en torno a: la acumulación de recursos; los extensos cordones de pobreza-extrema pobreza; la afectación ambiental y proliferación de riesgos (Beck, 1998); la generación de violencia, desplazamiento y muerte de poblaciones; el epistemicidio y reducción de los territorios de pueblos y comunidades indígenas y afrodescendientes, entre otras prioridades.

La interculturalidad contiene experiencias que refuerzan la necesidad legítima de un nuevo orden social, basado en el respeto a la diversidad poblacional en diferentes configuraciones territoriales (Herrera y Torres, 2017). En esta propuesta se cuestionan largos procesos de colonización, de ejercicios racistas del poder, de deterioro evidente de la naturaleza y sus fuentes generadoras de vida, del predominio violento y denigrante de la supremacía patriarcal, adultocéntrica y heterosexual del mundo, entre las principales. A diferencia de lo propuesto por el giro decolonial, desde lo intercultural se proponen nuevos acuerdos civilizatorios y éticos, que incluyen también a las disputas de hegemonía en occidente y en la modernidad (Tubino, 2015). Otra diferencia se marca con el multiculturalismo propuesto desde Europa y Estados Unidos, pues a diferencia de éste, la interculturalidad fortalece lo múltiple, en apego a la coexistencia dialogada entre pueblos, donde sea posible coexistir en consenso y disenso; en definitiva, donde el poder sea compartido y no impuesto (Fornet-Betancourt, 2009). El reconocimiento de la diversidad cultural no puede desviarse en tratamientos mercantiles y folclorizantes hacia pueblos y poblaciones cuyas diferencias e identidades sean manipuladas como publicidad que anula a seres humanos y culturas en calidad de clientes y sujetos exóticos. No obstante, desde lo intercultural no se puede caer en etnicismos intransigentes, aunque el liderazgo lo hayan ejercido los movimientos indígenas. Tampoco se trata de posturas que reproducen

lógicas duales y fraccionadas (indígenas versus occidentales, saberes ancestrales versus ciencias), como tampoco de encubrir prácticas de violencia y denigración hacia mujeres, niños, ancianos y poblaciones GLBTI. En esta perspectiva, concebimos oportuna la contribución de Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2010) respecto a la concepción multicultural de los derechos.

En síntesis, el tema requiere de mayores profundizaciones epistémicas, teóricas y metodológicas, sostenidas en reflexividades socioculturales y/o populares, que proyecten utopías de cambio (Houtart, 2010) con acontecimientos, donde el pensar sea devenir (Prada, 2015). De este modo, la interculturalidad puede articularse a partir de relacionar ámbitos territoriales distintos y los territorios contemplar gestiones que fortalezcan la diversidad cultural ya existente en ellos, respetando la heterogeneidad. Se cuenta con experiencias en la temática, pero es evidente que el desafío teórico-práctico debe profundizarse. Por lo mencionado, en este número se proponen los siguientes ejes temáticos:

- **Geopolíticas regionales y gramáticas del poder contra-espacial:** (Territorios y dominación global: la lógica capitalista en la conducción geopolítica de procesos sociales en América Latina).
- **Pos-extractivismo, posdesarrollo: problemas y desafíos.** (Territorialidades como sustento de lo emergente y de contrahegemonía; experiencias de lucha política y de otras miradas de las espacialidades-identidades-diferencias)
- **Narrativas interculturales, contra hegemonía epistémica y ciudadanías heterotópicas.** (La territorialidad como perspectiva intercultural; debates sobre utopías y acontecimientos en la gestión y movilidad sociopolítica en América Latina).
- **Territorios-territorialidades desde cartografías y experiencias de investigación crítica:** Investigación acción participativa (IAP) y la Investigación acción participativa feminista (IAPF).
- **Diversidades epistémico-epistemológicas en la construcción territorial de América Latina;** nuevos indigenismos, nuevas negritudes, genealogías generacionales, decolonialidades, feminismos y perspectivas QUEER.

**La fecha límite para el envío de artículos a través del OJS de la revista es el 31 de octubre de 2019.** <http://revistas.ups.edu.ec/pdf/docs/universitas/NORMATIVAUNIVERSITAS.pdf>

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