TEMA CENTRAL

Desintegración regional: Causas, consecuencias y contradicciones

Regional Disintegration: Causes, Consequences and Contradictions

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Sumario

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Regional Disintegration: Causes, Consequences and Contradictions
Desintegración regional: Causas, consecuencias y contradicciones

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Regional integration is a complex and multifaceted topic that has garnered significant attention from researchers and policymakers. Regional integration refers to the process by which countries in a given region come together and become more cohesive and interconnected economically and/or politically.[1] This process can take many different forms, such as the formation of trade blocs, the establishment of security alliances, or the creation of economic unions. Regional integration has often been conceptualised as a gradual process with institutional, legal and political milestones that mark consecutive steps in the creation of regional sovereignty.

The concept of integration may be ambiguous, however.[2] In the early days of the regional integration literature, Deutsch et al. theorised 'integration' in

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1. Philippe De Lombaerde, ed., *Assessment and Measurement of Regional Integration* (London: Routledge, 2006).
2. For an overview, see Philippe De Lombaerde and Fredrik Söderbaum, "Reading the Intellectual History of Regionalism", in *Regionalism. Volume I: Classical Regional Integration (1945-1970)*, ed. Philippe de Lombaerde and Fredrik Söderbaum (London: Sage, 2013).

the context of security communities as referring to a *de facto* process of increasing interdependence, accompanied (or not) by political practices and/or institution-building.[3] Although neo-functionalists were also very much aware of the *de facto/de jure* dichotomy, they placed regional institutions more at the centre of the debates. As a consequence, they narrowed the definition into a European-style process of gradual political unification, echoed in the economic and social spheres, even if the broader ambition remained a 'general' theory of regional integration (i.e. a theory valid beyond the European case). Haas radically defined integration as a process of "political unification of nations through non-coercive efforts",[4] thereby deliberately narrowing the scope of the research programme.

More recently, i.e. with the so-called new regionalism approach and its posterior developments, there is again a tendency to broaden the conceptual scope of the research agenda on integration. The aim is to include a variety of expressions of regions and regionalism worldwide, on the one hand, and a variety of actors, on the other. The term regional integration is sometimes still reserved for European-style integration processes with a supra-national institutional component, and therefore distinct from (de facto) regionalization and regionalism understood as diverse political projects of region-building. Another avenue is to interpret regional integration as a broader concept, with *de facto* features, as well as institutional features. In this article, we adopt the latter (broader) definition.

When looking at the regional integration literature broadly defined, one can observe that, until recently, relatively little theoretical work had been devoted to the opposite dynamic of regional 'disintegration'. As Zielonka reviews in his article "Disintegration Theory: International Implications of Europe's Crisis", it can be pointed out that we have numerous books on European integration, but hardly any on disintegration.[5] The bias of the literature can be explained by a notion of integration as an institutional continuity, rather than

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3. Karl Deutsch et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience* (Princeton, US: Princeton University Press, 1957).
4. Ernst Haas, "The Study of Regional Integration: Reflections on the Joy and Anguish of Pretheorizing", *International Organization* 24, n.° 4 (1970): 607-10, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300017495.
5. Jan Zielonka, "Disintegration Theory: International Implications of Europe's Crisis", *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 13, n.° 1 (2012), https://bit.ly/41B3InN.

thinking of institutional change as a possibility.[6] Having said this, and in spite of sometimes mechanical theorising about unidirectional and ever-deepening processes, there has also been an awareness in the scholarship that regional integration projects do not always 'deliver'. Immediately after the initial impulses in the 1960s and 1970s, critical voices emerged, referring to failures or crises of regional integration processes. After an overview of experiences in different parts of the world in the mid-1980s, Stakhovitch concluded that there was no single experience where regional integration could be found a complete success, and only very few showed satisfactory results.[7] The questionable contribution of regional integration to economic development was also echoed in other studies, often pointing to policy implementation failures as a crucial factor.[8] More recently, analysts of the Latin American and European integration processes have explicitly stated that such processes necessarily need to be considered reversible.[9]

Regional disintegration refers to the breakdown or dissolution of established regional economic and political arrangements. This can occur for a variety of reasons, including changes in the global political landscape, shifts in economic conditions, or the emergence of new actors and interests. Three dimensions can be distinguished: sectoral disintegration (reduction in specific existing regional policies); vertical disintegration (reduction in regional authority); horizontal disintegration (reduction in the number of member states).[10] Disintegration can occur in different dimensions: economic disintegration (divergence of economic indicators and dissociation), political disintegration (membership withdrawal) and social disintegration (reduction of

6. Ben Rosamond, "Theorising the EU in Crisis: De-Europeanisation as Disintegration", *Global Discourse* 9, n.° 1 (2019), https://doi.org/10.1332/204378918X1545393450591.

7. Alexandre Stakhovitch, "Unas y otras integraciones", in *Unas y otras integraciones*, ed. Víctor Urquidi and Gustavo Vega (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1991).

8. Maurice Schiff and Alan Winters, *Regional Integration and Development* (Washington DC: World Bank / Oxford University Press, 2003); World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects 2005: Trade, Regionalism, Development* (Washington DC: World Bank, 2004); Philippe De Lombaerde, Antoni Estevadeordal and Kati Suominen, *Governing Regional Integration for Development: Monitoring Experiences, Methods and Prospects* (London: Routledge, 2008).

9. María Victoria Álvarez and Hugo Ramos, "Reflexiones teóricas y enseñanzas sobre integración regional: Diálogos entre la Unión Europea y el Mercosur", in *La integración regional latinoamericana y europea en el siglo XXI: Marco para la reflexión sobre su presente y futuro*, ed. Fernanda Caballero, Rita Giacalone and Edgar Vieira (Bogotá: UCC Ediciones, 2019), 189.

10. Douglas Webber, "Trends in European Political (Dis)Integration: An Analysis of Postfunctionalist and Other Explanations", *Journal of European Public Policy* 26, n.° 8 (2019), https://doi.org/10.1080/1350 1763.2019.1576760.

cross-border interactions and identities).[11] These processes can overlap and even produce ambiguous results, which include the merger or absorption of regional organisations or the replacement with new organisations.[12] Disintegration weakens the authority of a regional organisation, not least due to less compliance and less allocated resources, but it does not necessarily result in a re-nationalisation of the region as its only outcome.[13]

Over the past several decades, there have been a number of notable cases of regional disintegration,[14] including the end of the Warsaw Pact[15] the withdrawal of Venezuela from the Andean Community (CAN) and the Group of Three (G3),[16] the break-up of the Union of South American States (UNASUR)[17] and the Brexit vote in the United Kingdom.[18] Although regional organisations are infrequently dissolved,[19] international organisations suffer in terms of vitality, meaning that they enter 'zombie' state where they continue to exist without notable institutional activity.[20] Increasing empirical evidence about the erosion of integration projects has sparked intense debates and discussions among scholars and policymakers about the causes and consequences of regional disintegration, and have raised important questions about the

11. Annegret Eppler, Lisa Anders and Thomas Tuntschew, "Europe's Political, Social, and Economic (Dis-) Integration: Revisiting the Elephant in Times of Crises", *Political Science Series* 143 (2016), https://bit.ly/3YfNs91.

12. Mette Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, "Death of International Organizations: The Organizational Ecology of Intergovernmental Organizations, 1815-2015", *The Review of International Organizations* 15, n.° 2 (2020), https://bit.ly/41yj5gV.

13. Hans Vollaard, "Explaining European Disintegration", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 52, n.° 5 (2014), https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12132.

14. Cheryl Shanks, Harold Jacobson and Jeffrey Kaplan, "Inertia and Change in the Constellation of International Governmental Organizations, 1981-1992", *International Organization* 50, n.° 4 (1996), https://doi.org/10.1017/S002081830003352X.

15. Vojtech Mastny and Malcolm Byrne, eds. *A cardboard castle?: An inside History of the Warsaw Pact, 1955-1991* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005).

16. Carlos Malamud, "La salida venezolana de la Comunidad Andina de Naciones y sus repercusiones sobre la integración regional (1.ª parte)", *Real Instituto Elcano*, working paper, May 10th 2006.

17. Detlef Nolte, "From UNASUR to PROSUR: Institutional Challenges to Consolidate Regional Cooperation", in *Regional and International Cooperation in South America After COVID*, ed. Melisa Deciancio and Cintia Quiliconi (New York: Routledge, 2022).

18. Ben Rosamond, "European Integration and the Politics of Economic Ideas: Economics, Economists and Market Contestation in the Brexit Debate", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 58, n.° 5 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13029.

19. Evgeny Vinokurov and Alexander Libman, *Re-Evaluating Regional Organizations: Behind the Smokescreen of Official Mandates* (London: Palgrave Macmillan Cham, 2018).

20. Julia Gray, "Life, Death, or Zombie?: The Vitality of International Organizations", *International Studies Quarterly* 62, n.° 1 (2018), https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqx086.

future of regional integration processes. As a consequence, an increasing share of the regionalism literature is engaged with the impact that different types of economic, political and security crises have on regional integration.

The scholarship on regionalism in the Global South has been more accustomed to volatile membership in regional organisations. For instant, an integral research strand on South American integration is to identify the failures of defunct regional organisations. Among the identified causes, ideological polarisation between the member-states and institutional shortcomings figure prominently.[21]

The recent rise in interest in theorising disintegration is thus particularly noteworthy in European Studies, where some have even argued that differentiated disintegration should be considered as a subfield in its own right, as a new field of research that can be studied from different branches, such as sociology, anthropology, economics and law.[22] Although disintegration is not a new process for Europe as evidenced by the case of Algeria leaving the European Economic Community in 1976, the European integration process has been confronted in recent years with several crises that have put into question the future of further integration. The historical decision of the UK to leave the Union has spurred debates about the narrative of an 'ever-closer union', including downsizing of the Eurozone, the rise of sub-regional alliances such as the Visegrad Group and the success of populist and nationalist parties. While more exits from the EU are unlikely, the challenge of selective policy or institutional disintegration persists.[23] Accordingly, the scholarship in European Studies has issued numerous calls to develop a new research agenda focusing on theoretical frameworks.[24] For instance, the spill-over effect of neo-functionalism can be mirrored by spill-backs to structure causes of

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21. Detlef Nolte and Víctor Mijares, "UNASUR: An Eclectic Analytical Perspective of its Disintegration", *Colombia Internacional* 111 (2022), https://doi.org/10.7440/colombiaint111.2022.04.

22. Benjamin Leruth, Stefan Gänzle and Jarle Trondal, "Exploring Differentiated Disintegration in a Post-Brexit European Union", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 57, n.° 5 (2019), https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12869.

23. Vollaard, "Explaining European Disintegration".

24. Tomasz Grosse, "Assumptions of the Theory of Regional Disintegration: Suggestions for Further Research", *Przegląd Europejski* 42, n.° 4 (2016), http://dx.doi.org/https%3A//doi.org/10.31338/1641-2478pe.4.16.1; Agnieszka Cianciara, "Does Differentiation Lead to Disintegration?: Insights from Theories of European Integration and Comparative Regionalism", *Yearbook of Polish European Studies* 18 (2015), https://bit.ly/3y4xvYp; Erik Jones, "Towards a Theory of Disintegration", *Journal of European Public Policy* 25, n.° 3 (2018), https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1411381.

disintegration, ranging from deliberate to coerced disintegration.[25] In addition, post-functionalism explores how the politicisation of European integration may have contributed to an erosion of a permissive consensus theory,[26] while governance scholars have delved into approaches of flexible integration and variable geometry.[27]

One key reason why states may choose to leave regional organizations is a change in the global political landscape. The formation of regional organisations is often driven by a common threat or shared set of interests. However, when these threats or interests change, states may no longer see the benefits of maintaining their membership in the organization. For example, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War led to a significant shift in the global political landscape, and many states chose to leave regional organisations that were no longer aligned with their national interests. Confronted with a multi-polar world and a recalibration of international relations countries adopt a path of differentiated disintegration in a post-liberal order, which entails the reduction of a member's adherence to the integrated legal rules, norm and policies.[28] Key aspects are centralisation, policy scope and membership. Internal disintegration refers to a state remaining a member of the organisation but leaving specific policies, while external disintegration implies leaving the organisation but continuing to participate in some of the organisation's policies.[29] In this issue, Zane Sime's article "The Potential of EU Connectivity Through Missions and Smart Specialisation" explores the conditions under which interdependence becomes perceived as a vulnerability, thus fuelling actions to disintegrate and increase autonomy.

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25. Zoe Lefkofridi and Philippe Schmitter, "Transcending or Descending?: European Integration in Times of Crisis", *European Political Science Review* 7, n.° 1 (2015), https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773914000046.
26. Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus", *British Journal of Political Science* 39, n.° 1 (2009), https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123408000409; Katharina Holzinger and Frank Schimmelfennig, "Differentiated Integration in the European Union: Many Concepts, Sparse Theory, Few Data", *Journal of European Public Policy* 19, n.° 2 (2012), https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2012.641747.
27. Berthold Rittberger, Dirk Leuffen and Frank Schimmelfennig, "Differentiated Integration of Core State Powers: Beyond the Regulatory Polity", in: *The European Integration of Core State Powers*, ed. Philipp Genschel and Markus Jachtenfuchs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
28. Stefan Gänzle, "Differentiated (Dis)Integration in Europe and Beyond: Historical and Comparative Perspectives", in *Differentiated Integration and Disintegration in a Post-Brexit Era*, ed. Stefan Gänzle, Benjamin Leruth and Jarle Trondal (London: Routledge, 2019).
29. Frank Schimmelfennig, "Brexit: Differentiated Disintegration in the European Union", *Journal of European Public Policy* 25, n.° 8 (2018), https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2018.1467954.

Another reason why states may choose to leave regional organisations is a shift in economic conditions. The formation of regional organisations often involves significant economic integration, with member states agreeing to open their markets to one another and to pursue common trade policies. However, when economic conditions change, states may no longer see the benefits of maintaining these economic arrangements. For example, the economic downturn following the global financial crisis in 2008 led many states to reassess the costs and benefits of their membership in regional organisations, and some chose to leave in order to pursue more independent economic policies. However, economic disintegration is distinct from a country simply leaving an integration group, as a multitude of actors and entanglement are involved.[30] In this context, regional organisations can only remain relevant if they prove to be resilient. The institutional design is key to survive exogenous shocks.[31] In this issue, Yessenia Briones Molina's article "An integration that does not integrate, a look at the energy experience at UNASUR" analyses the failures in the field of energy integration in South America and points to institutional shortcomings and organisational overlaps to explain why integration could not be maintained as economic conditions changed.

In the economic realm, debates on the economic costs and benefits of regional integration schemes have been on the agenda for a long time. Alleged poor benefits or even net costs of membership are used as arguments in favour of disintegration scenarios as witnessed in the case of Brexit. The UK but also other members such as The Netherlands have routinely argued that costs and benefits of EU membership are not in balance for them. This has led to further refinement of the methodologies to calculate actual cost and benefits of regional memberships. Such estimations should go beyond simple calculations of visible financial flows between a member state and the regional organisation, in the form of assessed membership contributions, customs duties or subsidies,[32] even if these lend themselves more easily

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30. Arkadiusz Kowalski, "Theoretical Aspects of Regional Disintegration and Its Consequences for International Competitiveness", in *Brexit and the Consequences for International Competitiveness*, ed. Arkadiusz Kowalski (London: Palgrave Macmillan Cham, 2018).
31. Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, "Death of International Organizations"; Julia Gray, "Life, Death, Inertia, Change: The Hidden Lives of International Organizations", *Ethics & International Affairs* 34, n.° 1 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1017/S0892679420000052.
32. Marta Pilati and Fabian Zuleeg, "The Benefits of EU Membership Are Not Measured by Net Operating Balances", *European Parliament*, February 2020, https://bit.ly/3y3C4Cb; Netherlands Court of Audit, *Focus on the Netherlands' Net Payment Position: The Netherlands' Contributions to and Receipts from the EU* (The Hague: Algemene Rekenkamer, 2020).

to political communication purposes. More sophisticated estimations of the effects of creating common markets, precisely stimulated by Brexit, have suggested considerable benefits of membership. For the European case, a long-term average GDP increase by 8-9% were found by in't Veld,[33] which was higher than what was originally estimated in the Cecchini report (4-6,5%).[34] In 't Veld's numbers could even be underestimations as they do not fully reflect the effects of further perfectioning the common market and the effects of production factor mobility. Stronger trade effects are also reported by Mayer, Vicard and Zignago[35] and Felbermayer et al.[36] These trade (and investment) effects are further significantly boosted by monetary integration among Eurozone countries.[37] As there seems to be converging views on the economic effects, disintegration dynamics cannot primarily be attributed to rational cost-benefit calculations but instead to more complex sets of factors, as illustrated by Brexit, CAN or UNASUR.

The emergence of new actors and interests can also lead states to leave regional organisations. The formation of regional organisations often involves the coalescence of a group of states around a common set of goals and interests. However, when new members enter the scene with different interests and priorities, the existing regional organisation may no longer be able to accommodate these interests. In such cases, some states may choose to leave the organisation in order to pursue their own interests more effectively. This dynamic has also been triggered through changes within member states When a state's preferences diverge from the average preferences of the other states, it is more likely to disintegrate. Additionally, when a leading state leaves an organisation, it may generate a contagion effect, causing other states to follow in its

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33. Jan in 't Veld, "Quantifying the Economic Effects of the Single Market in a Structural Macromodel", *European Economy*, discussion papers 094, February 2019.

34. Paolo Cecchini, Michael Catinat and Alexis Jacquemin, *The European Challenge 1992: The Benefits of a Single Market* (Aldershot, UK: Wildwood House, 1988).

35. Thierry Mayer, Vincent Vicard and Soledad Zignago, "The Cost of Non-Europe, Revisited", *Banque de France*, working paper 673, April 2018.

36. Gabriel Felbermayer, Jasmin Gröschl and Inga Heiland, "Undoing Europe in a New Quantitative Trade Model", *IFO Institute*, working paper 250, January 2018.

37. Theo Eicher and Christian Henn, "One Money, One Market: A Revised Benchmark", *Review of International Economics* 19, n.° 3 (2011), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9396.2011.00956.x; Reuven Glick and Andrew Rose, "Currency Unions and Trade: A Post-EMU Reassessment", *European Economic Review* 87 (2016), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2016.03.010; José de Sousa and Julie Lochard, "Does the Single Currency Affect Foreign Direct Investment?", *The Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 113, n.° 3 (2011), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9442.2011.01656.x.

footsteps.[38] In particular, populist and nationalist governments can significantly jeopardize multilateral cooperation. In this issue, Damiano Scotton's article "South American Regional Integration: From Adolescence to Maturity" identifies the obstacles related to political will that thwart regional integration initiatives.

At the same time, disintegration in one regional format can be the trigger for more integration in another one. Disintegration is not linear, meaning that it does not simply lead to a breakdown of the integration process but is part of a complex multi-faceted process. For instance, Greenland sought greater sovereignty and independence from the European integration process in 1985 but was keen to maintain close ties and formal agreements, especially for economic reasons, which did not jeopardise the overall integration project.[39]

Disintegration is thus not necessarily a failure but implies a shift of integration in a different setting following internal tensions or a perceived lack of progress of the regional integration process.[40] And even if a specific phenomenon is specified as disintegrative this does not essentially mean a general system-wide consequence, giving the example that Brexit is disintegrative but the long-term consequences may be the opposite.[41] Conversely, in the Caucasus, the promotion of regional integration projects by two external actors (Russia and the EU) with different objectives and intentions has produced a region which is more divided and less open to regional cooperation.[42] In another instance, as a consequence of the unilateral tendencies under the populist government of Donald Trump, integration within NATO has been questioned.[43] Therefore, European countries revisited transatlantic security

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38. Inken von Borzyskowski and Felicity Vabulas, "Hello, Goodbye: When Do States Withdraw from International Organizations?", *The Review of International Organizations* 14, n.° 2 (2019), https://bit.ly/3ZxlvKB.
39. Ulrik Gad, "Greenland: A Post-Danish Sovereign Nation State in the Making", *Cooperation and Conflict* 49, n.° 1 (2014), https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836713514151.
40. Stefan Gänzle and Jens Uwe Wunderlich, "Differentiated (Dis)Integration beyond Europe: A Comparative Regionalism Approach", in *The Routledge Handbook of Differentiation in the European Union*, ed. Benjamin Leruth, Stefan Gänzle and Jarle Trondal (London: Routledge, 2022).
41. Rosamond, "Theorising the EU in Crisis".
42. Giulia Prelz Oltramonti, "When External Drivers of Regional Integration Turn into Actors of Regional Disintegration: Regionalism and Interregionalism in the South Caucasus", in *The Unintended Consequences of Interregionalism*, ed. Elisa Lopez-Lucia and Frank Mattheis (London: Routledge, 2020).
43. Harold Hongju Koh, "Trump Change: Unilateralism and the 'Disruption Myth'", *Yale Journal of International Law* 44, n.° 96 (2019), https://bit.ly/41FL51R.

cooperation and invested in their own strategic autonomy.[44] The transatlantic cooperation had been fundamental in the European integration process, reflected in the reliance on NATO and the US for security guarantees. France has tried to spur further integration in such matters in order to gain autonomy over this transatlantic implicit cooperation, but with limited success.[45] Only with the election of former president Donald Trump, was Europe confronted with the United States becoming a less reliable and supportive partner for multilateral and transatlantic cooperation. In this issue, Gökhan Tekir's article "France-led Security Balancing against NATO" provides insights into the disintegration of transatlantic cooperation and reflects upon the role of France in advancing European integration under the banner of strategic autonomy to reduce dependency on NATO and the United States.

In this context of reconfiguring European security regionalism, another instance of formal disintegration is worth mentioning: in 2011, the Western European Union (WEU) ceased to exist. This was a very rare case of dissolution of a regional organisation, although not following a conflict among member states but on a consensual basis. The reason for this operation was the gradual transfer of functions of the WEU to the EU in the context of its new European Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), and the crucial adoption of a solidarity clause among EU member countries in the Treaty of Lisbon. Disintegration of one regional project can thus be the direct consequence of deeper integration of another one, underlining the importance of entanglements between regionalisms.[46]

Finally, regional disintegration is not only an outcome of political, social and economic processes. It is the cause of new developments within the region and also globally, including significant unintended consequences on the ac-

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44. Lisbeth Aggestam and Adrian Hyde-Price, "Double Trouble: Trump, Transatlantic Relations and European Strategic Autonomy", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 57 (2019), https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12948.
45. Bastien Irondelle, "European Foreign Policy: The End of French Europe?", *Journal of European Integration* 30, n.° 1 (2008), https://doi.org/10.1080/07036330801959556; Joylon Howorth, "Strategic Autonomy and EU-NATO Cooperation: Threat or Opportunity for Transatlantic Defence Relations?", *Journal of European Integration* 40, n.° 5 (2018), https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2018.1512268.
46. Frank Mattheis and Uwe Wunderlich, "Regional Actorness and Interregional Relations: ASEAN, the EU and Mercosur", *Journal of European Integration* 39, n.° 6 (2017), https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2017.1333503.

tors themselves.[47] In this issue, Sean O' Dubhghaill and Sven van Kerckhoven's article "Brexit, Englixit?" Disintegration and how taking back control means giving up control" examines one specific unintended consequence of Brexit in terms of the linguistic policies and practices within the EU, as English ceased to be the first official language among its members. Conversely, Susannah Dibble's article "Sinn Féin in the European Union: The Evolution of Self-Determination Policy after Brexit" analyses the unintended consequences of Brexit within the UK. The UK referendum not only caused economic, social and political disruptions for relations between the EU and the UK, but also within the UK, not least because the voting patterns in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland differed from that in England. The reactions of Sinn Féin, a republican party from Northern Ireland, to Brexit reflect how unintended consequences play out internally.

With this special issue, we aim to provide insights into the current state of the art on regional disintegration, examining key theoretical frameworks and conceptual approaches. We also seek to contribute to the repositioning of the EU within the study of regionalism[48] as disintegration constitutes a universal phenomenon. The case studies in this issue of regional disintegration examine in-depth the causes and consequences of specific examples of regional breakdown. They provide valuable insights into the dynamics of regional disintegration and help us to better understand the potential implications of such events for the concerned region and the broader global political and economic system. Overall, this special issue aims to serve as a valuable resource for anyone interested in the current state of the art on regional disintegration.

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47. Elisa Lopez-Lucia and Frank Mattheis, eds., *The Unintended Consequences of Interregionalism: Effects on Regional Actors, Societies and Structures* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2021).
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Tema central

Desintegración regional: Causas, consecuencias y contradicciones

Regional Disintegration: Causes, Consequences and Contradictions

Comentario Internacional
REVISTA DEL CENTRO ANDINO DE ESTUDIOS INTERNACIONALES

Sinn Féin in the European Union: The Evolution of Self-Determination Policy after Brexit

El Sinn Féin en la Unión Europea: La evolución de la política de autodeterminación tras el Brexit

Susannah Dibble[*]

Abstract

The European Union is the most ambitious regional integration project in the world. Yet as the supranational entity has expanded so have the number of minority nationalist parties seeking independence from their respective member states. There is much discussion in the literature about whether these parties trend pro or anti-European. Sinn Féin is a Northern Irish republican party that has undergone an evolution in its EU policy. Brexit, and the related negotiations, have brought forth the issue of self-determination in Northern Ireland and the role of the European Union, twenty-years after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement ended the Troubles. This paper traces Sinn Féin's EU policy from 1973 to the present and finds that the party has moved from opposition to critical engagement and, now, to a more positive partnership. Sinn Féin's EU policy in the Brexit era shows the long-term impacts of the Europeanisation of the peace process, offering an altered framework for self-determination in Northern Ireland.

Keywords: Europeanisation, self-determination, nationalism, Brexit, Northern Ireland

Resumen

La Unión Europea es el proyecto de integración regional más ambicioso en el mundo. Sin embargo, como la entidad supranacional se ha ampliado, el número de partidos

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nacionalistas buscando independizarse de sus respectivos Estados ha aumentado también. Hay mucha discusión en la literatura sobre si estos partidos nacionalistas tienden a ser proeuropeos o antieuropeos. Sinn Féin es un partido republicano de Irlanda del Norte cuyas políticas sobre la Unión Europea han evolucionado. El Brexit, y las negociaciones relacionadas a él, han resaltado la cuestión de la autodeterminación en Irlanda del Norte y el papel de la Unión Europea, veinte años después de la firma del Acuerdo de Viernes Santo y el fin del conflicto. Este artículo traza la política de Sinn Féin con respecto a la Unión Europea desde 1973 al presente, y encuentra que el partido se ha movido de la oposición al compromiso crítico y, ahora, a una asociación positiva. La política de Sinn Féin con respecto a la Unión Europea durante la era del Brexit demuestra los impactos a largo plazo de la europeización en el proceso de paz, y ofrece un marco distinto de autodeterminación para Irlanda del Norte.

Palabras clave: europeización, autodeterminación, nacionalismo, Brexit, Irlanda del Norte

Introduction

In 2012, the European Union (EU) won a Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts to promote peace on the continent. There has been no armed conflict between member states over the last 70 years, a notable accomplishment for a region decimated by two world wars. As it has expanded, the EU has sought to mitigate conflict beyond its borders, both on the continent, where accession is often used as a bargaining tool,[1] and outward, through the European External Action Service (EEAS). However, post-Cold War conflicts have increasingly been fought between state actors and non-state actors within a country, and within its own borders, the EU has no set recourse for this kind of asymmetric warfare.[2]

These internal conflicts are overwhelmingly grounded in the struggle for self-determination, a particularly thorny issue for the EU. The Troubles in Northern Ireland are perhaps the best-known example of a conflict within EU borders that has transitioned to peace. However, the tensions that defined that conflict remain central in the Northern Irish political arena. Brexit has called attention to those issues and raised questions about the EU, its role as a peace maker, and the effectiveness of advocating for self-determination within the EU.

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1. This has been the case in the Balkans, Turkey, and Cyprus.
2. Lotta Harbom and Peter Wallensteen, "Armed Conflicts, 1946-2008", *Journal of Peace Research* 46, n.° 4 (2009): 577, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343309339112.

While there is much discussion about nationalist parties within regions of the EU seeking independence, from Corsica to Flanders to Catalonia, it is crucial to include political parties with connections to violence, who underwent conflict transformation, to evaluate the effects of peace processes. Understanding how secessionist political parties conceive of, and interact with, the EU can create insight on how to effectively move parties from violent action to peaceful political engagement. From violent protests during recent elections in Catalonia[3] to growing threats of separatist violence in the Western Balkans,[4] where states are in the process of accession, violence and the role of EU membership remains a salient issue.

This working paper will trace the evolution of Sinn Féin's EU policy from the United Kingdom (UK) and the Republic of Ireland joining the European Economic Community (EEC) through Brexit and look at Sinn Féin's transformed EU policy in the present moment. This paper posits that Brexit has caused a unique re-examination of the EU's influence on Sinn Féin's quest for self-determination, grounded in the Europeanisation of the peace process twenty years ago. Though the EU does not interfere without consent in internal conflicts of its member states, it can offer an alternative to regions seeking self-determination, thus giving it further leverage to promote peace.

Europeanisation and Minority-Nationalist Parties

The European Union is the most ambitious undertaking of regional integration in existence, and as such, has been extensively studied. Europeanisation, an imperfect term to describe the integration process, comprises the emergence of a distinctly European polity and the adaption of national and sub-national political systems.[5] This relationship is neither inherently convergent nor harmonious but rather is constantly in flux as EU capabilities expand.[6]

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3. Marco Trujillo, Jordi Rubio and Joan Faus, "Street Fires Erupt in Barcelona in Fourth Day of Catalan Protest", *Reuters,* October 17th, 2019, https://reut.rs/3KR4w1J.
4. Luke McGee, "A Dangerous Crisis is Brewing in the Balkans. Will the West Do Anything to Stop Another War?", *CNN,* November 6th, 2021, https://cnn.it/3YlrYHv.
5. Milada Vachudova, *Europe Undivided: Democracy, Leverage, and Integration After Communism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
6. Robert Ladrech, "Europeanisation and Political Parties: Towards a Framework for Analysis", *Party Politics* 8, n.° 4 (2002), https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068802008004002; Simon Hix and Christopher Lord, *Political Parties in the European Union* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997); Peter Lynch, *Minority Nationalism and European Integration* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996); Tapio Raunio,

While much of the literature focuses on the state, the entity that compromises membership, there is a growing interest in the effects of Europeanisation on political parties.[7] In part, because national parties operate as "carriers of European integration",[8] in various aspects of their political systems from policy to organization to competition to party-government relations.[9] However, continued or further integration is not uniformly desired by national parties and various studies have examined Euroscepticism in Western Europe,[10] Central and Eastern Europe,[11] party ideology,[12] and its sources.[13]

The Tension between Integration and Sovereignty

A key factor contributing to Euroscepticism is the tension between European integration and national sovereignty. Some sub-state actors have argued that the EU is rendering obsolete the state as the central political entity, opening up the possibility of a post-Westphalian order.[14] Questions of sovereign-

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"Why European Integration Increases Leadership Autonomy within Political Parties", *Party Politics* 8, n.° 4 (2002), https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068802008004003; Johan Hellström, "Partisan Responses to Europe: The Role of Ideology for National Political Parties' Positions on European Integration", *Journal of European Public Policy* 15, n.° 2 (2008), https://doi.org/10.1080/13501760701817690; Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus", *British Journal of Political Science* 39, n.° 1 (2009), https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123408000409; Catherine de Vries and Erica Edwards, "Taking Europe to Its Extremes: Extremist Parties and Public Euroscepticism", *Party Politics* 15, n.° 1 (2009), https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068808097889.

7.   Ladrech, "Europeanisation and Political Parties".
8.   Hix and Lord, *Political Parties in the European Union*, 15.
9.   Ladrech, "Europeanisation and Political Parties".
10. Paul Taggart, "A Touchstone of Dissent: Euroscepticism in Contemporary Western European Party Systems", *European Journal of Political Research* 33, n.° 3 (1998), https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.00387.
11. Paul Taggart and Aleks Szczerbiak, "Contemporary Euroscepticism in the Party Systems of the European Union Candidate States of Central and Eastern Europe", *European Journal of Political Research* 43, n.° 1 (2004), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2004.00143.x; Petr Kopecký and Cas Mudde, "The Two Sides of Euroscepticism Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe", *European Union Politics* 3, n.° 3 (2002), https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116502003003002.
12. Mark Aspinwall, "Preferring Europe: Ideology and National Preferences on European Integration", *European Union Politics* 3, n.° 1 (2002), https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116502003001005.
13. Hooghe and Marks, "A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration".
14. James Anderson and James Goodman, "Regions, States and the European Union: Modernist Reaction or Postmodern Adaptation?", *Review of International Political Economy* 2, n.° 4 (1995), https://doi.org/10.1080/09692299508434335; Stephen Tierney, "Reframing Sovereignty?: Sub-State National Societies and Contemporary Challenges to the Nation-State", *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 54, n.° 1 (2005), https://doi.org/10.1093/iclq/54.1.161; Michael Keating, "Plurinational Democracy in a Post-Sovereign Order", *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 53, n.° 4 (2002), https://bit.ly/3kD53Ki.

ty are of particular importance to ethno-regional parties,[15] characterized by sub-national divisions and distinct cultural identities, which seek to mobilize for the interests of their territorial collectives.[16] Typically, the goal is some form of self-determination or independence from the state.[17] Though it is important to note that the demands can range from protectionist parties (soft demands) to secessionist parties (strong or radical demands).[18]

While the EU is aware of these demands and willing to mediate, the institution is wary of overstepping member state sovereignty to intervene in conflict without consent. As a supranational organization, the EU obtains power through the pooling of sovereignty of its member states, this allows for shared competences over areas such as the internal market. EU treaty law grants member states, on behalf of their people, the right to join the EU by which they then renounce some of their right to self-determine in exchange for consensus decision-making on certain areas.[19] Essential state functions remain the sole responsibility of the state which, as defined in the Treaty on European Union, includes "ensuring the territorial integrity of the State, maintaining law and order and safeguarding national security".[20] Intrastate asymmetric conflict has typically been understood to fall within those bounds.

Though the European Court of Justice (ECJ) has previously ruled that the United Nation's right of peoples to self-determine applies to EU law, this was in the context of de-colonization and the European Union has continued to defer to states.[21] In a letter to the President of the Catalan Government, then European Commission (EC) President José Manuel Barroso, framed Catalonia's self-determination dispute as "a question of internal organisation related

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15. It is important to note that a variety of terms are used to describe similar parties including ethno-regional, regional, minority, minority-nationalist.
16. Lieven de Winter and Huri Tursan, *Regionalist Parties in Western Europe* (London: Routledge, 1998).
17. Ibid., 210; Christopher Connolly, "Independence in Europe: Secession, Sovereignty, and the European Union", *Duke Journal of Comparative and International Law* 24, n.° 1 (2013), https://bit.ly/3ESciEP.
18. Régis Dandoy, "Ethno-Regionalist Parties in Europe: A Typology", *Perspectives on Federalism* 2, n.° 2 (2010), https://bit.ly/3IJn4hN.
19. Mare Ushkovska, "European Union Integration and National Self-Determination", *New England Journal of Public Policy* 31, n.° 2 (2019), https://bit.ly/3ZEjpIT.
20. European Union, *Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union*, Official Journal of the European Communities, C 326/13, October 26th, 2012, art. 4.2.
21. European Union General Court, *Council of the European Union v. Front Polisario*, December 21st, 2016, https://bit.ly/3y54YlE.

to the constitutional arrangements of a particular Member State".[22] Similarly, of Northern Ireland during the Troubles, EC President Jacques Delors said the he did not think the Commission had "a duty to interfere in the internal problem of a country, of a province", but was ready to "follow with friendship and enormous interest".[23] This understanding of sovereignty leaves the EU with limited options, dependent on the member state's behest, for conflict resolution within its own borders.

One such option is framing the EU's role not as an actor, but a vital space for parties to articulate their demands and project nationalist claims-whether through embracing or criticizing the EU.[24] In particular, the 1979 shift to direct representation in the European Parliament (EP) gave smaller parties more visibility. However, the rate of EU policies and initiatives has "created a tendency for nationalist parties to trail behind developments in European integration, with parties continually cast as reactor in relation to European policy".[25]

The EU Biases of Ethno-regional parties

There is extensive discussion in the literature on whether minority nationalist parties have pro or anti-EU tendencies. One argument is that fringe parties are Eurosceptic because they reflect historical cleavage. Marks and Wilson, drawing heavily from Lipset and Rokkan's theory of social cleavages, posit that the center-periphery relationship defines nationalist parties' strategies.[26] Views on European integration are integrated into those existing beliefs that oppose the center.[27] The underlying premise being that fringe parties, including ethno-regional parties, reject oversight and control on any level – both national and supranational.

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22. Quoted in Dimitry Kochenov and Martijn van den Brink, "Secessions from EU Member States: The Imperative of Union's Neutrality", *European Papers* 1, n.° 1 (2016): 70, https://bit.ly/3Zge7U9.
23. Paul Hainsworth and Duncan Morrow, "Northern Ireland: European Region - European Problem?", *Etudes Irlandaises* 18, n.° 2 (1993): 136, https://bit.ly/3JPowA1.
24. Keating, "Plurinational Democracy in a Post-Sovereign Order"; Michael Keating, "European Integration and the Nationalities Question", *Politics & Society* 32, n.° 3 (2004), https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329204267295.
25. Lynch, *Minority Nationalism and European Integration*, 184.
26. Gary Marks and Carole Wilson, "The Past in the Present: A Cleavage Theory of Party Response to European Integration", *British Journal of Political Science* 30, n.° 3 (2000), https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123400000181; Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (New York: Free Press, 1967).
27. Marks and Wilson, "The Past in the Present", 439.

Other studies make the opposite argument: that minority nationalist parties have trended pro-EU. European integration is still incorporated into existing platforms, but positively, in an attempt to "increase the legitimacy and validity of their movements", such as the Scottish Nationalist Party's 'Independence in Europe' platform.[28] The EU is seen as a sanctioned actor that can give "legitimacy to parties which might have controversial positions in the domestic political landscape".[29] This is particularly relevant for parties with strong secessionist demands. A few minority nationalist parties have formed a European-level party (the European Free Alliance) to promote cross-border advocacy of their goals within the EU.[30]

There is a substantial body of work that adopts a more nuanced approach to this debate, accounting for internal dynamics as well. Elias presents four possible categories of EU bias for any type of political party: euro-enthusiast, euro-reject, euro-skeptic, or euro-pragmatist.[31] A party's categorization is based not just on their view of Europeanisation, but also party ideology and the dynamics of party competition. Both euro-enthusiasts and euro-pragmatists support the EU, but these labels acknowledge different motivations. Similarly, Kopecký and Mudde highlight a distinction between diffuse and specific support for the EU: the former being support for the ideas of European integration while the latter is support for the EU itself.[32]

Lynch suggests a similar grouping approach, outlining three potential positions that minority nationalist parties have towards the EU: incompatible (it undermines national sovereignty and political and economic autonomy), compatible (the EU and these groups have together contributed to the demise of the centralized nation state), and regarding the EU as an external support system which shares sovereignty in vital areas.[33] Lynch acknowledges that this not a static space as parties are located in a nexus of continuous change and adopt various, evolving linkage strategies to align with their views.

Chaney, in studying trends of minority national party manifestos in the

28. Seth Jolly, "The Europhile Fringe?: Regionalist Party Support for European Integration", *European Union Politics* 8, n.° 1 (2007): 113, https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116507073290.
29. Maria Spirova, "European Integration and Minority Politics: Ethnic Parties at the EP Elections", *East European Politics* 28, n.° 1 (2012): 77, https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2011.649357.
30. Lieven de Winter and Margarita Gomez-Reino Cachafeiro, "European Integration and Ethnoregionalist Parties", *Party Politics*, 8 n.° 4 (2002), https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068802008004007.
31. Anwen Elias, *Minority Nationalist Parties and European Integration* (London: Routledge, 2009).
32. Kopecký and Mudde, "The Two Sides of Euroscepticism".
33. Lynch, *Minority Nationalism and European Integration*, 17.

UK, echoes the centralism of pragmatism within party strategy, finding a shift in the UK towards "instrumental Europeanism".[34] Parties have shifted from viewing the EU as the path to obtain autonomy to viewing the EU "as part of their efforts to attract electoral support and thus fulfill their constitutional goals".[35] The EU is no longer seen as the principle route to autonomy but, whether acting as a foil or a partner, it remains an active space from which to advocate.

Finally, Wyn Jones pushing back on claim of a post-Westphalian order, notes that there are clear limitations to the existing framework of Europeanisation that does not recognize how embedded European institutions, and the accompanying nation-state framework, have become.[36] This is perhaps most notable in the reaction to the push for a 'Europe of the Regions' in the 1980s and 1990s, which offered a promising alternative institutional framework that emphasized transnational cooperation but failed to transform the existing system.[37] Formal structures for sub-state regions have yet to gain meaningful traction within the EU.[38]

The Political History of Sinn Féin

Since the partition of Ireland in 1921, the central goal of Sinn Féin, which translates to "we, ourselves" has been the reunification of the island of Ireland. This irredentist claim is central to Sinn Féin's campaigns in each of its political arenas, which include the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Parliament of the United Kingdom,[39] the Dáil Éireann,[40] and the EP.

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34. Paul Chaney, "Instrumental Europeans?: Minority Nationalist Parties' Discourse on the European Union: The Case of UK Meso-Elections 1998-2011", *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 15, n.° 4 (2014), https://doi.org/10.1080/15705854.2014.900987.
35. Ibid., 465.
36. Richard Wyn Jones, "From Utopia to Reality: Plaid Cymru and Europe", *Nations and Nationalism* 15, n.° 1 (2009): 130, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2009.00368.x.
37. Anwen Elias, "Introduction: Whatever Happened to the Europe of Regions? Revisiting the Regional Dimension of European Politics", *Regional and Federal Studies* 18, n.° 5 (2008): 483, https://doi.org/10.1080/13597560802351655.
38. Judith Sijstermans and Coree Brown Swan, "Shares of Solidarity: Comparing Scottish and Flemish Responses to Catalonia", *Regional & Federal Studies* 32, n.° 2 (2022): 163, https://doi.org/10.1080/13597566.2021.1881064.
39. Sinn Féin MPs follow a long-standing policy of abstentionism in Westminster.
40. Lower House of the Irish Parliament.

Sinn Féin has undergone a substantial evolution from political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a republican paramilitary, to an established governing party in devolved government. Its modern iteration came out of the provisional Sinn Féin faction of a 1970 organizational split. In the 1980s, the party began to focus more on winning political representation, developing in conjunction with the IRA, an 'armalite and ballot box' strategy, seeking simultaneous military and electoral influence.[41] The 1981 special election of hunger striker Bobby Sands as a Member of Parliament (MP) for Fermanagh and South Tyrone, the party's first MP in Westminster since partition, marked an electoral turning point and "broadened the battlefield" of IRA influence.[42] Throughout the latter half of the conflict, Sinn Féin also ran candidates for local office in Northern Ireland and for the Dáil Éireann with limited success.

The 1990s saw a recalibration of the political problem by the British government, which affected Republican openness to negotiations, notably Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Brooke's speech that "the British government has no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland",[43] as well as the Downing Street Declaration. There was also dialogue within the nationalist community through the Hume-Adams talks. Following these new dialogues, the IRA called its first cessation of military action in 1994, a turning point that marked the beginning of the end of most large-scale violence in the conflict.[44]

Any negotiations for peace were dependent on the cooperation of the British and Irish governments, but the process was also buoyed by international support, in particular from US President Bill Clinton who nominated George Mitchell as Special Envoy in 1995. Multi-party negotiations got under way, but they excluded Sinn Féin until the IRA, which had renewed military activity, called a second ceasefire. With a ceasefire in September 1997, Sinn Féin signed onto the Mitchell Principles which affirmed a commitment by negotiating parties to peacefully resolve political issues, disarm paramilitary organizations, and renounce violence, and joined negotiations.

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41. Brendan O'Leary, *A Treatise on Northern Ireland: Consociation and Confederation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 3:75.
42. Ibid., 3:73.
43. P. J. McLoughlin, "'The First Major Step in the Peace Process'?: Exploring the Impact of the Anglo-Irish Agreement on Irish Republican Thinking", *Irish Political Studies* 29, n.° 1 (2014): 127, https://doi.org/10.1080/07907184.2013.875895.
44. Neil Jarman, "From War to Peace?: Changing Patterns of Violence in Northern Ireland, 1990-2003", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, n.° 3 (2004): 422, https://doi.org/10.1080/09546550490509739.

While absent from negotiations, the EU made an important contribution to the Irish peace process by providing a common framework for the British and Irish governments to act within, as well as extensive funding throughout the post-conflict period.[45] The two countries saw themselves as partners in the European Union and their EU membership guaranteed that whether Northern Ireland remained a part of the UK or reunited with the Republic of Ireland, the region would remain within the EU. Additionally, the EU had provided support for numerous years prior through the creation of networks and later, funds.[46] The PEACE programme, which is in its fifth iteration and has contributed over €1.5 billion to Northern Ireland.[47]

The eventual outcome of negotiations, the Belfast Agreement, also known as the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) (1998), is made up of a multi-party agreement between Northern Irish political parties and an international agreement between the British and Irish governments. Strand 1 established the Northern Ireland Assembly, which would require cross-community voting on key issues, and the Northern Ireland Executive, a power-sharing executive. The Agreement also clearly defined self-determination on the island:

> ...that it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively and without external impediment, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish, accepting that this right must be achieved and exercised with and subject to the agreement and consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland.[48]

The agreement thus recognizes the right of the people of Ireland to self-determine but ties it to the agreement of both parts of the island as well as the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland.

Power sharing came into effect in December 1999 with the formal return of devolved government to Northern Ireland, with Sinn Féin winning 18 seats, though government has been suspended numerous times since due

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45. Duncan Morrow and Jonny Byrne, "Playing Jenga?: Northern Ireland after Brexit", *Political Insight* 7, n.° 2 (2016): 30-1, https://doi.org/10.1177/2041905816666147.
46. Giada Lagana, *The European Union and the Northern Ireland Peace Process* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021).
47. Marek Kołodziejski, "Northern Ireland PEACE Programme", *European Parliament*, accessed March 3rd, 2023, https://bit.ly/3ogJdds.
48. British-Irish Council, *British-Irish Agreement*, April 10th, 1998, art. 1(ii), https://bit.ly/2kRfKd0.

to breakdown in power-sharing arrangements.[49] Unlike the return to governing, the demobilization of sectarian paramilitaries was a much slower process and a 2015 report found that individual members of groups continued to perpetuate violence.[50]

In 2007, five years into the existence of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Sinn Féin overtook the Social Democratic and Labor Party (SDLP) to become the largest nationalist party and thus a governing party in the executive. Since 2007, Sinn Féin has governed through power-sharing with the largest unionist party, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). In 2022, Sinn Féin became the largest party in the Assembly, winning more seats than the DUP for the first time. Sinn Féin has also steadily increased its seats in Westminster, where it now has seven MPs, and in the the Dáil Éireann, winning an unprecedented 37 seats in the most recent elections.

In 2004, Sinn Féin got its first Member of the European Parliament (MEP) elected, Bairbre de Brún for Northern Ireland, who held the seat until 2012 and was succeeded by Martina Anderson until Northern Ireland left the EU as a part of Brexit in January 2020. Sinn Féin has also won EP seats in the Republic of Ireland beginning with Mary Lou McDonald, now party president, in 2004.[51] The number of Irish Sinn Féin MEPs has fluctuated in subsequent elections and now stands at just one: Chris MacManus, who replaced Matt Carthy in March 2020.

Sinn Féin has evolved from the political arm of a paramilitary group to an established political party, winning representation in all four arenas that the party runs in as well as governing in Northern Ireland. The party's central goal of self-determination has remained, as have sectarian tensions, yet party messaging and strategy on how to achieve reunification have evolved immensely post-conflict most notably within the EU.

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49. Nicholas Whyte, "Northern Ireland Assembly Elections 1998", *ARK*, October 14th, 2002, https://bit.ly/41F4VdQ.
50. O'Leary, *A Treatise on Northern Ireland*, 3:280.
51. Martyn Frampton, "Sinn Féin and the European Arena: 'Ourselves Alone' or 'Critical Engagement'?", *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 16 (2005): 235, https://bit.ly/3EU4faz.

Table 1
Political Timeline of Sinn Féin

Year	Event
1921	Partition of Ireland
1970	Sinn Féin (SF) splits into two factions
Early 1980s	SF develops 'armalite and ballot box' strategy
1981	Election of hunger striker Bobby Sands as MP
Late 1980s	Hume-Adams talks
1994	First IRA cessation of military activity
1995	Multiparty negotiations begin
1997	SF signs onto the Mitchell Principles
1998	SF signs the Good Friday Agreement
1999	SF wins 18 sets in new devolved government in Northern Ireland (NI)
2004	The first SF MEP is elected in both NI and the Republic of Ireland
2007	SF becomes a governing party in the NI executive
2022	SF becomes largest party in the NI Assembly

Tracing Sinn Féin's EU Policy

Post conflict, Sinn Féin has sought to distance itself from past connections to violence and further establish itself as a traditional political party, now running candidates from the local level up to a European-wide stage on a platform of reunification. Political parties naturally evolve within and in reaction to their political realities. Sinn Féin's EU strategy is a noteworthy example of this, moving from outright rejection to critical engagement. After an initial rejectionist policy, Sinn Féin has largely remained as a consistent, critical participant in the European project for the past twenty years. Brexit has profoundly changed that position, unintentionally creating more positive incentive for seeking EU involvement, particularly in Irish reunification. Sinn Féin's goal of self-determination thus cannot be divorced from the process of Europeanisation.

The different eras of policy can be divided into three sections: pre-peace agreement, pre-Brexit, and post-Brexit. In the first two time periods, the party underwent a gradual evolution from firm rejectionist of the EU to critica-

lly engaged, while post-referendum, there was a shift towards a more positive understanding of the EU's role in Sinn Féin's goal of self-determination.

Previous works have detailed Sinn Féin's transformation from strong opposition to critical engagement.[52] These accounts were written a year or so after the election of Sinn Féin's first MEP, which marked a turning point for the party's EU involvement, but do not account for the past 15 years.

Pre-Peace to Pre-Brexit

Sinn Féin was vehemently opposed to the UK and the Republic of Ireland joining the EEC in 1973. Leading up to the Republic of Ireland's referendum on membership, Sinn Féin campaigned for a "no" vote against what it saw as an imperial power whose goal was to further exploit.[53] As a former General Secretary of Sinn Féin explained, the party was "very perplexed at the idea of surrendering sovereignty to an even bigger entity than Britain".[54] Though the referendum passed, Sinn Féin ran no candidates in the first few EP elections as part of its rejectionist stance. The party's platform, as outlined in manifestos, called for withdrawal from the EEC, opposition to EEC economic policies which "re-emphasized partition", and "for a national sovereignty, for a Free Ireland in a Free Europe".[55] Likewise, the party campaigned against any move to expand the EEC and its capabilities further, such as the Maastricht treaty.[56]

This refusal to engage ended in the 1990s and was replaced by a period of critical engagement. This shift coincided with a few events: Ireland ratifying the Maastricht Treaty by referendum, Sinn Féin abstentionist candidates failing to gain traction, and the beginnings of the peace process.[57] In 1993, at its ard fheis,[58] members moved for the party to develop a Europe policy.[59] This move towards more active engagement also coincided with calls for in-

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52. John Doyle, "Republican Policies in Practical Politics: Placing Contemporary Sinn Féin in a European Context", *IBIS*, working paper 45, 2005; Frampton, "Sinn Féin and the European Arena".
53. Sinn Féin, "Why Sinn Féin Says No to the Common Market", *Repsol Pamphlet* 6 (1972), https://bit.ly/3y9b2cI.
54. Mitchell McLaughlin, interviewed by author, February 28th, 2020.
55. Sinn Féin, *One Island, One People: The Only Alternative* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 1984), 9.
56. Martina Anderson, interviewed by author, March 10th, 2020.
57. Jane O'Mahony, "Ireland's EU Referendum Experience", *Irish Political Studies* 24, n.° 4 (2009), https://doi.org/10.1080/07907180903274727.
58. Annual party conference.
59. Frampton, "Sinn Féin and the European Arena", 246.

ternational involvement in the peace process.[60] The party went so far as to establish an office in Brussels to explain to the EU, "the need for the international community to play a more active and political role in regard to Ireland if a just and lasting peace is to be achieved".[61]

Despite welcoming international involvement in the peace process, the party's skeptical posture continued post-conflict as all political parties in Northern Ireland recalibrated to the new political environment. The party's 1999 manifesto recognized the EU as a "key terrain for political struggle" and categorized its engagement as one "in a critical manner".[62] Sinn Féin still had no representation in the EP though Northern Ireland and the border region of the Republic of Ireland began to receive substantial EU funding, €667 million between 1995 – 1999, as a part of the PEACE programme.[63] Yet, despite the EU's support for peace, Sinn Féin continued to oppose any form of EU expansion – campaigning for "No" votes on referendums for the Treaty of Amsterdam and the Treaty of Nice.[64]

Sinn Féin's 2004 EU manifesto, titled "an Ireland of equals in a Europe of equals", called for the EU to "take a role in ensuring the speedy end to all occupations and enforced partitions" around the world "but especially at home".[65] The party saw its "just call for an end to the British military occupation of a part of our island and for Irish reunification" as the next logical step for the EU after "endors[ing] the peace process in our country".[66] Sinn Féin won seats in the EP for the first time in the 2004 elections, one each in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The party joined the European United Left-Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) political group, which consisted of other leftist parties who sought EU reform.

Once in office, Sinn Féin MEPs continued to critique the institution and the party campaigned for a "no" vote on the Treaty establishing an EU constitu-

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60. Gerry Adams, "Speech by Gerry Adams to the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis, 13 April 2013", *CAIN*, accessed March 3rd, 2023, https://bit.ly/3kSBJ2e; Sinn Féin, *Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 1994).
61. Susannah Dibble, *Sinn Féin in the EU: The Evolution of Self-Determination Policy Post Brexit* (Bruges: United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Studies, 2020), 9.
62. Sinn Féin, *A New Opportunity for Peace* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 1999), 2.
63. Kenneth Bush and Kenneth Houston, "The Story of Peace: Learning from EU Peace Funding in Northern Ireland and the Border Region", *INCORE*, accessed March 3rd, 2023, 32, https://bit.ly/3UzGqeJ.
64. Séan Crowe, "Sinn Féin calls for NO vote in Amsterdam Treaty", *Sinn Féin*, May 13th, 1998, https://bit.ly/3yoe5y4; Sinn Féin, "Sinn Féin Nice Treaty Referendum Manifesto: Vote No to the Treaty of Nice", *Sinn Féin*, 2001, http://bit.ly/3S0kCaW.
65. Sinn Féin, *An Island of Equals in a Europe of Equals: Sinn Féin EU Election Manifesto 2004* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2004), 6.
66. Ibid., 14.

tion, criticizing it as a step towards a superstate that further took away from national sovereignty.[67] Though even while campaigning for a "no" vote, the party stressed that voting "no" to the treaty did not mean voting "no" to the existence of the EU and it would remain a member regardless – a far cry from past calls to leave the EEC entirely.[68] Sinn Féin also continued to call for EU support in Irish reunification, launching a document in 2006 on the topic, and hosting an "international inquiry into Irish unity in Brussels which considered the role the EU could play in the reunification of Ireland".[69] In office, Sinn Féin's platform broadened beyond reunification to identify more specific left leaning policy concerns within the EU such as economic governance and the eradication of poverty.[70]

Sinn Féin's 2009 and 2014 EP manifestos further built on the 2004 manifesto, stating that "Ireland's place is in the European Union – but the European Union needs to change"[71] and also to "build support in Europe for Irish reunification".[72] The 2014 manifesto listed Irish unity as one of its top ten key priorities in the EU.[73] Sinn Féin also commended the EP for passing a resolution that supported furthering the Northern Irish peace process.[74] In both of these elections, Sinn Féin sent back representatives and its work in the EU continued to expand, though calls for Irish reunification were consistent, the party developed policy on all levels from youth unemployment to the Common Agricultural Policy.

Brexit Referendum Leadup

Sinn Féin was one of the last parties in Northern Ireland to declare its campaign intentions for the Brexit referendum, in this case for the "Remain" vote. There have been suggestions that certain segments of Sinn Féin's constituen-

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67. Mary Lou McDonald, "Debate on Statement by Mr. Barroso, President-Elect of the Commission", *European Parliament*, November 17th, 2004, https://bit.ly/3mmLZjO; Sinn Féin, *Sinn Féin Response to the Draft EU Constitution* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2003); Sinn Féin, *An Island of Equals in a Europe of Equals*; Sinn Féin, *Sinn Féin Document on the EU Constitution* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2005).
68. Mary Lou McDonald's speech at a conference on the EU Constitution, 2005.
69. Sinn Féin, *Putting Ireland First* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2014), 9. See also Sinn Féin, *European Union Can Help Bring about Irish Unity-Bairbre de Brún* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2006).
70. Sinn Féin, *Sinn Féin Response to the Draft EU Constitution*.
71. Sinn Féin, *Putting Ireland First*, 11.
72. Sinn Féin, *European Election Manifesto 2009* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2009), 3.
73. Sinn Féin, *Putting Ireland First*, 6.
74. Martina Anderson, "Anderson Welcomes Passing of EU Resolution", *Sinn Féin*, November 13th, 2014, https://bit.ly/3zV6w2p; Martina Anderson, "EU Has Played Major Role in Supporting Peace Process", *Sinn Féin*, November 10th, 2014, https://bit.ly/4079QSX.

cy saw the vote as a British, and more specifically English, problem, that did not substantially affect Irish voters.[75] When the party finally did engage, its actions centered around vague statements by current MEPs and party leadership about the EU's "huge contribution" and "benefits" and a warning that "withdrawal would be disastrous".[76] The statements were broad, but the party tried to maintain a balanced narrative that it supported EU membership, "but that support d[id] not translate to unconditional approval for the EU's direction".[77] Though removed from its earlier calls for complete withdrawal, the party had been an active, and vocal, critic of the EU. Campaigning for Brexit, while not erasing these criticisms, did refocus on the positives of EU memberships and according to Sinn Féin leadership, "strengthened the relationship with the European Union".[78] In fact, within Sinn Féin, the decision to campaign for remain was unopposed.[79] EU membership was important for its "potential to provide a bridge towards the greater integration of Ireland, north and south" a key benefit that the party did not want to forego despite other criticisms.[80]

While the "leave" vote won overall, the majority of votes cast in Northern Ireland were to remain.[81] This dynamic placed Sinn Féin's pro-EU position on even more familiar ground: a British government that was going against Northern Irish dissent. Sinn Féin thus found itself in an unexpected alliance with the European Union, which had been much quicker to grasp the potentially disastrous consequences of Brexit for Irish peace.

Post Brexit Referendum

The repercussions of the unexpected success of the "Leave" vote and resulting Brexit negotiations have had the greatest impact on Northern Irish-EU rela-

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75. Jonathan Evershed and Mary Murphy, "An Bhfuil Ár Lá Tagtha?: Sinn Féin, Special Status and the Politics of Brexit", *The British Journal of Political and International Relations* 24, n.° 2 (2022): 247, https://doi.org/10.1177/13691481211026153.

76. Morrow and Byrne, "Playing Jenga?", 30-1. See also Martina Anderson, "Europe Makes a Genuine Improvement to People's Daily Lives", *Sinn Féin*, November 28th, 2014, https://bit.ly/3KC2T6o; Martin McGuinness, "EU Withdrawal Would Have Disastrous Impact on the North", *Sinn Féin*, April 21st, 2015, https://bit.ly/3myml6A; Michelle O'Neill, "Ireland's Future Is within the European Union", *Sinn Féin*, 2015.

77. Lynn Boylan, "Open Letter to the Irish Times", *Sinn Féin*, May 23rd, 2019, parr. 5, https://bit.ly/3MF22Va.

78. Mitchell McLaughlin, interviewed by author, February 28th, 2020.

79. Evershed and Murphy, "An Bhfuil Ár Lá Tagtha?", 247.

80. Gerry Adams, "Adams Demands Separate Vote for North in the Event of Tory Election Win", *Sinn Féin*, May 4th, 2015, parr. 25, https://bit.ly/3zW95S4.

81. BBC News, "EU Referendum: Results", *BBC News*, June 23rd, 2016, https://bbc.in/2l6nt3A.

tions since the signing of the GFA, highlighting the legacy of the Europeanisation of the peace process. In response, Sinn Féin has shifted its political strategy towards the EU. Though still critical of the institution, the party, throughout the negotiation period, emphasized the EU's understanding and support of Northern Ireland, highlighted the cost of leaving the EU, and endeavored to positively link self-determination to EU membership. While Brexit officially occurred on January 31, 2020, the transition period lasted through the end of 2020 as both sides negotiated a deal. For Sinn Féin, the European Union will continue to be a viable electoral arena through the Republic of Ireland.

While the decision to leave the European Union was made by voters in the United Kingdom, the referendum was of obvious importance to the EU who, like Sinn Féin, wanted the UK to remain a member. Within the EU, the Republic of Ireland, as a member state, border country to the UK, and a signatory to the Good Friday Agreement, stands to be disproportionately affected by Brexit. To ensure its best interests, the Irish government campaigned in Northern Ireland for a "Remain" vote and, after that loss, won reassurance from the EU that it "will stand fully behind" the Republic of Ireland in negotiations.[82]

Due to Sinn Féin's policy of abstentionism in Westminster and the numerous breakdowns of Northern Ireland devolved government, most recently for three crucial years of Brexit negotiations, the EU, and specifically the EP, has offered a consistent, sympathetic platform, for Sinn Féin to advocate for its interests. Prior to the referendum, the EU was notably quicker than the British government to grasp the unique difficulties that Brexit could present for Northern Ireland. The British government, including then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Teresa Villiers, dismissed any concerns as "highly irresponsible".[83] The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee in Westminster condemned the British government for its "unclear and inconsistent communication" and "lamentable lack of engagement" on the Northern Ireland Protocol.[84]

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82. Patrick Wintour, "Irish Leader to Campaign in UK for Remain Vote", *The Guardian*, May 13th, 2016, https://bit.ly/3JbqE5I; Rory Carroll, "Barnier Pledges EU Support for Backstop in Event of No-Deal Brexit", *The Guardian*, April 8th, 2019, https://bit.ly/2WWU4d8.
83. Edward Burke, "Who Will Speak for Northern Ireland?: The Looming Danger of an Ulster Brexit", *The RUSI Journal* 161, n.° 2 (2016), https://doi.org/10.1080/03071847.2016.1174477; Morrow and Byrne, "Playing Jenga?", 30-1; Matt O'Toole, "Ireland an Afterthought during Brexit Campaign When I Was Cameron Adviser", *The Irish Times*, October 4th, 2017, https://bit.ly/2Aya0do; Belfast Telegraph, "Claims Brexit Could Threaten Peace Process Are Scaremongering, Says Villiers", *Belfast Telegraph*, April 17th, 2016, https://bit.ly/3YocxhQ.
84. United Kingdom Parliament, "Unfettered Access: Customs Arrangements in Northern Ireland after Brexit", *UK Parliament*, July 14th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3EX25Hf.

Conversely, the EU has experience with many of the key points of tensions specific to Northern Ireland, including maintaining a border between an EU member state and a non-member state, reunifying a country within the EU,[85] and overseeing the continued implementation of peace agreements. After the referendum, the EP commissioned a study on the GFA and the challenges posed by UK withdrawal.[86] The EC's Head of the UK Task Force Michel Barnier has repeatedly spoken on the difficulties for Northern Ireland as the "part of the UK most impacted by Brexit".[87]

Brexit has pushed Sinn Féin to articulate the benefits of EU membership for Northern Ireland, including in its fight for self-determination. In contrast to Vote Leave's campaign to "Vote Leave, Take Control", Sinn Féin has endeavored to communicate the benefits that Northern Ireland loses by leaving the EU, including funding, open borders, and citizenship rights.[88] The party sees Brexit as threat to peace in Northern Ireland and to the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement which covers all of the aforementioned issues.

The EU has contributed extensive funding towards peace in Northern Ireland. The region has received over €1.5 billion through the EU's PEACE programme which former Sinn Féin MEP Martin Anderson said, "has made a huge impact in terms of building and strengthening communities and promoting reconciliation".[89] In 2017, Sinn Féin published a paper on how to fight the negative economic impact of Brexit including granting Northern Ireland special status and continuing EU funding.[90] The party has also warned that loss of these funding streams would "cripple the North", which already has a weak regional economy compared to the rest of the UK.[91] While Sinn Féin has campaigned for, and secured, an EU commitment

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85. German reunification was an enlarged continuation of former West Germany within the EEC.
86. David Phinnemore and Katy Hayward, "UK Withdrawal ('Brexit') and the Good Friday Agreement", *European Parliament*, November 2017, https://bit.ly/3INS0h8.
87. Michel Barnier, "Speech by Michel Barnier at the William J. Clinton Leadership Institute", *European Commission*, January 27th, 2020, 3, https://bit.ly/3JekxOo.
88. Vote Leave, "Why Vote Leave", *Vote Leave*, accessed March 3rd, 2023, https://bit.ly/3KUs1ac; Sinn Féin, *Fighting for Ireland, All Ireland in Europe* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2019); Sinn Féin, *Inclusive and Strategic Growth: Developing a New Economic Strategy for the North of Ireland* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2019).
89. Martina Anderson, "Brexit Could Undermine Progress Made in Peace Process", *Sinn Féin*, March 9th, 2017, parr. 6, https://bit.ly/43s2hsO.
90. Sinn Féin, *How Ireland and the EU Can Fight the Economic Impact of Brexit North and South* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2017).
91. Martina Anderson, "Anderson Welcomes Adoption of €270 Million PEACE IV Funding", *Sinn Féin*, November 30th, 2015, parr. 6, https://bit.ly/3UvrJtm; John FitzGerald, "Northern Ireland's Economy Is Threatened by More than Brexit", *The Irish Times*, September 6th, 2019, https://bit.ly/3J9xwk6.

to main Interreg and PEACE funding through 2027, there is no guarantee beyond that, though the party has expressed its interest.[92]

As previously mentioned, the Irish border has emerged as one of the largest stumbling blocks in Brexit negotiations. Sinn Féin Vice President Michelle O'Neill has said that EU membership created "seamless trade" and employment in "key sectors" across an open border.[93] The party has called for continued "freedom of movement" and "seamless all-island commerce" after Brexit.[94] Though Sinn Féin, and many other parties, successfully pushed to avoid a hard border on the island, as detailed in the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland in the Withdrawal Agreement Bill, there will be an Irish sea border, meaning goods that cross from the UK to Northern Ireland must go through customs checks. Sinn Féin has demanded that the EU ensure "the full and timely implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement", specifically the Irish protocol ensures avoidance of a hard border.[95]

Sinn Féin has also raised concerns that Brexit will deprive Irish citizens of their rights. The Good Friday Agreement grants Northern Irelanders the right to choose Irish, British, or dual citizenship. Former MEP Martina Anderson spoke before the EP and warned that Brexit would deny those with Irish citizenship in Northern Ireland their right to representation in the EU.[96] Earlier on in the Brexit negotiations period, Sinn Féin advocated for a special Ireland North Consistency to be established in the EP, giving the North two MEPs after Brexit. Sinn Féin submitted a report to the EU Constituency Commission making its case.[97] However, instead, the EP gave the two additional seats to the Republic of Ireland.[98]

While consistently a plank of Sinn Féin's platform, Brexit brought the issue of self-determination back to the forefront of the party's EU work. Though

92. Sinn Féin, *Inclusive and Strategic Growth.*
93. Michelle O'Neill, "Sinn Féin Opposed to Stormont Veto on the Backstop", *Sinn Féin*, September 18th, 2019, https://bit.ly/3UvNskR.
94. Sinn Féin, *Fighting for Ireland.*
95. Chris MacManus, "EU Must Stand Firm as Brits Continue to Disregard Agreement", *Sinn Féin*, April 24th, 2020, http://bit.ly/3XpYc4d.
96. Martina Anderson, "One-Minute Speeches on Matters of Political Importance", *European Parliament*, September 10th, 2018, https://bit.ly/3IYKHTK.
97. Sinn Féin, *Review of European Parliament Consistencies: Sinn Féin Submission to the Constituency Commission* (Dublin: Sinn Féin, 2018).
98. European Parliament Liaison Office in Ireland, "Ireland Officially Gains Two New MEPs", *European Parliament*, January 31st, 2020, https://bit.ly/3YuRLx1.

self-determination refers to the right of a people to nationally self-determine, Sinn Féin's goal of self-determination is intertwined with its right to determine EU membership. Supranational institutions, like the EU, require a form of collective determination that asks members to give up some sovereignty to join. The 'Leave' campaign framed Brexit as a way to protect, and gain back, the UK's sovereignty as an independent country; Sinn Féin's support for EU membership, and the right to choose that membership, was linked to its goal for a united Ireland.[99] Documented grievances aside, for Sinn Féin "the relationship with Europe is much more positive, and less kind of dominating, than the relationship with Britain".[100]

Sinn Féin has repeatedly called on the EU to respect Northern Ireland's Brexit vote as a means to support the Good Friday Agreement. In the European Parliament, MEP Martina Anderson called for the EU to support, stand up for, and respect the Northern Irish vote to "Remain" as a way to protect the peace agreement, a document which defines the right to self-determination in the north.[101] Sinn Féin also hosted a European Parliament conference titled "Post Brexit: Towards A United Ireland?" that sought to explore with a European audience what the future could look like.[102] Sinn Féin's 2019 European manifesto was titled "all Ireland in Europe" and while it cited the consistent need for EU reform, it also held the position that Northern Ireland should not be "dragged out" and pointed to the need to build support for a unified Ireland in Europe.[103]

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99. Chris Grayling, "We Must Vote Leave to Protect Our Sovereignty and Democracy from Further EU Integration", *Vote Leave*, May 31st, 2016, https://bit.ly/3T6pCvq.
100. Mitchell McLaughlin, interviewed by author, February 28th, 2020.
101. Martina Anderson, "Preparation of the European Council Meeting of 21 and 22 March 2019 and UK's Withdrawal from the EU (Debate)", *European Parliament*, March 13th, 2019, https://bit.ly/3SXHet6; Martina Anderson, "Disenfranchisement of Voting Rights in the EU (Debate)", *European Parliament*, October 2nd, 2018, https://bit.ly/3ZxN3QH; Martina Anderson, "State of Play of Negotiations with the United Kingdom (Debate)", *European Parliament*, October 3rd, 2017, https://bit.ly/3yk8850; Martina Anderson, "One-Minute Speeches on Matters of Political Importance", *European Parliament*, April 26th, 2017, https://bit.ly/3SXDY0W; Martina Anderson, "Negotiations with the United Kingdom Following Its Notification that It Intends to Withdraw from the European Union (Debate)", *European Parliament*, April 5th, 2017, https://bit.ly/3F73OKn; Martina Anderson, "Outcome of the Referendum in the United Kingdom (Debate)", *European Parliament*, June 28th, 2016, https://bit.ly/3L67X4U.
102. Sinn Féin, *Inclusive and Strategic Growth*.
103. Sinn Féin, *Fighting for Ireland*, 6.

For voters who might not feel strongly about reunification on the island of Ireland but do feel strongly about the benefits of EU membership, Sinn Féin has highlighted re-unification as a practical way to regain EU membership.[104] The European Council, came to the conclusion in 'EUCO XT 20010/17' that "in accordance with international law, the entire territory of such a united Ireland would thus be part of the European Union".[105] Thus, if Ireland, under the requirements outlined by the GFA, re-united, then the entire isle of Ireland would automatically acquire membership as one entity. This differs from the often-cited case of Scottish independence where the EU has said that if Scotland becomes a country, independent of the UK, then it would not automatically become a sperate EU member state but would have to re-apply for membership and go through the ascension process.[106] Consequently, Sinn Féin has argued Irish unity is the solution to Brexit. Generally, as a way "back into the EU for citizens in the North", but also as a way to solve technical problems, arguing that "resolving the issue of partition, resolves the issue of the border and the fiendishly complicated trading arrangements that they're going to have to make".[107] Reuniting Ireland is not just a republican goal, but a practical answer to the complication caused by Brexit and a way to maintain the existing peace.

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104. Gerry Adams, "Brexit Is Bad for Ireland", *Sinn Féin*, January 31st, 2020, http://bit.ly/3HZy4HI; Mary Lou McDonald, "Ireland and the EU after Brexit: A View from Sinn Féin", *SoundCloud*, January 31st, 2020, https://bit.ly/3ZycP7f.
105. European Council, *Special Meeting of the European Council (Art. 50)*, April 29th, 2017, EUCO XT 20010/17.
106. Anthony Salamone, "What Would It Take for Scotland to Rejoin the EU as an Independent State?", *EUROPP*, February 5th, 2020, https://bit.ly/41V3Xu0; Martina Anderson, "The UK's Withdrawal from the EU (Debate)", *European Parliament*, September 18th, 2019, https://bit.ly/3YEvzRu.
107. Mitchell McLaughlin, interviewed by author, February 28th, 2020. See also Adams, "Brexit is Bad for Ireland".

Table 2
Summary of Sinn Féin's EU Policy

Policy Era	EU Stance	Campaign Position	EP Engagement	Rhetoric/ Platform
Pre-Peace Agreement	EU rejectionist	• Vote no on Republic of Ireland membership referendum • Vote against expansion moves such as Maastricht Treaty	• Ran no candidates in EP elections	• Platform called for withdrawal
Pre-Brexit	Critical engagement	• Vote no for referendums on Treaty of Amsterdam, the Treaty of Nice, the Treaty establishing an EU constitution	• Won seats in EP Joined GUE/NGL political group in the EP • Established office in Brussels	• Developed platform on EU issues • Called on EU to support reunification of Ireland
Post-Brexit	A benefit of a United Ireland	• Vote remain • Campaigned to avoid a hard border	• Hosted EP conference on a United Ireland, post Brexit	• Called on EU to respect NI's vote in Brexit as part of the GFA

Conclusion

Brexit has become a reworking of the peace process or, at the very least, a test of the agreement's stability without the structure of European integration. Though Brexit is the disintegration of the UK as an EU member state, it is also a shift in the relationship between the UK and the Republic of Ireland, which disproportionately affects Northern Ireland.

While it is a challenge for Sinn Féin to balance continued criticism of the EU with praise for its Brexit stance, it is not incongruous. Sinn Féin has affirmed in recent years that it wants to stay within the system and seek the necessary change from within. The EU has not changed its stance on intervening in internal conflict or supporting self-determination efforts, but its support of Northern Ireland during Brexit has reframed the issue for Sinn Féin. Brexit has created a binary that did not exist before: Northern Ireland can be in the UK, or it can be in the EU, upon reunification with the Republic of Ireland.

As opposed to earlier efforts to promote Irish unification within the European Union, Brexit clearly reoriented and refocused Sinn Féin's political

strategy to lay out the capabilities and benefits of EU partnership more explicitly, the cost to Northern Ireland of leaving the EU, and re-framing self-determination as both an EU issue and a solution to EU issues. Brexit, perhaps conversely, has created new connections between remaining in the EU and pursuing self-determination. For Sinn Féin, there is no united Ireland that is not a part of the European Union.

More broadly, the case of Sinn Féin and Brexit illustrates the need for any discussion of the EU-tendencies of ethno-regional parties to include an examination of the Europeanization of peace processes within the EU's borders as an influential factor on how related minority-nationalist political parties conceive of the EU. For the EU to continue its efforts to maintain peace on the continent, in a context where intrastate conflict is increasingly the norm, it will have to contend with the far-reaching legacies of peace processes.

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The Potential of EU Connectivity through Missions and Smart Specialization

El potencial de la conectividad de la UE a través de las misiones y la especialización inteligente

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Abstract

Mission-oriented innovation and smart specialisation are internationally familiar concepts. They hold the potential to add more profundity to the EU thinking and modelling of its connectivity approach towards Asia and the world in general. The existing policy, governance frameworks and implementation instruments of smart specialisation and innovation could provide connectivity with evidence-informed lessons learnt and research findings from various parts of the world. Both frameworks for innovation and research could steer the EU connectivity approach away from controversies tied to the weaponised interdependence and strategic autonomy, including the bundle of concepts that come along with this vulnerabilities-oriented intellectual current. Research-intensity and mutual learning are elements that the mission-oriented innovation and smart specialisation could bring to the overall spectrum of thematic dimensions and implementation measures of the EU approach towards sustainably and trustfully connecting to Asia and other parts of the world.

Keywords: Asia-Europe relations, connectivity, missions, smart specialization

Resumen

La innovación orientada a la misión y la especialización inteligente son conceptos conocidos internacionalmente. Tienen el potencial de añadir más profundidad al pensa-

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miento de la Unión Europea y a la modelización de su enfoque de conectividad hacia Asia y el mundo en general. Los marcos políticos y de gobernanza y los instrumentos de aplicación de la especialización inteligente y la innovación existentes podrían aportar a la conectividad las lecciones aprendidas y los resultados de la investigación de diversas partes del mundo. Ambos marcos de innovación e investigación podrían alejar el enfoque de conectividad de la Unión Europea de las controversias vinculadas a la interdependencia armada y la autonomía estratégica, incluido el conjunto de conceptos que acompañan a esta corriente intelectual orientada a la vulnerabilidad. La intensidad de la investigación y el aprendizaje mutuo son elementos que la innovación orientada a la misión y la especialización inteligente podrían aportar al espectro general de dimensiones temáticas y medidas de aplicación del enfoque de la Unión Europea hacia una conexión sostenible y de confianza con Asia y otras partes del mundo.

Palabras clave: relaciones Asia-Europa, conectividad, misiones, especialización inteligente

Introduction

Focus on connectivity is on the rise. This article is written in the context of the European Union (EU) facing a complex international setting.[1] To counter the erosion of certain established multilateral forums and a shift towards "exclusionary policies",[2] the EU sustainable connectivity captured by the Joint Communication "Connecting Europe and Asia-Building Blocks for an EU Strategy" is examined to argue how it could benefit from mission-oriented innovation and smart specialisation to continue sustaining a level of engagement with other parts of the world amidst the on-going geopolitical tectonic shifts.

The purpose of the article is to elaborate how some elements of the existing conceptual and policy toolbox of the EU, namely, mission-oriented innovation and smart specialisation could advance the goals captured by the EU strategic approach towards connectivity with Asia. The primary focus is on the Asian side of the Asia-Europe Meeting. However, such a geographic choice respects that ASEM does not assemble all countries geographically located across Europe and Asia. Moreover, the EU connectivity approach towards Asia will be complemented with the EU Global Connectivity Strategy to be launched in 2022.[3]

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1. Suzana Anghel et al., *On the Path to "Strategic Autonomy": The EU in an Evolving Geopolitical Environment* (Brussels: European Union, 2020).
2. Tomas Ries, "Security Aspects of Policy", *Security Policy Brief* 115 (2019): 2, https://bit.ly/3ZvgJhp.
3. Council of the European Union, *A Globally Connected Europe: Council Conclusions (12 July 2021)*, July 12th, 2021, 4, 10629/21; Maaike Okano-Heijmans and Wilhelm Vosse, "Promoting Open and Inclusive Connectivity: The Case for Digital Development Cooperation", *Research in Globalization* 3 (2021): 3, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resglo.2021.100061.

Thus, suggestions captured in this article should be considered as applicable in a broader context or beyond Asia as well.

Following the ASEM agreement, connectivity is defined as "bringing countries, people and societies together; enhancing Europe-Asia ties on economic, political, security, social and cultural issues; establishing connectivity in respect of transport, digital links, energy, education, research, tourism and institutions; and contributing to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".[4] Building on the trusted connectivity approach, two non-negotiable pillars promoted by the leaders of the EU are transparency and accountability.[5] Mission-oriented innovation is understood as an approach towards research and development that "requires not just adaptation, but also institutional innovations and dynamic capabilities within public organisations that create new markets and reshape the existing ones".[6] The missions' approach is founded on systems thinking with a focus not solely on growth but also on the direction of innovation.[7] Smart specialisation stands for an EU implemented and internationally promoted approach towards national or regional research and innovation strategies. Smart specialisation aims at building upon the existing regional or national knowledge strengths and potential for smart growth and the knowledge economy with the support of the EU expertise and funds.[8]

This article brings to the existing body of literature on connectivity insights from the EU research-intensive support frameworks and instruments, including the latest analysis on these policy initiatives and assistance measures. Besides the multifaceted connectivity model and findings elaborated in the EU supported ASEM Sustainable Connectivity Portal,[9] there is a wealth of intellectual output at the disposal of the EU international connectivity

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4. Enrico D'Ambrogio, *Prospects for EU-Asia Connectivity: The "European Way to Connectivity"* (Brussels: European Union, 2021), 3.
5. Kaja Kallas and Charles Michel, "Trusted Connectivity: The European Value Proposition", *European Council*, September 14th, 2021, https://bit.ly/3Yywen6.
6. Mariana Mazzucato, Antonio Andreoni and Rowan Conway, "Mission-Oriented Innovation in the USA. Shaping Markets toward Grand Challenges: A New Industrial Policy Frontier", *UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose*, policy paper 1, June 2021, 2, https://bit.ly/3ZyZlbl.
7. Mariana Mazzucato and Olga Mikheeva, "The EIB and the New EU Missions Framework: Opportunities and Lessons from the EIB's Advisory Support to the Circular Economy", *UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose*, policy report, November 2020, 20, https://bit.ly/3JqbpWX.
8. Karen Schlüter, "(Regional) Smart Specialisation: A New Push for Regionalism in Europe?", *L'Europe en Formation* 1, n.° 379 (2016): 180, https://bit.ly/41YIi4k.
9. William Becker et al., "Exploring the Link between Asia and Europe Connectivity and Sustainable Development", *Research in Globalization* 3 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resglo.2021.100045.

builders that can serve the overall purposes to build the trusted connectivity in close alignment with the lessons learnt from the EU evidence-informed policy making.

This article is written with a full appreciation of the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) being the source of inspiration for the EU Connectivity Strategy Towards Asia.[10] The latest developments in the BSR thinking on sustainable smart specialisation strategies (S4) and global supply and value chains deserve wider attention as a way how the EU via its connectivity approach could avoid further propensity towards the confrontational sentiment fuelled by the intellectual currents of weaponised interdependence. Mission-oriented innovation and S4 as the cross-cutting European way has the potential to guide the exploration of new cooperative ties in innovation, research and entrepreneurship in a win-win fashion both within the EU, as well as between EU-based entities and collaboration partners elsewhere in the world. Consequently, the EU approach towards connectivity with Asia, especially cooperation in research and innovation which forms part of the people-to-people domain of connectivity, is not seen in a siloed manner but as deeply intertwined in a broader international context.

A review of EU documents, relevant academic literature and policy analysis results in a proposal to channel mission oriented and S4 focused elements into the EU connectivity approach not only towards ASEM participating entities but Asia in general, not excluding the applicability to a broader international context as well. The proposed approach takes into consideration that the EU is far from the sole proponent of connectivity in Europe and Asia. The first section outlines the theoretical logic of network institutionalism that serves as a point of departure. The second part taps into the conceptual thinking that has been discussed in relation to 'connectivity', 'weaponised interdependence', 'strategic autonomy' and 'mission-oriented innovation', 'smart specialisation', as well as how these terms are seen in relational terms. The third part outlines the main features of connectivity of the EU Connectivity Strategy Towards Asia (captured in the 2018 Joint Communication) and presents some compatibility measures on how the on-going work on mission-oriented innovation and S4 can support the goals of this initiative. The fourth part

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10. European Commission, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Investment Bank: Connecting Europe and Asia. Building Blocks for an EU Strategy*, September 19th, 2018, 8, JOIN(2018) 31 final.

maps out other driving forces of connectivity in Europe and Asia and why those are relevant in future considerations on the EU approach towards connectivity. The concluding part sums up the key findings.

Network Institutionalism

The core logic of network institutionalism is the starting point for this study of connectivity. Networks are intermediary constructs that have a role in the institutionalisation of organisations.[11] Furthermore, "[r]elationships that connect individuals, groups, and organizations are assumed to be complex, in the sense that linkages between them are overlapping and cross-cutting".[12] Empirical findings on the engagement of global policy networks in post-war settings illustrate this assumption.[13] This specific feature is especially valuable for analysing multi-level governance's modalities of the EU and its implications on the external ties forged with the support of the EU. These dynamics occur in an ever-denser context that weaves together supranational, international, transgovernmental and transnational with frequent references to the governance.[14]

Therefore, the next crucial characteristic of the network institutionalist conceptual lens is of great help in understanding the complexity of ties developed because of the implementation of the EU strategic initiatives both internally, as well as between the EU-based entities and external partners. "[N]etworks mobilize information, social influence, resources, and social capital in highly differentiated ways".[15] This tacit collective potential is a moving target characterised by fluidity and multifaceted characteristics.

One of the novel governance examples that is heavily reliant on collective actions steered via a dense layer of interlinked networks is the EU macro-regional

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11. Chris Ansell, "Network Institutionalism", in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, ed. Sarah Binder, Roderick Rhodes and Bert Rockman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Anna Ohanyan, "Network Institutionalism and NGO Studies", *International Studies Perspectives* 13, n.° 4 (2012): 367, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1528-3585.2012.00488.x.
12. Ansell, "Network Institutionalism", 2.
13. Anna Ohanyan, "The Effects of Global Policy Networks on Peacebuilding: Framework of Evaluation", *Global Society* 24, n.° 4 (2010), https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2010.508365.
14. H. George Frederickson, "Whatever Happened to Public Administration?: Governance, Governance Everywhere", in *The Oxford Handbook of Public Management*, ed. Ewan Ferlie, Laurence Lynn and Christopher Pollitt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 19.
15. Ansell, "Network Institutionalism", 2.

strategies. These transnational consultative and coordination frameworks pool resources with various conditionalities and assemble diverse expert networks and working groups to reach the critical mass of effort to tackle specific challenges.[16] Each strategy has a tailored model of the structure and thematic network pattern. Each strategy focuses on specific challenges of a given part of Europe and involves local, regional, national, and transnational entities in project-based activities.

BSR is not only a source of inspiration for crafting the connectivity towards Asia. Besides, it is the pioneering area that launched the first macro-regional framework – the EU Strategy for the BSR. The macro-regional framework placed in this geographic, historical, economic and political context brings together the past and future prospects in a manner that, in comparison to other peer EU macro-regional areas, might be less prone to what Ohanyan refers to as the "territorial trap of statehood", namely, a narrow focus on the states in the studies of regionalism.[17] The EU Strategy for the BSR underwent a comprehensive analysis to scan the future S4 thematic avenues.[18] These findings and suggested ways forward could be considered as a source of inspiration (not direct replication) also beyond the BSR.

Vulnerability Through Connectivity

'Connectivity' is a widely used term in various compartments of social sciences theories. The limited space of this article does not allow to delve into the diversity of nuances of various definitions. The guiding understanding of the term is the one indicated in the EU Connectivity Strategy without elaborating on further intricacies whether it corresponds to the notions of one or another theoretical definition. The definition of connectivity agreed by the

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16. Zane Šime, "EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region: A New Space for a Study of Novel Forms of Diplomacy", *Regions & Cohesion* 10, n.° 3 (2020), https://doi.org/10.3167/reco.2020.100310.
17. Anna Ohanyan, "Regional Fracture and Its Intractability in World Politics: The Case of the Late Ottoman Empire", *Nationalities Papers* 50, n.° 3 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2021.27.
18. Nordic Council of Ministers, *Ten Trends For the Sustainable Bioeconomy in the Nordic Arctic and Baltic Sea Region* (Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers, 2020); Alasdair Reid, Elina Griniece and Vladimir Cvijanović, *High Level Value Chain Mapping in the Baltic Sea Region: Guidance Manual* (Brussels: EFIS, 2020); Elina Griniece, Alasdair Reid and Vladimir Cvijanović, *High Level Value Chain Mapping in the Baltic Sea Region: Pilot Exercise on Circular Bioeconomy* (Brussels: EFIS, 2020); Johanna Leino and Alison Hunter, *Smart Specialisation in the Baltic Sea Region: Learning towards Macro-Regional Specialisation* (Tampere, FI: Interreg / European Union, 2020).

Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and re-confirmed in the EU Connectivity Strategy Towards Asia[19] is treated as the supportive element for further exploration how following the networked institutionalist logic various other related terms expand the understanding of contextual factors and implications that come along with connectivity, especially its research collaborative side corresponding to the people-to-people domain.

ASEM defines connectivity as "bringing countries, people and societies closer together. It facilitates access and is a means to foster deeper economic and people-to-people ties". ASEM connectivity "encompasses the hard and soft aspects, including the physical and institutional social-cultural linkages that are the fundamental supportive means to enhance the economic, political-security, and socio-cultural ties between Asia and Europe which also contribute to the narrowing of the varying levels of development and capacities".[20] This definition is instrumental in understanding how not only advantages but also risks are articulated. The next paragraphs elaborate in further detail via what terms and notions the EU and analysts of the EU have articulated their stances on the risks.

The term 'weaponised interdependence' captures the contestation of the former understanding that increased interdependencies and integration brings more peace and prosperity.[21] Real-world dynamics paint a more complex picture. 'Weaponised interdependence' builds upon the identified gap in the existing body of international relations' theory. There is a lack of "guideposts as to how states may leverage network structures as a coercive tool and under what circumstances".[22] Various examples of economic ties have been stated to argue how certain countries suffer from their vulnerability in terms of dependence on certain goods or export of their own produced products or services when faced with politically motivated backlashes.[23] The term travels far and wide. It

19. Bart Gaens, "The EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy and Its Impact on Asia-Europe Relations", in *Trade and Economic Connectivity in the Age of Uncertainty*, ed. Christian Echle and Megha Sarmah (Singapore: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2019), 23.
20. European Commission, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament*, 1.
21. Amrita Narlikar, "A Grand Bargain to Revive the WTO", *Centre for International Governance Innovation*, May 11th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3YGiZkI; Henrique Choer Moraes, "The Turn to Managed Interdependence: A Glimpse into the Future of International Economic Law?", *EJIL Talk!*, August 24th, 2018, https://bit.ly/3J5FysW.
22. Henry Farrell and Abraham Newman, "Weaponized Interdependence: How Global Economic Networks Shape State Coercion", *International Security* 44, n.° 1 (2019): 43, https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00351.
23. Chia-Chien Chang and Alan Yang, "Weaponized Interdependence: China's Economic Statecraft and Social Penetration against Taiwan", *Orbis* 64, n.° 2 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orbis.2020.02.002.

goes as far as exploring the weaponization of tourism with a focus on the management of China's outbound tourist flows.[24] Likewise, it is used by analysts who seek to identify what implications these dynamics bring to Europe.[25]

Interlink between weaponised interdependence and strategic autonomy[26] can be traced in a comprehensive, cross-sectoral manner in reflections on the EU connectivity.[27] Tocci defines strategic autonomy as "[t]he ability of the Union to decide autonomously and have the means to act upon its decisions".[28] Strategic autonomy requires attention towards the divergence between official policy stance and scholarly understanding of the term. "Academics argue that strategic autonomy does not apply exclusively to the realm of security and defence policy from which it originates, but covers all EU-related policy areas, thereby requiring a horizontal, cross-policy, approach and the discontinuation of the existing silo approach to EU policies".[29] Although the official endorsement in the EU refers to the strategic autonomy solely in relation to the defence sector, this article embraces the zest witnessed among the researchers to refer to it in a comprehensive manner.

Among the definitions associated with strategic autonomy is one which incorporates relational aspects as well: "the ability to act autonomously, to rely on one's own resources in key strategic areas and to cooperate with partners whenever needed".[30] It proves to be highly salient for the purposes of this article. Both connectivity and strategic autonomy share a focus on

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24. Darren Lim, Victor Ferguson and Rosa Bishop, "Chinese Outbound Tourism as an Instrument of Economic Statecraft", *Journal of Contemporary China* 29, n.° 126 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1080/106 70564.2020.1744390.
25. Zhao Minghao, "The Belt and Road Initiative and its Implications for China-Europe Relations", *The International Spectator* 51, n.° 4 (2016): 115, https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2016.1235819; Amrita Narlikar, "Managing the World of Weaponized Interdependence", *The Security Times*, February 2020, https://bit.ly/3kSUov7.
26. The terms 'strategic autonomy' and 'strategic sovereignity' are treated as synonyms in this article.
27. Romana Vlahutin, "Reconnected: How the EU Can Assert Its Sovereignty after the Pandemic", *European Council on Foreign Relations*, April 21st, 2020, https://bit.ly/3ZUtSjU; Romana Vlahutin, "Sustainable Connectivity: The European way" (keynote speech, Asia-Europe Sustainable Connectivity Scientific Conference [AESCON], March 22nd-24th, 2020).
28. Nathalie Tocci, "Interview with Nathalie Tocci on the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy", *The International Spectator* 51, n.° 3 (2016): 3, https://doi.org/10.1080/ 03932729.2016.1216744.
29. European Commission, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament*, 3.
30. Anghel et al., *On the Path to "Strategic Autonomy"*, 1.

multilateralism.[31] Such interlinkages also serve as a good context for accommodating the earlier suggested study of "the concept of flow security and its applicability to the EU context".[32] To strike the right balance between being optimally connected but at the same time remaining capable to act autonomously (when necessary) is an ambitious task for the EU to accomplish.

Furthermore, by bringing strategic autonomy into the connectivity discussion 'smart power', 'sharp power', 'shaping power'[33] tag along. These power terms can help to carve out more details of what 'weaponised interdependence' would entail in terms of foreign policy implications. However, this bundle of concepts is left outside of the scope of this concise article. The existing scholarly literature does not seem to indicate a strong connection between these power concepts and missions, smart specialisation. Instead, Nye's invitation to reorient towards "open and rules-based order" to manage the tectonic shifts of international interdependence[34] is noted as a perspective that has more like-mindedness with the EU focus on strengthening multilateralism through jointly agreed and respected forms of engagement discussed in the subsequent section.

Missions and Smart Specialisation

Strategic autonomy is a term that is not without its controversy. The EU efforts aimed at strengthening its autonomy pose a risk of additional costs, international tensions, and protectionism.[35] To manage the potential misunderstandings between the EU and its partners in Asia and worldwide[36] it is worth bringing mission-oriented innovation and S4 into the picture. Both terms refer to widely discussed and researched concepts among the scholarly circles and a policy framework adopted by policy planners in the EU, as well as examined and tested elsewhere in the world. Missions and S4 could be instrumental for translating at least some proportion of the visionary and strategic seren-

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31. Ibid., 28; Council of the European Union, *Connecting Europe and Asia: Building Blocks for an EU Strategy. Council Conclusions (15 October 2018)*, October 15th, 2018, 2-3, 13097/18.
32. Ries, "Security Aspects of Policy", 6.
33. Anghel et al., *On the Path to "Strategic Autonomy"*, 1.
34. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Power and Interdependence with China", *The Washington Quarterly* 43, n.° 1 (2020): 17-8, https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2020.1734303.
35. Anghel et al., *On the Path to "Strategic Autonomy"*, 10.
36. Sven Biscop, "The Power to Engage: Giving Punch to a New EU Global Strategy 2020", *Security Policy Brief* 114 (2019): 3, https://bit.ly/3Jpk37T.

dipity outlined in the EU Connectivity Towards Asia into more tangible implementation terms. Missions and S4 could be considered among a range of selected instruments from the EU toolbox for a clearer projection of the European way for a sustained international engagement.[37] Both have a role to play in translating specific research, innovation, and industrial objectives, as well as reconfiguration of international supply and value chains into tangible actions and results. Likewise, both are internationally known due to the widespread preponderance towards Mazzucato's promoted approach towards innovation and earlier EU work not only in terms of EU-wide implementation of smart specialisation but also its promotion to the other parts of the world.[38]

In short, back in 1967, some American tastemakers were of an opinion that "mission-oriented is a terrible expression".[39] However, the terminology stood the test of time. The contemporary international hype around missions builds on a premise that "[c]ountries around the world are seeking economic growth that is smart (innovation-led), inclusive and sustainable".[40] Mazzucato is the contemporary intellectual protagonist. Her framework places the resurging international focus on missions as a directionality offering approach for pooling cross-disciplinary forces into the context of present-day policy-making terminology, such as Sustainable Development Goals and grand societal challenges.[41] Her often used example of technological achievements sparked by investments in missions are Apple products.[42] If in the previous century the basic principles of missions were put into the wording encouraging not to neglect "long-range science and technology",[43] then in the contemporary national and European governance contexts it is echoed by a recommenda-

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37. Idea aligned with the suggestions expressed by Steven Blockmans, "Why the EU Needs a Geopolitical Commission", *Centre for European Policy Studies*, September 15th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3kWN1Tp.
38. Mikel Landabaso, "From S3 to S4: Towards Sustainable Smart Specialisation Strategies", *European Commission*, February 27th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3kZGRSp.
39. T. L. Campbell, "Basic Science in Mission-Oriented Endeavor", *Science* 156, n.° 3775 (1967): 670, https://doi.org/10.1126/science.156.3775.670.
40. Mariana Mazzucato, "Mission-Oriented Innovation Policy: Challenges and Opportunities", *UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose*, working paper, September 2017, 5, https://bit.ly/3l5L6vB.
41. Ibid., 9 and 14; Douglas Robinson and Mariana Mazzucato, "The Evolution of Mission-Oriented Policies: Exploring Changing Market Creating Policies in the US and European Space Sector", *Research Policy* 48, n.° 4 (2019): 937-8, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2018.10.005.
42. Mazzucato, "Mission-Oriented Innovation Policy", 22.
43. Rodney Nichols, "Mission-Oriented R & D: Senator Mansfield's Questions Sharpen Congressional Uncertainties About Federal R & D Patterns", *Science* 172, n.° 3978 (1971): 35, https://doi.org/10.1126/science.172.3978.29.

tion to embrace "patient, long-term, committed finance" for radical and incremental innovations.[44]

Although not a complete novelty in certain 21st century national contexts in Europe,[45] missions have succeeded to become the name of the game not only EU-wide but also internationally, including Latin America.[46] The EU adopts a thematically wide approach to missions (climate, cancer, ocean, cities, soil) to be funded by the EU Framework Programme "Horizon Europe" among other instruments. Researchers avidly explore domains, such as renewable energy, to map potential modalities of future international comparisons on mission-type of initiatives, and modalities of analysing food systems transformation through the framework of 'mission-oriented innovation system'.[47] This thematic focus corresponds to the latest prioritisation chosen for the BSR S4 directions. Thus, this is a good example of how the empirical focus of both conceptual frameworks benefits from the compatibility of certain thematic directions.

Since the European Research Area (ERA) is open to international collaborations, then EU chosen areas for missions[48] should be seen as a cross-cutting EU

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44. Mariana Mazzucato, *Mission-Oriented Research & Innovation in the European Union: A Problem-Solving Approach to Fuel Innovation-Led Growth* (Brussels: European Commission, 2018); Mariana Mazzucato, "Catch-Up and Mission-Oriented Innovation", in *How Nations Learn: Technological Learning, Industrial Policy, and Catch-Up*, ed. Arkebe Oqubay and Kenichi Ohno (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 66; Mariana Mazzucato and George Dibb, *A Mission-Oriented Vision for Innovation-Led Economic Growth* (London: UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, 2018); Mariana Mazzucato and Caetano Penna, "The Rise of Mission-Oriented State Investment Banks: The Cases of Germany's KfW and Brazil's BNDES", *Science Policy Research Unit*, working paper, 2015-2016, 8 and 29, https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2744613; Nichols, "Mission-Oriented R & D", 35; Giovanni Dosi et al., "Mission-Oriented Policies and the 'Entrepreneurial State' at Work: An Agent-Based Exploration", *UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose*, working paper, 2021, https://bit.ly/3J6vOPg.
45. Kaare Aagaard and Niels Mejlgaard, "Research Policy Transformations and Tensions", in *The Oxford Handbook of Danish Politics*, ed. Peter Munk Christiansen, Jørgen Elklit and Peter Nedergaard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).
46. UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose, "IIPP Taking the Lead in Latin America on Post-COVID Recovery", *UCL*, July 29th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3L42AmS.
47. Laurens Klerkx and Stephanie Begemann, "Supporting Food Systems Transformation: The What, Why, Who, Where and How of Mission-Oriented Agricultural Innovation Systems", *Agricultural Systems* 184 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agsy.2020.102901; Hudson Mendonça, Teresia van Aduard and Marcus de Araújo, "Working towards a Framework Based on Mission-Oriented Practices for Assessing Renewable Energy Innovation Policies", *Journal of Cleaner Production* 193 (2018), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.05.064.
48. Areas: cancer; adaptation to climate change including societal transformation; healthy oceans, seas coastal and inland waters; climate-neutral and smart cities; soil health and food. European Commission, "EU Missions in Horizon Europe", *European Commission*, accessed March 8th, 2023, https://bit.ly/3IV5lnC.

policy strand that allows to distance from the potential controversies associated with the strategic autonomy. Instead, missions support a cooperative spirit that minimizes the vulnerability towards dependence on external know-how and help to make most of the international collaborations to facilitate mutual learning among the involved parties, including further strengthening the EU research potential and expertise.

Mazzucato has developed the mission-oriented innovation framework as highly compatible with smart specialisation.[49] "The original smart specialization concept [...] emerged out of discussions led by a team of expert analysts investigating the growing 'Transatlantic Productivity Gap' [...] and the puzzling lack of innovative and entrepreneurial dynamism in many parts of Europe in the light of the potential market opportunities offered by newly emerging technologies".[50] Smart specialisation "is a systematic policy process with the aim to make European regions more competitive through innovation".[51] Most importantly, smart specialisation is a meta-policy or a policy process rather than a policy. It introduces changes in policies through distilling criteria and priorities for other policies to follow.[52] The strength of smart specialisation is an elaborate toolbox of methodological steps, assistance measures and expert debates facilitated primarily by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission. It offers a comprehensive set of terminology for international engagement and a detailed learning process on how to unlock the entrepreneurial and growth potential of a region or a country.

An international 'mission-oriented turn' in the innovation policies further increases the viability of smart specialisation as a world-wide learning-by-doing discovery process of home-grown industrial strengths.[53] This coupling

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49. Mazzucato, "Mission-Oriented Innovation Policy", 18; Mazzucato, "Catch-Up and Mission-Oriented Innovation", 70.
50. Dominique Foray, Philip McCann and Raquel Ortega, "Smart Specialization and European Regional Development Policy", in *The Oxford Handbook of Local Competitiveness*, ed. David Audretsch, Albert Link and Mary Walshok (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 459. For a concise overview of the development of the policy framework for this theoretical line of thinking consult the following article: Ninetta Chaniotou and Zane Šime, "Baltic Sea Region-Wide Research-Business Cooperation: What Benefits for Sparsely Populated Areas and Smart Specialisation?", *European Structural and Investment Funds Journal* 6, n.° 3 (2018), https://bit.ly/3yoBTlb.
51. Leino and Hunter, *Smart Specialisation in the Baltic Sea Region*, 5.
52. Fabrizio Guzzo and Carlo Gianelle, *Assessing Smart Specialisation: Governance* (Luxembourg: European Commission, 2021), 7.
53. Zane Šime, "Multi-Level Governance of Innovation and Smart Specialisation", *Baltic TRAM*, October 31st, 2017, 14, https://bit.ly/3ZS2oLv.

of missions and smart specialisation provides diverse support for research and development to the 'sleeping giants', 'excited goblins' and 'hungry dwarfs'.[54] In 2019, this poetic typology of enterprises received some further honing via the definition of six strategic value chains.[55] The Mazzucato reports with a focus on the role of co-design, co-creation, co-implementation and public procurement[56] show certain like-mindedness with the principles of the smart specialisation's triple and quadruple helixes.[57]

While smart specialisation is humbler about the knowledge and expertise of the state and drops the "omniscient central planner",[58] missions represent a somewhat bolder compartment of EU policies. According to the mission logic, the market-shaping efforts launched by the public sector should result in tilting the playing field towards a set of directions that channel pressing challenges into concrete problems and solutions tailored to resolve them.[59] Due to the fact that missions should be based on various funding sources, the interlinks with the S4 that is largely grounded in the EU Cohesion Policy and funds linked to this policy gains even more prominence.[60]

These on-going attempts of tilting and smartly specialising do not restrict involved experts from sharing the lessons learnt so far of this hands-on approach with interested parties located in various parts of the world. Since 2016,[61] such key elements as the entrepreneurial discovery process have been discussed during the annual SMARTER conferences. It is one of the

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54. Definitions of these typologies of enterprises are outlined in European Parliament, "Smart Specialisation and Europe's Growth Agenda", *European Parliament*, accessed March 8th, 2023, 4, https://bit.ly/3JqPkaM.
55. These six chosen areas are connected, clean and autonomous vehicles; hydrogen technologies and systems; smart health; industrial internet of things; low-carbon industry; cybersecurity. Reid, Griniece and Cvijanović, *High Level Value Chain Mapping in the Baltic Sea Region*, 5.
56. Mazzucato, *Mission-Oriented Research & Innovation in the European Union*, 18; Mariana Mazzucato, *Governing Missions in the European Union* (Luxembourg: European Union, 2019), 12; Mariana Mazzucato, "Mission-Oriented Public Procurement: International Examples", *UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose*, policy report, 2020, https://bit.ly/42b3S5I.
57. Definitions and explanation of triple and quadruple helixes are provided in Elias Carayannis and Ruslan Rakhmatullin, "The Quadruple/Quintuple Innovation Helixes and Smart Specialisation Strategies for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in Europe and Beyond", *Journal of the Knowledge Economy* 5 (2014), https://bit.ly/3ZBQJB0.
58. Foray, McCann and Ortega, "Smart Specialization and European Regional Development Policy", 11.
59. Mazzucato, *Governing Missions in the European Union*, 12.
60. Ibid., 20.
61. European Commission, "1st SMARTER Conference on Smart Specialisation and Territorial Development", *European Commission*, accessed March 8th, 2023, https://bit.ly/3mHc50X.

key forums that gathers experts interested in offering their assessments on the achieved progress and future directions of smart specialisation, how specific geographic areas reinterpret relatedness and connectivity.[62] Continuous tapping into the expertise on smart specialisation, especially paying attention to the recent research on the role of extra-local connectivity and innovation pipelines,[63] would be one of the ways how to build more solid foundations for the implementation of the EU connectivity approach.

EU Connectivity Strategy

The Joint Communication "Connecting Europe and Asia – Building Blocks for an EU Strategy" was prepared for the 12th ASEM Summit in October 2018.[64] Instead of being a strategic blueprint for action, it is judged to correspond to a technical document a list of the EU's instruments.[65] The subsequent paragraphs outline how this inventory of useful EU frameworks and tools could be broadened to accommodate missions and smart specialisation, thus strengthening the future actionable dimension of the EU Connectivity Strategy Towards Asia.

Overall, the document is outward-looking and explains how the EU seeks to build or maintain ties across ASEM (and Asia more broadly) in a variety of policy domains. Thought, certain thematic areas have gained more prominence than others. Digital is among those areas that analysts invite to pay more attention to.[66] The recommendations for improving digitalisation and technological development in Central Asia,[67] earlier mentioned EU industrial focus on cyber security and BSR S4 propensity towards prioritising the

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62. Such spatial concepts as "domain", "relevant size", "connectedness", "embeddedness", "relatedness" and "connectivity" are no strangers to the smart specialisation literature. Foray, McCann and Ortega, "Smart Specialization and European Regional Development Policy", 12.

63. Andrés Rodríguez-Pose, "The Research and Innovation Divide in the EU and Its Economic Consequences", *European Commission*, working paper, 2020, https://bit.ly/3l0UeBS.

64. European Commission, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament*, 1.

65. Jacopo Maria Pepe, "Connectivity in Post-COVID-19 Eurasia: Chances for the EU", *German Council on Foreign Relations*, September 1st, 2020, https://bit.ly/3Fehzqv.

66. Maaike Okano-Heijmans, "How to Strenghten Europe's Agenda on Digital Connectivity", *Clingendael*, policy brief, July 2019, https://bit.ly/3YB0FJJ; Okano-Heijmans and Vosse, "Promoting Open and Inclusive Connectivity".

67. Dmitry Erokhin, "Comparative Analysis of Digital Development in Central Asian Countries", *OSCE Academy in Bishkek*, policy brief 63, September 2020, 9, https://bit.ly/3YBqjOr.

development of new digital solutions shows that there are good grounds for building complementarities between the EU internal policies and their extensions towards Asia.

The Connectivity Strategy aims at promoting synergies with such frameworks tailored for specific geographic areas as the EU Central Asia Strategy.[68] However, since the launch of the EU Connectivity Strategy Towards Asia other major agreements have been reached. Thus, its success should be considered dependent also on such documents as the Joint Statement of the EU-India Leaders' meeting convened in 2021 in Porto, including the EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025. Remarks presented by India-based connectivity researchers[69] have a lot of similarities with the EU logic of cohesion policy and subsequently S4. Thus, there is a potential to forge complementarities.

The leading voice on the EU for the connectivity, Ambassador Romana Vlahutin, avoids rose-tinted glasses via references to the weaponised interdependence.[70] An international propensity towards the US-China geopolitical interaction does not escape the EU policy-making radar. However, to reiterate Nye's suggested open and rules-based governance, this article follows this more cooperative spirit with a suggestion to explore the full potential that missions and smart specialisation could bring to the EU connectivity approach towards Asia. The European way stands for the international flows of goods, services, people, and ideas organised in a sustainable and rules-based manner and entails 'soft connectivity' of "promoting consistent rules and standards".[71]

The European way is considered in this article to be similar to open and rules-based governance. It is more multilateralism-oriented and mutual expertise enhancing direction for future engagement that would invite to consider incorporating either in the overall approach or wording of the EU core docu-

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68. European Commission, *Joint Communication to the European Parliament*, 8; Martin Russell, "Connectivity in Central Asia: Reconnecting the Silk Road", *European Parliament*, briefing, April 2nd, 2019, https://bit.ly/3F9Q7Ky.
69. P. V. Rao, "'Development through Connectivity': India's Maritime Narrative", *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* 15, n.° 3 (2019): 256, https://doi.org/10.1080/19480881.2019.1640578; Garima Mohan and Darshana Baruah, "Charting EU-India Cooperation on Connectivity", *EU-India Think Tanks Twinning Initiative*, January 7th, 2019, https://bit.ly/3L9I8kk; Maaike Okano-Heijmans and Jagannath Panda, *Managing Connectivity Conflict: EU-India Cooperation and China's Belt and Road Initiative* (Stockholm: Institute for Security & Development Policy, 2018).
70. Vlahutin, "Sustainable Connectivity".
71. Manuel Widmann, "The EU Connectivity Strategy: Putting Words into Action", *European Institute for Asian Studies*, briefing paper 2, August 2021, 2 and 9, https://bit.ly/3Yvpbvv.

ment Mazzucato's thinking of the EU (and in national contexts-the state) as the market shaper, not a fixer. Practically, one potential way how to translate this shift of the approach in the overall narrative revolving around connectivity[72] would be to revisit points raised in the joint communication about the aim to 'level the playing field' and evaluate those in the context of the mission-oriented 'tilting towards a direction' among the willing ones. The EU selected areas for missions, industrial priorities and BSR S4 trends offer plenty of guidance for potential Europe-Asia tilting directions and multi-stakeholder partnerships of smart specialisation projects.

Other Connectivity Proponents

Connectivity has several proponents present in Europe and Asia. It is shown by the references to the "geopolitics of connectivity"[73] that marks a shift away from the previous preoccupation with territorial geopolitics.[74] Even if this article focuses on the EU connectivity potential towards Asia, it respects the unmatched US network power. The US is still considered a system maker and a privilege taker.[75] Much ink has been spilt over the study of the other prominent connectivity leaders, namely, China and its Belt and Road Initiative,[76] Japan with quality infrastructure, India with several infrastructure projects, and Russia with the Eurasian Economic Union and the Collective

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72. A example would be Carole Lecomte, "Ambassador Romana Vlahutin: The EU's Connectivity Strategy", *Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs*, May 10th, 2019, https://bit.ly/2VtOC5g.

73. Nadine Godehardt and Karoline Postel-Vinay, "Connectivity and Geopolitics: Beware the 'New Wine in Old Bottles' Approach", *SWP Comment* 35 (2020): 1, https://bit.ly/3YAaes0.

74. Ayaz Rzayev, "Towards Greater Connectivity: The South Caucasus as a Railway Hub between the EU and China", *UNU-CRIS*, policy brief 1, 2019, https://bit.ly/3l0ZVje.

75. Daniel Drezner, "The Song Remains the Same: International Relations after COVID-19", *International Organization* 74, n.° 51 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818320000351.

76. The reason why the EU internal connectivity should not be neglected is the sheer proportion of involved countries. "[...] 14 out of 28 EU member states have already signed bilateral endorsements of the BRI, with Italy in 2019 being the first G7 nation to join the initiative". Constantin Holzer, "Identity Narratives in China and the EU's Economic Diplomacy: Comparing the BRI and the EU Connectivity Strategy for Asia", in *Chinese National Identity in the Age of Globalisation*, ed. Lu Zhouxiang (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 196. See also Jakub Jakóbowski, "Chinese-Led Regional Multilateralism in Central and Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America: 16 + 1, FOCAC, and CCF", *Journal of Contemporary China* 27, n.° 113 (2018), https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2018.1458055; Minghao, "The Belt and Road Initiative"; Werner Pascha, "Belts, Roads, and Regions: The Dynamics of Chinese and Japanese Infrastructure Connectivity Initiatives and Europe's Responses", *Asian Development Bank Institute*, working paper 1114, April 2020, https://bit.ly/3T1VvFc.

Security Treaty Organisation.[77] This growing body of literature shows that connectivity has a remarkable density of layers, forms of established ties, supporting institutions and initiatives, as well as historical context that might be promising patterns to build upon.[78]

Connectivity, similarly to a range of other terms that recently have caught international attention, refers to a process with deep historical roots but its contemporary meaning allows to categorise it as a relatively novel buzzword.[79] Its current thematic strands have not yet stood the test of time to make it possible to discern the signature features, such as whether the further debate will go down the road of 'weaponised interdependence' with a propensity towards safeguarding from vulnerabilities or lean more towards the internationally welcoming European way of trusted connectivity and the open and rules-based governance. The terms and interlinks between them matter. It helps to capture the political sentiment and state of relations between the main connectors, as well as implications this general mood have on so-to-say 'connecters' or countries and actors that seek international engagement with like-minded leading forces to sustain and enhance their prosperity.

Since the EU is not the sole connectivity proponent with an interest in developing mission-oriented innovation initiatives, the well-elaborated structural patterns of the ERA and the EU Framework Programmes (as the implementation enablers) offer a good international collaboration mode to extend the EU connectivity goals in a number of domains.

Likewise, the support offered by smart specialisation to the EU industrial policy and the well-elaborated framework of transferring smart specialisation conceptual and policy blueprint to other parts of the world, including

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77. Mathieu Duchâtel et al., "Eurasian Integration and the EU", in *Absorb and Conquer: An EU Approach to Russian and Chinese Integration in Eurasia* (London: European Council on Foreign Relations, 2016); Sinikukka Saari, "Connecting the Dots: Challenges to EU Connectivity in Central Asia", *European Union Institute for Security Studies*, brief, June 2019, https://bit.ly/3Jt4Ra6.

78. Mario Esteban and Ugo Armanini, "The EU-Japan Connectivity Partnership: A Sustainable Initiative Awaiting Materialisation", *Real Instituto Elcano*, February 4th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3Jr1YGF.

79. Similar remarks have been made in relation to science diplomacy. Zane Šime, "Science Diplomacy in the Context of the EU-India Strategic Partnership: Looking beyond the European Sandbagging Contest", *Science Diplomacy. India's Global Digest of Multidisciplinary Science* 4, n.° 4 (2021), https://bit.ly/3J6TyCK.

but not exclusively China,[80] India[81] and Latin America[82] as well, proves that it is a conducive enabler of connectivity with substantial potential to offer not only an interactive collaboration but also a sound framework for monitoring, analysing and measuring the achieved results. While connectivity is a lot about relations, having some clarity about specific achievements would strengthen certainty about the value of the EU chosen strategic approach and practical course of actions.

Conclusions

This article proposes to incorporate mission-oriented innovation and smart specialisation in the EU connectivity approach towards ASEM and Asia more generally in order to offer access to established EU mechanisms for assembling rich networks of research-intense expertise. The EU existing structures and intellectual infrastructure developed for the implementation of missions and S4 provides a valuable support measure for additional depth and substance of the overall meaning associated with the EU connectivity.

Some of the conceptual underpinnings of the EU policies that have not attracted attention in Asia-Europe relations should be taken on board as promising conveyors of the results that the EU Connectivity Strategy Towards Asia aspires to deliver. The mission-oriented innovation and smart specialisation are excellent concepts and policy steering tools that have accumulated internationally grounded empirical evidence and should be considered as instrumental in delivering several industrial policies, innovation, and entrepreneurial goals of the EU Connectivity Strategy Towards Asia.

The next edition of this policy document or the EU Global Connectivity Strategy would be an excellent occasion to build on the new generation of smart specialisation captured by S4, industrial policy priorities and directions chosen by the inspirational BSR expert circles. The elaborate networked structure of the ERA serves as an excellent springboard for launching project portfolios as implementation structures for the EU chosen missions with tailored

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80. Can Huang, Xiao Jin and Lanhua Li, *RIO Country Report 2015: China* (Sevilla: European Union, 2016).
81. Technology Park Ljubljana, "Ganesha: EU/SLO-India Smart Specialisation Initiative for Internationalization", *Technology Park Ljubljana*, February 26th, 2018, https://bit.ly/3l0IPlA.
82. Belén Barroeta et al., *Innovation and Regional Specialisation in Latin America* (Luxembourg: European Union, 2017).

international interlinks chosen for each topic. It does not require international participants (that are located outside of the EU) to commit to ambitious integrationist schemes. Instead, Horizon Europe will serve as one of the bedrocks for the missions' kick-off provide a structured engagement model for mutual learning and expertise-enhancing collaborative encounters among interested institutions. It is highly compatible with the EU promoted connectivity logic. Thematic directions of the areas chosen for the EU missions show some thematic affinities with the priorities set for the EU Connectivity Strategy Towards Asia.

The incorporation of missions-guided initiatives into the EU connectivity approach would contribute towards shifting away from the potential controversies associated with 'weaponised interdependence' and 'strategic autonomy'. Instead, the elaborate implementation framework that the EU has devised for missions and S4 would strengthen the overall propensity of the EU connectivity and engagement with Asia towards open and rules-based order. It would help to bring more complementarities into the overall discussions on the future directions of connectivity. Additionally, it would help to position connectivity as an integral part of the EU approach towards innovation, research, and entrepreneurship.

A considerable number of major connectivity diffusors are located or operate in Europe and Asia. Thus, Europe and Asia form a promising test bed for crafting the future of connectivity through learning-by-doing collaborative encounters. Missions and smart specialisation projects could be one of such treasure troves where to look for a wealth of evidence so that future EU visions would keep on being closely attuned to evidence-informed approaches, appreciative of the established networks of experts and less falling into the trap of too many references made to the concepts of 'weaponised interdependence' and 'strategic autonomy' that might spark unnecessary and destabilising adversarial sentiment among either main connectivity heavyweights, such as the US, China, Japan, India and Russia, or other countries in Europe or Asia. The risk of alienating important cooperation partners should be avoided.

Missions and smart specialisation are amicable, collaboration-based and mutual gain-oriented tools that can serve both the EU internal needs of continuously building competitive capacities among the 'sleeping giants', 'excited goblins' and 'hungry dwarfs', as well as enriching expertise and building prosperity elsewhere in the world in close cooperation with like-minded experts in innovation, research and entrepreneurship.

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France-Led Security Balancing against NATO

El equilibrio de seguridad liderado por Francia frente a la OTAN

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Abstract

The much-discussed question of the relevance of NATO after the end of the Cold War is reappearing due to increasing disagreements between the United States of America (USA) and the European Union (EU). The search of strategic autonomy of European countries led by France leads to questioning of the trans-Atlantic alliance. This questioning has become visible especially after the election of U.S. President Donald Trump, who expressed his doubts about the relevance of NATO. While the USA is disengaging with security issues related with European security, European countries are searching ways to find a common security and defense policy. The French President Emmanuel Macron has laid out several initiatives such as Permanent Structure Cooperation (PESCO), which aims at coordinating and deepening defense cooperation among EU member countries and European Intervention Initiative (EI2), which shares the goals of PESCO but operates outside EU framework. Although these initiatives are referred officially as complementary structures to NATO, they reflect Europe's desire to break free from U.S. security umbrella and become an independent political body in world politics. France, which has traditionally been wary of U.S. security dominance over Europe, is taking the lead in structuring European security institutions and merging France's interest with European interests.

Keywords: PESCO, EI2, NATO, France, Macron, security, autonomy

Resumen

La tan debatida cuestión de la pertinencia de la OTAN tras el final de la Guerra Fría reaparece debido a los crecientes desacuerdos entre Estados Unidos de América (EE. UU.)

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y la Unión Europea (UE). La búsqueda de autonomía estratégica de los europeos liderados por Francia lleva a cuestionar la alianza transatlántica. Este cuestionamiento se ha hecho visible especialmente tras la elección del presidente estadounidense Donald Trump, quien expresó sus dudas sobre la relevancia de la OTAN. Mientras Estados Unidos se desentiende de las cuestiones relacionadas con la seguridad europea, los países europeos buscan vías para encontrar una política común de seguridad y defensa. El presidente francés Emmanuel Macron ha presentado varias iniciativas, como la Estructura Permanente de Cooperación (PESCO), cuyo objetivo es coordinar y profundizar la cooperación en materia de defensa entre los países miembros de la UE, y la Iniciativa Europea de Intervención (EI2), que comparte los objetivos de la PESCO, pero opera fuera del marco de la UE. Aunque estas iniciativas se denominan oficialmente "estructuras complementarias de la OTAN", reflejan el deseo de Europa de liberarse del paraguas de seguridad estadounidense y convertirse en un organismo independiente en la política mundial. Francia, que tradicionalmente ha recelado del dominio de la seguridad estadounidense sobre Europa, está tomando la iniciativa en la estructuración de las instituciones europeas de seguridad y en la fusión de los intereses franceses con los europeos.

Palabras clave: PESCO, EI2, OTAN, Francia, Macron, seguridad, autonomía

Introduction

This paper examines changing security environment in Europe in which the existence of NATO is being questioned. France under the leadership the President Emmanuel Macron activated Permanent Structure Cooperation (PESCO) and initiated European Intervention Initiative (EI2). Although these developments are not presented as direct challenges to NATO, this paper views them as Europe's attempts to lessen its security dependency on the USA.

The article puts forward following research questions: What are the factors that contributed to France's search of European autonomy in recent years in the field of security and defense? Do PESCO and EI2 pose a significant threat to NATO's position in Europe? Finally, what are alternative alliances that France pursues outside EU structure to strengthen Europe's defense?

The main argument of this paper is that although PESCO and EI2 have not reached to the level of capability and cooperation of NATO, they signify disintegration of trans-Atlantic alliance and Europe's desire to achieve strategic autonomy in security and defense. France appears to be leading country in deepening security cooperation. The paper also argues that while coordinating Europe's strategic autonomy, France looks for cooperation of the United Kingdom (UK) and Russia as partners from outside the EU in the framework of EI2. Especially, Russia's involvement in EI2 will create disturbances in Baltic and Eastern European flanks of the EU.

On Method

This article applies process tracing methodology in tracing relevant factors which led to France's balancing behavior concerning NATO. Process tracing is defined as "the systematic examination of diagnostic evidence selected and analyzed in the light of research questions and hypotheses posed by the investigator".[1] Process tracing searches for intervening variables that link an independent variable with a dependent variable. It aims at under covering the intervening steps to estimate the causal effect of an independent variable.[2]

The intervening steps manifest themselves as actors, organizations, structures which engage in activities which generate causes or changes.[3] Process tracing, thus, analyzes trajectories of change and causation. The description of phenomena is critical in analyzing the processes that are being studied. In process tracing, characterization of process requires the researcher to identify key steps in the process.[4]

Based on methodological tools of process tracing, this article examines post-Cold War balancing initiatives of Europe in security area led by France. The article discusses the early initiatives such as Saint-Malo Declaration and European Security Defense Policy (ESDP) before analyzing in great detail the implications of Permanent Structure Cooperation (PESCO) and European Intervention Initiative (EI2).

Balancing

According to neorealism, great powers seek security in an anarchic international order. In such an environment, states are expected to consider capabilities, not the intentions while making their decisions.[5] To increase their capabilities, states engage in balancing behavior. Balancing indicates states' efforts to develop military power in order to deter the aggression of other states. The-

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1. David Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing", *Political Science and Politics* 44, n.° 4 (2011): 823, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096511001429.
2. James Mahoney, "After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative Research", *World Politics* 62, n.° 1 (2010): 123, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0043887109990220.
3. Derek Beach, "Process-Tracing Methods in Social Science", *Oxford Research Encyclopedias: Politics*, January 25th, 2017, https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.176.
4. Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing", 823.
5. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, US: Addison-Wesley, 1979), 74.

re are two types of balancing: Internal and external. Internal balancing refers to states' amassing military power with their own capabilities. External balancing occurs when states form alliances against common rivals.[6]

Following this neorealist argument, we should clarify which strategy that France adopted to balance U.S. security dominance in Europe. As an internal balancing strategy, France's military expenditure must be examined after the Cold War. In 1990, France's military expenditure amounted to 35 billion dollars. In 2020, France's military expenditure reached to 52 billion dollars.[7] This military expenditure corresponds to only 2.073 percent of France's GDP.[8] These numbers suggest that French endeavors alone are not sufficient to balance overwhelming U.S. military superiority in Europe. Instead, France has sought allies in balancing U.S. military presence in Europe. In accordance with this imperative, French official documents concerning security matters have started to emphasize 'European commitment' narrative rather than 'national sanctuary' narrative.[9] France focused on balancing potentials of other European countries such as Germany and the United Kingdom.[10] This indicates external balancing behavior on France.

Alliances and NATO

Snyder defines alliances as "formal associations of states for the use (or nonuse) of military force, in specified circumstances, against states outside their own membership".[11] According to Stephen Waltz, "an alliance is a formal or informal arrangement for security cooperation between two or more sovereign states".[12]

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6. Joseph Parent and Sebastian Rosato, "Balancing in Neorealism", *International Security* 40, n.° 2 (2015): 56, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00216.
7. World Bank, "Military Expenditure (Current USD) - France", *World Bank*, accessed March 9th, 2023, https://bit.ly/3ZTvEl5.
8. World Bank, "Military Expenditure (% of GDP) - France", *World Bank*, accessed March 9th, 2023, https://bit.ly/3yxzVyR.
9. Lorenzo Cladi and Andrea Locatelli, "Bandwagoning, Not Balancing: Why Europe Confounds Realism", *Contemporary Security Policy* 33, n.° 2 (2012): 280, https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2012.693792.
10. Jolyon Howorth, "France, NATO and European Security: Status Quo Unsustainable; New Balance Unattainable", *Politique Étrangère* 4 (2002): 5, https://bit.ly/3ZWkBHO.
11. Glenn Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 4.
12. Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 12.

The desire of states to avoid threat posed by superior states or coalition is the main driving force of alliance formation.[13] In case of the formation of NATO, this threat was the Soviet Union. In the official website, the foremost reason behind the formation of NATO was stated as deterring Soviet threat. After the Second World War, the devastation of European countries left them open to Soviet expansionism. U.S. reversal of its policy of isolationism provided confidence to European countries in their defense against the Soviet Union. The famous Article 5 states in case of an attack of one member of NATO, the alliance will take "such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force".[14]

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 deprived NATO of an enemy, leading to questioning survivability of NATO. According to Walt, the main motivating element which drives states to join to alliances is responding to a threat.[15] In 1993, Kenneth Waltz predicted that: "NATO's days are not numbered, but its years are".[16] Zbigniew Brzezinski expressed that through NATO Western Europe became almost protectorate of the USA.[17] Having no enemy is a significant loss for the alliance. Without the Soviet threat, it was expected that the European countries would balance against U.S. dominance in European security. Henry Kissinger noted that: "The sole remaining European motive for developing a capacity to act autonomously is to escape American tutelage and increase European bargaining power".[18] European's balancing endeavors in 1990s can be considered soft balancing. Stephen Walt contends soft balancing as coordination of diplomatic efforts among European countries to create friction with the USA to obtain results contrary to US preferences.[19] Soft balancing occurs if the hegemon's behaviors

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13. Stephen Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power", *International Security* 9, n.° 4 (1985): 5, https://doi.org/10.2307/2538540.
14. Quoted in NATO, "A Short History of NATO", *NATO*, accessed March 9th, 2023, parr. 6, https://bit.ly/3LtgjnB.
15. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power", 4.
16. Kenneth Waltz, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics", *International Security* 18, n.° 2 (1993): 76, https://bit.ly/3T5MsmJ.
17. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2012), 6.
18. Henry Kissinger, "The End of NATO as We Know It?", *The Washington Post*, August 15th, 1999, parr. 7, https://wapo.st/3L7H1So.
19. Stephen Walt, *Taming American Power* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2005), 126.

create concerns but do not pose serious challenges. Moreover, the hegemon's position as security and public goods provider simply cannot be replaced.[20]

In 1998, Tony Blair, the Prime Minister of the UK, and Jacques Chirac, the President of France, signed Saint-Malo Declaration, which proposed the creation of credible military power to provide autonomous action.[21] This declaration was the precursor of the formulation of European Security Defense Policy (ESPD) during Kosovo Crisis in 1999 to establish the concept of European common defense. Yet, the divergences among EU members prevented ESPD from becoming an effective instrument to challenge NATO. While France was keen on establishing a separate European defense, the UK was in favor of NATO's primary status in Europe.[22] In a meeting held in Helsinki in 1999, the European Council agreed that the member states would create a force consisted of 60,000 troops, 100 ships, 100 ships, and 40 aircraft by 2003. The European Rapid Reactionary Force (ERRF) was viewed with suspicion by the USA. Yet, the lack of coordination among European countries prevented the effective use of the ERRF. France and Italy saw the ERRF as a combat force, which would carry out high-level military operations. On the other hand, Germany and Sweden considered it as peacekeeping force, leaving high-level security matters to NATO.[23] In this respect, those attempts can be evaluated as soft balancing within NATO instead of hard balancing against it.

In the post-Cold War era, NATO defined its goal is to promote democracy and enable defense coordination. Militarily, NATO is committed to resolutions of conflict peacefully and conduct crisis-management operations if the peaceful efforts fail.[24] These stated aims are compatible with liberal perception of international relations. Owen argues that European countries and the USA share common democratic and liberal economic values. These common values enable them to have common enemies, making European counterbalancing unnecessary.[25] On the other hand, Ikenberry contends that the USA is the leading country in organizing and shaping liberal order even if its actions

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20. T. V. Paul, "Soft Balancing in the Age of U. S. Primacy", *International Security* 30, n.° 1 (2005): 59, https://doi.org/10.1162/0162288054894652.
21. Howorth, "France, NATO and European Security", 5.
22. Jean-Yves Haine, *ESDP: An Overview* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2004), 1.
23. Cladi and Locatelli, "Bandwagoning, Not Balancing", 274.
24. NATO, "What Is NATO?", *NATO*, accessed March 9th, 2023, https://bit.ly/2GwhNsD.
25. John Owen, "Transnational Liberalism and U. S. Primacy", *International Security* 26, n.° 3 (2001): 149, https://bit.ly/3J4A8ia.

are not agreeable to other parties within the alliance.[26] This asserts that Europe has little influence on U.S. behavior, leaving U.S. behavior unchecked.

U.S. commitment to NATO and the coordination of interests within NATO have loosened last two decades. In 2003, the USA failed to convince France and Germany to consider Saddam Hussein was a threat to world security. Thus, it formed a coalition of the willing to conduct war in Iraq. The term coalition reflects a lesser degree than alliance. Coalition is formed when a group of states come together to respond a particular problem at a particular time frame without committing themselves into a durable relationship.[27] This difference was not unnoticed by Trump. In 2017, The President Donald Trump called NATO as an obsolete institution.[28] Although this description can be considered as vulgar, it reflects a process which eroded NATO as a security alliance. NATO's inability to cooperate on conducting such a big scale operation in Iraq and the establishment of ad hoc formation raised questions about not only the relevance of NATO, but also nature of alliances. Instead of a formal and long-term security organization, short term security coalitions emerge as new forms of security alignments.

In July 2016, before his election as the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump stated in an interview that the Article 5 of NATO would not automatically be applied in case of Baltic states are attacked by Russia. Before helping those states, the USA would review if these states fulfilled their obligations.[29] He constantly rebuked U.S. allies in Europe for not contributing to military spending of the alliance. In 2018, he reiterated U.S. lack of commitment to Article 5. Trump even considered U.S. withdrawal from NATO.[30] The weakening of U.S. security aid to Europe when Europe faced external threats eroded trust placed on NATO as an alliance in providing security of Europe. The French President Emmanuel Macron stated that: "Eu-

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26. G. John Ikenberry, "Woodrow Wilson, the Bush Administration, and the Future of Liberal Internationalism", in *The Crisis of American Foreign Policy: Wilsonianism in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. G. John Ikenberry, Thomas Knock, Anne-Marie Slaughter and Tony Smith (Princeton, US: Princeton University Press, 2009), 17.

27. Andrew Pierre, *Coalitions: Building and Maintenance. The Gulf War, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and the War on Terrorism* (Washington DC: Georgtown University Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, 2002), 2.

28. Joyce Kaufman, "The US Perspective on NATO under Trump: Lessons of the Past and Prospects for the Future", *International Affairs* 93, n.° 2 (2017): 251, https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix009.

29. Ibid., 263.

30. Benjamin Schreer, "Trump, NATO and the Future of Europe's Defence", *RUSI Journal* 164, n.° 1 (2019): 10, https://doi.org/10.1080/03071847.2019.1605011.

rope cannot rely on the United States only for its security. It is up to us to meet our responsibilities and guarantee our security, and therefore European security".[31] The Foreign Minister of Germany Heiko Maas said that: "Old pillars of reliability are crumbling under the weight of new crises. Alliances dating back decades are being challenged in the time it takes to write a tweet".[32] U.S. disengagement, thus, drives Europe to self-help for its survival.

Besides this realist challenge to NATO, liberal order led by the USA is being challenged by the USA itself. Trump criticized the liberal international order and its institutions, urging European countries to follow U.S. leadership based on his 'America First' concept.[33] Trump's other behaviors such as starting a trade war with China, U.S. withdrawal from Paris Agreement confirm his lack of commitment to liberal order. The USA and the EU are going separate ways. Thus, the liberal institutionalist thesis which explains the survival of NATO is also crumbling. Macron expressed this process as "what we are currently experiencing is the brain death of NATO" in an interview published in *The Economist*.[34] In this respect, the European countries are trying to find and set up alternative security institutions for the defense of the continent.

PESCO

The Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in 2009, referred Permanent Structure Cooperation (PESCO) as a framework to respond, "the most demanding missions".[35] Yet, the EU failed to implement this framework. The then-President of European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker labels PESCO as the Sleeping Beauty of the Lisbon Treaty, calling for waking the Sleeping Beauty up.[36]

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31. Sylvie Corbet, "France's Macron Urges Europe to Take Charge of Own Defense", *AP News*, August 27th, 2018, parr. 2, https://bit.ly/3kTSri4.
32. Heiko Maas, "Speech by Foreign Minister Heiko Maas: 'Courage to Stand Up for Europe-#EuropeUnited'", *Germany's Federal Foreign Office*, June 13th, 2018, parr. 7, https://bit.ly/2JQ9eh7.
33. Schreer, "Trump, NATO and the Future of Europe's Defence", 12.
34. The Economist, "Emmanuel Macron Warns Europe: NATO Is Becoming Brain-Dead", *The Economist*, November 7th, 2019, https://econ.st/3mHrO0l.
35. European Union, *Consolidated Version of the Treaty on European Union*, Official Journal of the European Communities, C 326/13, October 26th, 2012.
36. Jean-Claude Juncker, "Speech by President Jean-Claude Juncker at the Defence and Security Conference Prague: In Defence of Europe", *European Commission*, June 9th, 2017, https://bit.ly/420UwJr.

This call of the head of the executive organ of the EU is significant, but the main driving force of the reignition of PESCO was the victory of Emmanuel Macron in 2017 French Presidential Elections. Pro-European stance was the main differentiating factor, which distinguished Macron from other presidential candidates during the election campaign. In his foreign policy understanding, France's participation to the EU does not reduce its sovereignty, but it raises it.[37] According to Macron the French power rests on three tenets: "independent, humanist, and European".[38] These principles are in conformity with traditional French foreign policy tenets characterized as interventionist and autonomous.[39] With this formulation, Macron revived traditional French policy of balancing Europe against the USA. Since 1949 French diplomacy has sought to elevate the status of Europe at the international table, questing for balancing U.S. power in trans-Atlantic relations.[40] As any special relationship between Europe and the USA is not assured in the future, France seeks to ensure Europe's independence from North America in the security issues.[41] Considering itself as the main political actor in the EU and European unity as a means to retain its world power status, France has taken the lead in political integration of the EU.[42] Macron embraces this traditional French stance. He does not tie European security solely to NATO.[43]

Thus, Macron's election to French presidency gave a new impetus rebuilding a common security project for Europe. Franco-German Ministerial Council, gathered in July 2017, announced a new generation of joint fighter jets, signifying the first materialization for this aspiration.[44] In November 2017, except Denmark, Malta, Ireland, Portugal, and the UK, 23 EU countries expressed their interest in joining PESCO. Then, Portugal

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37. Manuel Lafont Rapnouil and Jeremy Shapiro, "Macron's Foreign Policy: Claiming the Tradition", *Brookings*, May 8th, 2017, https://bit.ly/3T4WmF5.
38. Frédéric Charillon, *Macron's France in the World: Strategic Challenges, and a Narrow Path* (Oslo: The Norwegian Atlantic Comittee, 2018), 4.
39. Alice Pannier and Olivier Schmitt, "To Fight Another Day: France between the Fight against Terrorism and Future Warfare", *International Affairs* 95, n.° 4 (2019): 899, https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiz050.
40. Howorth, "France, NATO and European Security", 2.
41. Lukáš Pachta, "France: Driving Force of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy?", *Europeum*, 2003, https://bit.ly/3YAiNmT.
42. Ibid.
43. Lafont Rapnouil and Shapiro, "Macron's Foreign Policy".
44. Alice Billon-Galland and Martin Quencez, "Can France and Germany Make PESCO Work as a Process Toward EU Defense?", *The German Marshall Fund of the United States*, policy brief 33, 2017, https://bit.ly/3Yz9kMz.

and Ireland joined this group. PESCO was initiated in December 2017.[45] PESCO not only coordinates common policies but also offers "collaboration in the areas of investment, capability development and operational readiness – areas that have been underfunded in some EU countries in the past".[46] PESCO provides both binding legal framework which guides EU members' investments in security field and political framework for EU members' improvement in security and defense capabilities. The binding nature of PESCO framework is reviewed by annual assessment by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The commitments are supported by various EU security missions such as the European Defense Agency (EDA), the European Union External Action (EEEA), the European Union Military Staff (EUMS), and the Common Security Defense Policy (CSDP). It offers opportunities for the participating states by setting up common security projects.[47] Within PESCO structure almost 50 projects are being implemented. The implementation of initial 17 project were decided in March 2018[48]. Additional 17 projects materialized in November 2018.[49] In November 2019, 13 new projects were added[50].

PESCO projects cover areas of training, land, formations, systems, maritime, air, cyber, enabling, joint capabilities, medicine, and space. The projects are being carried out through bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral cooperation of member states.[51] France is gradually becoming a leading power in PESCO by expanding its role in the projects enacted. Blockmans and Crosson observe that France, Spain, and Germany form the core of PESCO projects.[52] Of

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45. Niklas Nováky, "The EU's Permanent Structured Cooperation in Defence: Keeping Sleeping Beauty from Snoozing", *European View* 17, n.° 1 (2018): 100, https://bit.ly/422h1xA.
46. Elena Lazarou and Alina Dobreva, "Security and Defence", *European Parliament*, briefing, June 2019, 8, https://bit.ly/40cXPfd.
47. Council of the European Union, "Notification on Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) to the Council and the High Represantative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy", *Council of the European Union*, 2018, https://bit.ly/2FMlLjJ.
48. Council of the European Union, *Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/340 of 6 March 2018 Establishing the List of Projects to Be Developed under PESCO*, March 6th, 2018, L 65/24.
49. Council of the European Union, *Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1797 of 19 November 2018 Amending and Updating Decision (CFSP) 2018/340 Establishing the List of Projects to Be Developed under PESCO*, November 21st, 2018, L294/18.
50. Council of the European Union, "Defence Cooperation: Council Launches 13 New PESCO Projects", *Council of the European Union*, November 12th, 2019, https://bit.ly/3LcMkjA.
51. Council of the European Union, "Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)'s Projects - Overview", *Council of the European Union*, November 12th, 2019, https://bit.ly/3Fdj4W5.
52. Steven Blockmans and Dylan Macchiarini Crosson, "Differentiated Integration within PESCO: Clusters and Convergence in EU Defence", *CEPS*, December 2019, https://bit.ly/3J4GfD8.

the new 13 projects, France assumed the lead in three projects, while partici-
pating 10 of 13. Germany and Poland only participate in two, Spain in seven,
Italy in four.[53] France's participation into PESCO projects should be evalua-
ted in the context of French endeavors to align France's interests with EU in-
terests. PESCO projects share the similar goals of French security aims, which
are dealing with terrorism, hybrid threats, human and arms trafficking, and
organized crime. The projects that France is taking part involve upgrading of a
modular unmanned ground system, MALE (Medium Altitude Long Enduran-
ce) drones, the development of a platform, which will deal with cyber-threats,
and the production of Tiger attack helicopter.[54]

Despite the initiation of projects, the implementation of PESCO is pro-
blematic. Two giant initiators, France and Germany have different visions re-
garding PESCO. France has sought to set high entry criteria, focusing on effi-
ciency. On the other hand, Germany has opposed high standards for entry,
emphasizing inclusiveness. This divergence clouded the operationalization of
PESCO since its revival in 2017.[55] Germany also criticizes France for focusing
on too much military side of PESCO and overlooking social and economic
aspects of the disturbances in the troubled areas.[56]

Besides hurdles with Germany, Macron found himself a hostile geopo-
litical environment both inside and outside Europe. Britain's exit from the
EU deprived France a formidable military ally within the framework of the
EU. The immigration crisis and rise of populism weakened Angela Merkel's
position in Germany, creating a paralyzed ruling coalition. The southern and
eastern flank of the EU has also been affected by the populism wave, placing
Euro-skeptics in the executive branches.

As a result of these developments, PESCO is evolving into a less ambitious
project. Sven Biscop argues that considering PESCO as a European army is a
far-reaching goal. Instead, he advocates PESCO should focus on accelerating
defense integration within EU members without rivalling with NATO.[57] The

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53. Jacobo Barigazzi, "France Dominant in New Flurry of EU Military Projects", *Politico*, November 12th,
    2019, https://politi.co/3kVpHFD.
54. Pannier and Schmitt, "To Fight Another Day", 914.
55. Billon-Galland and Quencez, "Can France and Germany Make PESCO Work".
56. Justyna Gotkowska, "European Strategic Autonomy or European Pillar in NATO?: Germany's Stance
    on French Initiatives", *OSW Commentary* 320 (2020), https://bit.ly/3ZUk4Gl.
57. Sven Biscop, "Don't Be Too Shy about PESCO", *Egmont*, September 6th, 2018, https://bit.ly/3T3x76c.

lack of common strategic understanding and the lack of consensus on European autonomy lessen the effectiveness of PESCO.[58] According to Biscop, the absence of a defined purpose is the foremost reason why PESCO has not become effective.[59] Another problem is complicated processes that the decisions have to pass through. Too much bureaucracy spoils and dilutes the implementation of the projects.[60] All of these concerns have been expressed by French policymakers. Phillippe Errara, who is the Director General of International Relations and Strategy, Ministry of Armed, commented that France needs member states to make PESCO real by participating in the projects and delivering results[61]. The French Defense Minister called PESCO "club Med of bureaucracy".[62] Dissatisfied by PESCO, Emmanuel Macron initiated a parallel security institution in the EU, complementing deficiencies of PESCO.

European Intervention Initiative (EI2)

On 26 September 2017, the President Macron acknowledged his desire to set up a security organization called European Intervention Initiative (EI2), which would act as an intervention force materialized by the participation of European countries.[63] Macron's speech mentions the inclusion of not only EU countries but also European countries. This distinction is important in that it opens up the possibility of participation of the UK and Russia. Another implication is that Macron specifies EI2's mission as an intervention force. This initiative is intended to conduct specific military operations instead of being simply a coordination forum.

Three main factors drove the creation of EI2. Firstly, France wants to alleviate its military burden among European countries in its operations in

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58. Simon Sweeney and Neil Winn, "EU Security and Defence Cooperation in Times of Dissent: Analysing PESCO, the European Defence Fund and the European Intervention Initiative (EI2) in the Shadow of Brexit", *Defence Studies* 20, n.° 3 (2020): 233, https://doi.org/10.1080/14702436.2020.1778472.
59. Sven Biscop, "European Defence and PESCO: Don't Waste the Chance", *EUIDEA*, policy paper 1, May 2020, https://bit.ly/3mDYHL9.
60. Nick Witney, "EU Defence Efforts Miss the Open Goal Again", *European Council on Foreign Relations*, November 15th, 2017, https://bit.ly/3kTX3oo.
61. Philippe Errera, "We Need Coherent Projects Leading to Concrete Results", *European Defence Agency*, accessed March 9th, 2023, https://bit.ly/3L7b10J.
62. Olivier de France, "The French Perspective", *Armament Industry European Research Group*, policy paper 37, February 2019, https://bit.ly/3YCQgNk.
63. Emmanuel Macron, "Sorbonne Speech of Emmanuel Macron: Full Text / English Version", *Ouest-France*, September 26th, 2017, https://bit.ly/3JrJ2aF.

Africa. Secondly, PESCO fell short of meeting France demands in helping its military operations. Thirdly, France is disappointed in PESCO's evolvement as an over-inclusive and highly bureaucratic organization.[64] Indeed, French military was overstretched and needed to share is burden with partners which have operational capability. The chief of staff Francois Lecointre declared that "the French armed forces used at 130% of their capabilities and now need to regenerate".[65] France has been conducting counterterrorism operations in sub-Sahara especially in Mali. The burden of French deployment and lack of European participation necessitated the leading nation with a consensus organization.[66] Mölling and Major argue that what France needs is not another structure but an institution, which is capable and willing to act. PESCO proved to be slow, cumbersome, and less action oriented.[67]

EI2 is designed to address France's concerns. The organization aims at bolstering European strategic autonomy, military credibility, and fairer burden sharing. The structure of EI2 is designed to be more flexible than PESCO. It will include limited number of countries. It has a permanent secretariat coordinated by France and liaisons of joining members. It holds annual ministerial meetings and biannual strategic military talks among members.[68] Controlling secretariat would ensure France's influence over EI2. Limiting the countries which would participate in EI2 would increase efficiency. Specifying the number of conferences in the charter is a good strategy for France to end countless conferences and meetings that PESCO proscribed.

As of September 2019, the number of EI2 reached 13 states.[69] Germany's participation into EI2 deserves a special attention. Although Germany eventually joined EI2, initially it considered EI2's materialization as a divisive issue in the EU. Germany worried EI2 would undermine PESCO, which is designed to be inclusive thanks to Germany's efforts to convince France. In this

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64. Niklas Nováky, "France's European Intervention Initiative: Towards a Culture of Burden Sharing", *Wilfried Marten Centre for European Studies*, policy brief, October 2018, https://bit.ly/3YF8CgK.
65. The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance: The Annual Assessment of Global Military Capabilities and Defence Economics* (London: IISS, 2018), 74.
66. Pannier and Schmitt, "To Fight Another Day", 909.
67. Christian Mölling and Claudia Major, "Why Joining France's European Intervention Initiative Is the Right Decision for Germany", *Egmont*, June 15th, 2018, https://bit.ly/3Yxtq9X.
68. France Ministère des Armées, "European Intervention Initiative", *Ministère des Armées*, 2020, https://bit.ly/407tUo0.
69. Olivier-Rémy Bel, "Can Macron's European Intervention Initiative Make the Europeans Battle-Ready?", *War on the Rocks*, October 2nd, 2019, https://bit.ly/3J6nRd0.

sense, EI2 has an opposite structure in that it only accepts operationally capable states. This causes worry in Germany, which is generally wary of military operations. Finally, with some countries, Germany suspected EI2 is a vehicle for French foreign policy goals.[70] Germany's position about NATO's future is less ambitious than France. The Foreign Minister of Germany Haas labelled Macron's statements about NATO as "drastic", stressing that NATO is central to European security.[71]

Although Germany's reservations about EI2 may create problems for EI2, its 'flexible' characterization will enable France to overcome these problems. EI2 is more concerned on European defense than EU defense by opening the membership possibilities to non-EU members.[72] The most important contribution can come from the UK. Despite its exit from the EU, the UK expressed its interest in joining EI2. The Ministry of Defense of the UK stated that:

> ...with France and other European partners to support the development of the proposed. European Intervention Initiative (EII). The EII will be a defense cooperation framework that aims to improve operational planning and coordination of military deployments among European partners with meaningful capabilities. The EII will be separate from the EU, and will be complementary to existing NATO, EU and JEF [Joint Expeditionary Force] military structures and initiatives.[73]

After this statement, the UK officially became a member of EI2. Involvement of the UK is consistent with the priority of French foreign policy which is "to keep the UK on board in respect of European security".[74] The participation of the UK is important in that the UK constituted 20 percent of the EU28 force catalogue, being the most capable defense partner in Europe except France.[75] Being excluded from PESCO because of being a non-EU state, EI2 enables the UK to participate in military operations in an ad hoc manner.

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70. Nováky, "France's European Intervention Initiative".
71. Sweeney and Winn, "EU Security and Defence Cooperation in Times of Dissent", 236.
72. Claudia Major and Christian Mölling, "France Moves From EU Defense to European Defense", *DGAP Standpunkt* 16 (2017), https://bit.ly/41VLNIJ.
73. Quoted in Claire Mills, "The European Intervention Initiative (EII/EI2)", *House of Commons Library*, briefing paper 8432, September 23rd, 2019, 3, https://bit.ly/3J80U9f.
74. Pannier and Schmitt, "To Fight Another Day", 914.
75. Sweeney and Winn, "EU Security and Defence Cooperation in Times of Dissent", 237.

Besides the UK and Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Norway, and Italy joined to EI2.[76] The participation of middle and small states are significant in that most of these countries joined U.S. ad hoc coalition of willing in Iraq war in 2003 not sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council. Including these countries into EI2 is an important diplomatic step for France to start to pull away these countries from U.S. orbit and mobilize their sources for European security.

Another participation, however, sounds improbable, might be Russia. Emmanuel Macron made an astonishing move by pivoting Russia, surprising foreign policy specialists. On ground, Russia has 11 combined armies, one tank army, and four army corps. In Navy, it has 12,000 and 15,000 troops. Its airborne forces consist of 45,000 troops. Its direct intervention in Syria and Ukraine demonstrated its formidable nature.[77] Its inclusion to European security apparatus would be a game changing move for Europe's search of strategic autonomy. In 2019, Macron stated that: "the European continent will never be stable, will never be secure, if we do not ease and clarify our relations with Russia".[78] In February 2020, at Munich Security Conference, Macron reiterated the necessity of engaging Russia, stating that: "we are demanding, we are giving no ground in our principles on frozen conflicts, but will re-engage in a strategic dialogue-which will take time".[79] In line with those statements, there are some signs that French-Russian security cooperation is materializing. In Central African Republic, Russian mercenaries are siding with President Faustin-Archange Touadera against Seleka rebels, helping French counter-terrorism efforts in the region. Russia also made arms deals with French allies in sub-Saharan Africa. Franco-Russian cooperation is also visible in Libya in support of Khalifa Haftar.[80] Thus, the security assistance much needed by French military in Africa is partially given by Russia. The same cooperation could be expanded in defense of Europe if these two governments bolster their ties.

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76. Bel, "Can Macron's European Intervention Initiative Make the Europeans Battle-Ready?".
77. Andrew Bowen, "Russian Armed Forces: Capabilities", *Congressional Research Service*, June 30th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3mJCgEe.
78. Gustav Gressel et al., "Emmanuel Macron's Very Big Idea on Russia", *European Council on Foreign Relations*, September 25th, 2019, parr. 1, https://bit.ly/3YANdWc.
79. Geir Moulson, "France's Macron Urges Better Long-Term Relations With Russia", *USA News*, February 15th, 2020, parr. 2, https://bit.ly/3ZD1YsC.
80. Samuel Ramani, "Russia Takes Its Syrian Model of Counterinsurgency to Africa", *Rusi*, September 9th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3Ju7hVP.

The inclusion of Russia into European security institutions would have repercussions on NATO and the EU. The Eastern European, Southern European, and the Baltic states are wary of Russian expansion. Russia's participation of EI2 would raise questions whether these states are expendable in exchange of greater Franco-Russian security cooperation.[81] Vasili Tcherneva, who is the deputy director of the European Council on Foreign Relations, argued that: "there is a perception that Macron wants to change Europe via multiple integrations or introducing second-class EU members, and Central and Eastern Europeans are dead sure they are going to be the second-class members".[82] The idea of building a security coalition with Russia is an attractive and bold diplomatic move, but it will have geopolitical consequences for France, NATO, and the EU.

Another bold diplomatic move would be the possible entry of Turkey. Turkey is the second largest NATO army after the USA. Recently, Turkey has been experiencing problems in NATO due to U.S. support to Kurdish militants in the northern Syria, the purchase of S-400 air defense systems from Russia, and differences between Erdoğan and U.S. administration.[83] Since Turkey's EU membership is a distinct possibility, its participation to PESCO is not attainable. However, its inclusion into EI2 could be possible. Turkey could be emerged as a partner for France to balance NATO in providing European security under ideal circumstances.

Nevertheless, Turkey's relations with France have equally been strained because of Eastern Mediterranean geopolitics. France was among the countries which opposed Turkey's Maritime Deal with Libya, which delimited the exclusive zones of Turkey and Libya.[84] French and Turkish officials accused each other of playing a dangerous game in Libya. France's support to Cyprus and Greece in these countries clashes further exacerbated the rivalry between two countries.[85] Under these geopolitical circumstances, it is unlikely that Turkey

81. Gressel et al., "Emmanuel Macron's Very Big Idea on Russia".
82. Rym Momtaz, "Macron's Eastern Approach to EU Power", *Politico*, August 20th, 2019, parr. 13, https://politi.co/2TQhAZ0.
83. Francesco Bongiovanni, "Turkey: The NATO Alliance's Wild Card", *Turkish Policy Quaterly* 17, n.° 2 (2018), https://bit.ly/3mMhioc.
84. Branislav Stanicek, "Turkey: Remodelling the Eastern Mediterranean Conflicting Exploration of Natural Gas Reserves", *European Parliament*, briefing, September 2020, https://bit.ly/3YBBpmu.
85. Rufat Ahmedzade, "The Battle for Libya: Growing French-Turkish Rivalry in the Mediterranean", *London School of Economics and Political Science*, June 26th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3J6Mne7.

will join to EI2 in short term. However, as it is shown in Russian case, Macron can initiate another opening for Turkey for the sake of European security. Turkey has also shown that it could act in the service of European security as the 2016 refugee deal between Turkey and the EU restricted the flow of migrants to Europe, enhancing European security.

To sum up, EI2 is designed to rectify deficiencies of PESCO, which are overly bureaucratic, inflexible, and less-operational. France prefers a militarily capable security organization than organizing conferences or forums. Flexible EI2 opened many options to France by including not only EU countries but also other European countries. The UK already became a member of EI2. Despite their problems with European countries, Russia and Turkey could theoretically join the initiative. However, Macron, who initiated EI2 for strategic autonomy for Europe, is also facing geopolitical dilemmas while trying to reach out other countries outside the EU.

Assessments and Conclusions

The article has examined France's endeavors of finding security alternatives to NATO. Since Macron's election, France stepped up its efforts to reach its traditional foreign goal of providing strategic autonomy of Europe. This process activated Permanent Security Cooperation (PESCO) and engendered European Intervention Initiative (EI2). The activation of PESCO, the sleeping beauty of the Lisbon treaty, raised the hopes concerning cooperation in security and defense but it falls short of meeting the expectations because of its inclusive and bureaucratic character. France, whose military has already overstretched, needs reliable security partners, which would share its burden. Therefore, it initiated EI2, whose membership is open to non-EU countries in Europe. EI2 also set a high standard for membership, emphasizing its operational capability.

With the new security institutions European security have become multilayered. There are countries, which are members of NATO, PESCO, or EI2. NATO has 30 members; PESCO has 25 members; and EI2 has 13 participants. Although PESCO and EI2 offered alternatives to NATO in terms of providing common security and defense, they are far from replacing it. The same disagreements among the member states in NATO are being experienced in PESCO and EI2. Moreover, France's biggest partner in the EU, Germany, is not

enthusiastic about bringing NATO down. Germany's doubts about the scope of strategic autonomy of Europe and its reservations in conducting common military operations surely affect other EU members' behaviors towards common security and defense of Europe, weakening France's endeavors.

Macron's formulation of EI2 reflects the search of finding a capable European ally to conduct common military operations instead of a rigid alliance institution. In its search of strategic autonomy for Europe, France started to lean towards ad hoc coalitions rather than grand alliances. France pivoted non-European countries such as the UK and Russia. Its rapprochement with Russia is significant in that this security cooperation reflects realism instead of idealism. Although it is not officially part of EI2, Russia and France have already started security cooperation in Africa where France needs security aid most. This example of Russia could be expanded other non-EU members despite the geopolitical repercussions these coalitions may bring.

Yet, NATO's security and defense clout in Europe overwhelms PESCO and EI2. Macron's attempts could be considered as soft-balancing rather than hard-balancing against NATO. Nevertheless, U.S. disengagement from international institutions and increasing isolationism are widening political and security vacuum. Furthermore, Macron is perhaps the only leader in Europe, who is willing to assume leadership position by taking political risks. PESCO and EI2 have been operational for only a few years. Despite initial setbacks and geopolitical problems, with a strong leadership these institutions could reach institutional and operational capability. In this respect, France's political leadership in Europe is to be observed to achieve this goal.

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Brexit, Englixit? Disintegration and How Taking Back Control Means Giving Up Control

¿Brexit, Englixit? Desintegración y cómo recuperar el control significa renunciar a él

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Abstract

This contribution seeks to explore what disintegration can mean for a language, with a focus on Brexit and the English language. Linguistic differences are often instrumentalized as drivers of disintegration. However, in the case of Brexit, disintegration will also affect the status of the English language. Due to the decision of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union, English will no longer be a first official language of any European member state; it is only the second official language in Ireland and Malta. This has important political and legal repercussions, that affect the future of the English language in the EU after Brexit. Based on desk research, we see two avenues for the future of the English language within the EU: it could be replaced by another major European language (German/ French), or could become a real European *lingua franca*. The latter option seems most reasonable as the English language has taken a firm foothold among young (and older) Europeans but entails that by taking back control of its decision-making processes by leaving the EU, the UK will lose the little control over the English language it currently still has. This tendency was already taking place both internationally as within the EU but will greatly accelerate after Brexit.

Keywords: Brexit, disintegration, English language, EU, UK, lingua franca, Euro English

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Resumen

Esta contribución busca explorar lo que la desintegración puede significar para un idioma, enfocado específicamente en el Brexit. Las diferencias lingüísticas suelen ser una de las principales razones por las cuales la desintegración sucede; sin embargo, en el caso del Brexit, el idioma inglés se verá afectado debido a la decisión del Reino Unido de dejar la Unión Europea. El inglés no será el idioma oficial de ninguno de los Estados miembro europeos (es el segundo idioma oficial de Malta e Irlanda, más no el primero). Esto tiene repercusiones políticas y legales importantes, que afectarán el futuro del idioma en la UE después del Brexit. Basados en investigación documental, vemos dos avenidas para el futuro del idioma inglés en la UE: podría ser reemplazado por otro de los idiomas más utilizados, como el alemán o el francés, o podría convertirse en la auténtica *lingua franca* europea. La segunda opción parece muy viable, ya que es un idioma muy hablado por la juventud europea. No obstante, al dejar la UE y recuperar el control sobre sus decisiones, los británicos perderán el control sobre el idioma inglés. Esta tendencia ya había sido observada en varios países fuera de la UE, pero se acelerará dentro de ella, después del Brexit.

Palabras clave: Brexit, desintegración, idioma inglés, Reino Unido, Unión Europea, lingua franca, euroinglés

Introduction

The phenomenon of disintegration is not novel, but it is a phenomenon that has only received an increasing amount of attention in recent years. The rise of nationalist and populist feelings and parties has called the tendency towards greater integration that has been observed in recent decades into question. This integration resulted from the realization that there exists a variety of imminent threats that one nation alone cannot tackle, as they are not confined to one nation's boundaries. The COVID-19 pandemic is a case in point for the necessity for a concerted effort that crosses borders as a pandemic affects people irrespective of their national origins. However, the idea that integration specifically serves to achieve workable cross-border solutions has been questioned by nationalist and populist interests. Greater expansion and collaboration have been followed recently by calls for national governments to reprioritise the 'folk'. In the context of Brexit, exiting the EU was framed in the context of regaining control of matters of critical importance to the British public, such as increased funding for the National Health Service instead of devoting resources to the EU.

The voiced concerns with greater integration (whether it be social, political, or economic in form) stem from the sentiment that integration has become superimposed onto a previously static, homogenous entity. Integration then comes to be viewed as an adaptation to a previously un-adapted holistic

entity, thereby raising concerns about both dilution and diminution. This is clear in the nationalist and populist responses to questions of greater or increased integration and can cause a fetishization for the preservation of local, regional, and national cultures, which are also thought to have been unaffected over time. Brexit saw Vote Leave focus on immigration for example.[1]

Deep integration, such as within the EU, only works when the policy preferences of the entities that collaborate are not too heterogeneous.[2] Peoples' preferences are created in a social setting and as such are also something that can be modified and manufactured. One such preference base is that of language, which additionally can play an important role in the process of manufacturing and framing preferences.

The preservation of a country's language, and its parenthetical history and legacy, is a common focal point and a common preference that is both personal and cultural. However, language is not impartial nor unchanging and it is not free of value-based encoded sentiments. Much of Bourdieu's work focussed on the choice of words, the selection of syntax and a person's ability to express themselves in their 'linguistic habitus' as similar in many ways to material consumption choices that are clearly class-informed and classifying.[3] Collapsing the complexity of language has been a necessity in guaranteeing forward momentum for integrated/federal structures. This is often reflected in the daily operation of nation states, in which sub-entities have received certain competences based on a country's particular language setup. Many recent conflicts that have led to the break-up of nation states[4] as well as to the rise of "regions' competences" in decision-making (for example see Catalunya[5] and Belgium[6] are often informed by differing linguistic backgrounds). To

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4. Such as the collapse of Yugoslavia. See Ranko Bugarski, "Language, Nationalism and War in Yugoslavia", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 151 (2001), https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl.2001.048; William Safran, "Introduction: The Political Aspects of Language", *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 10, n.° 1 (2004), https://doi.org/10.1080/13537110490450746.
5. Elisa Roller, "When Does Language Become Exclusivist?: Linguistic Politics in Catalonia", *National Identities* 4, n.° 3 (2002), https://doi.org/10.1080/1460894022000026132.
6. Jan Wouters, Sven Van Kerckhoven and Maarten Vidal, "Traditional and New Federalism in Europe: Belgium and Switzerland Compared", in *Weak States, Strong Societies?*, ed. Amin Saikal (London: IB Tauris, 2016).

that end, while a streamlined language is necessary for frictionless integration, the maladaptation or assimilation of too many discrepant groups can result in a fracturing of integration efforts. As such, linguistic differences have often been employed, instrumentalized or used for political purposes in connection with disintegration processes.

In light of the decision of the United Kingdom (UK) to leave the European Union (EU) in 2016, language was not considered one of the main points of contention, but the English language will nonetheless be affected by this decision. The extant literature on the topic of Brexit has studied several issues concerning the expected impact on both the UK and on the EU. For example, post-Brexit, the UK is expected to be affected in fields as diverse as fisheries[7] and its role as the hub for financial services.[8] While many other preserves of everyday life will become restricted with the removal of frictionless trade and freedom to reside in other Member States, one intangible good that has received sparse theoretical attention concerns the future of the English language within the EU.

This paper focuses on the idiosyncratic position of a language that is commonly employed in the service of integration and global expansion, but which is commonly conceived of as being the preserve of one nation in particular. The aim of this paper is to determine what the impact of disintegration will be on a language upon which many have come to depend on, English, in the context of Brexit.

The following section provides a brief background on how the English language came to dominate in the European Union. This commentary then assesses the impact of Brexit and the future of the English language within the European Union. We close by providing a small conclusion. What seems apparent is that while it seems that the proponents of Brexit prioritised the desire to take back autonomy and control, we argue that the genie is very much out of the bottle with respect to the English language. By taking back control of the decision-making from the EU, the UK might have unwittingly given up control over the English language within Europe.

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7. Jeremy Philipson and David Symes, "'A Sea of Troubles': Brexit and the Fisheries Question", *Marine Policy* 90 (2018), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2017.12.016.
8. Sven Kerckhoven and Jed Odermatt, "Euro Clearing after Brexit: Shifting Locations and Oversight", *Journal of Financial Regulation and Compliance* 29, n.° 2 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1108/JFRC-02-2020-0021.

The global appeal of the English language

Language, and the ability to express oneself, is one of the most powerful drivers of human interaction. It is woven into issues as diverse as affect, emotions (and the ability to express those emotions), national belonging, culture, and interdependence. It serves as a primacy construct for both debate and argumentation. However, while language can be employed in the service of narratives and shared narratives for continuity, language can also serve as the dividing line between people groups as a language can sustain us and them distinctions.

Many societies were initially founded on the notion of the necessity of monistic essentialism: one currency, one language and one sovereign. With the rise of the nation state, followed by increased regional integration (in particular European integration), these have been hollowed out and language, for example, is no longer as useful as it once was in the definition of borders. The necessity to adapt to the requirements of multiple languages has evolved in tandem with the advancement of global supply chains, globalisation, and tourism as nations attempt to attract investment and to remain competitive. This adaptability, in some senses, has been woven into the national constitutions of the fifty-five nation states that have at least two official languages.

The English language has become a globally recognised means of communication due to colonization, Anglophilia and its everyday use in North America. English has remained an important language in several areas in the world even after the decolonization period, by dint of its new-found use in commerce, education, and tourism. Given the seeming stalemate and indecision about whether French or German could be propagated as the national language of the EU in its earlier years, English rose to prominence as a kind of stopgap, surpassing the other official languages and the other working languages of the EU as the 'primary' go-to language in which to communicate, after the accession of the Scandinavian and Eastern European countries. English is the most commonly spoken foreign language in 19 out of 25 European Union countries (excluding the UK and Ireland). In the EU25, a working knowledge of English as a foreign language clearly leads at 38%, followed at a distance by German and French (at 14% each).

Moreover, the share of the population with knowledge of English in other EU member states ranges from 55% (in France) to 71% (in Sweden).[9] What

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9. Statista, "English proficiency in European countries in 2019", *Statista*, February 28th, 2023, https://bit.ly/426T2Oa.

stands in opposition to the overseas uptake and adoption of English, however, is the growing monolingualism that is prevalent within schools in the UK at present. A report from the beginning of 2020 highlighted that only 32% of children in the UK can write in a language other than English. This trend has been the direct result of a 2004 directive within the UK that removed the requirement to learn an additional language at school.[10] This emphasis on sticking to one language has led to the creation of a disparity between the UK and the other member states as elsewhere in Europe, English was being folded into national curricula, alongside other languages and not instead of them.[11] English has become the preeminent second language of Europe, on a voluntary or national government level push, in the absence of any direct colonial history or diaspora[12] with the important exceptions of Ireland, Malta, Cyprus and Gibraltar. There has been a concerted effort to increase fluency in English by Europeans since the Second World War. The European appetite for adopting English stems from historical events such as the World Wars and the Cold War when a strong affinity towards the US and UK was created and from a desire to fold English into a multilingual project.

This has put the English language in a unique position. It has become the most useful language to connect different language groups throughout Europe and is often the second language that is taught in schools. Moreover, in some cases, such as Belgium, the English language plays an important role in terms of trifurcating the country's three national languages (Dutch, French, and German). In some other countries, speaking English within mixed language groups allows speakers to adopt a subject position that allows them to shy away or conceal elements of speech that might otherwise become heavily weighted with historical predispositions and power implications. In Hong Kong, English remains the preferred language, its return to the People's Republic of Chi-

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10. Richard Adams, "Learning Foreign Languages Should Be Compulsory, Says Report", *The Guardian*, January 9th, 2020, https://bit.ly/400BbGL.
11. Sean O'Dubhghaill, "It's Fake—I mean It Sounds the Same, but It's Fake': Plasticity, Simulation and Passing through the Irish Language in Belgium", *Irish Journal of Anthropology* 17, n.° 1 (2014), https://bit.ly/3yua3Ed.
12. Marko Modiano, "English in a Post-Brexit European Union", *World Englishes* 36, n.° 3 (2017), https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12264.

na notwithstanding.[13, 14] In India, English was initially deemed to be phased out in favour of Hindi post-independence.[15] However, given that the usage of Hindi was expected to create cultural and political tensions, English eventually became an official language of India. In the United States, English is the national language, which has further increased its global appeal. English thus became the language of choice for global interactions.

The impact of Brexit on the English language

Linguistic differences have often been a driver for disintegration. However, in the case of Brexit, language was not a primary driver. 'Taking back control' did not refer to language as much as it did to take back control of decision-making from the European institutions.

Since 1958, there has been an expectation that a Member State would 'notify' one of its national languages for primary consideration by the European Union. The 'EEC Council: Regulation No.1 determining the languages to be used by the European Economic Community'[16] was brought up in the immediate aftermath of Brexit in June 2016. The former head of the European Parliament's Constitutional Affairs Committee (AFCO) Danuta Hübner being the first to underscore that the English language would no longer be primarily notified by the United Kingdom.[17] The primary conveyance employed at the legislative level has a lot more to do with convenience than legislative stricture; however, for instance, the Irish language, which appears before the English language in Ireland's constitution, was recognized formally in 2007 as a 'treaty language' but took 14 additional years to graduate from 'derogation'.

Both Malta and Ireland (where English is an official language) opted for a first official language other than English. For instance, the Republic of Ireland gives Irish Gaelic as its official language, and Malta gives Maltese. Out

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13. Hong Kong, *The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China*, May 2021, art. 9.
14. Kingsley Bolton, Werner Botha and Andy Kirkpatrick, eds., *The Handbook of Asian Englishes* (Hoboken, US: John Wiley and Sons, 2020).
15. India, *The Constitution of India*, May 2022, art. 343.
16. Council of the European Communities, *Regulation No 1: Determining the Languages to Be Used by the European Economic Community*, October 6th, 1958, 358/58.
17. Hortense Goulard, "English Will Not Be an Official EU Language after Brexit, Says Senior MEP", *Politico*, June 27th, 2016, https://politi.co/2BrTpqX.

of a population of about 448 million, after Brexit, the English language as a first language stands at a mere 0,06 percent in the Union, while the German language would be at 18% for example.

This problematizes the role of the English language in the European Union moving forward. On the one hand, it is no longer the first official language of any member state, but on the other hand, it has become deeply embedded in the lives of Europeans.[18] English's value moving forward will remain the same but will become increasingly unmoored from the country in which it first became established. Brexit thus speeds up the already ongoing process, as English became a global language living next to British English.

The disintegration of the UK from the European Union could continue to affect the language division within the Union and could become the first instance in which a national language will have become separated from its nation, its origin point, to re-establish itself as an orphaned language in the European Union.

The future of the English language in the EU

The role of the English language will become an important issue post-Brexit and there appear to be two very different manners in which this orphaned language might come to call Europe its home once more. Looking at the future, two possibilities are immediately possible: a refocusing of languages within the EU, or a 'taking control' of the English language by EU citizens. Will a kind of linguistic intensification take place, in which national languages re-assert themselves to displace the English language or will English continue as a kind of stopgap or as a kind of burdensome necessity?

In many other fields, there is a great deal of 'picking up the pieces' taking place at present, as is evident in terms of economic competition; one key example of which is the competition/scramble to appeal to businesses currently operating in the UK to relocate overseas (such as to France and Germany).[19] This same level of competitive drive is not happening in the language field. Of course,

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18. Ushma Jacobsen, "English in the European Union after Brexit: Inclusion Effects of a Language without an Owner", *Culture, Practice and European Policy* 2, n.° 1 (2017), https://bit.ly/3yzkfuY.
19. Sven Van Kerckhoven, "Post-Brexit Leadership in European Finance", *Politics and Governance* 9, n.° 1 (2021), https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v9i1.3705.

linguistic dominance is much subtler, does not provide any direct payoffs, and is more path-driven than controlled. This would mean that advancing the causes of different languages is a long-term project, rather than a short-term opportunity. Nationalist and populist tendencies could provide some support for a reappraisal of the different languages with the EU. This would also coincide with the EU's generally robust desire to protect and facilitate minority languages, to advocate for 'unity within diversity';[20] the (continued) widespread adoption of the English language might strike a contradictory chord in this respect, at least when it is not viewed from the perspective of increasing the number of languages spoken by EU citizens to increase education and the competitiveness of the EU. In the latter view, languages are not competing, but enriching and complementing each other.[21]

Some EU officials have already called for the end of English as one of the dominant languages within the EU.[22] These calls were made mostly with regards to the French language, and supported by the French Prime Minister, Emmanuel Macron, and former EU Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker. The French language would indeed be a reasonable option as it dominated the other languages in the European Union until the 1990s. When the EU was still the European Community, official languages were Dutch, French, German, and Italian, but as more countries joined, which often had English as unofficial second language, the tables were turned, and English came to dominate.[23]

However, the question of how the English language will be portrayed by some member states is yet to be seen. Belgium's Prime Minister Alexander De Croo attracted media attention when he opted to sidestep the issue of consigning himself to speaking one of Belgium's three official languages, opting instead to speak to his addressees about COVID-19 in English. French President Emmanuel Macron also spoke in English to address American scientists in

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20. Katarzyna Iskra, "Language Policy", *European Parliament*, April 2022, https://bit.ly/3YxPGAA.
21. Michał Krzyżanowski and Ruth Wodak, "Political Strategies and Language Policies: The European Union Lisbon Strategy and Its Implications for the EU's Language and Multilingualism Policy", *Language Policy* 10, n.° 1 (2011), https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-011-9196-5; Michele Gazzola, "Multilingual Communication for Whom?: Language Policy and Fairness in the European Union", *European Union Politics* 17, n.° 4 (2016), https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116516657672.
22. Bill McLoughlin, "EU Humiliation: Brussels Forced to Keep English as Official Language Despite UK's Exit", *Express*, September 28th, 2020, https://bit.ly/3Lh3tIY.
23. Kingsley Bolton and Daniel Davis, "Brexit and the Future of English in Europe", *World Englishes* 36, n.° 3 (2017), https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12263.

response to the US's withdrawal from the Paris Climate change agreement.[24] Moreover, in order to remove the English language as an official language of the EU, there would have to be a unanimous vote in the European parliament in favor of doing so.[25]

As such, the UK's attempt to wrest control back from an interdependent union of European Member States could fire back in terms of the dominance of the English language. The UK's departure represents, in this view, a unique opportunity to finally reevaluate the legitimacy and everyday usage of the English language in a continent that no longer recognizes it in the same way as it has since the UK's accession in 1973.

The second option would mean a longer commitment of the EU member states to the usage of the English language. In that sense, control over the English language and the way the language develops within the EU, would no longer be under the prerogative of the crown. There is no central authority over the English language at present.[26] It is a living language driven by a set of rules that the language community agrees upon.[27] While it there might be some hand-wringing about the departure of the UK from the EU in terms of its linguistic legacy, what poses a more interesting avenue for research, to our minds, is the notion that new hybrid or pidgin permutations will emerge; these variations will encounter fewer issues around correct usage and, while putatively 'broken', will not be answerable to a member state that has withdrawn its cooperation in every other field.

The English language is at risk of becoming, due to the disintegration of the UK from the EU, the *lingua franca* for international and European interactions, but without oversight. It might well become a language or dialect that is systematically used to make communication possible between groups of people who do not share a native language or dialect, particularly when not one of the speakers' native languages. When the UK was a colonial power, English became the lingua franca throughout the British colonies, often by force. Due to its

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24. Robert Mackey, "French President Emmanuel Macron Offers Refuge to American Climate Scientists", *The Intercept*, June 1st, 2017, https://bit.ly/3Js6aWB.
25. See European Union, *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, March 1st, 2020, art. 342.
26. Several other languages do have a central authority. L'Academie Française, for example, is the pre-eminent French Council for matters pertaining to the French language.
27. Funnily enough, the whole plethora of new words originating from the Brexit process are an interesting case in point, see Christine Ro, "How Brexit Changed the English Language", *BBC*, March 14th, 2019, https://bbc.in/424ULDC.

international presence, the English language already plays the role of a lingua franca in the world. At present, it seems likely that it will continue to grow in usage as a lingua franca within the EU but will do so without the vernacular endorsement of a member state supporting and guiding its deployment.

In light of Brexit, the tendency to 'operationalize' the English language will accelerate. Researchers have previously argued that within the EU, 'Euro English', can be seen as developing as a lingua franca. 'Euro English' can be seen as a is a pidgin dialect of English based on the technical jargon of the European Union and the native languages of its non-native English-speaking population (terms include the usage of the noun and pluralized forms of the words training and guidance). For now, much of the reliance upon English has been led by people working within the EU bubble as well as by expatriates from EU countries, and by other European citizens.[28] This tendency could accelerate due to the high percentage of people with English as a second language. In this view, Brexit will not mean the end of English as a shared language within European borders and its institutions. However, it is very likely that this 'English' will no longer be British English, which appears to be destined to detach itself forever from the rest of the continent after Brexit, as it has already been detached from American English. It will serve as the language to speed up interactions, as a bedrock and 'relay' language for translators or might become increasingly Americanised in usage. Italy's former Prime Minister has even called for a revitalisation or upgrading of the use of English after Brexit in 2017: "It would help us Europeans to become more competitive by using fewer languages".[29] Here, the case is made for a candid recognition of the pandora's box-style predicament in which the English language now finds itself, as a crutch, as a relay and as a stopgap and, naturally enough, as a tool to communicate. The role played by English can be exemplified by dint of the fact that 80% of legislature in the EU is drafted in English first, as a 'relay' language, before being translated into the other languages.

That the continuous adoption of English as a European language will depend on the fortunes of the political and economic fortunes of the United Kingdom in the long run[30] is probably too strong a statement, as the English

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28. Sandra Mollin, *Euro-English: Assessing Variety Status* (Tübingen, DE: Gunter Narr Verlag Tübingen, 2006).
29. Paul Dallison, "Mario Monti: EU Should Adopt English Post Brexit", *Politico*, November 21ˢᵗ, 2017, parr. 4, https://politi.co/422mUel.
30. Jane Setter, "Will Brexit Spell the End of English as an Official EU Language?", *The Guardian*, December 27ᵗʰ, 2019, https://bit.ly/3T5bItq.

language is already globally accepted. However, he historical example of La-
tin, which was no longer anyone's first language after it had become everyo-
ne's second language, all before almost completely disappearing is telling to
bear in mind moving forward.

Conclusion

Disintegration has a wide variety of consequences and often is a result
of nationalist and populist pressures. Linguistic differences often play a role
in disintegration processes.

This contribution has studied Brexit and the impact of the UK's exit from
the European Union on the English language. Post Brexit only two member
states will officially recognize English as an official language, albeit only as a
second official language with the first one 'notified' serving as the common-
ly recognised choice. As such, the official 'power' of the English language will
have waned considerably, as will any claims be concerning a delimited, 'co-
rrect' and endorsed schema for usage.

However, no other European language seems to be able to quickly step in
and take over the English language's dominant position. Attempts to leapfrog
English to pole position will be time- and resource-intensive given that, un-
like most of the issues discussed in relation to Brexit, the acquisition of new
language skills is not as easy as for example relocating one's business from the
UK to the remaining EU member states. The English language will probably
continue to be adopted and embraced as a *lingua franca*. The language can
continue to serve as a way to easily communicate between different linguistic
groups. Without guidance from the UK in the arena of language, there is a
risk that the language will become further diluted in the view of the United
Kingdom. This is a trend that has already been observed in recent years, with
the rise of 'Euro English'. This trend can only be expected to accelerate. This
would mean that Brexit and its attempt to "Take back control" of the UK's
economy and decision-making would result in the unexpected abandonment
of control over the English language. The study of disintegration would be-
nefit greatly from assessing linguistic differences, not only as an input in the
process but also as an output.

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South Africa's Involvement in Zimbabwe's Suspension from the Commonwealth of Nations

La participación de Sudáfrica en la suspensión de Zimbabue de la Mancomunidad de Naciones

Dan Petrica[*] iD

Abstract

This article delves upon Zimbabwe's 2002 suspension from the Commonwealth of Nations and the relentless efforts of South Africa and other peers to get that suspension lifted, in the context of continuous rebuttals from states such as the UK and Australia. The research piece touches primarily upon the underlying motives for the said suspension, as well as the reasoning behind the bandwagoning of nations on the ongoing issues plaguing Zimbabwe in the early 2000s. Furthermore, it tangentially covers themes such as: the balance within the Commonwealth, global North versus South interpretations of democracy – and the realities they produce, and the rationale of two-sided post-colonial narratives. In our endeavour we have used a series of primary and secondary literary sources. Our conclusion is that South Africa gave primacy to its own foreign policy objectives, and thereby, allowed democracy to continue to disintegrate in Zimbabwe. Our research piece purposefully lacks the classical structure one might expect, for we consider that the chosen style of organizing information best befits the general public and specialized reads alike.

Keywords: international relations, international organizations, (post)colonialism, democracy, diplomacy, foreign policy

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Resumen

Este artículo analiza la suspensión de Zimbabue de la Mancomunidad Británica de Naciones y los incansables esfuerzos de Sudáfrica y sus socios regionales para levantarla, en el contexto de continuas refutaciones de Estados como el Reino Unido y Australia. Nuestra investigación identifica los motivos subyacentes de la suspensión declarada, así como el razonamiento detrás de la polarización de las naciones sobre la plétora de problemas que plagaron a Zimbabue a principios de la década de 2000. Además, cubrimos tangencialmente temas como el equilibrio de poder dentro de la Commonwealth, las interpretaciones globales de la democracia entre el Norte y el Sur —y las realidades que producen— y la razón fundamental detrás de las narrativas poscoloniales. En nuestro esfuerzo, hemos utilizado una serie de fuentes literarias primarias y secundarias. Concluimos que Sudáfrica dio primacía a sus propios objetivos de política exterior y, por lo tanto, permitió que la democracia siguiera desintegrándose en Zimbabue. Lo que está a punto de leer carece deliberadamente de la estructura clásica que cabría esperar, ya que consideramos que el estilo elegido para organizar la información se adapta mejor al público en general y a las lecturas especializadas por igual.

Palabras clave: relaciones internacionales, organizaciones internacionales, (pos)colonialismo, democracia, diplomacia, política exterior

Introduction, disclaimers and some theory

As almost two decades have passed since the first US travel and financial sanctions were imposed on Zimbabwe in an effort to curve Robert Mugabe's descent into authoritarianism, the new White House administration sends no signals of backing down, with President Biden having renewed the sanctions program in March 2021. Since then, what was meant to bring Zimbabwe to the democratic path has failed miserably, with economic and political conditions continuously deteriorating therein. A lengthy body of work dedicated to the failure of sanctions, coupled with Zimbabweans' arguments that sanctions continue to cripple their economy and affect their livelihoods, and reinforced by states'[1] and organizations' calls,[2] have recently culminated with a UN rapporteur's pleas for lifting sanctions.[3]

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1. Wang Wenbin, "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin's Regular Press Conference on November 1, 2021", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China*, November 1st, 2021, https://bit.ly/3l6gQRn.
2. Lazarus Chakwera, "Statement by His Excellency Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, President of the Republic of Malawi, and Chairperson of SADC, Calling for the Lifting of All Sanctions Imposed on The Republic of Zimbabwe", *Southern African Development Community*, October 25th, 2021, https://bit.ly/3Yz8q2I.
3. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Preliminary Findings of the Visit to the Republic of Zimbabwe by the Special Rapporteur on the Negative Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Enjoyment of Human Rights", *United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights*, document 2063260, October 28th, 2021, https://bit.ly/3J9lqqb.

Other nations, either through standalone action or through the use of international organisations - such as the EU and the Commonwealth - have participated, albeit distinctively, to the sanctions regimes imposed on Zimbabwe.

This article provides an account of the inner workings behind the Commonwealth's decision to suspend Zimbabwe's membership in the organisation starting with 2002. Despite not wanting to put a label on this particular piece of research, it could be considered a case study of how regional foreign policy interests end up eclipsing international pleas for democratization inside international organisations.

Our main question is why did South Africa decide to side with Zimbabwe against states from the global North,[4] despite seeming to be more ideologically connected to the latter rather than the former when it comes to questions of how democracy and democratization should be furthered. To rephrase: why did the government in Pretoria refuse to be the North's footstep in Africa in this particular instance and chose instead to be Sub-Saharan Africa's footstep in the North? Our findings align with most of the literature covering the subject either directly or tangentially – thus the perspective we provide is not new, nor innovative; rather we hope it is a pleasurable dive into several intermingled themes, of which we only exemplify: if sanctions applied by regional organisations are conducive to democracy/democratisation; how the balance of power is achieved inside international governmental bodies, how the use of anti(neo)colonialist discourse can change state preference. The rest of the *motifs* can be identified by readers in the following sections.

It is our firm belief that this article works well without a distinct and elaborate theoretical framework part, thus we have opted to include most theoretical references throughout the body of the text. Nonetheless, some definitions are in order, for scholars and casual readers alike, and they are provided below – with some of them being extended into bits of theory.

As our work heavily focuses on the question of democracy, we can synthesize the term, by drawing from Dahl, as the free and honest contest for political power, inclusive participation and the guarantee of civil and political liberties.[5] Sartori argues that all the significant contributions to the theory of

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4. The word "North" was chosen in detriment of "West" because it aligns with Sub-Saharan discourse regarding the political global system.
5. Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (Yale, US: Yale University Press, 1973).

democracy are only relevant to the particular string of democracy found in the political North.[6] They are Northern formulations that find themselves limited when trying to describe societies in which the state has but a diminished importance. Nonetheless, we argue that if the North is both the originator of democracy as we know it and its strongest advocate, agreeing with its denouncement of undemocratic practices - which go against basic human rights or free elections, for example - does not constitute a mistake. However, calling a spade a spade, while relevant in a game of cards, becomes a complicated chore when it comes to social sciences. The thorny issue of what constitutes democratic behaviour will be briefly tackled below.

Granted that our topic delves on an attempt to democratize through external influence, it is also invaluable to identify some of the basic traits of exerting influence on foreign actors. States can affect other states' decisions through a handful of political, economic, and military mechanisms. Indeed, the totality of mechanisms is rarely available to one country at a given point in time; nevertheless, more possibilities are often concomitantly at one state's disposal.

Coercion and persuasion represent the two main ways in which states can influence other states in the international arena, at least for the body of scholars of international law. While coercion is a mechanism generally advertised and employed by realists,[7] liberalism and social constructivism display a preference for persuasion.[8] Sanctions represent ways of manifesting coercion - whereby international actors raise the benefits of conformity while simultaneously increasing the costs of non-conformity for other actors - and are the least costly item to be found inside the hard power toolkit.[9] Sanctions are foreign policy tools *par excellence*, aimed at either preventing unwanted behaviours or ensuring their reversal, especially when it comes to security concerns or human rights infringements.

Although coercion can be used in warfare, the purpose of this research piece is to underline its manoeuvring through diplomacy, specifically inside

6. See Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited* (Chatham, UK: Chatham House, 1987).
7. See Daniel Drezner, "Introduction: The Interaction of Domestic and International Institutions", in *Locating the Proper Authorities: The Interaction of Domestic and International Institutions*, ed. Daniel Drezner (Ann Arbor, US: University of Michigan Press, 2003).
8. See Alastair Johnston, "Treating International Institutions as Social Environment", *International Studies Quarterly* 45, n.° 4 (2001): 495, https://doi.org/10.1111/0020-8833.00212.
9. For more on the distinction between soft and hard power, see Joseph Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).

international governmental organisations. International institutions don't re-configure state interest - nor do they reconfigure preferences, for that fact - but they can change the conduct of targeted states, making the latter realize that it is in their interest to succumb to such changes.[10] This can be done through imposing conditions – in our case conditions needed to be fulfilled by Zimbabwe as to reap the various fruits associated with being a Commonwealth member.[11] While conditionality was originally coined to describe sets of criteria to be met to obtain aid from financial institutions, human rights-motivated interventions shortly doubled those focusing on aid. Subsequently, international institutions of several types began to have a more decisive say regarding state behaviour. When their sovereignty was ceded to others, states started to pose sharp questions regarding Northern responsibility and the latter's actors' right to intervene in shaping and implementing domestic policies. Throughout the 1980s and '90s, international policy intervention became a norm and the paradigm has not yet shifted, only evolved. We feel that one clarification is in order: when we speak of international organisations – the Commonwealth included - one must not think of a faceless monolith; in fact, the said entities are pools of states controlling pools of resources. Still, we do not share the view that international institutions represent mere devices available to powerful states "with minimal influence on state behaviour".[12] While we find the above realist account accurate in some instances, it fails to explain others, namely, those institutions inside which bandwagoning allows smaller states to counter the influence of larger ones and steer the institution towards the desired outcome that is discordant with the interests of larger actors. Our paper does not describe how bandwagoning can alter historically created balances of power, but it exposes and dissects an attempt to do so.

Zimbabwe's initial suspension

In 2002, Zimbabwe was suspended from the Commonwealth, after it had been the black sheep of the organization for some time. Talks surrounding Ro-

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10. See Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, US: Princeton University Press, 1984).

11. Some of the formal benefits of Commonwealth membership are listed by the organization at https://bit.ly/3ZUSklD.

12. John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security* 19, n.° 3 (1994/1995): 7, https://doi.org/10.2307/2539078.

bert Mugabe's regime and the dire situation of his country led to many divisive discussions amongst the Commonwealth's members. Standing accused of breaching the Harare Declaration of 1991, a document that underlines the basic principles of the Commonwealth, Zimbabwe's membership in the latter body was suspended. The list of accusations was lengthy for Mugabe's government, as several issues were raised, which range from human rights abuses to election rigging, and undermining one's own economy.[13] The UK, Australia and New Zeeland had pushed earlier for punitive action against Zimbabwe, which was rejected at the 2002 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). In March 2002, the CHOGM Chair-in-Office, alongside the former and future Chairs (The Troika)[14] decided that Zimbabwe would be suspended from the Commonwealth, following a report of the Commonwealth Observer Group,[15] which emphasized a problem that had developed in Zimbabwe; namely, the government-instigated violence surrounding the then-recent elections. The Report, which was later quoted by the Chair of the Troika stated that: "the presidential election was marred by a high level of politically motivated violence"[16] and that "the conditions in Zimbabwe did not adequately allow for a free expression of will by the electors".[17] South Africa's own observation missions, however,[18] reported that the elections had been legitimate,[19] granted the opposition parties participated in the election.[20] We argue that despite being allowed to formally participate in elections, opposition parties need not be harassed by the party in power, not have their votes stolen and their members and voters impeded from casting their ballot. Everything less is just a mimicry of democracy and far from a free and legitimate electoral process. Given Sou-

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13. John Hatchard, Muna Ndulo and Peter Slinn, *Comparative Constitutionalism and Good Governance in the Commonwealth: An Eastern and Southern African Perspective* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 11.
14. The Troika was composed of Thabo Mbeki – President of South Africa, whom had ended his chairmanship earlier that month, John Howard – Prime Minister of Australia – scheduled to hold office until December the following year, and Olusegun Obasanjo, the President of Nigeria.
15. See Commonwealth Secretariat, *Zimbabwe Presidential Elections, 9-12 March 2002: The Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2003).
16. Ibid., 43.
17. Ibid., 44.
18. The government in Pretoria sent 50 people, representing different areas (government, NGOs unions and businesses), to gather and compile data. A parliamentary observation mission, comprised of 20 persons was also on the ground.
19. South African Observer Mission, "Interim Statement by the South African Observer Mission on the Zimbabwean Presidential Elections", *Department of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa*, March 13th, 2002, https://bit.ly/3LcEsyj.
20. Ibid.

th Africa had constantly minimized the amplitude of Zimbabwe's problems, especially when presenting the situation to the international community, any admission that it had been wrong up to that point would have posed a series of questions for the credibility of the regime in Pretoria, concomitantly constituting an insufficient excuse for past misinformation. Such a concession would have called for South Africa's immediate action and for a reversal of foreign policy towards Zimbabwe, one which the former's acting president, Thabo Mbeki was not willing to take into consideration. Thus, we argue that the results presented by both South Africa's observer missions were in harmony with the government's foreign policy goals, not with the facts and political behaviours of The Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front's (ZANU-PF) members and clientele during the 2002 elections.

Bargain, bark, belittle - to no avail

While all other Commonwealth suspensions had been indefinite up to that point, in Zimbabwe's case, a period of one year was stipulated. This one-year term led Zimbabwean officials to believe that the suspension would automatically be lifted on 19 March 2003. However, procedurally, the suspension needed to be lifted by the same body that imposed it, namely the Troika, as Australia's Prime Minister had announced from the get-go.[21] Nearing the Spring of 2003, the Troika couldn't come to a unanimous decision, with Australia favouring a prolonged suspension and South Africa and Nigeria both siding to end it. In a letter to Howard, Obasanjo wrote: "I believe that the time is now auspicious to lift the sanctions on Zimbabwe with regard to her suspension from the Commonwealth Councils",[22] adding that "President Thabo Mbeki shares the same view".[23] The letter contained several clearly biased paragraphs, supporting Mugabe's actions or, circumstantially, lack thereof: it implied that Zimbabwe's land reform was a responsible decision at the time it ensued, that the ZANU-PF government had put together a Z$4-billion package to compensate dispossessed commercial farmers, that these farmers had

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21. See Commonwealth Secretariat, *Meeting of Commonwealth Chair Persons' Committee on Zimbabwe*, press release 02/26, March 19th, 2002, parr. 8, https://bit.ly/421QOzs.
22. See Olusegun Obasanjo, "Nigeria Calls on Australia to Reinstate Zimbabwe in Commonwealth: Olusegun Obasanjo's Letter to John Howard", *Southern African Regional Poverty Network*, February 12th, 2002, parr. 19, https://bit.ly/3T7Rijq.
23. Ibid., parr. 4.

been in an active dialogue with the government, and that the latter had means of attacking the malpractices if they deemed fit to do so.[24]

In reality, the only known sum allocated for compensation at the time amounted to a mere 0.25% of what Obasanjo claimed; the farmers' outcry was not taken into consideration, and the latter had no formal way of denouncing malpractices and seeing those responsible brought to justice. The letter also claimed that the government was pushing the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) as a means of ensuring prosecutions succeed,[25] despite all the international outrage surrounding the new draconian piece of legislation, which effectively annulled free press in Zimbabwe. When discussing the state-backed violence against the opposing party's supporters, Obasanjo falsely asserted that the police 'apologized' for their cruelty and that punishment for those involved was on its way.[26] Obasanjo's motives, of course, went beyond the allegiance to an African brother, which was fighting off the colonial North. 2003 came with very troubled elections in Nigeria, where Obasanjo's People's Democratic Party won a landslide victory, marked by a near-perfect turnout in places where international observers had reported low numbers of voters.[27]

Despite efforts from both Mbeki and Obasanjo, John Howard could not be persuaded. As a result, with almost a month to spare, the Prime Minister of Australia and the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth declared that the suspension imposed on Zimbabwe would not be lifted, at least not prior to the next CHOGM, later that year, when Nigeria was supposed to obtain chairmanship.

The decision, which had been widely known beforehand, sparked an attack on John Howard from South Africa's acting Foreign Affairs Director-General, Abdul Minty, during a Commonwealth briefing in February 2003. Minty accused the Australian Prime Minister of subjectivity when it comes to Zimbabwe and of breaching confidentiality with regards to telephone calls he had received from both Mbeki and Obasanjo.[28] In the same letter from February,

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24. Ibid., parrs. 5-11.
25. Ibid., parr. 15.
26. Ibid., parr. 17.
27. Patrick Bond, *South Africa and Global Apartheid: Continental and International Policies and Politics* (Uppsala, SE: Nordic Africa Institute, 2004), 18.
28. Abdul Minty, quoted in Mail & Guardian, "Minty's Broadside Startles Diplomats", *Mail & Guardian*, February 13th, 2003, https://bit.ly/3LaFLOq.

Obasanjo had argued that "this unfortunate decision [to maintain sanctions] would seem … to compromise Australia's position as an honest broker in the Zimbabwean crisis".[29] South Africa's Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma later admitted that South Africa shares the Nigerian President's perspective on the said point.

This marked a clear sign that South Africa was with Zimbabwe all the way, despite the latter having not fulfilled any of the prerequisite conditions for the Commonwealth's passive sanction to be lifted. We consider that South Africa was not necessarily pushing for an end to sanctions at the time, rather it was trying to keep the Commonwealth from imposing further punitive measures on its neighbour. The government in Pretoria was using 'extremity bargaining' to meet its counterparts somewhere in the middle with regards to requests. In addition, African leaders had misunderstood Australia's role in the situation, for it was never to take on the role of the honest broker, rather it was to act against any development that would not meet Commonwealth norms and to push Zimbabwe's government to refrain from any anti-democratic practices it had triggered and supported. Siding with Zimbabwe and expressing dissatisfaction towards Howard's decisions and his activity as Chair put South Africa's relations with Australia under some tension. Nearing December, the next milestone for a further decision, several Commonwealth leaders met in Abuja, Nigeria. The meetings, in which six states were called upon to make a proposition for all the Commonwealth were heated and resulted in deadlock.

Tony Blair was pushing for further suspension, backed by Australia and Canada, while Obasanjo was the voice of the coalition formed by South Africa and Mozambique - arguing for the readmission of Zimbabwe into the Commonwealth. India and the chair of the meetings, Jamaica expressed their neutrality. While Mugabe was continuously proclaiming that the division in the 'Zimbabwe case' was on race lines - rather than higher principles, things were not actually black and white at all: Ghana, Botswana, Sierra Leone and other African states wanted the suspension reinforced, but kept low profiles, fearing Mugabe's reaction.[30] African leaders knew that Mugabe's words still weighted heavily across Africa; and siding with a colonial enemy, which did not share blood ties nor a history of struggle, would be close to 'treason of kin'.

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29. Obasanjo, "Nigeria Calls on Australia", parr. 2.
30. Richard Dowden, "Blair Fails to Reach Commonwealth Agreement on Zimbabwe Exclusion", *The Independent*, December 6th, 2003, https://bit.ly/3T9j4fh.

Africanism, colonialism, imperialism, land and kin

After a disputed decision in Abuja, which made Zimbabwe's suspension indefinite, Mugabe withdrew from the Commonwealth - a decision that was announced at a ZANU-PF congress. During this entire period, South Africa, through the voice of President Mbeki, sided with Zimbabwe, accusing the UK in unison of neo-colonial practices.[31] Mbeki had tried his best to get Mugabe invited to the Abuja meeting, and Obasanjo, who had issued invitations, seemed to be on board, but increased pressures from Ottawa, London and Canberra, which noted regressions in all spheres of Zimbabwean politics, brought the former's efforts to a forced stop.

Earlier in 2002, Britain had proposed active sanctions for Zimbabwe, believing that the AIPPA, which had been drafted by Parliament and pushed by the ZANU-PF government, would be used either control or silence the media, making it an offence to criticize Mugabe's followers.

We argue Mugabe's repetition of the anti-imperialist discourse was strong enough to persuade South Africa that Britain's accusations lacked any fundament. Convincing the government in Pretoria was not as difficult as one would imagine, for, arguably, South Africa's foreign policy was based on three paradigms: Africanism, anti-imperialism and democracy.[32] While the first two are complementary and never come into conflict, the latter had non-alignment issues with the former. When all three could not be accommodated, the democratic paradigm tended to give way to the other two,[33] for these referred to the Marxist core-periphery imbalances theory;[34] one that encompasses numerous social (solidarity is the key to fight off the core's dominion), political (such the need for a restructuring of power inside the UN and other bodies), and economic (the economic domination of the North, in detriment of the impoverished South) grievances that could be resolved

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31. Ian Taylor, "'The Devilish Thing': The Commonwealth and Zimbabwe's Dénouement", *The Round Table. The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs* 94, n.° 380 (2005), https://doi.org/10.1080/00358530500174630.

32. Suzanne Graham, *Democratic South Africa's Foreign Policy: Voting Behaviour in the United Nations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 90.

33. James Barber, "The New South Africa's Foreign Policy: Principles and Practice", *International Affairs* 81, n.° 5 (2005): 1088, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2005.00503.x.

34. Numerous authors have delved upon the World-systems theory; see the works of Immanuel Wallerstein, Samir Amin, Giovanni Arrighi, Andre Gunder Frank, John W. Meyer.

only by solitary action.[35]

Before his country was suspended from the Commonwealth, Mugabe had sent a letter to the organization, whereby promising that his government would respect the Declaration signed in Harare, protect human rights, and end the endemic political turmoil engulfed in violence. Mugabe was either incapable of keeping his promise, or unwilling to do so. We believe that the latter serves as a more accurate interpretation. Mugabe had no interest in ending a campaign of intimidation his party had orchestrated and put in motion with the purpose of securing a new presidency.

Even upon winning the controversial elections, politically-driven violence continued in Zimbabwe, as a way of silencing any critics and punishing the political opposition, The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), and its supporters. On the ground, South Africa's ceaseless fight to keep Zimbabwe inside the Commonwealth alienated MDC leaders. MDC president Morgan Tsvangirai, who had been accused at the time of treason - in an absurd attempt to denigrate him and keep him out of the upcoming elections - warned that Mbeki had yielded to blackmail and had "embarked on an international safari to campaign for Mugabe's regime".[36] Tsvangirai saw South Africa's points of view - expressed during the early 2000s both inside and outside the Commonwealth - as a departure from quiet diplomacy and movement towards the 'noisy approval' of Mugabe's regime, concluding that, by instilling a government of national unity, as Pretoria had recommended, the situation in Zimbabwe was to be controlled, not resolved.[37] Mugabe's attacks on the British were further considered a despicable way of alleviating international pressure, although even the scarce essential supplies still available to Zimbabweans came from London.[38]

As a result of the continuous suspension debate, which had at its core numerous human rights infringements, more losers emerged than winners. One of them, according to Hussein Solomon, professor at the University of Pretoria, was Mbeki, who had lost his credibility as a leader and strayed away

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35. Laurie Nathan, "Consistency and Inconsistencies in South Africa's Foreign Policy in Africa", *International Affairs* 81, n.° 2 (2005), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2005.00455.x.
36. Morgan Tsvangirai, President of the MDC's Speech to MDC Parliamentarians, Harare, December 18th, 2002, in Bond, *South Africa and Global Apartheid*, 19.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.

from the principles of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NE-PAD) and African renaissance.[39] Mbeki had been one of the fathers of NEPAD - an economic development program of the African Union, which, amongst other things, offered economic aid in exchange for incorporating and developing good governance within states.

Mbeki also had his share of critics back home; Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, the director of studies at the South African Institute of International Affairs, called for a change in Pretoria's strategy, arguing that Zimbabwe would implode economically, hurting both the efforts of The Southern African Development Community's (SADC) members and the NEPAD endeavour as a whole.[40] She advertised sending clear messages to Mugabe, even by utilizing quiet diplomacy methods,[41] thereby implying that South Africa had been too relaxed about what was going on in Zimbabwe and too preoccupied by how the events were seen inside the Commonwealth.

Sidiropoulos essentially argued that South Africa shielded Zimbabwe's image, instead of doing something structurally productive for its neighbour. Nevertheless, Mbeki had gone as far as bandwagoning alongside a small group of African countries and opposing the re-election of Commonwealth Secretary-General Don McKinnon. This unpreceded move was an attempt to punish the leader from New Zeeland, whom had been vocally demanding Zimbabwe's continued suspension. McKinnon withstood a 40-11 vote, rendering Pretoria's accusations and wishes obsolete.

After returning from the Abuja Summit, Mbeki created, with the help of other SADC leaders, a statement of that organization (plus Uganda), in which it was claimed that members of the Commonwealth had been "dismissive, intolerant and rigid",[42] and that they sought to transform their African counterparts into "grateful and subservient recipients".[43] Although no such member had been named, Mbeki's words were aimed at Tony Blair, who stood accused of playing the 'wrong card' since the 2002 suspension talks inside the Commonwealth. Blair had overwhelmingly focused on the land reform and land dispossessions, neglecting the various human rights infringement con-

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39. News24, "'Mbeki Could Harm Nepad'", *News24*, December 8th, 2003, https://bit.ly/3ysQiNp.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Stephen Chan, *Grasping Africa: A Tale of Achievement and Tragedy* (London: IB Tauris, 2007), 140.
43. Ibid., 141.

cerns raised by other Commonwealth members, thus giving African leaders fuel for a racially driven debate.

Despite Blair's constant denial that the UK had any residual financial interests in Zimbabwe's land reform, critics were not convinced, considering the UK aimed to protect the interests of whites, while the rest of Zimbabwe's population was seen as collateral. Mbeki later expressed, in one of his weekly letters[44] published on his party's official site, a dismissive attitude regarding the initial motive for suspending Zimbabwe, by quoting the observation mission that his government had sent to Zimbabwe, which reported upon arrival that: "the mission is therefore of the view that the outcome of the elections represents the legitimate voice of the people of Zimbabwe".[45] Mbeki also implied that, since the mission from Pretoria had stayed longer on the ground than the Commonwealth's observer mission and had collaborated with the latter, the former cannot be wrong.[46]

Referring to history, both recent and of the past decades, Mbeki stated that the land issue was inflammatorily dealt with by the British, who did not suppress Ian Smith's rebellion in 1965, due to the fact their own 'kith and kin' had more important interests than those of the African majority.[47] As a result, Zimbabwe's 1979 Constitution had entrenched clauses that protected the white's ownership rights for ten years; clauses which no Northern government had supported repelling since. After managing to acquire pledges for the funds required for the acquisition of 118 farms and handing over the issue to the UN, it was swallowed whole and forgotten due to bureaucracy.[48] Mbeki's letter argued that granted the failure to restore land in Zimbabwe, "a forcible process of land redistribution perhaps became inevitable".[49]

Surely, the act of forcibly removing property owners from their properties through the violent methods used by a government-sponsored militia, however 'inevitable' it may have seemed to the President of South Africa, was nothing of the sorts. Rather, one can argue that it is a manoeuvre, orchestrated by an increasingly authoritarian government, to utilize the latent sentiment of

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44. Thabo Mbeki, "We Will Resist the Upside-Down View of Africa", *The Insider*, 2003, https://bit. ly/3mGpXsu.
45. Ibid., parr. 14.
46. Ibid., parr. 15.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid., parrs. 21-36.
49. Ibid., parr. 28.

a majority population that had historically been politically oppressed, in order to capitalize in elections. While the urgency of the events taking place in Zimbabwe – particularly the land redistribution reform - is open to debate, the methods used for gaining political momentum are unjustifiable. Nevertheless, Mbeki sought justification, as he did for the critique targeting him for his preferred diplomatic strain, that of quiet diplomacy.[50]

In the same letter, Mbeki referenced Kissinger's seminal work 'Diplomacy',[51] arguing that the CHOGM episodes displayed similarities to how Reagan raised the human rights issue during the Cold War to help overthrow political regimes.[52] For Mbeki, the entire issue seemed one of forceful regime change from those which could not, such as Americans under Reagan, passively wait for free institutions to evolve inside a state.[53] Thus, in Mbeki's eyes, while state-sponsored violence and dispossession were the last resort in Zimbabwe, punishment for these acts should be slow or non-existent in the realm of international relations. One could argue that Mbeki's claims go far beyond any realist's dream of how the political spectrum is organized globally. Mbeki also expressed his deep concern that the suspension would only delay political reconciliation and economic restructuring.[54] We find that this argument has some validity: within the framework of an international inter-governmental body such as the Commonwealth, there is a better chance of moving towards a fuller democracy than there is in isolation.

As might be expected, some conditions have to be met to attain further democratization: namely a wish, frail as it may be, to achieve democratic outcomes has to exist inside the governing body of a country. However, in the case of Zimbabwe, while this wish had been verbalized by the Mugabe government on many separate occasions, in practice, only dismal progress has been achieved, and the country, especially during the initial one-year period of suspension, has done nothing to revert to the best-practices it had initially adhered to, only to later disregard. Thus, it was far better for Zimbabwe to be a part of the Commonwealth, as long as the Commonwealth, through its internal workings, could exert enough pressure to ensure the desired outcome of democratic consolidation.

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50. See Dan Petrica, "Quiet Diplomacy: South Africa's Way of Dealing with Zimbabwe during the Presidency of Thabo Mbeki", *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai - Studia Europaea* 4 (2016), https://bit.ly/3LeZ0Gw.
51. See Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994).
52. Kissinger, quoted in Mbeki, "We Will Resist", parr. 36.
53. Ibid., parr. 38.
54. Ibid., parr. 42.

Mugabe, on the other hand, was closely observing Mbeki's political moves and the developments in the former's narrative. In his new feud with the UK and Australia, Zimbabwe's president might have been overjoyed that someone appropriated parts of his discourse, and was ready to further develop the said narrative. Zimbabwe's withdrawal from the Commonwealth could be labelled as a gesture of pride, foremost. Granted his actions, one might consider Mugabe a person that likes to bask in the international limelight; subsequently, we envisage that there must have been some degree of satisfaction that his actions, despite resulting in the isolation of his country, managed to create rifts among the international community.

Whilst constantly searching for international approval, Mugabe has permanently sought regional and national validation – especially after his organization won 'problematic', if not rigged elections. As one commentator puts it: "he would perhaps like to be the headmaster's favourite, which he once was".[55] Since he was unable to retain this position, the role of 'international bad-boy' didn't seem quite demeaning. Even so, as the North was turning against him, the lack of Commonwealth support from his closest peers, clearly increased both his anger and the number of his worries. As a result, Mugabe tried to minimize the Commonwealth, by drawing a comparison with one of George Orwell's infamous novellas:[56] "The Commonwealth[...]has become like an Animal Farm where some members are more equal than others. How can Blair claim to regulate and direct events and still say all of us are equals?".[57] One cannot accuse Mugabe of having been naïve and not understanding the power structure in this or any other international organization, but he could be accused of doublespeak. While his narrative worked, in part, for his at-home auditorium and some African Peers, it did not for the EU or the US.[58]

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55. Chan, *Grasping Africa*, 141.
56. George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, which was written in the wake of World War II, constitutes a biting satire of totalitarianism. It tells a simple story of farm animals rebelling against their masters, and their efforts to manage themselves in the aftermath of mutiny. Ultimately, the novel depicts how good intentions can lead to tyranny. It provides one immortal phrase about equality: "Everyone is equal, but some are more equal than others".
57. Robert Mugabe, quoted in Chris Chinaka and Ed Johnson, "Mugabe: Commonwealth is 'Animal Farm'", *The Independent*, December 7th, 2003, parr. 10, https://bit.ly/422CbvH.
58. In 2003, in conjuncture with the international community, especially the Commonwealth and the EU, the US government extended sanctions, which had been previously put in place.

On the meaning of democracy

We argue that Mugabe believed that 'democracy' is to be treated as a 'charade word', a pretext the North uses to coerce developing states around the globe in general, and specifically to make Zimbabwe submit. Even though democracy is an articulation of the North, its relevance and meaning reach far beyond what Mugabe tried to imply. Minimizing the value of democracy, even of one particular string of democracy promoted but the US and its allies may be perilous for a regime, weather peril should be brought about by peer pressure internationally, or by a sickened population nationally. One must admit that democracy is quite difficult to quantify, due to the numerous juxtaposed layers that need to be taken into consideration.

Nonetheless, most parts of the world operate within the principles dictated by Northern values: such as human rights, free elections, free speech and assembly, separation of power and rule of law. We reiterate that it is within the above postulates that the core of democracy resides. While it was fitting for Mugabe and ZANU-PF to resort to such principles in previous decades, when trying to overthrow a minority government, as time had passed, the above signifiers became voided discursively and were filled up with new meaning, which transcended the field of discourse altogether.[59] For Mugabe's political purposes, his population, his neighbours and the international community in its entirety need to know that Zimbabwe is democratic - just not according to the vision of the North. It was arduously argued that another form of democracy prevails. While the slight alteration of values to make them fit one community is allowed, even desirable, we claim that these values need to remain remotely the same at their core.

For example, rule of law guarantees the equal treatment of citizens by the judicial power. If under the declared auspices of rule of law, a state ends up treating citizens differently, based on any kind of hierarchy, racial or social status, we are faced with an illogical and perverted construction. For some terms, meaning is unalienable. What Mugabe was trying to achieve resembled, in part, what Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary, later referenced – drawing on the terms developed by Fareed Zakaria.[60] In claiming that his

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59. See Dan Petrica, "Discursive Struggle and Social Change in South Africa in the Mid 1990's", *Analele Universității din Oradea* 8 (2016), https://bit.ly/3l1sg9d.
60. See Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy", *Foreign Affairs* 76, n.° 6 (1997), https://bit.ly/2LRzTKJ.

country will become an illiberal democracy,[61] Orbán has annulled the term 'democracy' altogether. While Orbán and other autocrats advertise the absence of civil liberties, when presenting a hybrid, pseudo-democratic product, Mugabe was more cunning.

For him, the variations of what constitutes democratic were up for grabs, according to what he wanted to achieve. He never called for illiberal democracy or partial democracy, rather insisting that a fully democratic form of government can exist, without the prerequisites advertised by the North. The North, observing the logical fracture, refused to go along, while some partners in Africa accepted Mugabe's views because they were accommodating the latter's interests. As such, the North needs to re-establish its values in Zimbabwe, for they had been eroded and, to do so, used South Africa for mitigation. Africa has had its fair share of autocrats, including Idi Amin Dada of Uganda, Macías Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia's Mengistu Haile Mariam, Central Africa Republic's self-proclaimed Emperor Jean-Bédel Bokassa and, more recently, Muammar Gaddafi of Libya. Dictators, as was anticipated, find the idea that democracy is relative empowering and support the claim that each country should decide the path it wants to follow in pursuit of the democratic strings they deem fit. Furthermore, the said 'band of brothers', comprised of rulers which contest the core principles of democracy, have a way of standing together in the worst of times.

Conclusion

As a result of the continued support of South Africa and other African peers inside the Commonwealth, a potentially critical opportunity, in the attempt to further democratization in Zimbabwe, was missed – or better put, annulled. The failure of Thabo Mbeki's government to grasp that coercive action conducted by African members was needed to halt and, later, try to revert Mugabe's profoundly antidemocratic practices, coupled with South Afri-

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61. Viktor Orbán, "Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Speech at the 25th Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp", *Magyarország Jobban Teljesít*, July 26th, 2014, https://bit.ly/2wubZze. For example, in 2001, while traditional external donors had retracted from Zimbabwe, Libya was willing to provide Zimbabwe aid in oil worth 45mil. In 2002, after Mugabe's re-election, the two countries signed a trade deal. Thus, Libya took the role of a democratic spoiler, severely limiting the economic leverage of other actors such as South Africa.

ca' vivid unwillingness to sacrifice its own foreign relations objectives for the sake of stability at its borders and democracy across said borders, marked the impossibility to create a strong majority within the Commonwealth.

The absence of a strong majority, if not centred around, at least with the concert of African political strongholds such as South Africa and Nigeria, contributed to the further descent of Zimbabwe into autocracy. Zimbabwe's suspension could thus be discursively used by Robert Mugabe in an attempt to recreate narrations centred on neocolonialism and domination politics, while drawing attention away from his government's kleptocracy, mismanagement and profoundly undemocratic practices. While the fate of Robert Mugabe is now known, the future of ZANU-PF is a distinct issue, for even with Mugabe overthrown, the party seems to still be able to capitalize under new leadership and continue, at least in part, the practices it has created and enforced throughout the early 2000s, as the calls for lifting sanctions of any sorts become more vocal.

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La integración regional sudamericana: De la adolescencia a la madurez

South American Regional Integration: From Adolescence to Maturity

*Damiano Scotton** iD

Resumen

A lo largo de su historia, el subcontinente sudamericano ha demostrado fuertes pulsiones orientadas hacia la integración regional, y en particular a partir desde 1960, con la fundación de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Libre Comercio (ALALC). Sin embargo, los principales actores en el panorama continental continúan siendo los Estados nacionales, mientras que las organizaciones regionales creadas hasta ahora se han convertido en espacios de diálogo entre países con mayor o menor profundidad y efectividad, o incluso han fracasado. El presente artículo se propone como objetivo desmitificar aquellos que considero "falsos obstáculos" a la integración regional sudamericana, para señalar cuáles son los verdaderos límites que dificultan una cooperación concreta, profunda y madura entre los países sudamericanos y proponer, finalmente, posibles soluciones para que la integración regional sudamericana pueda pasar de su actual "adolescencia" a una plena madurez.

Palabras clave: integración, regionalismo, Sudamérica, cooperación, Latinoamérica, gobernanza multinivel, supranacionalidad

Abstract

Along its history, the South American subcontinent has demonstrated strong wishes oriented to regional integration, and particularly starting from 1960 with the foundation of the "Asociación Latinoamericana de Libre Comercio" (ALALC). However, until nowadays, the main actors in the continental landscape keep being the national

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states, while the regional organizations created until now have become more or less effective spaces of dialogue between countries or even reached their complete failure. The present article takes as its main objective that of demystify those that I consider "false obstacles" to regional integration, pointing then out those which I consider real limits hindering a concrete, deep and mature cooperation between south American countries and, finally, proposing some possible solutions for south American regional integration to pass from its current "adolescence" to a complete maturity.

Keywords: integration, regionalism, South America, cooperation, Latin America, multi-level governance, supranationality

Introducción

Históricamente, Sudamérica ha sido considerada, y sobre todo se ha considerado a sí misma, un continente de dificultades, diferencias y contrastes, tanto entre los países de la región como al interior de cada país. Las divergencias económicas, políticas, ideológicas y sociales, que innegablemente existen, han dificultado todo intento de cooperación e integración a nivel regional, y llevado el camino o los caminos integracionistas hacia el fracaso o, por lo menos, hacia una importante pérdida de importancia, de influencia y, sobre todo, de percepción ciudadana.

En mi opinión —queriendo enmarcarme en pero al mismo tiempo desmarcarme de la literatura que analiza los procesos integradores del subcontinente—, el problema radica en realidad en una consideración errónea de cuáles son efectivamente los problemas que afligen a la región sudamericana, habiéndonos concentrado como académicos en las que podríamos definir como causas "históricas" de desemejanzas y fracasos, y tras fallar en entender cómo aquellos factores que consideramos problemáticos podrían en cambio fácilmente revelarse razones promovedoras y fortalecedoras de un proceso de cooperación. Este concentrarnos en causas históricas de fracaso es un proceso al que defino "espejismo regionalista". El término, naturalmente, no lo uso con la finalidad de considerar "ilusoria" a la integración regional sudamericana, sino para señalar que, en el camino hacia ella, nos hemos dejado y nos seguimos dejando engañar por espejismos de metas, de dificultades o de necesidades de cambio que nos convencen de acelerar, desacelerar o interrumpir la ruta en un momento no adecuado.

El presente artículo desea enfrentar la problemática de la tortuosa integración sudamericana desde una perspectiva diferente, intentando poner "indicaciones en el desierto" que nos permitan guiarnos aun cuando frente

a nosotros se presenten engañosos espejismos. Mi perspectiva es la de proponer una visión tanto de las dificultades como de las posibles soluciones que permitirían a los países de la región fortalecer y emprender con mayor decisión un camino hacia una integración estable, duradera, fortalecedora y conveniente para todos los países de la región sudamericana.

Finalmente, antes de entrar en los temas clave de este artículo, es necesario realizar una corta aclaración terminológica. Hablar de "regionalismo" muy a menudo conlleva significados contrastantes: por un lado, la oposición entre áreas más o menos definidas (regionalismo considerado como superioridad o preferencia de un área con respecto a otra); por otro —el sentido en que se hará en este artículo—, se puede considerar al regionalismo como la existencia de procesos de integración macrorregionales a nivel global que fortalezcan la cooperación de países pertenecientes a una misma región geográfica, con el objetivo de reducir los actores internacionales (en la actualidad, los Estados nacionales individualmente considerados) a macroactores más fuertes e influyentes en el panorama internacional. De esta forma, se propone la idea de una simplificación, agilización y mejora de un diálogo internacional capaz de pasar de la actual situación mononivel "entre Estados" a una nueva y posible situación multinivel "entre regiones". En esta óptica de proponer una integración seria, coherente, madura y sobre todo concreta y realizable, en este texto usaré el término "sudamericano" en lugar del más frecuente "latinoamericano". Si bien es cierto que al escribir sobre los procesos sudamericanos de integración regional no podemos dejar de lado su histórica orientación más allá del subcontinente y hacia una integración más amplia de los países latinoamericanos, al mismo tiempo hablar de Latinoamérica nos llevaría a tomar como referencia un área geográfica extremadamente extensa —que en lo cultural va desde México, en Norteamérica, hasta el Cono Sur del subcontinente— e históricamente aún más amplia. Una integración regional exitosa tiene, en mi consideración, que orientarse a objetivos realizables política, económica y socialmente, y debe por ello dirigirse hacia regiones geográficamente claras y definidas, por lo menos en sus comienzos.

Un regionalismo "adolescente"

Definir al regionalismo sudamericano como "adolescente" podría parecer algo paternalista. Por supuesto, no es este el significado que deseo dar a esta palabra; me refiero más bien a la observación de hechos que me llevan a hacer este tipo de analogía. Si pensamos en un adolescente, posiblemente

la primera idea que tenemos es la de una persona llena de entusiasmo por el futuro y los propósitos de su vida, y que al mismo tiempo quiere hacer de esa vida —que tiene casi completamente por delante— algo grande, recordado, que lo lleve a ser importante, influyente. En definitiva, un adolescente tiene objetivos muy altos, a menudo nobles y ciertamente ambiciosos. Existe, sin embargo, al mismo tiempo, un problema relevante: normalmente el adolescente no tiene muy claro cuáles son las mejores vías y modalidades para alcanzar dichos objetivos; ni siquiera, en algunas ocasiones, sabe a dónde quiere llegar concretamente ni cómo transformar ese entusiasmo y esa ambición en algo serio y, sobre todo, estable y duradero. Además, y siguiendo con nuestra analogía, el adolescente, debido a esa falta de constancia y claridad antes mencionada, tiene la tendencia a cambiar de opinión con gran rapidez, siguiendo banderas ideológicas y "sueños" del momento que sin embargo tienen raíces débiles e inestables.

Leyendo esta analogía, es posible aclarar la razón por la cual defino a los procesos sudamericanos de integración regional como "adolescentes": no falta en el continente el entusiasmo, histórico, hacia una fuerte y sólida integración regional; no falta tampoco el deseo de surgir internacionalmente como subcontinente y no de forma inconstante como Estados nacionales. No obstante, los procesos regionales de integración que se han venido desarrollando en la región —en particular desde la fundación de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Libre Comercio (ALALC) en 1960— han demostrado ser en numerosas ocasiones inconstantes, frágiles, poco duraderos y relativamente poco influyentes (por no decir muy poco influyentes en la percepción ciudadana). Retomando la analogía, la causa de esto reside, desde mi perspectiva, en una "adolescencia" que les impide ver claramente el objetivo, ofuscados como han estado por sus grandes, y positivas, ambiciones, y sobre todo por los frágiles cimientos ideológicos que han fomentado su creación, y que los condenan a menudo a un inevitable fracaso.

Quiero sentar una premisa importante: el presente artículo no desea realizar una comparación entre el proceso europeo de integración y los procesos sudamericanos. Como afirmaré más adelante, dicha comparación (constante, por otra parte) representa en realidad una problemática y no una ventaja, peor una ayuda. Sin embargo, con el solo objetivo de ayudar a entender la inconstancia integradora sudamericana, haré una corta referencia al proceso europeo. Los dos procesos de integración se originan en momentos históricos muy cercanos, pero en contextos y por razones extremadamente diferentes: la integración

europea nace en 1951 con la creación de la Comunidad Europea del Carbón y del Acero (CECA) por medio del Tratado de París; sin embargo, en su forma estable y duradera, podemos tomar como su origen el Tratado de Roma, que en 1957 originó la Comunidad Económica Europea (CEE). Por su parte, el primer proceso integrador "contemporáneo" en Sudamérica se origina en 1960, con el Tratado de Montevideo, que creó la ya mencionada ALALC.[1]

Temporalmente, entonces, existe una clara cercanía originaria; las causas y los cimientos, sin embargo, difieren fuertemente: la CEE (y la CECA antes de ella) surgen debido a una "voluntad" cooperativa que no dudo en definir como "excepcional y milagrosa", después de siglos de enemistades y conflictos entre los países de la región, y en especial después de alrededor de treinta años de traumatizantes guerras continentales que se convirtieron en globales, así como de nacionalismos y discriminaciones de tipo racial capaces de llevarnos hacia el mayor horror y la más grande violación a la dignidad de las personas que la humanidad haya conocido: la Shoá. El nacimiento de ALALC, en cambio, se da a causa de lo que llamaría una "necesidad" cooperativa.

Al concluir el segundo conflicto mundial, a partir de la segunda mitad de los años 40, Sudamérica era una de las muy pocas áreas del planeta que habían quedado, desde un punto de vista estrictamente bélico, al margen de la guerra. La región encontró entonces, principalmente en Europa, que había quedado devastada por el conflicto y con una masiva conversión de fábricas hacia la industria bélica, un espacio comercial ideal hacia el que podía exportar sus productos, tanto materias primas como productos refinados. Desafortunadamente para Sudamérica, la bonanza tuvo una vida corta: al recuperarse Europa al final de la década de 1950, en particular gracias a la creación de su mercado común, las economías de los países sudamericanos entraron en una importante crisis que los vio obligados a dirigir sus miradas económicas ya no al otro lado del Atlántico, sino mucho más cerca, entre los países cercanos, con una mayor apertura al mercado continental. Para fomentar de mejor manera los intercambios comerciales internos, la idea fue crear un área de libre comercio en el continente, con la CEE como posible ejemplo a seguir. Además, es importante recordar cómo el Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles

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1. La ALALC nace en 1960 acorde a una perspectiva (como dice el nombre) "latinoamericana", y no propiamente sudamericana, al ser México uno de sus miembros fundadores. Sin embargo, referirnos a ella es de gran importancia en el presente texto, pues, como se señalará más adelante, es posible considerarla como causa indirecta del comienzo de los procesos integradores de la región.

Aduaneros y Comercio, firmado en 1947, favorecía las uniones aduaneras en el mercado internacional.[2]

Tras originarse entonces en momentos históricos muy cercanos y de forma casi "propedéutica", pronto ambos procesos de integración llegan a tomar caminos muy diferentes. Europa sigue un camino integrador que podríamos llamar "lineal" y "evolutivo": nace, como vimos, con la CECA en 1951 (Tratado de París), seguida por la CEE en 1957 (Tratado de Roma); en 1992 la integración se amplía para añadir a lo económico el factor político y social, y nace así la Comunidad Europea en 1992 (Tratado de Maastricht); y se llega finalmente, por lo menos por ahora, a la Unión Europea como la conocemos hoy en día, creada en 2007 (Tratado de Lisboa). Podemos afirmar que en el camino europeo cada nueva institución es "evolución" y "ampliación" de la anterior, sin que existan importantes disoluciones o reducciones territoriales, a exclusión de la salida del Reino Unido (Brexit), que se efectivizó el 31 de enero de 2020.

Por su parte, Sudamérica sigue un camino integrador que quiero llamar "zigzagueante", hecho de altibajos, creaciones y destrucciones: primero la ALALC desde 1960 (Tratado de Montevideo) hasta su disolución en 1980; para protegerse de los desequilibrios internos, nace en 1969, entre los países más "débiles" de la ALALC, el Pacto Andino (Acuerdo de Cartagena) —desde 1996, Comunidad Andina de Naciones (CAN)—; frente al fracaso de la ALALC, transformada en Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI) en 1980, nace en 1991, con el Tratado de Asunción, el Mercado Común del Sur (Mercosur), con la intención de integrar y reforzar a los países del Cono Sur. Además, podríamos nombrar otros intentos integradores: la Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América-Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos (ALBA-TCP), creada en 2004 (Acuerdo de La Habana) para reunir a los países bajo la ideología del llamado socialismo del siglo XXI; la Unión de Naciones Sudamericanas (Unasur) en 2008 (Tratado de Brasilia), para crear una primera y real integración regional no ideológica, pero igualmente a la sombra de la ideología en aquel tiempo dominante, considerando que surgió de una propuesta del entonces presidente de Venezuela Hugo Chávez, y que sus principales organismos estaban localizados en países con, en ese entonces, un pensamiento afín: la Secretaría estaba localizada en Ecuador y el Par-

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2. "Cada uno de dichos territorios aduaneros será considerado como si fuera parte contratante, exclusivamente a los efectos de la aplicación territorial del presente Acuerdo…". Australia et al., *Acuerdo General sobre Aranceles Aduaneros y Comercio (GATT de 1947)*, abril de 1947, art. 24.

lamento, en Bolivia. Estos son solo algunos ejemplos, pero podríamos nombrar muchas más organizaciones no estrictamente orientadas a Sudamérica: ALCA, CELAC, Alianza del Pacífico, entre otras.

Del análisis anterior es fácil entender cómo las organizaciones regionales sudamericanas no resultan ser "evolutivas" ni "propedéuticas"; podríamos en cambio definirlas como organizaciones regionales de "defensa" o incluso de "oposición" recíproca con la finalidad de mitigar desequilibrios internos o contrarrestar posibles intervenciones (reales o supuestas) por parte de países externos a la región.

El "espejismo integrador": Los falsos límites a la integración

En la introducción a este artículo, señalé cómo la inconstancia, la "adolescencia" o el "zigzagueo" de la integración sudamericana se ha achacado generalmente a problemas y límites históricos que la región presenta. Hasta la actualidad, las políticas y los discursos se dedican a enfrentar estos límites en el intento de solucionarlos para caminar de forma más estable hacia una cooperación entre los países de la región. Sin embargo, como afirmé anteriormente, mi consideración es que estos límites "históricos" representan lo que yo defino un "espejismo integrador"; es decir, falsos molinos de viento que creemos ver en el camino y contra los que intentamos luchar como modernos Estados quijotescos. Lo que no vemos, sin embargo, es que estos "espejismos", a pesar de ser problemas reales, no ilusorios, en lugar de dificultar los procesos integradores podrían en cambio solucionarse justamente en virtud de la creación de una organización regional sudamericana seria, verdaderamente cooperativa, madura y duradera. Antes de seguir analizando los que considero verdaderos límites a la integración, deseo hacer un corto resumen de cuáles son estos "espejismos", para que podamos disolverlos y tener una mirada más clara de la realidad.

Primero, "somos culturas muy diferentes". Definimos a nuestros países y a nuestras culturas como "demasiado diversos" para cooperar, pero estas diversidades existen en la mayoría de regiones del mundo, a veces con rasgos muy marcados. En muchos casos, sin embargo, estas diferencias no han llevado a reflexiones sobre la imposibilidad de "mantener" la existencia del Estado nacional. Para disolver este espejismo es necesario dejar de ver a la región como "conjunto de Estados

nacionales" y comenzar a verla como una sola área naturalmente multicultural, considerando dicha multiculturalidad como una fuerza, y no como un obstáculo.

Segundo, "nuestras economías son extremadamente diversas e inestables". No lo niego, pero estas diferencias económicas pueden ser solventadas justamente por medio de una integración que sea verdaderamente cooperativa y solidaria, en la que los países no miren a su crecimiento económico nacional, sino a un crecimiento regional del que cada uno de ellos sea parte y beneficiario. Nuevamente, es imperativo el cambio de mirada de "nacional" a "regional" en beneficio de todos los países.

Tercero, y alineado al punto anterior, "existen demasiadas diferencias sociales entre nuestras poblaciones, algunas con mayor bienestar que otras". Políticas regionales coordinadas permitirían mitigarlas fuertemente, para posibilitar el acceso de los trabajadores a un mercado continental extremadamente mayor que el mercado nacional y aumentar la oferta laboral, al tiempo que permitiría a las empresas continentales la distribución de sus productos en un área y a una población mucho más extensa que la nacional, de manera que fomente fuertemente sus posibilidades de crecimiento y con ello las posibilidades de crecimiento del bienestar general de la población.

Cuarto, "algunos países u organizaciones extranjeros intervienen en nuestros procesos integradores, dividiéndonos y haciéndolos fracasar". Podríamos discutir hasta qué punto esto es cierto en la actualidad, pero en todo caso la cooperación regional permitiría presentarse fuera de las fronteras continentales como un único e importante actor de diálogo internacional, en lugar que como pequeños actores estatales, a menudo vulnerables. Así, aumentaría la capacidad de negociación frente a otros países u actores, lo que permitiría un diálogo mucho más paritario y beneficioso.

Finalmente, "las crisis sociales regionales aumentan los desacuerdos entre los países y alejan aún más las voluntades integradoras". Este límite es particularmente ejemplificador si consideramos que estas crisis no pueden, de ninguna manera, encontrar su solución en las políticas nacionales. Tomando como ejemplo la crisis migratoria venezolana, nos resultará particularmente claro cómo cada política de limitación llevada a cabo por los Estados no hace más que aumentar la presión en las fronteras y, por ende, en la política nacional de los Estados limítrofes. Políticas coordinadas a nivel regional, en cambio, permitirían sin lugar a duda enfrentar estas situaciones de una forma mucho coordinada y, sobre todo, efectiva.

La realidad detrás del espejismo: Los verdaderos límites

El apartado anterior de este artículo nos permitió disolver ese "espejismo integrador" basado en factores "canónicos" y sin embargo falaces de limitaciones a la integración, y nos otorgó la capacidad de ver la realidad de los hechos y de comenzar a analizar cuáles son los verdaderos impedimentos para un camino regional de integración sudamericana.

En primer lugar, es importante considerar la fuerza y relevancia que tienen los discursos de tipo nacionalista en el subcontinente. Se afirma muy a menudo, y yo mismo lo afirmé en este artículo, que Sudamérica posee una larga historia de integración, que muchos remontan hasta el personaje de Simón Bolívar, especialmente alrededor de la creación de la Gran Colombia y la idea de Patria Grande, término muy frecuente entre los Gobiernos, en particular del norte de la región. Sin embargo, estas pulsiones integracionistas han sido muy a menudo orientadas de una forma, a mi parecer, incorrecta, utilizando, para el contexto regional, discursos de tipo nacionalista, casi queriendo orientar las nacientes organizaciones regionales a un "nacionalismo sudamericano". El uso frecuente entre los Gobiernos de la región de términos como *patria*, *soberanía*, *antimperialismo* y el ya nombrado *Patria Grande* constituyen lo que yo defino discursos nacionalistas disfrazados con palabras integracionistas, que en lugar de orientarse hacia una profunda cooperación en el contexto global, desean "regionalizar" su nacionalismo, buscando evitar los antagonismos nacionales para reflejarlos en la esfera global.

Existe, entonces, una marcada tendencia en la región a integrarse o cooperar con el objetivo de defenderse de la influencia, sea política, económica o cultural, de otras áreas del planeta, en lugar de con la sola perspectiva de integrarnos "a favor de nosotros" y para fomentar nuestro crecimiento y nuestra capacidad de enfrentar con mucha mayor fuerza, determinación y sobre todo destreza los desafíos globales con los que es muy difícil lidiar individualmente como Estados. Además, es importante destacar la fuerte influencia que tienen sobre los procesos integradores regionales las ideologías políticas y económicas dominantes en la región, que hacen que las organizaciones regionales surjan ya en una sombra ideológica importante que llega, necesariamente y con el tiempo, a parcializarlas en el panorama internacional. Estos factores no constituyen y no pueden constituir bases sólidas de integración y cooperación: reflejar en la regionalidad ideales nacionalistas no hace más que man-

tener vivas nociones divisivas que pronto o tarde pueden fácilmente resurgir y llevar a la destrucción del proyecto cooperativo; de la misma manera, basar una integración en razones "defensivas de otros" —en lugar de simplemente "participativas entre nosotros"— y en ideologías temporales provoca que tanto los "adversarios internacionales" como los mismos principios fundantes tengan la fuerte tendencia a modificarse con el paso del tiempo, lo que obliga a las organizaciones regionales a cambiar sus objetivos o, más fácilmente, a disolverse para crear otras nuevas y más acordes con el cambio de "sentir" de los Gobiernos.

Las bases, entonces, no pueden ser ideológicas ni opositivas. Sudamérica necesita buscar fundamentos de integración propios y sólidos que la lleven hacia el entendimiento de que una falta de integración es simple y evidentemente inviable en un mundo siempre más tendiente, *nolens volens*, hacia la globalidad. En este contexto, tampoco es correcta la visión de otras experiencias, como la Unión Europea o la Asociación de Naciones del Sudeste Asiático, como modelos de integración: estas y otras realidades tuvieron orígenes muy propios y peculiares que hacen que se mantengan vivas pese a numerosas dificultades y errores. Dichas raíces no pueden ser aplicadas en su totalidad a Sudamérica, por lo que la región necesita seguir su propio camino integrador basado en unas raíces compartidas y cooperativas que le permitan caminar hacia delante de forma segura y pese a las naturales dificultades. Visualizar otras experiencias ha llevado al subcontinente sudamericano hacia el deseo de hacer "todo y ahora", queriendo alcanzar en muy poco tiempo una integración regional económica, política y social sin que existiese fundamento y concientización suficiente para ello. Esto llevó al fracaso, por ejemplo, de la Unasur.

Después de haber analizado problemas de fundamento que son propios de los Gobiernos y de su voluntad, es fundamental hablar, en segundo lugar, de los otros mayores actores de integración, cuya importancia es igual, por no decir superior, a la de los Gobiernos en este proceso: los ciudadanos. Una integración regional que se fundamente en los aspectos políticos y económicos pero que no considere, o postergue, la conciencia y la integración de los ciudadanos está destinada a perecer o por lo menos a sufrir fuertemente, ya que los cambios de Gobiernos se originan en los ciudadanos y sus ideas, y si somos nosotros, como individuos, los primeros en no creer en estos proyecto, no son ni pueden ser sustentables. Debe existir una educación hacia los ciudadanos de la región que, libre de ideologías, tienda a la globalidad, mostrando a Sudamérica no con la retórica de un territorio "resiliente" pese a las

adversidades, sino como uno que necesita, puede y debe aprovechar las enormes oportunidades que posee para brillar en el escenario internacional en conjunto con las otras áreas del planeta.

Lamentablemente, existe en Sudamérica —y este es un pecado común a muchas organizaciones regionales dentro y fuera del continente— una falta de participación real y sobre todo de "vivencia" de aquellas organizaciones regionales que ya existen: en realidad, la participación de los ciudadanos se limita de forma casi exclusiva a la elección de sus representantes en el Parlamento Andino (en el caso de la CAN) o del Parlasur (en el caso del Mercosur), pero la vida de los individuos sigue estando dominada de forma exclusiva, o esta es por lo menos la percepción, por las decisiones tomadas a nivel nacional, lo que resulta en un desconocimiento y por ende en un desinterés hacia las instituciones regionales. Por otro lado, existe una importante falta de "integración de los ciudadanos" en la región: el anhelo turístico, estudiantil o laboral de muchos sudamericanos no es interno sino externo, hacia áreas como Estados Unidos o Europa, entre otros. Esto provoca un intercambio cultural dentro del subcontinente mucho más reducido de lo que podría y debería ser, y por ende dificulta la conformación de una "identidad sudamericana" que no se base en una "historia común" sino en un "presente común" de crecimiento y desarrollo. Crear políticas de liberalización de la aviación y reducción de las tarifas a través de la competencia, y eliminar completamente (y no de modo parcial, como en realidad ocurre) las barreras fronterizas entre los países de la región y los requisitos de residencia, trabajo y estudios para sus ciudadanos serían factores capaces de fomentar fuertemente el movimiento interno y la creación de una "conciencia colectiva" sudamericana a través del conocimiento mutuo y del intercambio cultural del ciudadano individualmente considerado.

Finalmente, es también de gran importancia recalcar cómo algunos Gobiernos han intentado crear una "conciencia sudamericana" entre los ciudadanos, con fundamento en cuestiones históricas como el drama común de la colonización o la fuerte influencia de la política estadounidense, que sin embargo no deben ni pueden ser factores de integración: si bien estos eventos existieron y fueron innegablemente dramáticos, no pueden seguir teniendo mayor influencia real, pues, si nos basáramos en ellos para crear nuestra "identidad regional", obtendríamos obvias "desconfianzas" internacionales hacia otros países y áreas, lo cual dificultaría la existencia de un diálogo serio y sobre todo paritario dentro y fuera de la región.

De la adolescencia a la madurez

Los problemas analizados en el apartado anterior, pese a no ser ciertamente fáciles de enfrentar, poseen todos una misma característica: su solución no depende de factores o coyunturas externas, ni de voluntades ajenas a la región, sino únicamente de la voluntad de los Gobiernos de superarlos[3] en búsqueda de una verdadera integración sudamericana. Tomar las medidas necesarias para solucionarlos y salir de esa "adolescencia integradora" será entonces decisión exclusiva de los Gobiernos y voluntad de sus pueblos, formados ya no en una "anacrónica" nacionalidad sino en una "presente" regionalidad. Para hacerlo, en esta última sección me permito sugerir algunas acciones concretas para progresar hacia una integración regional verdaderamente cooperativa y duradera.

Es necesaria una fuerte voluntad política de los Estados nacionales de la región para, en primer lugar, cooperar de forma más estrecha entre sí en la definición de políticas económicas y sociales en beneficio de todos. Más adelante, esta cooperación deberá, en mi opinión, traducirse en disposición para ceder parte de su soberanía a una entidad política regional supranacional, que sea un espacio no solo de diálogo, sino también de toma de decisiones vinculantes.[4] Desde mi perspectiva, no puede existir integración sin supranacionalidad, ciertamente no a largo plazo: mantener la toma de decisiones en el exclusivo ámbito estatal, aun por medio de un constante diálogo, condena a las organizaciones regionales a ser víctimas de las necesidades, las visiones y los objetivos propios de cada uno de sus Estados miembros, con lo que pierde fácilmente de vista la visión de conjunto necesaria para el progreso de la región.

Dicha voluntad estatal se tiene que plasmar en un cambio de discurso por parte de los Gobiernos, renunciando al uso y a la importancia de palabras

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3. En este sentido es importante una aclaración: al señalar la importancia de la existencia de una fuerte voluntad gubernamental, no quiero decir que no exista una "voluntad integradora", que la hay, y en ocasiones es presente "hasta el exceso". El problema, desde mi consideración, es que es una voluntad de integración basada en el beneficio del Estado dentro del proyecto integrador y no en un beneficio comunitario del conjunto de Estados de la región.
4. Con lo señalado no deseo afirmar que no existen intentos de supranacionalidad (en realidad los hay, especialmente en el ámbito de la CAN). Lo que afirmo es que dichos intentos resultan ser permanentemente muy débiles: la misma supranacionalidad, en lugar de estar en manos de entidades "superiores" a los Estados, capaces de tomar decisiones "por ellos", está en cambio vinculada a una aceptación estatal de los países miembros, lo que la convierte en una "toma de decisiones compartida" siempre dependiente de la inconstante voluntad gubernamental.

excluyentes como *soberanía*, *independencia*, *liberación* e *imperialismo* para sustituirlas por conceptos incluyentes como *decisiones compartidas*, *interdependencia* y *diálogo*, *crecimiento* y *cooperación interna y externa*. Tenemos entonces que orientarnos hacia una liberación de las ideologías en el proceso integrador, buscando y encontrando bases comunes y estables de crecimiento y cooperación, en particular entendiendo que la individualidad estatal condena a casi cualquier país a la insignificancia global y a la fácil influencia de otros poderes, mientras que una presentación comunitaria fuera de las fronteras subcontinentales permite sentarse a las mesas de diálogo internacionales como pares. En un regionalismo "sano" y "maduro" pueden existir ideologías diferentes, e incluso opuestas, que no tienen por qué minar la cooperación, si esta encuentra bases estables. En esta búsqueda de fundamentos, es importante recordar que la integración regional, en el siglo XXI y en los próximos tiempos, no es una opción, sino una necesidad: pensar en enfrentar problemas internacionales que involucran a la mayoría de países de la región e incluso del globo —y que muy a menudo tienen su raíz en un país ajeno al propio, como el cambio climático o las migraciones—, de una forma y con soluciones de tipo nacional, es simplemente inconsistente. Corresponde a un sistema de gestión internacional anacrónico y caduco, y que por ello necesita de importantes modificaciones.

Lo afirmé anteriormente: si bien las iniciativas integracionistas tienen que comenzar desde una firme voluntad de los Gobiernos, no pueden permitirse el lujo de dejar a un lado la participación activa y el "sentir" de sus ciudadanos, quienes tienen que convertirse en actores protagonistas de esta evolución política. Para hacerlo, el primer paso inmediato para nuestros países es fomentar una educación orientada desde el nivel escolar hacia la globalidad. Es primordial enseñar a los jóvenes ciudadanos la importancia de la existencia de una entidad regional sudamericana capaz de superar las fronteras nacionales, de proponerse en el contexto global como *unicum* internacional y de encontrar en las otras áreas globales —y sobre todo en "pares" regionales— no enemigos contra los que luchar o de quien defenderse, sino amigos con los que cooperar de forma más sólida, estable y fructífera.

El objetivo de esta educación debe ser entonces la formación de "ciudadanos sudamericanos en Sudamérica", en lugar de "ciudadanos nacionales en un continente de Estados". Para hacerlo es necesario fomentar fuertemente la movilidad entre países, especialmente de estudiantes y trabajadores, y el consiguiente intercambio cultural, por medio de proyectos dedicados a nivel regional. Esta conciencia es de vital importancia para que una naciente orga-

nización regional sudamericana sea no solo aceptada, sino también promovida por los ciudadanos. Un claro ejemplo surge del continente europeo, en donde la reducida existencia de dicha conciencia en algunos países[5] puede ser considerada como uno de los factores que pone en crisis actualmente el sistema Europa, a partir del resurgimiento de movimientos nacionalistas y soberanistas que abogan por un retorno a una realidad continental más débil en la que vuelvan a ser protagonistas los Estados nacionales.

Finalmente, es también importante recalcar la importancia de no ver a la Unión Europea como "modelo" o "ejemplo a seguir". Como afirmé anteriormente, la Unión Europea nace de bases e ideales que surgen de su historia y cuya fuerza se relaciona, entre otros factores, con la necesidad de no volver a trágicos eventos, en especial del siglo XX, que traumatizaron al continente y a los que la superación de los nacionalismos y de los individualismos entre países era, y es, la única solución. Ciertamente, es un modelo que, pese a sus evidentes dificultades (en ocasiones muy fuertes), perdura y se mantiene exitoso tanto interna como (y me atrevería a decir sobre todo) externamente. De esta forma, ver a la Unión Europea sería útil solo para ayudarnos a entender que la cooperación y la integración regionales son mucho más ventajosas para cada uno de los Estados que su presentación individual en el panorama internacional. Sin embargo, los Gobiernos sudamericanos y quienes nos dedicamos a la investigación en estos temas tenemos la tarea de contribuir a la búsqueda de un "modelo sudamericano de integración" con sus propias raíces solidarias, cooperativas y, por ello, fuertes y duraderas.

Es entonces fundamental en este camino entender la necesidad de caminar con pasos pequeños y evitar ese deseo, esa ambición o ese entusiasmo adolescente de hacer "todo y ahora". El camino integrador no puede comenzar ya crecido, con una cooperación económica, política y social sin un paciente camino previo que contribuya a la formulación de políticas y a la creación de una conciencia ciudadana, fundamentales para que la transición de lo nacional a lo regional sea lo más aceptada y entendida posible: los Gobiernos de Sudamérica, en lugar de querer trasplantar troncos inmensos en un terreno que no está listo para ellos, tienen que preferir plantar pequeñas semillas que, con el tiempo y procesos hechos de constancia y determinación, puedan finalmente convertirse en esos firmes y fructíferos árboles. Bajo esta óptica, es importante retomar y profundizar procesos integradores duraderos que aún hoy

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5.   Comisión Europea, *Standard Eurobarometer 91: Results* (Bruselas: Comisión Europea, 2019).

en día existen, en vez de crear sustitutos desde cero. La CAN y el Mercosur son organizaciones importantes, serias y complejas que podrían armonizarse y profundizarse para crear un sistema de cooperación estrecha entre sí y llegar incluso a una entidad "regionalmente federal" que sea una suma de los dos.

Conclusiones

A lo largo de mis estudios académicos, que iniciaron en Italia con el análisis de la integración europea, y de mis once años de vida en Ecuador y de análisis de los procesos de integración de Sudamérica, he llegado a la firme conclusión de que en la actualidad esta es la región global con las mayores y más concretas posibilidades de dar vida a una entidad regional sólida, duradera, verdaderamente cooperativa y, por supuesto, muy relevante en el contexto global. Esto lo afirmo al observar su historia, su deseo integrador, su conciencia común y sus posibilidades económicas y geográficas, que solo se verían inmensamente amplificadas, potenciadas y mejor aprovechadas por medio de su cooperación a nivel regional. Las dificultades señaladas en este artículo podrán parecer muy complejas de superar; sin embargo, la buena noticia es esa característica común que todas ellas tienen y que señalaba en el apartado anterior: su solución depende exclusivamente de una voluntad integradora de los Gobiernos de la región que se transforme con rapidez en un deseo integrador por parte de sus ciudadanos.

La adolescencia integradora sudamericana perdura, en mi opinión, hasta el día de hoy. No obstante, el camino regional hacia la cooperación —hecho de aciertos y desaciertos, creaciones y destrucciones, pero esencialmente de experiencia— nos señala que ha llegado la hora de salir de esa adolescencia para caminar con paso firme y convencido hacia una seria, duradera, cooperativa y ventajosa integración de los países. Para llegar entonces a una anhelada madurez, lo que se necesita es voluntad estatal, conciencia popular y paciencia creadora. Concluyo citando, y permitiéndome modificar ligeramente, una parte de la famosa Declaración Schuman de 1950, considerada el acto fundacional de la CECA, primer ejemplo de integración regional europea: Sudamérica "no se hará de una vez ni en una obra de conjunto: se hará gracias a realizaciones concretas, que creen en primer lugar una solidaridad de hecho".

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Una integración que no integra: Una mirada a la experiencia energética en la Unasur

An Integration that Does Not Integrate: A Look at the Energy Experience at Unasur

*Yessenia Paola Briones** ⒾⒹ

Resumen

Dada la importancia estratégica de la energía en el incremento de la productividad y en el mejoramiento del estándar de vida de una sociedad, en años recientes los proyectos de integración de América del Sur han incorporado a este recurso como un elemento esencial para el desarrollo. De hecho, con la firma del tratado de constitución de la Unasur, en 2008, empezó una estrategia regional con miras a institucionalizar el régimen energético para involucrar a todos los países ya partícipes dentro de este esquema. Sin embargo, la región no ha sido capaz de transitar de las declaraciones oficiales hacia la implementación de políticas. Así, en el presente artículo se argumenta que existen tres obstáculos que convergen y persisten en el regionalismo sudamericano: flexibilidad institucional, heterogeneidad en los márgenes de agencia y superposición de organismos regionales. Asimismo, en el marco de la disolución de la Unasur, se ofrecen algunas perspectivas para el proyecto energético en la región.

Palabras clave: integración, Unasur, intergubernamentalismo, infraestructura energética, cooperación bilateral, política

Abstract

Given the strategic importance of energy in increasing productivity and improving the standard of living of a society; In recent years, integration projects in South America have incorporated this resource as an essential element for development. In fact, with

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the signing of the Unasur constitution treaty, in 2008, a regional strategy began with a view to institutionalizing the energy regime to involve all countries that are already participants in this scheme. However, the region has not been able to move from official statements to policy implementation. Thus, in this article it is argued that there are three obstacles that converge and persist in South American regionalism: institutional flexibility, heterogeneity in the margins of agency and overlapping of regional organizations. Likewise, within the framework of the dissolution of Unasur, some perspectives are offered for the energy project in the region.

Keywords: integration, Unasur, intergovernmentalism, energy infrastructure, bilateral cooperation, politics

La energía en el sueño integracionista sudamericano

La conformación y el fortalecimiento de esquemas de integración regional suscitan gran interés para los Estados, por la posibilidad de maximizar sus beneficios económicos y mejorar su competitividad a nivel internacional. De esta forma, los estudios sobre la dinámica política y económica de los procesos de regionalización se derivan de dos enfoques de las relaciones internacionales: el funcionalismo y el neofuncionalismo. Bajo estas perspectivas, se trata de explicar cómo y por qué los Estados ceden ciertos atributos de su soberanía, al tratar de articularse voluntariamente con sus vecinos,[1] al tiempo que adquieren nuevas técnicas para resolver sus conflictos. No obstante, la realidad sudamericana parece distar de esta perspectiva.

En la práctica, las experiencias en este sentido no han sido capaces de lograr esta característica en sus esquemas de integración y, en su mayoría, estos han tenido una orientación fundamentalmente económica, a partir del supuesto de que a través de este tipo de modelo se podría avanzar en aspectos más complejos como el político.[2] No obstante, en la región existe una asidua competencia comercial, tanto por la similitud de los productos a ofertar como por los esfuerzos que destinan para lograr su permanencia en el mercado.

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2. Milko González, "Nuevas perspectivas de la integración energética en América del Sur: ¿Cambios paradigmáticos", en *El factor energético y las perspectivas de integración en América del Sur*, coord. Kurt-Peter Schütt y Flavio Carucci (Caracas: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, 2008).

A diferencia de los otros sectores de la economía, en el energético, la región presenta altos grados de sinergia y complementariedad, tanto en la oferta como en la demanda. Sin embargo, existe una marcada diferencia en el manejo de los recursos, acentuado por una dirección estatista en ciertos países y una más privada en otros, lo que frena la posibilidad de aumentar la producción a causa del uso de políticas y regulaciones muy abiertas o cerradas en el sector.

Lo anterior hace necesario un marco regulatorio común a fin de concretar, a nivel regional, una estrategia energética para aumentar el comercio, mejorar el suministro y ofrecer seguridad jurídica y un ambiente favorable para la inversión. En este contexto, diversos mecanismos, como la Comunidad Andina (CAN)[3] y el Mercado Común del Sur (Mercosur),[4] lograron numerosos avances en acuerdos bilaterales de cooperación energética. Por su parte, la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (Unasur)[5] se planteó la integración energética como uno de los ejes principales de la estrategia en esta materia: la seguridad energética de los países de la región.[6] Dentro de los planteamientos se establecieron como pilares fundamentales el Consejo Energético Suramericano (CES), el Tratado Energético Suramericano (TES) y la construcción de infraestructura regional.

No obstante, esta aparente voluntad política de la región, a veinte años de la Declaración de Brasilia,[7] generó que los resultados en esta materia nunca pasaran de las declaraciones oficiales. Ante la próxima disolución de la Unasur, la cuestión energética se desarrolla en un espacio políticamente fragmentado.

Debido a ello, el presente artículo pretende analizar los principales obstáculos que imposibilitan el desarrollo de un proyecto energético en América del Sur. Con este fin, se parte de la premisa de que el diseño y la estructura de las instituciones, las preferencias gubernamentales y la superposición en los esquemas de integración tienen un impacto negativo en la consecución de un regionalismo en esta materia. En dicho marco, el trabajo se divide en cinco partes.

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3. Lo conforman Colombia, Ecuador, Perú y Bolivia.
4. Integrado por Argentina, Brasil, Paraguay y Uruguay.
5. Al momento de escribir este artículo lo conforman Venezuela, Guyana y Surinam. Bolivia se encuentra en un proceso de readhesión al esquema.
6. Victorio Oxilia y María Emma Mejía, *Unasur: Un espacio que consolida la integración energética* (Quito: Unasur / OLADE, 2012), 4-12.
7. Fue llevada a cabo en el año 2000 en la capital brasileña, y es considerada la primera reunión de presidentes sudamericanos en la que se propusieron lineamientos para llevar a cabo una integración de tipo político, social y económico en la región.

La primera realiza un recuento de las principales acciones energéticas en los esquemas de integración vigentes y sitúa en este contexto la propuesta de la Unasur. La segunda parte analiza la presencia del intergubernamentalismo como parte de la debilidad institucional en los esquemas de integración regional. La tercera describe la figura presidencial y las preferencias estatales en los proyectos regionales, en especial el energético. La cuarta observa la superposición en los esquemas regionales. Finalmente, la quinta resalta los puntos principales de la investigación y establece distintas perspectivas a superar en Sudamérica.

De lo nacional a lo regional: La experiencia energética en Sudamérica

La región sudamericana tiene importantes reservas de recursos energéticos y un enorme potencial de fuentes de energía alternativas. La región posee el 25 % del potencial hidroeléctrico mundial y el 4,1 % de las reservas probadas de gas natural.[8]

Estas circunstancias, sumadas a la complementariedad económica, están entre los argumentos más pesados para la promoción de la integración energética regional como la posibilidad de planificar el uso de los recursos de manera integrada, lo que a su vez permitiría emprender proyectos regionales ambiciosos que un solo país no podría hacer en la búsqueda de su seguridad energética.

Como se describió en la introducción, la Unasur establece la consecución de la seguridad energética a nivel regional a través de la cooperación e integración en este ámbito. Sin embargo, la seguridad energética, entendida por Yergin como "la garantía de suministros adecuados y confiables a un precio razonable de manera que no se pongan en peligro los objetivos nacionales",[9] es un objetivo que prioriza la política interna (respecto a oferta y demanda) y la agenda nacional, por lo que es difícil entender cómo podría extrapolarse a nivel regional.

La Agencia Internacional de Energía define la seguridad energética como "la disponibilidad ininterrumpida de fuentes de energía a un precio asequible" y propone un modelo global para interpretarlo tanto en el corto como en el largo plazo: "[A] largo plazo se ocupa principalmente de inversiones oportunas para suministrar energía en consonancia con la evolución económica y

8. British Petroleum, *Statistical Review of World Energy* (Londres: British Petroleum, 2016), 8.
9. Daniel Yergin, "Ensuring Energy Security", *Foreign Affairs* 85, n.° 2 (2006): 72, https://doi.org/10.2307/20031912.

las necesidades medioambientales [...], y a corto plazo se centra en la capacidad del sistema energético para reaccionar rápidamente a los cambios repentinos en el equilibrio entre la oferta y la demanda".[10]

En este sentido, la estrategia de corto plazo podría resolverse de manera autónoma, mientras que la planificación energética de largo plazo sería un proceso en el cual los objetivos, las políticas y las estrategias de inversión permitan a los países una reducción en los costos de acceso a la energía, una mayor estabilidad regulatoria y una mayor competitividad en el mercado.

Por su parte, el término *integración* puede significar proximidad geográfica y mutua dependencia económica,[11] pero en palabras de Bela Balassa, "en la teoría [...] aún no existe un concepto claro".[12] Sin embargo, podemos acercarnos a que es un proceso que "involucra al menos a dos países y que tiene como objetivo promover la industria energética regional a través de una instalación permanente y con base en un convenio específico".[13]

Entonces, se vuelve un proceso multifacético y dinámico, que no solo comprende un tema de infraestructura sectorial, sino que también involucra secciones políticas, institucionales, económicas, sociales y ambientales.[14]

En el caso de los países de América del Sur, existen varias experiencias de cooperación energética[15] tanto en hidroelectricidad como en gas natural. Por un lado, desde los años 70 se han construido alrededor de 35 centrales hidroeléctricas, de las cuales Itaipú (1973),[16] Salto Grande (1979) y Yacyretá (1998) cuentan con la mayor capacidad de toda la región.[17]

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10. Agencia Internacional de Energía, "Energy Security: Reliable, Affordable Access to All Fuels and Energy Sources", *International Energy Agency*, accedido 13 de marzo de 2023, párr. 4, https://bit.ly/3Lnv8rA.

11. Milena Olivares, "Regionalismo e integración suramericana: Análisis de la Unasur", *Estado & Comunes. Revista de Políticas y Problemas Públicos* 1, n.° 4 (2017), https://doi.org/10.37228/estado_comunes.v1.n4.2017.46.

12. Bela Balassa, *Teoría de la integración económica* (Ciudad de México: Unión Tipográfica Editorial Hispano-Americana, 1980), 7-45.

13. Victorio Oxilia, en Thauan dos Santos, "Furthering Regional Energy Security instead of National Approaches", *Revista de Economía del Caribe* 22 (2018): 28, https://bit.ly/3TfLbd5.

14. Thauan dos Santos, "Regional Energy Security Goes South: Examining Energy Integration in South America", *Energy Research & Social Science* 76 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2021.102050.

15. En este trabajo se entiende la cooperación energética como un proceso previo o intermedio al proceso de integración regional. Thauan dos Santos, "Regional Energy Security: Re-Evaluating Concepts and Policies to Promote Energy Integration in Mercosur" (tesis doctoral, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, 2018), 48, https://bit.ly/3mUFwwA.

16. Está emplazada en el río Paraná y es considerada la segunda represa más grande del mundo, solo superada por la Tres Gargantas, de China.

17. Ariela Ruiz, *Puntos de conflicto de la cooperación e integración energética en América Latina y el Caribe* (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, 2010), 28.

En esta época, la construcción de los proyectos hidroeléctricos era más de índole binacional y, aunque no se aprovechó todo el potencial de los beneficios asociados al uso compartido de tales recursos, tal intención resultó una alternativa al uso del petróleo, luego del *shock* de la década de 1970.[18]

Figura 1
Interconexiones hidroeléctricas en América del Sur

Elaboración propia a partir de Lambertini (2016).[19]

Adicionalmente, esta etapa dejó los primeros componentes de una infraestructura de transmisión de electricidad y una importante experiencia de relación entre los operadores nacionales de los sistemas.

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18. Comunidad Andina de Fomento, *Nuevas oportunidades de interconexión eléctrica en América Latina* (Bogotá: CAF, 2012), 7-63.
19. Griselda Lambertini, *Estudio sobre convenios bilaterales que soportan las interconexiones energéticas en América del Sur* (Buenos Aires: Organización Latinoamericana de Energía, 2016).

Por otro lado, el mercado gasífero regional tuvo su primer intercambio transfronterizo, entre Argentina y Bolivia, en el municipio Juana Azurduy en 1972, con una capacidad de 27 000 millones de metros cúbicos diarios (27 MM m³/d).[20] Bolivia también exporta a Brasil a través de dos gasoductos inaugurados en 1999 y 2002, respectivamente; el Gasoducto de Bolivia (Gasbol) es el de mayor capacidad de Sudamérica, con 30 MM m³/d.[21]

Figura 2
Interconexiones de gas natural en América del Sur

Elaboración propia a partir de Sabatella (2018).[22]

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20. Roberto Kozulj, *Situación y perspectivas del gas natural licuado en América del Sur* (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, 2008), 9.
21. Ignacio Sabatella, "¿GNL vs. gasoductos?: Tensiones en el proceso sudamericano de integración gasífera", *Ciclos* 25, n.° 51 (2018), https://bit.ly/404wkUV.
22. Ibíd.

Así, en la década de los 90 se construyó la mayor cantidad de gasoductos destinados a la exportación: siete, por ejemplo, entre Argentina y Chile, con Gas Andes como el de mayor capacidad (10 MM m³/d). Luego, como parte de una estrategia de abastecimiento y de valorización del gas, Colombia y Venezuela suscribieron la creación del gasoducto Transcaribeño en 2003. Este permite la exportación desde la Guajira hasta Maracaibo, con una capacidad de 4,2 MM m³/d.[23]

Estas experiencias nacionales y binacionales permitieron el posterior aprovechamiento de la CAN y del Mercosur para fructificar este espacio con el objetivo de desarrollar un mercado energético regional.[24]

En este ámbito, la decisión más importante en la CAN se dio con la aprobación de la Decisión 536, en 2002.[25] Con este marco normativo se inauguró, en 2003, la interconexión eléctrica Colombia-Ecuador, con una capacidad de 250 *megawatts* (MW) y, en 2008, se agregó una nueva línea que alcanzaba una capacidad de 500 MW.[26] Luego, en 2004, mediante el Diálogo Presidencial sobre el Futuro del Proceso Andino de Integración en Sudamérica[27] se acordó impulsar el establecimiento de interconexiones gasíferas y eléctricas y se crearon alianzas energéticas entre Petrosur, Petroandina y Petrocaribe.[28] La Deci-

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23. Kozulj, *Situación y perspectivas del gas natural licuado*, 10.
24. Ariela Ruiz, *Cooperación e integración energética en América Latina y el Caribe* (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, 2006), 51.
25. El *Marco general para la interconexión subregional de sistemas eléctricos e intercambio intracomunitario de electricidad* se convirtió en el primer marco jurídico para impulsar el desarrollo energético de sus miembros. Su diseño asume que las interconexiones de los sistemas eléctricos se deben basar en una serie de reglas, plasmadas en el art. 1, que establecen la no discriminación de precios, el libre acceso a líneas de interconexión, la coordinación de mercados, contratos intracomunitarios de carácter comercial y el aseguramiento de condiciones competitivas en el mercado de electricidad. Además, se permiten transacciones internacionales de corto plazo en las que se procura mantener la participación de la inversión privada en el desarrollo de la infraestructura para las interconexiones. Por otro lado, los países miembros no concederán ningún tipo de subsidios a las exportaciones e importaciones de electricidad. Para más información ver Comunidad Andina, *Marco general para la interconexión subregional de sistemas eléctricos e intercambio intracomunitario de electricidad* (Lima: CAN, 2002), 7.
26. Comisión de Integración Energética Regional, en Adriana Cadena, "La integración en energía eléctrica entre los países de la Comunidad Andina: Análisis, obstáculos y desafíos", *Revista Tempo do Mundo* 1, n.° 2 (2015): 36, https://bit.ly/3ZLrhc2.
27. Fue la decimoquinta reunión del Consejo Presidencial Andino de la CAN, en la que se desarrollaron las declaraciones sobre el establecimiento de una zona de paz en la región andina y el tratamiento de las drogas.
28. En Petrosur se agrupan Argentina, Brasil y Uruguay. Petroandina está pensada para los países de la CAN. El nacimiento de Petrocaribe, por su parte, fue suscrito por catorce países de la región caribeña. Ruiz, *Cooperación e integración energética*.

sión 720 estableció la nueva visión de la CAN y puso en marcha la Agenda de la Nueva Estrategia Energética Andina, que tendría como prioridad la integración energética. Así, en abril de 2011 se constituyó el Sistema de Interconexión Eléctrica Andina y, mediante la Declaración de Galápagos,[29] se estableció la creación de un corredor eléctrico andino.

Los miembros del Mercosur poseen una importante experiencia en cooperación energética, pues desarrollan desde hace más de treinta años varios proyectos comunes que les han permitido agrupar los sistemas eléctricos e intercambios de energía. Aunque dichas experiencias son previas a la conformación de este esquema de integración, sus países impulsan el emprendimiento de proyectos hidroeléctricos y gasíferos. Algunas de las decisiones más importantes del Tratado de Asunción son el Protocolo de Ouro Preto y la resolución 32/98,[30] el Memorándum de Entendimiento Relativo a los Intercambios Eléctricos e Integración Eléctrica en el Mercosur (Decisión 10/98)[31] y el Memorándum de Entendimiento Relativo a los Intercambios Gasíferos e Integración Gasífera entre los Estados Parte del Mercosur (Decisión 10/99).[32]

De esta forma, la Unasur establecería el primer esfuerzo para renovar esta visión de integración sudamericana. Con la Declaración de Brasilia de 2000 y la Declaración de Cuzco de 2004, se decidió crear un espacio que permitiera el impulso de la integración sobre las bases de la profundización de las experiencias bilaterales ya existentes.

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29. De 1989, reunió a los presidentes de la época a fin de discutir temas de paz, seguridad y cooperación.
30. En ella se establecen el fomento del libre mercado, la libre contratación, la garantía de suministro, la no discriminación entre productores y consumidores, intercambios internacionales, tarifas reguladas, criterios de seguridad y calidad, el acceso a la información y la elaboración de estudios de vialidad. Para un estudio más amplio acerca de esta decisión, ver Gerardo Honty, "Energía en Sudamérica: Una integración que no integra", *Nueva Sociedad* 204 (2006), https://bit.ly/3JDktYE.
31. En ella, los Estados miembro acordaron comprometerse a abrir la competencia en el mercado de generación; sujetarse a reglas de libre comercio; asegurar la reciprocidad y no discriminación de la demanda u oferta que provenga de otro país firmante del acuerdo; prever la libertad para el tránsito, el transporte y la distribución de la energía de y para terceros países; perfeccionar las herramientas para la defensa de la competencia, y asegurar el acceso a la información relevante para el funcionamiento del mercado. Ibíd., 125.
32. En ella se acordó fomentar la competitividad del mercado de producción de gas natural y asegurar que los precios y tarifas de los servicios asociados a la compra y venta de gas natural (tales como transporte, distribución y almacenaje) respondan en sus respectivos mercados a costos económicos, sin subsidios directos o indirectos que puedan afectar la competitividad de los bienes exportables y el libre comercio de los Estados parte. Ibíd.

Para 2007, en el marco de la I Cumbre Energética Suramericana, se destacaron el potencial, las capacidades y las experiencias públicas y privadas, para impulsar operaciones e identificar áreas comunes, además de proyectos que pudieran desarrollar empresas de la región.[33]

Para coordinar tales políticas se acordó la conformación del CES, el cual tendría como objetivo elaborar un plan de acción para el objetivo de integración, los lineamientos para esta estrategia y el TES. Estos tendrían que expresar la necesidad de realizar acuerdos que fomenten los intercambios y contribuyan al abastecimiento, al desarrollo de la industria y al fortalecimiento de la infraestructura regional, al tiempo que plasmarían la necesidad de congruencia en la voluntad política de las partes para lograr los objetivos establecidos.

Tremenda complejidad incrementó las dificultades para el logro de la integración en esta industria, especialmente por tener que realizar una transformación a nivel de regulación sectorial, instituciones regulatorias regionales e infraestructura energética.

El papel de la flexibilidad institucional en la integración regional

La corriente funcionalista es considerada por muchos como la concepción clásica de integración dentro de las relaciones internacionales. David Mitrany, en 1943, mediante su obra *A Working Peace System: An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organizations*, identificó que existen temas que sobrepasan los límites nacionales y a los cuales el Estado se muestra incapaz de dar solución. De esta forma, los funcionalistas abogan por el desarrollo de organizaciones con autoridad supranacional para que puedan cumplir las funciones a ellas asignadas.[34] Esta transferencia implica, a su vez, el crecimiento de interdependencia entre los participantes, lo cual, argumentaba Mitrany, sería beneficioso en términos de reducción de conflictos.

Para solucionar tal incapacidad, el autor propuso la creación de instituciones en las que no necesariamente participaran los Estados. Su argumento radica en que estas podrían ser más eficientes que el propio Estado nacional.

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33. Ruiz, *Puntos de conflicto*, 64.
34. En Edgar Vieira, "Evolución de las teorías sobre integración en el contexto de las teorías de relaciones internacionales", *Papel Político* 18 (2005), https://bit.ly/406KpRC.

Con ello, se establecería un sistema de creciente cooperación en áreas funcionales, lo que llevaría a un deseo de mayor cooperación en otras aristas y, por lo tanto, a un *efecto derrame*.

Tal concepto sería retomado por Ernst Haas en su libro *The Uniting Europe*, de 1958, donde intentó explicar que el desarrollo en la cooperación de un sector contagiaría a otros, por lo que habría una mayor integración. Para Haas, la integración debía ser un proceso caracterizado por este efecto derrame (*spill-over*)[35] y pasar del aspecto no político al político, o de lo no controvertido a lo controvertido;[36] en definitiva, la tesis de esta corriente propone pasar de lo económico y otros aspectos hacia una cooperación en materia política. Sin embargo, "la existencia de instituciones supranacionales no garantiza que en una región ocurra un proceso de integración. Se dan diversos modelos de integración y no todos gozan de acuerdos e instituciones supranacionales formales".[37]

En Sudamérica, las primeras iniciativas surgieron durante la década de 1970, como la Asociación Latinoamericana de Libre Comercio (ALALC), de 1960 —luego, Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI)—,[38] y el Pacto Andino, de 1969 —luego, CAN—, o las más recientes, como el Mercosur, en cuyo proceso de consolidación no ha habido cesión de soberanía a órganos comunes, requisito indispensable para hablar de integración de acuerdo con el paradigma funcionalista.[39]

De esta forma, se constituye en 2004 la Comunidad Suramericana de Naciones (CSN), reemplazada por la Unasur en 2007, con una agenda en la que primaría el diálogo político en áreas como el cuidado del medio ambiente, la integración física y energética, la superación de asimetrías, la promoción de la cohesión, entre otros.[40]

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35 El efecto *spill-over* es un concepto ampliamente utilizado en diferentes disciplinas. En este caso se emplea para referirse a que la coordinación en un aspecto desencadene una ola expansiva y contribuya positivamente en los demás sectores.

36 En Irene Rodríguez, "Funcionalismo, neofuncionalismo y relaciones internacionales: Dos contribuciones doctrinales al estudio de la organización internacional", *Dereito* 5, n.° 1 (1996), https://bit.ly/3ZJPP5p.

37 Aline Frambes, "Teorías sobre la integración aplicables a la unificación de los países latinoamericanos", *Política y Cultura* 2 (1993): 288, https://bit.ly/3Fmfw3A.

38 Lo integran Argentina, Bolivia, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, México, Panamá, Perú, Uruguay y Venezuela.

39 Paula Flores, "Integración y cooperación energética en los procesos de cooperación e integración de la región sudamericana" (tesis de licenciatura, Universidad de Chile, 2011), https://bit.ly/4028glx.

40. Comunidad Suramericana de Naciones, *Declaración de Cuzco*, 8 de diciembre de 2004, art. 1.

A pesar de las diferencias de su propuesta —por la primacía de lo político sobre lo económico—, en su tratado constitutivo se expone que sus instituciones son de carácter intergubernamental, bajo el supuesto de la importancia que tienen la soberanía, la autodeterminación de los pueblos y la no injerencia de externos en los asuntos nacionales.

Esta débil institucionalidad se compagina con la no especificación de plazos para concretar las metas planteadas por la organización y con el principio de unanimidad en la toma de decisiones. Así, se establece que "toda la normativa de Unasur se adoptará por consenso. [...] Cualquier Estado miembro podrá eximirse de aplicar total o parcialmente una política aprobada".[41] Por ello, todos los acuerdos adoptados por la organización solo serán obligatorios cuando hayan sido plenamente incorporados en el ordenamiento jurídico de cada Estado miembro, lo cual confiere a cada país el poder de vetar propuestas.

En cuanto a la máxima instancia de la Unasur, el Consejo de Jefes y Jefas de Estado y Gobierno está conformado por los presidentes y presidentas de los Estados miembros. A partir de su liderazgo, de aplicación *pro tempore*,[42] el Consejo es el responsable de establecer los lineamientos políticos y planes de acción durante su mandato.

De esta forma, dentro la estructura se encuentran distintos factores que permiten que la Unasur tenga una débil institucionalidad. Primero, el componente presidencialista dentro del Consejo de Jefas y Jefes de Estado, así como su funcionamiento, son el resultado de compromisos menos estatales y más centrados en la personalidad del estadista de turno.[43] Segundo, por el mismo diseño de sus instituciones, cada país tiene capacidad de veto, lo cual, en el regionalismo energético, inició una serie de tensiones bilaterales que directa o indirectamente involucraron a los Gobiernos venezolano y brasileño, por ser los mejor dotados en este sector a nivel regional.[44]

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41. Unasur, *Tratado constitutivo de la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas*, 23 de mayo de 2008, art. 12.
42. Esta presidencia rota anualmente por orden alfabético. Dentro de sus funciones, es capaz de preparar, convocar y presidir las reuniones de las instancias de la Unasur, presentar el programa anual de actividades y representar a la región a nivel internacional.
43. Sandra Borda, *Desafíos y oportunidades de la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (Unasur)* (Buenos Aires: Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales, 2012).
44. Stefano Palestini, "Energía de baja intensidad: Gobiernos, mercados e instituciones en el regionalismo energético de América del Sur", *Caderno CRH* 29, n.° 3 (2016): 113, http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0103-49792016000400008.

La figura presidencial en la Unasur

En 1998, la elección del presidente Hugo Chávez comenzó una sucesión de victorias electorales de partidos y coaliciones de izquierda en algunos países de la región. Estos Gobiernos se propusieron diversos programas basados en profundas reformas políticas para cuya realización era necesario un Estado capaz de apropiarse de la renta de los recursos naturales, en especial los energéticos, con el fin de reutilizarlos en iniciativas de orden social.[45]

Paralelamente, las economías de la región tuvieron un fuerte crecimiento económico y mostraron un saldo positivo en la balanza comercial, en especial debido al alza de los precios internacionales de las materias primas, tanto energéticas como no energéticas, a partir de 2004. Por ejemplo, el petróleo pasó de valer USD 30 por barril a USD 57 para el primer quinquenio de inicio de siglo, y de USD 66 a USD 95 en el segundo. Gracias a estos mayores ingresos, el producto interno bruto regional creció un 3,57 % anual, con un incremento anual del 10,6 % en las exportaciones y del 5,54 % en las importaciones. Para el quinquenio 2006-2011, el crecimiento saltó a un 13,86 % anual, con un 9,87 % y un 13,74 % de crecimiento anual para exportaciones e importaciones, respectivamente.[46]

Sin embargo, es importante recalcar que más allá de las similitudes entre los diferentes partidos y movimientos políticos en la región, hubo diferencias importantes en este aspecto. En algunos países se suscitaron reformas moderadas en el sector e, incluso, algunos asumieron la reestatización de sectores antes privatizados, la renegociación de contratos, aumentos de impuestos o la reducción de regalías;[47] y, aun cuando casi todas las constituciones de los países sudamericanos confirieron al Estado la propiedad de sus recursos, desde los inicios del proyecto ya existía una marcada diferencia en el nivel de control de estos.[48]

De tal manera, como se puede observar en la siguiente tabla, países como Venezuela, Ecuador y Bolivia evidenciaron una tendencia hacia el alto control estatal de sus recursos energéticos, lo cual significó que el ordenamien-

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45. Ibíd., 110.
46. CEPAL, *Balance preliminar de las economías de América Latina y el Caribe 2017* (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, 2018).
47. Henry Veltmeyer, "Economía política de la extracción de recursos naturales: ¿Nuevo modelo de desarrollo o imperialismo extractivo?", *Estudios Críticos del Desarrollo* 3, n.° 4 (2013): 16, https://bit.ly/3TefMaF.
48. Palestini, "Energía de baja intensidad", 111.

to jurídico nacional confiriera al Estado el control total de las actividades. Por ello, en 2001, Venezuela estableció que Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) tuviera la participación mayoritaria en la explotación de todos los pozos petroleros del país. Bolivia nacionalizó el gas y dejó el control del recurso en propiedad de Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales Bolivianos (YPFB). Ecuador, a través de una reforma petrolera, renegoció los contratos en el sector y otorgó mayor peso a Petroamazonas y Petroecuador. Por su parte, países como Argentina, Brasil, Uruguay y Paraguay tienen un control medio en sus sectores energéticos porque, aunque el Estado posee la propiedad de los recursos, permite la participación privada en la cadena de valor del sector.

Por su parte, Colombia, Chile y Perú mantuvieron una tendencia hacia una mayor participación del sector privado, por lo que han continuado con la trayectoria iniciada por las liberalizaciones de la década de 1990.

Tabla 1
**Nivel de control estatal de los recursos energéticos y divergencias
en las posturas gubernamentales de algunos países de la región**

Nivel alto	Nivel medio	Nivel bajo
• Venezuela (Hugo Chávez, 1998-2013) • Ecuador (Rafael Correa, 2007-2017) • Bolivia (Evo Morales, 2006-2019)	• Argentina (Néstor Kirchner, 2003-2007; Cristina Fernández, 2007-2015) • Brasil (Lula da Silva, 2003-2011) • Uruguay (Tabaré Vázquez, 2005-2010; José Mujica, 2010-2015; Tabaré Vázquez, 2015-2020) • Paraguay (Fernando Lugo, 2008-2012) • Chile (Michel Bachelet, 2006-2010 y 2014-2018)	Colombia (Álvaro Uribe, 2002-2010) Perú (Alan García 2006-2011; Ollanta Humala, 2011-2016)
Postura izquierdista radical	**Postura intermedia**	**Postura abierta, pero participativos**

Elaboración propia a partir de Palestini (2016) y Stoessel (2014).[49]

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49. Palestini, "Energía de baja intensidad"; Soledad Stoessel, "Giro a la izquierda en la América Latina del siglo XXI: Revisitando los debates académicos", *Polis* 39 (2014): 125, https://bit.ly/3ZJlHac.

Esta divergencia en el manejo de los recursos energéticos en una época de transición hacia la izquierda revela que, desde el principio del proyecto de la Unasur, ya existían marcadas diferencias en cuanto a su administración. En este contexto es difícil que emerja el pragmatismo requerido para que la integración regional avance, pues los Gobiernos tienen márgenes de agencia diferenciados para implementar políticas de cooperación.

Ahora, como resultado de la institucionalidad de este esquema, la diplomacia presidencial se convirtió en el principal recurso que permitió —al menos en los primeros años— avances sustanciales en las decisiones dentro del esquema. Esta característica facilitó entre 2008 y 2011 encontrar salidas alternativas a los conflictos, basadas en procesos democráticos y pacíficos, lo cual otorgó a la Unasur un mayor impulso político durante el período.[50]

A la vez, el margen de maniobra que los presidentes trasladaron con éxito al nivel regional permitió convertir a las cumbres presidenciales en foros deliberativos hacia ámbitos decisionales, en los que incluso existió imposición de agenda. Como resultado de dicha característica, está la creación de los sucesivos consejos sectoriales, en los que los presidentes, como únicos actores habilitados para participar del proceso de negociación y diseño de los proyectos, fueron los que, de acuerdo con su interés particular, definieron la agenda regional.

Por lo anterior, es evidente la relación entre los Gobiernos de izquierda dentro de los objetivos de la organización, debido a que existió una fuerte convergencia de las políticas de los países en la agenda de tales organizaciones. Ejemplo de ello es que tanto la Unasur como la Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de América (ALBA) se hayan creado en la década del 2000, y que ambas tengan una orientación más política que económica, con un enfoque centrado en cuestiones sociales y de desarrollo, clave dentro de la propuesta de izquierda.

Por ello, como se resume en el Tabla 1, por un lado, algunos países optaron por una especie de ruptura radical en su ordenamiento político, como los casos de Bolivia con Evo Morales, Ecuador con Rafael Correa y Venezuela con Hugo Chávez. Estos Gobiernos fueron críticos de las reformas relacionadas

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50. Nicolás Comini y Alejandro Frenkel, "Una Unasur de baja intensidad: Modelos en pugna y desaceleración del proceso de integración en América del Sur", *Nueva Sociedad* 250 (2014): 67, https://bit.ly/3mTxm7K.

con el Consenso de Washington,[51] de la propuesta del Área Libre de Comercio de las Américas (ALCA) y de la firma de tratados de libre comercio (TLC).

En otro grupo se encuentran los Gobiernos de una izquierda más abierta y reformista, como los de Lula en Brasil, Lagos y Bachelet en Chile y Vázquez en Uruguay, lo cual colocó al Gobierno de Kirchner y Fernández en una posición ambigua o intermedia,[52] pues buscaban reformas sociales, pero a la par querían mantener buenas relaciones con EE. UU., algo que difería del segmento anterior.

Un último grupo de países, entre ellos Colombia y Perú, se acercaron a EE. UU. mediante la firma de TLC y, a su vez, mediante su pertenencia a la Alianza del Pacífico (AP),[53] junto con Chile.

Sin embargo, entre los años 2011 y 2018, el escenario político regional transitó por importantes cambios y se produjo una reconfiguración de fuerzas en la región, especialmente debido a la muerte de Kirchner en 2010, al cambio de autoridades en Brasil, y a la muerte de Chávez en 2012, lo que permitió que estos Gobiernos intentaran establecer su propia visión dentro del proceso de integración. En este sentido, tras la firma de TLC de Chile, Colombia y Perú, se legitimó el modelo de preferencia por el mercado internacional y por la búsqueda de una integración basada en lo económico-comercial, materializado con la creación de la AP en 2011.

Como se destacó, desde el inicio de las negociaciones confluyeron bloques de países con modelos de inserción distintos. Esto, sumado a la débil institucionalidad, desembocó en el cuestionamiento de la capacidad de la Unasur para implementar lo acordado en el plano normativo.[54] De esta forma, Brasil y Venezuela mostraron, desde los inicios del proyecto, una fuerte tendencia a competir por el liderazgo y la influencia dentro del mecanismo, y convirtieron a la Unasur en un escenario de constante rivalidad en muchas de las temáticas propuestas en el esquema regional.

Por un lado, para el liderazgo brasileño, mucho menos ideologizado y más pragmático que el venezolano, era importante no enfrentar a EE. UU. ni romper definitivamente con las instituciones financieras multilaterales ya

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51. También conocido como el Decálogo de Washington, consistía en una serie de reformas destinadas a la reducción de la participación del Estado en la economía, como parte de un conjunto de políticas estabilizadoras para reducir los déficits en las finanzas de los países.
52. Stoessel, "Giro a la izquierda", 125.
53. Lo conforman Chile, Colombia, Perú y México.
54 Comini y Frenkel, "Una Unasur de baja intensidad", 68.

existentes.[55] Por otro lado, la postura de Venezuela, altamente idealista, confería especial relevancia a la instauración de un socialismo dentro de la región, como alternativa al modelo neoliberal de los demás proyectos de integración. En consecuencia, en materia energética, la propuesta brasileña de crear la Iniciativa para la Integración de la Infraestructura Regional Suramericana (IIRSA), en 2000, generó un amplio consenso en cuanto a la necesidad regional de integrar a través de infraestructura, y permitió a este país ganar más adeptos a su propuesta a medida que avanzaron las negociaciones del sector.

Un año más tarde, la IIRSA fue criticada por Venezuela por su carácter extractivista, y se propuso la creación de una nueva institución con la cual se llevaría a cabo la integración energética: Petróleos de América.[56] En respuesta, Brasil planteó la conformación del CES como parte del institucionalismo energético requerido en el esquema de la Unasur, con lo que logró consolidar su postura en el grupo.

Así, se puede catalogar a este como un tipo de regionalismo de orden ideológico, en el que, por la ausencia de una institución fuerte, son los Estados más poderosos de la región los que imponen sus preferencias políticas, económicas y energéticas sobre el resto de los actores.

Esta dinámica creó disputas en torno a las perspectivas de largo plazo de la región, de modo tal que Brasil, impulsado por los biocombustibles y la hidroelectricidad, defendió los criterios ambientalistas de Sudamérica en la escena global; Venezuela, por su parte, defendió el enfoque de los hidrocarburos y las exportaciones de petróleo en específico.[57] Por tal motivo, a pesar de la existencia de declaraciones sobre cooperación, en la práctica se inhiben los esfuerzos de armonización y parece lejana la posibilidad de estructurar una alternativa realizable.

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55. Borda, *Desafíos y oportunidades*, 16.
56. Palestini, "Energía de baja intensidad", 116.
57. Paulo Manduca, "La energía en la política suramericana: Características de las relaciones entre Brasil y Venezuela", *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales* 57, n.° 216 (2012): 98, https://bit.ly/3mYa54w.

Superposición de los esquemas existentes de integración regional

Como se mencionó anteriormente, en el acto constitutivo de la Unasur se apuesta por una efectiva integración del sector energético, y se pretenden preservar y utilizar los resultados y avances de los bloques regionales. Sin embargo, nunca quedó claro la forma de llevar a cabo este proceso por la existencia de diferencias marcadas entre los objetivos y las políticas que existen entre muchos de los esquemas sudamericanos. Por ejemplo, tanto la CAN como el Mercosur son proyectos que apuestan por un aumento en el intercambio comercial de sus miembros, de modo que la desgravación de aranceles y la estimulación del comercio son políticas importantes para ellos. Asimismo, las iniciativas energéticas de la CAN y el Mercosur no consideran un centro de solución de controversias en este ámbito, por lo que se ha suscitado una serie de problemas debido a las diferencias en el manejo de recursos energéticos entre los países, gracias a la poca relevancia que poseen los mecanismos hasta ahora implementados.

Con el objetivo de coordinar estos proyectos hacia una escala regional mediante el impulso de infraestructura energética, en la Unasur se acordó la conformación y creación del CES, el cual estaría conformado por los ministros de Energía, Petróleo y sectores afines de los países miembros. Aunque el CES logró determinar la elaboración de los Lineamientos de la Estrategia Energética Sudamericana y el Plan de Acción para la Integración Energética Regional, nunca logró concretar uno de los pilares fundamentales para lograr un proceso de este tipo a nivel regional: el TES. Esto debido a que nunca llegó a un acuerdo sobre las regulaciones a nivel regional, especialmente por la presencia de posturas divergentes y por la falta de un liderazgo que permitiera la convergencia de las preferencias estatales.

En el área de infraestructura, el monto de las inversiones del Consejo Suramericano de Infraestructura y Planeamiento (COSIPLAN) para 2016 se estimó en 20 150 millones de dólares, destinados a 103 proyectos de transporte y de energía. Sin embargo, los de interconexión energética representaron apenas un 3 % del total de los proyectos regionales, en contraste con el 97 % destinado al sector transporte.[58]

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58. Consejo Suramericano de Infraestructura y Planeamiento, *Cartera de proyectos 2016* (Quito: Unasur, 2016).

Todo lo anterior resalta una de las peculiaridades más sobresalientes en la región: los procesos de integración no tienden a profundizarse ni ampliar sus agendas[59] sino que, más bien, ante una problemática en la consecución de sus objetivos, se dirigen hacia la creación de nuevas modalidades que vayan acorde al contexto en el que se encuentran. De hecho, los procesos de integración no desaparecen ni son reemplazados por nuevos esquemas, sino que se superponen unos a otros, con repercusiones en lo legal y en lo normativo, ya que a veces difieren en objetivos y en proyección a largo plazo.

Ejemplo de lo anterior es el caso de Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador y Perú, que son parte de la ALALC y luego conformaron el Pacto Andino, se mantuvieron en la ALADI y pertenecen a la CAN. O el caso específico de Colombia y Perú, que en los años 60 se incorporaron a la ALALC, en los 70 al Pacto Andino, en los 80 se mantuvieron en la ALADI, en los 90 ratificaron la CAN, y en el siglo XXI firmaron con la CSN y se establecieron en la Unasur, además de ser los principales aliados de EE. UU. en la nueva AP.

Como se puede observar en la Figura 3, los esquemas de integración vigentes en la región contienen a casi todos los países de América del Sur, lo cual demuestra que la proliferación y superposición de organizaciones regionales son conceptos interrelacionados.

Una posible respuesta de por qué los Estados crean o se unen a una nueva organización regional establece dos variantes: esperan percibir beneficios por su membresía, o prefieren evitar cualquier tipo de externalidad negativa por no ser miembros. Esto, porque cada esquema plantea proyectos estratégicos sobre un tema en particular, que puede ir en relación con el contexto internacional, político o económico del momento en que es planteado, y que puede ir acorde o no con los intereses particulares de cada miembro.

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59. Botto, "América del Sur", 20.

Figura 3
Esquemas de integración vigentes en América del Sur
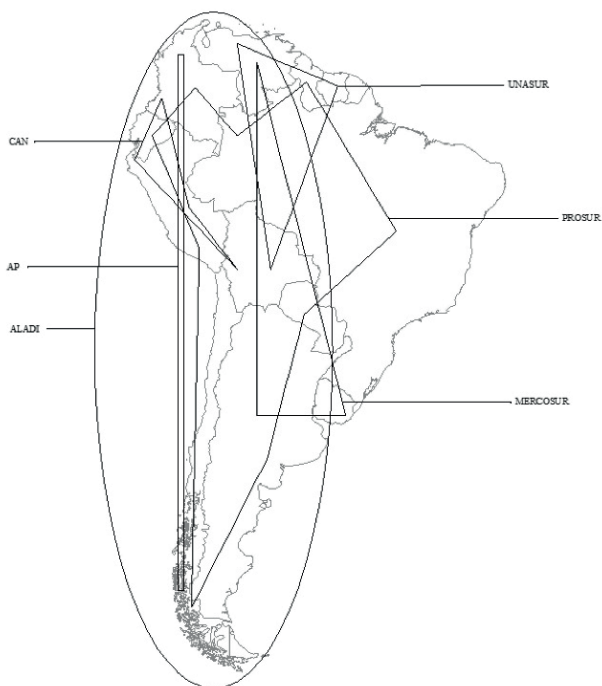
Elaboración propia.

Una revisión de la propuesta energética de la Unasur: El problema de la gobernanza

Pese a las características de complementariedad energética, la privilegiada posición que tiene la región y la enorme experiencia en infraestructura con la que cuenta, la energía parece estar aún muy lejos de ser la clave para la integración en Sudamérica. En este trabajo se destaca que, a pesar de las condiciones de oferta y demanda, claramente favorables para el proceso, en la práctica existe un déficit en la coordinación entre los países. La integración del sector no se da de forma sistemática debido a las diferencias entre las políticas sectoriales y los regímenes reguladores de los países. De este modo, el problema energético regional no está relacionado con la producción, sino con la mala administración de los recursos, que debilita su posición estratégica y permi-

te que aún persistan posibilidades económicas no realizadas. Por tanto, no se ha desarrollado un *spill-over* en este sector.

Como se analizó, la integración energética es un proceso extremadamente complejo debido a los distintos abordajes políticos, económicos y técnicos involucrados en su desarrollo. Así, en este trabajo se plantea que existen tres pilares fundamentes en los cuales se debería trabajar para la consecución de la integración a nivel regional: desarrollo de infraestructura, marco regulatorio común e instituciones que guíen el proceso.

En primer lugar, la inversión en infraestructura de forma conjunta crea las condiciones necesarias para la integración productiva de otros sectores económicos. En este punto son necesarias la disponibilidad de recursos para el proyecto y la definición de reglas para atraer inversiones de largo plazo.

En segundo lugar, la armonización regulatoria es un paso esencial cuando se ha iniciado algún tipo de acuerdo entre los países, porque a medida que se profundiza el proyecto de integración, más intereses se involucran, tanto por parte de los países participantes como de empresas transnacionales, lo cual sin duda requiere una agenda común. Un marco uniforme que permita la compatibilización de los diversos regímenes regulatorios es indispensable para producir inversiones para un proyecto de integración. Y aunque no se logre un sistema único regulatorio, se necesitan reglas claras de formación de precios y de seguridad operativa.

Por último, el elemento institucional, aunque sigue siendo una utopía en la región, es vital para regular la exploración de los países. Lo ideal sería la concepción de un acuerdo multilateral que planteara la existencia del elemento supranacional. Aunque el fortalecimiento institucional no garantiza la irreversibilidad del proceso, sí es un elemento importante a superar, porque los organismos tendrían un enorme incentivo para la definición e implementación de objetivos comunes, con lo que se reducirían significativamente los conflictos.

Una forma de comprender la dinámica de la integración energética sudamericana es a través de la siguiente figura, en la cual se usan elementos analíticos provenientes del trilema económico de Dani Rodrik[60] a fin de determinar

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60. Este trilema señala tres alternativas: globalización económica, democracia política y soberanía nacional. Rodrik argumenta que las tres son incompatibles, por lo que solo se puede escoger dos de ellas. Dani Rodrik, "How Far Will International Economic Integration Go?", *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14, n.° 1 (2000), http://doi.org/10.1257/jep.14.1.177.

que, aunque no imposible, sí es difícil lograr estas tres opciones simultáneamente en la región:

1. Elegir entre tener una regulación uniforme y destinar recursos hacia la construcción de infraestructura para dejar de lado la constitución de instituciones.
2. Delegar parte de la soberanía a instituciones y establecer una regulación para el sector energético, pero no destinar recursos para la infraestructura.
3. Crear instituciones y destinar recursos para la construcción de infraestructura, pero no poseer una reglamentación uniforme.

Como se vio, la Unasur se destaca por haber desarrollado un marco institucional respecto a sus recursos energéticos, aunque todavía no hay claridad sobre el papel desempeñado en términos de integración. Todas las instituciones dentro y fuera de la Unasur son de carácter intergubernamental, por lo que sus decisiones no son vinculantes.

Figura 4
Trilema de la gobernanza regional energética
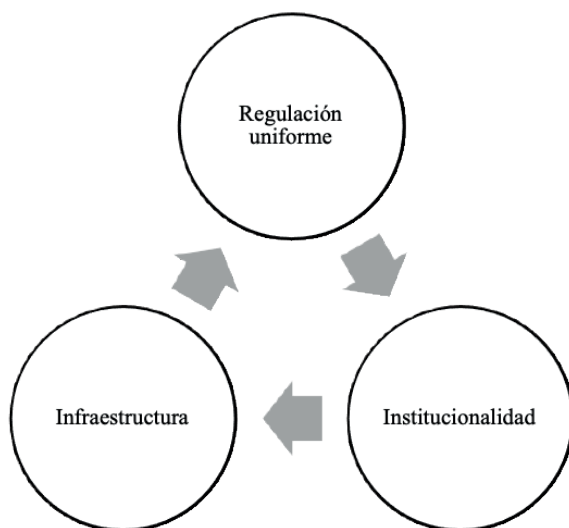
Elaboración propia a partir de Rodrik (2000).[61]

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61. Ibíd.

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Respecto a infraestructura, los países de la región poseen un bagaje amplio de proyectos en materia energética. Sin embargo, es necesario fomentar una integración más amplia que deje de lado el carácter bilateral para lograr un proceso más sólido a nivel multilateral con reglas claras y estables. Y, aunque la Unasur logró fusionar lo obrado por la IIRSA, en COSIPLAN no se observaron avances, ya que se enfocó en la integración física en áreas de transporte y comunicación y no en la construcción de infraestructura para el sector.

Por último, la uniformidad jurídica es un requisito necesario para la integración. Ya desde 2001, el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID) proponía que, aunque la región no requiera un sistema regulatorio único, al menos debían quedar establecidas las reglas de formación de precios y manejo de seguridad operativa. De hecho, en su informe *Integración energética en el Mercosur ampliado*,[62] de 2001, el BID aludía al hecho de que existe una serie de requisitos para llevar a cabo una integración más eficiente: los países deberían adoptar un método de compra y venta de energía basado en reglas transparentes y no discriminatorias, eliminar subsidios directos o indirectos a la generación y al precio de la energía, adoptar tarifas de transmisión representativas de los costos de expansión y una metodología similar en la transmisión de cada país que considere la generación y demanda de otro, y convertir las operaciones de comercio internacional en un negocio abierto.

Ello no existe dentro de la región; de hecho, lo que prima es una diversidad de estructuras de mercado y de políticas de precios, por la dificultad de creación de organismos supranacionales con poder de decisión y operatividad.[63] Pese a que la Unasur aprobó la redacción de la Estrategia Energética y del Plan de Acción Energético, el Tratado Energético no logró manifestarse. Un tratado regional de energía, si se toman como ejemplo los fundamentos del caso europeo, contribuiría a fortalecer la seguridad del sector energético en materia jurídica, a través de la protección de inversiones y la creación de condiciones justas para los Gobiernos participantes. Una vez que Sudamérica logre un consenso sobre las políticas energéticas, podrá aprovechar el régimen dentro de un proceso de integración regional ya establecido.

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62. Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo, *Integración energética en el Mercosur ampliado* (Washington DC: BID, 2001).
63. Kozulj, *Situación y perspectivas*, 67.

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Los derechos humanos y sus problemas de fundamentación metafísica
Human Rights and Their Metaphysical Foundational Problems

*Juan Justino Paredes Chura** ID

Resumen

En el presente artículo se analizará el pensamiento del profesor Robert Alexy, relacionado a la fundamentación metafísica de los derechos humanos. Alexy desarrolla la tesis central de que la validez de los derechos humanos se sustenta en su existencia misma como norma moral, por lo que de manera descriptiva iniciaremos con la caracterización de los derechos humanos, al menos desde sus principales particularidades, hasta la fundamentación dual metafísica que nos propone el profesor de Kiel. Luego, se hará mención a las objeciones que se presentan a este sustento, y el análisis de las objeciones realizadas se contrastará con la presentación del esquema del sistema de normas propuesto por Hans Kelsen. En este sentido, el debate se centrará en torno a la propuesta de la fundamentación metafísica de los derechos humanos dentro del sistema de normas morales guiadas por el principio estático de normas, que incluiría sus elementos de validez y exigibilidad en el campo de su creación y funcionamiento. Finalmente, el presente trabajo concluye que la fundamentación metafísica de los derechos humanos, por sus contradicciones e implicaciones, no alcanza a los sistemas jurídicos guiados por el principio dinámico de normas, sino que es aplicable y exigible en los sistemas de normas morales.

Palabras clave: fundamentación, metafísica, normas morales, derechos humanos, derecho, validez, sistemas

Abstract

This article will analyze the thought of Professor Robert Alexy, that related to the metaphysical foundation of human rights, where the central thesis is developed that the

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validity of human rights is based on the very existence of rights as a moral norm Therefore, in a descriptive way, we will begin with the characterization of human rights, at least from their main particularities, to the dual metaphysical foundation of rights proposed by the professor from Kiel, then mention will be made of the objections that are presented to this metaphysical foundation, where the analysis of the objections made will be contrasted with the presentation of the scheme of the system of norms proposed by Hans Kelsen, in this sense, the debate would focus on the proposal of the metaphysical foundation of human rights within of the system of moral norms guided by the static principle of norms, which would include its elements of validity and enforceability in the field of its creation and operation, therefore, the present work is concluded by arguing that the contradictions and implications of the metaphysical foundation of human rights do not reach legal systems guided by the dynamic principle of norms, but is applicable and enforceable in the systems of moral norms.

Keywords: foundation, metaphysics, moral norms, human rights, law, validity, systems

Introducción

Uno de los tópicos trabajados en las últimas décadas por Robert Alexy es precisamente el relacionado con el sustento de los derechos humanos. A través de una argumentación dual, tanto explicativa como existencial, muestra que desde la metafísica racional y discursiva es posible una fundamentación de los derechos humanos. Esto quiere decir que la validez de los derechos humanos será su existencia misma como norma moral.

Esta afirmación tiene sus propias aristas. En el presente trabajo se tratará justamente de describir cuáles serían las preocupaciones e implicancias de que un ciudadano pueda presentarse ante una autoridad y exigir el cumplimiento de sus derechos humanos, tal cual, por el hecho de ser humano. Se presentarán entonces algunas objeciones a la fundamentación metafísica del profesor de Kiel, para enriquecer el debate en torno al sustento de los derechos humanos. Para ello se realizará una descripción de las contradicciones de la propuesta de Alexy al momento de basar su fundamentación en la validez de los derechos humanos como normas morales.

Cuando describe las características que harían a los derechos humanos diferentes de otras normas, Alexy pone en juego algunas reflexiones que contrastaremos con lo que nos propone Hans Kelsen cuando explica los sistemas de normas. Para este cometido, se hace una referencia a las notas características de los derechos humanos y a la fundamentación dual que menciona Alexy, punto de debate donde precisamente estaría la debilidad del sustento metafísico de los derechos humanos.

Para finalizar, se sostiene que la perspectiva del profesor de Kiel se enmarca en los presupuestos de los sistemas de normas morales, por lo que su validez y existencia alcanza a su mismo sistema moral y no llega a ser exigible ni justiciable en sistemas jurídicos guiados por el principio dinámico de normas.

Los derechos humanos en el pensamiento de Robert Alexy

El profesor de Kiel realiza una definición que caracteriza a los derechos humanos con referencia a todos los demás derechos. Para ello, ilustra que se trata de derechos *universales*, cuyo titular sería toda persona en cuanto persona, es decir, por el hecho de ser humano. También tienen como característica su *fundamentabilidad*, pues los derechos humanos solo protegen intereses y necesidades fundamentales. Otro ámbito de importancia es el relacionado a su *objeto*: los derechos humanos son abstractos, por lo que hay una discusión sobre lo que significa un derecho humano en un caso en concreto. Otra nota característica sería la relacionada a la *validez*, ya que los derechos humanos en cuanto tales solo tienen una validez moral, de modo que un derecho vale moralmente si puede ser fundamentado frente a cada uno que participe en una justificación racional. Esta cuarta característica nos llevaría a la última parte de su definición, la de *prioridad*, según la cual los derechos humanos, en cuanto derechos morales, son la medida a la que debe ajustarse toda interpretación de lo positivizado.[1]

A efectos del presente trabajo, profundizaremos un poco más sobre las dos últimas características de los derechos humanos, aquellas referidas a su validez y a la prioridad en su interpretación. Según nuestro criterio, son los elementos principales de la crítica a la fundamentación metafísica.

Alexy sostiene que un derecho "vale moralmente si puede ser fundamentado frente a cada uno que participe en una justificación racional. La validez de los derechos humanos es su existencia. La existencia de los derechos humanos consiste en su fundamentabilidad y en nada más".[2] Esto quiere decir que la característica base para el entendimiento de los derechos humanos es la mo-

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1. Robert Alexy, "¿Derechos humanos sin metafísica?", *Doxa. Cuadernos de Filosofía del Derecho* 30 (2007): 238, https://doi.org/10.14198/DOXA2007.30.33.
2. Ibíd., 239.

ralidad, por lo que su existencia está sujeta a la validez moral de los derechos.

En este sentido, para su interpretación frente al derecho positivizado —que llegaría a ser algo accesorio, en palabras de Alexy—, el hecho de que un derecho humano aparezca en un documento escrito ayuda a su institucionalización, pero no es su característica definitiva. En este sentido, los derechos humanos tendrían su prioridad por encima del derecho positivizado, pues

> en cuanto derechos morales no solo no podrían ser derogados por normas de derecho positivo, sino que además son la medida a la que debe ajustarse toda interpretación de lo positivado. Esto significa que un pacto de derechos humanos, tanto como una sentencia de un tribunal de derechos humanos, puede ser contrario a los derechos humanos.[3]

Si el derecho positivo debe ajustarse a los derechos humanos en cuanto derechos morales, esto significaría que la prioridad de la moralidad está por encima del derecho positivo. Sin embargo, las dificultades que podría presentar este sentido de prioridad estarían basadas en la existencia de derecho positivizado contrario a las reglas de la moralidad —es decir, injusto o extremadamente injusto—. Para sortear estas dificultades, el profesor de Kiel sostiene que

> el problema de la fundamentabilidad puede sintetizarse en la cuestión de si, y cómo, pueden ser justificadas las normas o reglas morales que con pretensión de prioridad garantizan los derechos universales, fundamentales y abstractos. Esto demuestra que el problema de la fundamentación de los derechos humanos no es otra cosa que un caso especial del problema general de la fundamentación de las normas morales.[4]

Para evitar estos extremos, Alexy propone basar la fundamentación de los derechos humanos en una posición no escéptica a la metafísica, una fundamentación dual: explicativa y existencial. Con respecto a lo primero, si se consideran existentes los derechos humanos —lo que evitaría los extremos previstos—, cabría utilizar una fundamentación que pueda hacer explícito lo que está implícito.

> Una fundamentación de los derechos humanos es explicativa cuando consiste en poner de manifiesto lo que está contenido como implícito y necesario en la

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3.   Ibíd.
4.   Ibíd.

praxis humana. La idea de fundamentar algo por medio de hacer explícito lo que está necesariamente contenido en juicios y comportamientos sigue las líneas de la filosofía trascendental de Kant. Con ello aparece en el horizonte la posibilidad de una metafísica inmanente.[5]

Por ello, esta fundamentación se entendería como una práctica discursiva, y las prácticas de afirmar, preguntar y discutir, como una fundamentación discursivo-teórica. Sin embargo, esta práctica discursiva presupone reglas del discurso basadas en ideas de libertad y de igualdad, de modo que la libertad y la igualdad serían la base de los derechos humanos. Si se reconoce como libre e igual a un ser humano, se lo estaría reconociendo como autónomo: como persona, con dignidad; consiguientemente, se le reconocerían sus derechos humanos. En este sentido, Alexy sostiene que

> el serio o genuino participante en el discurso vincula así sus capacidades discursivas con el interés de hacer un uso operativo de las mismas. Esta conexión de capacidad e interés implica el reconocimiento del otro como autónomo. Todo lo que sigue es una conexión de conceptos, cada uno de los cuales no expresa algo distinto, sino solo diferentes aspectos de la misma cuestión. Quien reconoce al otro como autónomo lo reconoce como persona. Quien lo reconoce como persona le atribuye dignidad. Quien le atribuye dignidad reconoce sus derechos humanos.[6]

No obstante, esta fundamentación para Alexy tendría dos debilidades: las diferencias entre discurso y acción, por una parte, y entre capacidades e intereses, por otra, muestran que los derechos humanos no conciernen solo al discurso racional-teórico, sino que son más acción que discurso, por lo que esto mostraría un fuerte interés de corrección. En este plano de la discusión, la fundamentación existencialista ingresa para resolver las diferencias, porque "no se trata de preferencias cualesquiera encontradas en algún lugar o en ninguno, sino de una confirmación de algo ya necesariamente demostrado como posibilidad por vía de la explicación".[7]

Así, la fundamentación existencialista "establece su validez *qua* derechos morales, lo cual significa que los derechos humanos existen. Cuando los dere-

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5. Ibíd., 243.
6. Ibíd., 244.
7. Ibíd.

chos humanos existen, pueden ser violados".[8] Por lo tanto, este es un argumento que soporta las críticas a la metafísica. Se apunta a diferenciar aquellos aspectos que no existen o que, si existen, están en un nivel abstracto, por lo que "los derechos humanos no son posibles sin una metafísica racional y universal".[9]

Sobre la fundamentación metafísica

Cuando hablamos de la existencia de los derechos humanos, ingresamos al punto medular de la fundamentación metafísica. Según el profesor Alexy, la validez de los derechos humanos es su existencia, de modo que si una persona asegura que se le ha vulnerado o se le está restringiendo un derecho humano, se está cometiendo un acto injusto contra su dignidad.

> Si esto es cierto, los derechos humanos constituyen el núcleo de la justicia [...], donde cada violación de los derechos humanos es injusta y cada injusticia es una violación de los derechos humanos [...]. Por esta razón, la existencia de los derechos humanos implica la existencia de principios de justicia. Los elementos morales, si los derechos humanos existen, comprenden tanto a los derechos humanos como a la justicia.[10]

Esta sujeción, que al mismo tiempo se entiende como un condicionante a la validez de los derechos humanos —que está sujeta a la validez moral—, devendría de los actos de justicia que se reclaman en su existencia; por lo tanto, los derechos humanos son derechos morales. En consecuencia, para el profesor de Kiel, la fundamentación de los derechos humanos desde puntos no escépticos a la metafísica daría lugar a que los derechos humanos son fundamentales y, por lo tanto, existentes y válidos: "Los derechos existen si son válidos [...], los derechos morales son válidos si y solo si son fundamentales. Por esta razón, la existencia de los derechos humanos, *qua* derechos morales, depende de su fundamentación y solo de eso".[11]

De lo presentado por Alexy, se puede inferir que, si los derechos humanos tuvieran esta característica de universalidad, serían para todos los huma-

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8. Robert Alexy, "Derecho, moral y la existencia de los derechos humanos", *Signos Filosóficos* 15, n.º 30 (2013): 169, https://bit.ly/3ZPLQEe.
9. Alexy, "¿Derechos humanos sin metafísica?", 248.
10. Alexy, "Derecho, moral", 170.
11. Ibíd., 171.

nos en cuanto personas, por lo que no existiría un ser humano sin sus derechos correspondientes. Entonces, cualquier persona puede alegar que los tiene y, así, alegar la protección de sus intereses y necesidades fundamentales, ya que estaría en su fundamentabilidad como una de sus características para poder ejercitarlos. La persona no tendría duda sobre lo que intenta alegar y todos comprenderían qué es lo que está reclamando o exigiendo, pues todos sabrían qué se entiende por derechos humanos.

Sin embargo, las características presentadas representan una existencia metafísica en el plano discursivo. No es que se niegue la existencia de los derechos humanos como un aspecto que se intenta establecer al hablar de aspectos metafísicos, sino que no se reconoce la existencia de los derechos humanos como tal. Es decir, sabemos que existen, pero no se los puede aplicar. Esto puede presentarse debido a la definición que resultaría de lo que los presupuestos de Alexy entienden sobre la validez de los derechos humanos y la prioridad que les intenta dar al momento de interpretarlos.

Objeciones a la fundamentación metafísica

Tras un breve acercamiento reflexivo a la fundamentación metafísica de los derechos humanos, se pueden presentar tres objeciones —en este intento de crítica, se espera que el examen destaque tanto los méritos de la teoría como los interrogantes que deja abiertos—: la primera se dirige a la idea de considerar los derechos humanos como entidades que pertenecen a un espacio abstracto; la segunda se vincula con la estructura ontológica del discurso; y la tercera, que complementa a la anterior, discute el valor práctico de la teoría.

Alexy presenta los derechos humanos como una abstracción, en el sentido de que su veracidad está determinada por su atemporalidad y, por lo tanto, tiene independencia de si alguien los considera como tales. Esta idea de concebir a los derechos humanos como entes abstractos o ideales, situados en un ámbito distinto al de los entes físicos y psíquicos, constituye un elemento que no ayuda a su conceptualización ni a su aplicación.

La primera caracterización que realiza Alexy, según la cual el titular de los derechos humanos es toda persona en cuanto persona, está centrada en principios teóricos, pero sobrevalora aspectos en el plano práctico. La teoría del discurso seleccionada por el profesor muestra un conjunto de cuestiones accesibles y aplicables a un discurso racional ideal. Esto lo lleva a tener una

excesiva confianza en que las sociedades actuales están conformadas por individuos que intervienen en condiciones de igualdad. Así, pues, a la hora de formular el contenido de los derechos humanos, se desconoce que muchas personas no se encuentran en las mismas posibilidades que las demás al momento de exigir su cumplimiento.

Desde nuestro punto de vista, las objeciones mencionadas son importantes pero no suficientes para entender la debilidad de la propuesta de Alexy en cuanto al valor práctico de su teoría. En el problema de la abstracción en la universalidad de los derechos humanos y en la definición de cada uno de ellos, la fundamentación de la existencia y validez de los derechos humanos juega un rol muy importante. Su validez está sujeta a su existencia: si un derecho humano existe universalmente, no tendría que haber problemas en su abstracción, y por lo tanto su definición tendría que ser concreta. Los problemas de validez de los derechos humanos, entonces, responden a los problemas de su universalidad y su fundamentabilidad.

Sobre la validez de los derechos humanos y la moralidad

Para Alexy, los derechos humanos en cuanto tales solo tienen una validez moral; esto es, un derecho vale moralmente, pues en esta fundamentación estaría su existencia. Esta afirmación tiene al menos dos puntos, que se presentarán en este apartado. En primer lugar están los temas de la validez y la existencia, y en segundo lugar está el tema de la moralidad como validez de los derechos humanos. Veamos el primero, en el que el debate en torno a la existencia del derecho nos señala que un derecho existe siempre y cuando sea válido y que, por el contrario, si no es válido, no existe.

Siguiendo esta línea de ideas, Alexy presenta un sistema de normas —como otros muchos filósofos o teóricos del derecho podrían presentar otros—. Se verán, entonces, dos modos de entender el funcionamiento de los sistemas de normas, lo que ayudará a entender mejor la validez y la existencia de estas.

Para ello, acudiremos a la descripción de Hans Kelsen, quien analiza dos modos en que se mueven las normas, según la estructura bajo la cual funcionan. Kelsen sostiene que los sistemas de normas para los que se identifican su validez y existencia basan su funcionamiento en dos principios sumamente distintos, de los que también pueden derivar otras normas

—de este modo se configuraría su validez y existencia—: principio estático y principio dinámico.[12]

Según Kelsen, en el principio estático, una norma N2 se deriva *estáticamente* de otra norma N1, por lo que N2 tiene validez cuando el contenido de N1 determina el contenido de N2 —o, lo que es lo mismo, cuando N1 "impone" el contenido de N2—, en tanto su contenido puede ser referido a una norma, bajo cuyo orden admite ser subsumido como lo particular bajo lo universal.[13] Este tipo de derivación pone de manifiesto una consecuencia de lo general a lo particular, que es presentada por Kelsen a través de ejemplos en los que de ciertos principios morales básicos se derivan otros más específicos: por poner un caso, la norma general que impone el deber de amar al prójimo puede derivar en normas más concretas como la que prohíbe cometer homicidio, dañar a otro o dejar de auxiliarlo en caso de necesidad.[14] Estas normas más concretas serían una inferencia de la norma general, es decir, de su norma fundante básica.

Por el contrario, otros sistemas de normas están guiados por el principio dinámico, en el que una norma N2 se deriva *dinámicamente* de otra norma N1, cuando N1 determina quién tiene competencia y qué procedimiento ha de seguirse para dictar N2. En el modo de derivación dinámico, una norma no determina el contenido de otra, sino solo el procedimiento para dictarla y el órgano autorizado para hacerlo.[15] Se caracteriza por que la norma fundante no contiene otra cosa que el establecimiento de un hecho productor de normas, el "facultamiento de una autoridad normadora o, lo que significa lo mismo, contiene una regla que determina cómo deben producirse las normas generales e individuales del orden sustentado en una norma fundante básica".[16] Este tipo de derivación tiene un carácter eminentemente formal, ya que otorga competencia para su producción normativa, por contraste con el primer tipo de derivación, de carácter material. Kelsen considera que la derivación dinámica es característica de los sistemas jurídicos,[17] porque en

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12. Hans Kelsen, *Teoría pura del derecho* (Ciudad de México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1982), 203.
13. Ibíd.
14. Ibíd.
15. Jordi Ferrer y Jorge Luis Rodríguez, *Jerarquías normativas y dinámica de los sistemas jurídicos* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2011), 13.
16. Kelsen, *Teoría pura del derecho*, 204.
17. Ibíd.

ellos hay normas que disponen cómo crear otras, muchas veces sin limitar el contenido que puedan eventualmente tener: "[C]ual sea el contenido de esa constitución, y el del orden jurídico estatal erigido con su fundamento, que ese orden sea justo o injusto, es cuestión que aquí no se suscita".[18]

La postura de Robert Alexy está configurada bajo el principio estático. El contenido de las normas morales admite ser subsumido como lo particular bajo lo universal: las normas morales más concretas serían una inferencia de la norma general, es decir, de los derechos humanos, entendidos como la norma fundante básica.

Sin embargo, Kelsen describe un sistema de normas jurídico que, a diferencia del sistema de normas morales, basaría su validez en la observancia del procedimiento y en la autoridad competente para crearlo o derivar de su norma fundante básica. Esta diferencia hace notar que el sistema de normas morales no determina procedimiento ni autoridad competente para crear o derivar los derechos humanos. Es decir, el contenido de la norma general es suficiente para su validez y existencia, por lo que si la norma general es justa, la norma particular derivada también tiene que serlo; si la norma general es buena, la norma particular tiene que ser buena.

¿Cuál es el punto débil de los sistemas morales? Como su validez y existencia no está regidas por un procedimiento ni por una autoridad competente, como pasa en los sistemas jurídicos, el contenido de los sistemas morales llega a ser muy abstracto, indeterminado e incierto: no existe un límite a lo que se podría considerar justo, bueno o moral. Por otra parte, no existe autoridad para exigir el cumplimiento de un derecho moral; entonces, los sistemas morales quedan excluidos de los sistemas jurídicos.

Cuando el profesor de Kiel sostiene que los derechos humanos son derechos morales, basa su teoría en un sistema de normas morales, cuya validez y existencia recaen en un fundamento moral. Cuando nos habla de las reglas del discurso en las prácticas discursivas, implica que las ideas de libertad e igualdad son la base de los derechos humanos, pero esta consideración será real cuando a la persona se la trate como un ser humano libre e igual, con dignidad. No todos estamos en las mismas condiciones de ejercer estas prácticas discursivas, por lo que en realidad no existiría un reconocimiento de los derechos humanos a todo ser humano. Bajo este argumento, la univer-

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18. Ibíd., 209.

salidad y aquello que protege a los derechos humanos llega a ser indeterminado, incierto y abstracto.

Ahora, Alexy señala que la validez de los derechos humanos se basa en su existencia, y que su existencia se basa justamente en su moralidad; por lo tanto, la existencia de los derechos humanos es válida en los sistemas de normas morales, donde solamente están condicionados a la observancia de su contenido: las normas morales pueden ser existentes si son justas y buenas. Sin embargo, no se puede exigir que una norma moral sea válida y existente en un sistema jurídico. Cuando los derechos humanos conciernen no solamente al discurso teórico, sino también y más fuertemente a la acción —es decir, a actos injustos o malos—, llegan a ser existentes como tales en sistemas propiamente morales, por lo que no existiría prioridad, como sostiene Alexy, al momento de la aplicación de un derecho positivizado, ni mucho menos estarían por encima de un derecho dentro del sistema jurídico.

Sin embargo, como se mencionó en el tercer apartado, las características presentadas por Alexy representan una existencia metafísica en el plano discursivo. No es que se niegue la existencia de los derechos humanos, sino que no se la reconoce como tal en los sistemas jurídicos. Es decir, sabemos que existen en la realidad, pero no se pueden aplicar en Estados sujetos a un sistema jurídico guiado por el principio dinámico de normas.

Conclusiones

Los fundamentos metafísicos de los derechos humanos en el pensamiento de Robert Alexy presentan una dificultad en cuanto a su validez y prioridad. Al considerar que los derechos humanos son normas morales y que, en cuanto tales, solo tienen validez moral, su teoría ingresa dentro de los sistemas de normas guiados por el principio estático, en que la validez y existencia de derechos morales corresponden solo a la observancia de los contenidos de su norma general.

Las prácticas de fundamentación discursivo-teórica de la metafísica propuesta por Alexy presuponen que a toda persona se la reconozca como libre, como igual y, por lo tanto, como autónoma y con dignidad. Estos son presupuestos ideales: no a todas las personas se les reconocen sus derechos humanos, pues no todas las personas son libres e iguales, por lo que no pueden ser tratadas como individuos autónomos ni con dignidad. En este sentido, es dé-

bil la caracterización que realiza Alexy al suponer que los derechos humanos son universales por el solo hecho de ser humanos.

Asimismo, los derechos humanos no conciernen solamente a la fundamentación discursivo-teórica sino también a la acción. Los hechos y las muestras de injusticia darían lugar a la fundamentación existencial, es decir, que los derechos humanos son válidos en cuanto existen. No obstante, la validez y la existencia de los derechos humanos están sujetas a la validez moral en la propuesta de Robert Alexy, y eso no alcanza para que sean válidos o existan en los sistemas jurídicos. No se niega la existencia de derechos humanos en la vida real, pues existen casos injustos y malos. Sin embargo, al pertenecer a los sistemas morales, no se puede recurrir para su exigibilidad y justiciabilidad a un sistema jurídico guiado por el principio dinámico de normas.

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