

Presentation

The emerging powers and the contemporary world order: dilemmas, tensions, and possibilities



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We present the special issue “The emerging powers and the contemporary world order: dilemmas, tensions, and possibilities”, organized and published by the journal *Sociedade e Cultura* from the University of Goiás. The debates that have been done in the last years in the Research Group on Middle Powers (GPPM) and the Research Group in Asia-Pacific (GEPAP/UEPB) has called attention to the necessity to organize events and publications that strand together some thoughts concerning such topic. Henceforth, workshops and panels were organized in academic meetings on National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Social Sciences (ANPOCS), on the Brazilian Association of International Relations (ABRI), and on the International Studies Association (ISA); and now, we are glad to organize this special issue, which represents an important moment of synthesis of some reflections regarding the emergence processes of new middle powers and their impacts to the contemporary world order. In the face of recent changes in the

world order, the structure of global capitalism, the hierarchy, and the correlations of force in the international sphere have changed. In this context, new actors have been inserted internationally in a differentiated way, finding, simultaneously, possibilities and limits in this environment and these processes. At the same time, it may be noticed that the responses by the traditional/developed powers have a character of maintaining the status quo, and even among the main countries of the traditional core of the world order, clear divisions and differences are widening regarding to how to accommodate the emerging powers. On the part of the emerging powers, it is observed that these countries have reacted to the consequences of this uncertain and tense scenario. These reactions emerge in different ways, be it at the level of the states involved, or of the non-state actors, also considering that these dynamics tend to impact their respective societies broadly.

In such conjuncture, it is very pertinent studies about the emerging powers and their context. Some work has been produced on it, highlighting some aspects of such PROCESSES (LI, 2019; MENEZES; RAMOS, 2018; LEITE; LI, 2018), and this special issue intents to contribute to such debate as well. Particularly, our intention here is to present relevant contributions which scope incorporate transversal issues, not reducing to a state-centric vision, but also highlighting the importance of other actors to the understanding of such transformations regarding the emergence processes.

Daniela Secches, Javier Vadell and Leonardo Ramos open the special issue with a pertinent theoretical and conceptual discussion about the theories on medium and emerging powers in International Political Economy. Their aim is to trace a theoretical review that makes it possible to delineate some propositions on analytical possibilities and limits of these concepts nowadays – something very important in order to better grasp not only the current conjuncture, but also the subsequent articles. Following this conceptual discussion, Ernesto Vivares and Lorena Herrera-Vinelli focus is in the regional dimensions of the emergence process,

particularly concerning the New South American Regionalism. Hence, they analyse the multiple, contrasting roles and limitations of the dominant IPE regionalist theories in the research about the New South American Regionalism, with an interesting focus on methodological issues, exploring the Weberian concept of “iron cages” in order to interpret the theoretical development on such topic as well as its limits.

Going to a more empirical analysis focus, Elia Alves, Alexandre Leite and Livia Picchi present a very pertinent question: How does international development cooperation (IDC) unfold in the domestic arena? More specifically, how priorities and dimensions addressed in cooperation agreements enter the domestic public policy agenda? Hence, authors answer such questions by analysing the bilateral agreements on energy efficiency signed by Brazil with the developed countries, Brazilian national energy policies legislation implemented since the first oil crisis in the 1970s and the Brazilian National Plan on Climate Change. In doing so, they identify the actors and the mechanisms by which those programs, which were originally structured in developed countries, spread to Brazilian energy policy and characterize the instruments, in this case, cooperation agreements between the parties. In the end, they detach that IDC conditioned the content of energy efficiency programs (EEPs) adopted, signalling that Brazilian Foreign Policy (BFP) has a relevant role to play in energy politics in Brazil – in other words, showing some empirical elements of Brazilian emergence.

Brazilian Foreign Policy in general is current interest on some articles of the special issue. In this sense, Marcos Alan Ferreira and Juliana Medeiros, as well as Roberto Menezes and Natalia Fingermann pay close attention to such issue. The first authors focus on the rise of transnational organized crime and, once the border between Brazil and Paraguay is the more traditional route of drug trafficking in South America, such countries have a prominent role in the development of illegal transnational activities in the South American region. Such processes have led Brazil and Paraguay to joined efforts to address the issue, including militarily – showing,

in this sense, some covert aspects and dilemmas of the Brazilian emergence processes. Roberto and Natalia, on the other hand, focus on Brazilian foreign Policy during Dilma Rousseff government, particularly on South-South Cooperation (SSC) during this period (MARTÍN, 2016). They examine the changes of political domestic forces in the period that had shaped the SSC, particularly, technical cooperation in Rousseff's government.

Having the cooperation as their *leitmotif*, both Clarisa Giaccaglia and María Dussort; and Pablo Nemiña and Juan Larralde change the focus to the multilateral aspect of emergence. Hence, the first article aims to analyse the role of emerging powers in the multilateral for a taking into account two specific issues: energy and pharmaceutical patents, intending to see if emerging powers have reinforced or questioned the different multilateral organizations of North-Atlantic hegemony. Following this multilateral concern, Pablo and Juan look at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and its relationship with Latin America and Caribe, particularly during the decade following the financial crisis. In this context, IMF had played three different roles after the crisis: lender, guarantor and, unprecedentedly, debtor.

Every discussion on emergence in world politics, its possibilities, limits and dilemma have to cope with China and its influence on such processes necessarily (BLINDER, 2019; LIMA, 2019; LI, 2019). In this vein, both Augusto Teixeira Jr. and Peterson Silva, and Raphael Padula and Felipe Fernandes contributions emphasize security issues concerning China's role in contemporary world politics. Augusto and Peterson highlight the military determinants of China's strategic posture at the contemporary conjuncture, particularly after the wide-ranging military reform introduced by Xi Jinping in 2015. The author emphasize how China has faced major challenges in combining military modernization and Peaceful Development in a strategic environment marked by the balance of power logic, and how such elements could impact on security issues on global scale. Raphael and Felipe, from a geostrategic perspective, present an analysis about the South China Sea and

how it is a strategic space for the attainment of China's political, economic and military interests. Particularly, it is a strategic space because of its natural resources and its strategic position for Chinese economic and military security and projection. In sum, this special issue covers a set of important questions and research agendas on emergence processes and its consequences. Also, in doing it, it passes through many actors as well as many areas, as security, international political economy, institutions and so forth. Of course, it is not a conclusive work, but we hope that it could be helpful for those that are anxious and concerned to grasp, in a better way, the contemporary world politics.

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