SOVEREIGNTY OR “GLOBALIZATION”? REFLECTIONS ON AN APPARENT ANTAGONISM

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Introduction

During the last decades, especially with the disintegration of the Soviet bloc and the projection of the neoliberal thinking, it has become commonplace to speak of the end of the States and/or the erosion of sovereignty, whereas all social dynamics are frequently justified as a result of what is conventionally called “globalization”. This article aims to discuss the assumed antagonism between, on the one hand, State capacity and sovereignty, and on the other, “globalization”, understood here as the integration of markets worldwide and the consequently intensified flows of goods, capital, information and people. There is a current manichaeism that often reduces approaches to “globalists” or “skeptics”, as is the case of the work of Held and McGrew (2001), which contributes little to understanding the contemporary international system. Studies on “globalization”, while recognizing the coexistence of tensions between sub-national and supranational scales, end up featuring the reduction of national autonomy (Mittelman 1996, 7-8). Theories regarding the contemporary world and “globalization” either underestimate or neglect the State issue (Kumar 1997; Ianni 1996). Within the scope of International

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Relations (IR), the tendency is to either adhere to state-centric uncritical views of the State category, with little regard for its internal divisions and its systemic transformations (Waltz 1979), or, at the other pole, stick enthusiastically to the emphasis on supposed transnational forces.

In this sense, it is imperative to discuss the State, which has been, after all, cause and consequence of the formation of the international system, the locus of the accumulation of wealth and power, the main building instrument of international regimes and even the political apparatus which is both object and promoter of international processes. Thus, the expansion of State formations and its strengthening as bureaucratic capacity coincides with the further integration of the economy on a global scale, so that instead of antagonistic, these dynamics are mutually reinforcing, though not without contradictions.

Hence, one must overcome the supposed antagonism between state-centered and transnational views, which ultimately prevail in the IR area, in favor of critical approaches aiming to understand the interweaving between the State and the internationalization of capital, permeated by the current capitalist expansion process. Hence, as proposed by Losurdo (2015a, 63), this requires a general theory of social conflict that takes into account the various forms that class struggles and social conflicts assume: gender and/or family issues; racial and ethnic background; class, and between fractions of the same class, struggles; and which is especially important in IR studies between States and nations. This inflicts emphasizing that social conflicts are multifaceted and multiscaled, with distinct priorities in every space and time. In the same line, there are distinct contributions that can enrich critical approaches (Bartolovich and Lazaruz 2002), especially when social groups and subaltern countries are globally regarded.

Thus, the paper is organized as follows. In the first section, the importance of the State for the formation of the international system and as an agent of accumulation of wealth and power will be discussed. The second section analyses a few myths about the crisis of the State and the so-called “globalization”, in order to better understand the inseparable bond between the State and the internationalization of capital. In the third section, the role of sovereignty will be discussed, stressing its non-absolute character within the international system. In the fourth section, a few limitations that still remain

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3 Because of stereotyped views, as highlighted by these same authors (Bartolovich and Lazaruz 2002), such approximation has been compromised: Marxism was seen as Eurocentric based on totalizing and “modernizing” metanarratives, while post-colonial studies were considered uncritical face to an academicist and subjective imperialism (disregarding material and productive inconsistencies of capitalism).
in the study of IR - which is based on the supposed market-State antagonism - will be addressed. And lastly, brief closing remarks.

The State and the formation of the international system

The modern international system was born from the dialectic between States and capital. If it is correct to stress, as does Halliday (1999, 16), that there was a gradual expansion of pre-existing flows of people, religion and trade, before the formation of national States; it should also be noted that the centralization of political power in the Iberian Peninsula was the crucial factor for the beginning of maritime mercantile expansion. Thus, since the beginning, State formation forged the global economy, which is, as we shall see, the basis of the current interstate system.

Despite the existence of numerous approaches to the formation of modern States, nations and nationalisms (Balakrishnan 2000), the fact is that the relationship between territory, borders and sovereignty is constitutive of the formation and existence of the State in general. States are political organizations that involve the construction of national identity, usually from previous cultural areas, with an impact on the “damping” of class conflict (Hobsbawm 1990), on the production of internal cohesion and of legitimacy in the construction of borders.

According to Tilly (1996), coercion and capital were fundamental forces on the formation of European States. States are the product of complex relationships, marked by social conflicts, historical discontinuities and intense competition among nation states and those with other types of political units (empires, city-States, etc.). The aim to exercise power stably over populations and territories, to guarantee the extraction of “monetized” resources and to strengthen bureaucracy in an environment of disputes and rivalries, occurred through wars and the use of force. Both the monopoly of the legitimate use of force and the genesis of what is recognized as citizenship and national identity fall under a territorial and border limit. In a summarized statement, the State made war and war made the State, so that coercion and capital combined in the construction of modern States, in a sophisticated gear of accumulation of power and wealth (Tilly 1996).

On the one hand, the competitive expansion among States created colonial empires and internationalized capitalism, especially after the new imperialist cycle initiated after the end of the 19th century, dominating Africa and Asia almost entirely. Just as colonialism dominated America for more than three centuries (between the 16th and early 19th centuries), the crea-
tion of the world space was forged amid the spread of State formations. With what Hobsbawm (1977) called “double revolution” - the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution - the progressive unification of the globe by capitalism took place incorporating, dominating and undoing the various types of societies it met. Parallel to this, an enhance of wealth, income and power concentration could be observed on a global scale, with destructive effects on democracy and institutions, as highlighted by Piketty (2014).

As highlighted by Fernandes (1999), the greatest contribution of Marxism, arising from the Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels, is the ability to understand the internationalization of capital as an articulated and contradictory process, expressed by the worldwide diffusion of the political form of the modern State and its institutions, and the integration of markets promoted by the internal need of capital expansion. That is, the modern world system as a product of the complex dialectic between State and capital, reflected in the reorganization of both the capitalist economy and the geography of world power (Arrighi 1996). For this reason, according to Fiori (2008), capital expansion and the nationalization of power are overlapped, not only in terms of the military and bureaucracy, but also of currencies, banks and identities.

If such arguments are well founded, it is possible to overcome the manichaeism regarding the supposed antagonism between State and markets in International Relations and beyond. On the one hand, theories with Realist matrices focus too much on the stability and repeatability patterns of the system, underestimating historical transformations and systemic changes. On the other, sometimes studies of liberal orientation, in an attempt to purge the State-centrism, eventually even the critical approaches, end up overestimating the supposedly transnational forces, as does Robinson (1998), assuming all changes as new, including processes intrinsic to the formation of the international system. Therefore, the problem is not the obvious need to recognize the changes in the characteristics and intensity of current capitalist expansion processes, but taking as antagonistic what has been symbiotic. Actually, since The Manifesto, the State’s role is not taken as an obstacle to the expansion of capital, but as its “steering committee”, as its locus of power (Marx and Engels 1998).

In other words, it is not possible to make invisible - or even to underestimate - the necessary historical connection between power accumulation (State) and wealth (capital). As pointed out by Wallerstein (2001, 41-50), the policy of accumulation of a State occurs through the following attributes: 1) territorial jurisdiction, which controls the borders and the flow of goods, capital, labor; 2) legal right, which defines which rules govern social relations; 3) tax collection, which appears as the main source of State income and of policies.
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promoting accumulation (subsidies, public investments, etc.); and 4) monopoly of force, that internally ensures the maintenance of “order” and, internationally, (re)produces power asymmetries.

The problematic of the international system as being anarchic, asymmetrical and global, can only be properly understood within the following premise: the State, as maximum concentration of power, does not work against capital and, in contrast, uses the legitimate monopoly of force as a condition for internal existence and projects it, internationally, as a reflex of the asymmetry of its own wealth accumulation processes and State power. Complexity increases because the State is both an instrument of development and of liberation to the oppressed nations. The very discussion about the State’s place in post-capitalist societies remains obstructed. Or, as highlights Losurdo (2015b, 54-55), Marxism joined uncritically the notion of extinction of the State and neglected the need to discuss the institutions and the limitation of power which largely contributed to the concentrated and autonomous forms that took power of State in real socialism, with the consequent (con) fusion between party and State apparatus (Fernandes 2000).

The “crisis of the State” and “globalization”

The narrative carrying the banner of “crisis or withering away of the State” is shrouded in a mixture of inaccuracies and specific interests. In other words, the deepening integration of global markets is not a teleological force, but reflects political and territorial conflicts between specific actors, hegemonic power structures, crossed by interests of major global corporations and major States in international system. The theories of “globalization”, which treat globalization as a new historical period of a capitalist world without borders, available for the exploration of allegedly stateless capital, ultimately obscure or deny fundamental aspects concerning the functioning of the international system (Halliday 2002; Petras and Veltmeyer 2007; Ruccio 2003). In fact, the idea of “globalization” suppresses a number of issues related to the historical development of exploration relationships within the States and in a systemic level - which includes global asymmetries and the role of imperialism as a theoretical and historical reference (Sakellaropoulos 2009).

Firstly, on a domestic level, States depend on multiple capabilities, involving the collection and management of resources from institutions and a system of rules, in addition to the means for imposition of order and national defense - politically built by combining coercion, consensus and co-optation. Indeed, as defines Tilly (2013), this State capacity determines how the State
penetrates society and changes the distribution of resources, activities and interpersonal connections - meaning it is a polysemic, multidimensional and transdisciplinary concept, central to defining the role of the State in promoting development.

Despite the dominant narratives, it must be recognized that there was a decline of States and their capabilities, either measured by the proportion of public employment\(^4\), or by government revenues (taxes). In OECD countries, the tax burden rose from 24.8% in 1965 to 30.1% in 1980, 32.2% in 1990, 34.2% in 2000 and 34.1% in 2013. Even promoters of the liberal discourse, as the United States, Great Britain and Germany, had rates of 25.5%, 33.5% and 36.4% in 1980 and culminated with 25.4%, 32.9% and 36.7% respectively, remaining stable\(^5\) in 2013. The wealth of data collected by Piketty (2014, 136-137) is reinforced by the fact that the total value of government assets in France and in the United Kingdom have expanded 50% in the 18th and 19th centuries to about 100% of national income in the 20th and 21st centuries. When analyzing the importance that the set of taxes and revenues began to play in the national income of countries such as Sweden, France, United Kingdom and United States between 1870 and 2010, there is no doubt about the evolution of the public power’s role in developed societies (Piketty 2014, 463), as illustrated by OECD\(^6\) data. Thus, as pointed out by Losurdo (2015a, 13), the constitution of the Social Welfare State in Europe (and the attacks it has been suffering nowadays) is related to the political and social mobilization of the lower classes. The combination of mobilization of domestic struggles for the appropriation of wealth and the influence of the socialist bloc weighed heavily in the expansion of State’s responsibilities in public services and infrastructure to broad segments of the population. Therefore, the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the rise of neoliberalism have potentialized the dismantling of universalist public policies.

Secondly, on an international level, the place of States in the world must take into account the anarchic, competitive and asymmetrical international system. First, it should be noted that imperialism was one of the facets of the expansionist policy of liberal England in the 19th century (Losurdo

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\(^4\) By observing the performance of developed countries regarding public employment in relation to the total of employed, it is noted that there is a substantial growth between the 1960s and 1980s, from the supremacy of liberal discourse on, there was, at maximum, stability. Data available in the study by IPEA: http://www.ipea.gov.br/portal/images/stories/PDFs/TDs/td_1578.pdf.

\(^5\) The OECD series of statistics allows the observation of the behavior of the tax burden in all countries. Available in: http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=REV.

2015b, 258), and returned to prevail with the advent of neoliberalism using the sophisticated structure of international organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank, the European Central Bank and the WTO, whose goal was - among others - to serve the interests of the central countries (Chang 2004; 2008) and opening new frontiers of accumulation to the major powers7. It can also be emphasized that “free trade imperialism” is not dissociated from “human rights imperialism” and from motivations to intervene in peripheral States. The current humanitarian and “democratic interventionism” reissues colonial imperialism, with similar rhetoric of war for peace, for freedom and for Western civilization (Losurdo 2015b, 65-87). New informational (Internet War and Psywar) and military (Revolution in Military Affairs) means interlace, converting the spectacle as war technique and, by extension, boosting strategic goals of Western powers (Losurdo 2016, 109-160).

Recognizing the elements of continuity does not prevent the recognition that the capitalist system has undergone profound transformations since its origin. Its technological changes accelerate the integration and the flow of capital and goods, causing reorganization in the hegemonic structures of power and their hierarchies in the world. Therefore, as it has been pointed out, hasty readings have underestimated the contemporary role of the State, as well as overestimated the newness of internationalization of capital.

In this sense, Batista Jr. (1998) confronted - with a wealth of quantitative data - what he called the five myths of “globalization”. First, it does not inaugurate a stage in world economic history, since in many ways the degree of international integration achieved between 1870 and 1914 is comparable, or even superior, to that observed in the “globalized” economy of the late 20th century. Second, the dissolution of national borders in favor of a world market did not happen, despite the technical progress and innovation, due to the preponderance of wealth creation in the domestic sphere and the global concentration of wealth flows in developed countries. Third, there is no relentless decline of national States because of neoliberal policies, since the size of the State in the vast majority of economies persists, measured by aggregate indicators such as the ratio between public expenditure and revenue and the GDP. Fourth, there is no domination expected of such “transnational” companies, since these are companies with national loyalties, keeping the bulk of its assets, sales, employment and, above all, decision-making capacity on its national basis. Fifth and last, the argument that global financial transactions liquidated the autonomy of national policies is not applicable, to the extent

7 The case of the creation of the WTO is illustrative, having the biggest commitments and obligations for participants in investment (TRIMS), services (GATS) and intellectual property (TRIPS) themes.
that even with the sharp expansion of international financial transactions, domestic applications are still widely prevalent and dependent on their central banks. Or rather, as Ghemawat (2009) highlights, with a substantive set of data\(^8\), the global world is less flat than the dominant discourses have us believe.

Thus, not coincidentally, the discourse that associates the crisis of the State and “globalization” has strengthened precisely in the context in which the United States took advantage of the end of the Soviet bloc to project power on a global scale, seeking to create and consolidate a unipolar world and an agenda of liberalization of post-socialist and/or developmental markets. Paradoxically, the dominant discourse began to converge with the leftists ones - including the ones of Marxist tendencies -, critical to the power and importance of the States in the world order. In the latter case, the argument was added to the idea of permanent terminal crisis of capitalism and the collapse of the United States. Besides hindering the understanding of power dynamics in the world, such conceptions harm the formulation of any alternative national project and often contribute to the weakening of Keynesians, developmental and socialists experiences. Indifferent to the relevance of the debate over the US decline (Wallerstein 2004; Fiori 2008) and the emergence of a multipolar world, the fact is that one cannot underestimate the US leadership\(^9\).

In short, understanding the intimate and symbiotic relationship between the State and the internationalization of capital in the formation and transformation of the international system is central to encompass the complexity of these phenomena. Thus, one can neither forget the historical character of certain global dynamics\(^10\) (migration, trade, tourism, refugees, political activists), nor underestimate the internationalization of capital - particularly its current financialization - among the deep motivations behind national reactions, identities promotion and the increase of inequalities.

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\(^8\) See data available at the personal website of the author: http://www.ghemawat.com/.

\(^9\) Since the 1950s, with the Chinese Revolution, the setbacks on the Korean peninsula and the Russian early lead in the space race; then in the 1970s, with the end of the dollar-gold convertibility, the defeat in Vietnam and the oil shocks; in the 1980s, with the “Rust Belt” in Detroit and the rising twin deficits; and, finally, in the 21st century with the attacks of 9/11, the difficulties in the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq and the subprime crisis in 2008. Ironically, despite the challenges (and even relative decline), the US won the bipolar order, became leader of the 3rd Industrial Revolution, were among the first to emerge from the crisis and now give a major step in overcoming its energy vulnerability through the shale reserves.

\(^10\) Halliday (1999, 118) draws attention to the fact that many processes that characterize contemporary transnationalism were already present decades and even centuries ago, as the Reformation, the Industrial Revolution, the spread of universal suffrage and migration.
State and sovereignty in the world space

State and sovereignty are closely linked and refer to the subject of politics, as authority constituted with legitimate monopoly of force in a given territory and population and having international diplomatic recognition. Instead of focusing on the evolution of the conceptual debate — origins, definitions, forms and theories — the goal here is to question the assumption that the crisis of the State would have led to the erosion of States’ sovereignty, and understand its implications.

Regarding the assumption of the link between withering away of the State, and, by extension, of sovereignty, it must be said that these conclusions are wrong to take as premise the absolute and monistic character of sovereignty. The misconception is to regard sovereignty as something absolute, since States were formed in a global, asymmetric, anarchic system; that is, immersed in global flows of people, information, knowledge and goods and submitted to the unequal distribution of wealth and power - and by these factors States are conditioned. In this sense, it is clear that there are States with greater or lesser sovereignty within the system. Or as highlights Halliday (1999, 97), having monopoly of power and legitimacy within a territory, as well as diplomatic and international legal recognition, does not imply not knowing that there are national and global limits to the State’s control capability. Thus, the rigid separation between external and internal does not make sense, for it implies neglecting cleavages and asymmetries that underlie the dialectic of formation of the international system. If, on the one hand, the principle of sovereignty resides in the capability of ensuring decision-making autonomy and independence to the country, on the other, this is not absolute, because interdependence is in the formative nature of the international system.

Hence, the Westphalian system formally establishes sovereignty internally and equality internationally, though in none of the cases it should be absolutized, given the differences of material and political capacity. As written by Kissinger (2015, 34-35), such a system took the multiplicity of forces as its starting point in the common search for order, mediated by forums for resolving conflicts with their respective legal arrangements. According to the same author, the Westphalian system has faced challenges linked to 1) the concept of shared sovereignty of European integration; 2) jihadism, that takes religion and not the State as reference; and 3) the US’s exceptionalism that relativizes notions of sovereignty (Kissinger 2015, 15), whether in humanitarian interventions, in “color revolutions” or in attacks by drones without giving any attention to international law.
As for the implications arising from the discourse of the erosion of sovereignty, it should be remembered that there is a fine line that separates the growing protagonism of international organizations and their governance systems. Attention should be paid, however, that behind the different conceptions and normative references, linked to human rights and democracy, there are also the interests of powers in broadening the scope of interventions (Bar-telson 2006). The strengthening of the governance system and international law in the last half century does not imply a suprastate arrangement, but the adoption of treaties by countries, in which the application of these rules depends on the mobilization and on the capacities of the signatory countries. The opposite of sovereignty is not, as it may seem, the “general will” of the international community, but rather the rules and their imposition by countries (powers) with the capacity to coerce and impose norms in an anarchic system.

Instead of this “general will” community, as addressed by Losurdo (1998, 87-88), the construction of universal is done by great powers and, by extension, is confused with ethnocentrism and imperialism. Not rarely the great powers mobilize speeches intended to ensure “peace” and expand the “civilization”, the “free market” and the “law”, while project their power on a global scale, from the colonialism of the 16th century to contemporary foreign intervention\(^{11}\). Many forget that there are ambitious interests seeking to eliminate State ties (sovereignty) to legitimize and legalize new wars. Often the argument in favor of human security is put in opposition and to undo the security of States; although exceptionalism and imperialism also pose the strongest threat to the security of States (peripherals) and individuals (Walker 2006). It is not about relativism, but about problematizing the construction and application of legal systems and cultural codes in a deeply heterogeneous and asymmetric system.

For these reasons sovereignty has assumed distinct political meanings between its Westphalian formulation and nowadays. Not by chance, for the powers, the concept of sovereignty is no longer at the center of political-diplomatic and academic formulations. This stems primarily from the fact that sovereignty is (or seems to be) equated in a territorial scope by historically consolidated military superiority. Secondly, because these powers have the capacity to resist decisions contrary to their domestic interests, even if arising from regimes and international organizations. This can be illustrated by the violations committed by the US in the War on Terror, well documented by

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\(^{11}\) In the Post-Cold War era, interventions, institutional violations and war crimes have become recurrent, as in the case of the invasion of Panama, Yugoslavia, Iraq by the US and NATO in the 1990s, or in Afghanistan, Iraq again and Libya and Syria in the 21st century to mention the most important ones.
Scahill (2014), or by the practice of massive agricultural subsidies as opposed to what the powers themselves (and the WTO) advocate for the sector. Thirdly, these powers are the great builders of the legal systems, in order to make them converge with their own broader interests.

In short, the needs of these powers are enabled by the extension of their interests on a global scale, by force, through corporations and/or their international regimes which presupposes precisely the flexibility of States and their sovereignty. It is not about, of course, discrediting inter-state organizations and international regimes and their governance mechanisms. But to warn to the fact that the extension of the attributions of such organizations, under the domain of the great powers and accompanied by the consequent weakening of the national States, has intensified the asymmetry of the international system. In other words, by recognizing the relationship between sovereignty and State capabilities of each country, it is possible to understand the motivations and contradictions involving the relationship between national States and international organizations and regimes.

In addition to the motivations behind the narrative of State and sovereignty depletion in the current context (post-Cold War) it is not difficult to recognize that there are other empirical and historical limitations. Moreover, how to conclude that there is a weakening of sovereignty when it was just in the last quarter of the 20th century that most of the world was formed by independent countries? The UN was founded in 1944 with only 51 members, as most of Africa and Asia was still a colony, and now it has 196 members. Before that, in the 19th century, the countries of America were beginning their journey of independence from the European metropolis. It is up to the “globalization” (as novelty) enthusiasts define what would have been the context of full affirmation of the State and sovereignty which would be difficult to locate before the year 1990. The inconvenient question that remains is: when did sovereignty and the States had their maximum expression so that they could face the process of withering away? In summary, the globalist approaches build a distorted version, assuming absolute sovereignty and high State power, to favor the argument they intend to disprove.

**Beyond the State-market antagonism**

Despite theoretical advances in International Relations, it is still imperative to discuss State, sovereignty and “globalization”. The dialogue with other areas of the Humanities contributes to transcend conceptual and empirical limitations that still prevail in international studies. The first limi-
tion is the persistent maintenance of the concept of State as a “billiard ball” (Huntington 1997, 35) that apart from being ahistorical, hides divisions and tensions between State/society, State/government and State/nation. It is underestimated that the complexity of the State lies in the specificity of the political mediator and regulator of a set of interactions in a global economic entirety, where the domestic and international levels intersect (Halliday 1999, 94-95; 104).

The second limitation is the lack of understanding that if, on the one hand, technologies deepen the integration of world space and cross-border capital flows, on the other, these technical means strengthen State capacities. On the domestic sphere, the e-government dramatically increases performance capacity of the public sector in various activities involving taxation, inspection, planning, services, etc. Internationally, the means of the current technological revolution also potentiate interstate power asymmetry, through Space Command (satellites) and artificial intelligence that allows the automation of various operations such as guided munitions, drones, cyber war, etc. As highlighted by Duarte (2012), technology neither decides nor lead wars, but it is crucial to set the conditions of confrontation.

The third limitation is disregarding the intertwining between the concepts of State, sovereignty and “globalization”. The mistaken premise that the Westphalian Peace would have been a milestone in the establishment of a supposed absolute or full sovereignty, should be, as addresses Osiander (2001), overcome. If sovereignty refers to the ability to control the activities within its borders and getting recognition from other States, it is asymmetrical and historically conditioned. And it depends, of course, on the different State’s capacities and levels of development, of their political, military and economic power, as well as their international insertion, which all influence the vulnerability and the decision-making autonomy of a State.

The fourth limitation is located in the authors who normatively defend post-State societies as imperative to overcome what does not stem from the Westphalian system. This is the case of theorists entitled as criticals (Linklater 1998; Walker 1993) who problematize concepts related to national-State construction, such as nationality, citizenship, territoriality and sovereignty, and its consequent opposition, such as sovereignty-anarchy, security-threat, identity-difference. The problem is that such divisions and tensions do not come from the Westphalian system, but from emancipation-“disemancipation” processes that underlie the complex processes of development and construction of the international system. What is also not sufficiently explored is how to construct emancipatory processes (public policies and legal guarantees) on the margins of institutions, political organization and democratic processes.
As well highlights Goodhart (2001), democracy is neither built in the context of “globalization” by simply undoing the troubled reality of sovereign States, nor by waiting for a “world government”.

The fifth limitation covers the recurring arguments for the erosion of States and their sovereignty, in favor of liberalization processes. Such examples frequently underestimate the entanglement between the State and the internationalization of capital. Therefore, it is worth illustrating with cases of regional integration processes and other non-State actors. In the first case, the European example is often mentioned, forgetting the role of States in integrationist dynamics, interstate asymmetry within the bloc and the limits of integration, precisely by not sharing crucial elements of State sovereignty (military). Even so, eventual success in building a new supranational arrangement at European level would be made redundant in a new European State with the same prerogatives, but on an expanded territorial scope! In other cases, non-State actors such as international organizations, non-government organizations and big corporations do not arise, are funded or act outside the interstate system. That is, without understanding the hierarchies of power between and within States is not possible to understand the political asymmetrical weight in organisms such as the UN Security Council, the IMF and the WTO; participation, accession, compliance of international agreements; promotion and enforcement of rules and practices in different areas of the international system, etc. It is worth mentioning the case of multinational companies that, according to Chang (2008, 97), are actually domestic companies with world presence, in which management, innovation and capital accumulation are closely connected with the interests of their countries of origin.

Finally, it can be concluded, bending the stick to the opposite pole (to bring it to the adequate point) that: the twenty-first century will be one in which the issue of State-building and sovereignty will be at the center of politics, for the challenge of development and democratic institutional building (even when in integrative processes and/or international organizations and their regimes) is set for the overwhelming majority of countries in the international system, particularly those in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Sometimes, certain amount of ethnocentrism forgets that the challenges faced by these regions are still for motives prior to any post-Westphalian argument: on the contrary, building a basic energy, transport and communication infrastructure; the establishment of minimum consumption patterns; the provision of public health, education and security services; and the organization of the public administration apparatus. From the point of view of a Marxist approach, disregarding the importance of State (and sovereignty) in the internationalization of capital, is to disregard key elements of the general theory.
of social conflicts. First, because the State continues to be the “management committee of the bourgeoisie”, the political epicenter of the accumulation processes and the instrument of competition in respective fractions of the bourgeoisie. Second, the State becomes, to the peripheral nations, an important element for national autonomy and independence. Finally, it should be considered that social struggles are aimed at emancipation and these permeate public policies, material gains and recognition and naturally depend on the budget and on public institutions. Reiterating the issue raised by Losurdo (2015a), class struggles are not limited to the simplified version of labor-bourgeois conflict on the factory floor, but encompass various forms of social conflicts and processes of emancipation/”disemancipation”, as interstate, race, gender and different social segments struggles12.

Final considerations

It is important to recognize, as do the scholars of “globalization”, that there are structures, processes and phenomena currently emerging simultaneously - it refers inherently, in fact, to social and historical processes. The relationship between territoriality and flows, or between geographical scales (local-global), is driven by technological transformations and economic and political rearrangements. The bottom line is not these findings (sometimes truisms), but understanding the changes and the way in which States gain not only new importance, but also expanded capabilities. It is erroneous, then, the argument (of liberal matrix) that tends to oppose State and market, sovereignty and “globalization”, disregarding the constitutive trajectory of the international system, including wars, currencies, interstate agreements, etc. Moreover, it contradicts empirical evidence, such as the notorious global integration of the developed countries (and sovereign), as opposed to failed States on the margins of “globalization”. In other words, organized markets in developed countries impose bureaucratic and institutional capacity, in the same way as the global market does not stem only from choices of large corporations.

It is interesting to observe how approaches focused on “globalists” and “post-Westphalian” discourses disregard basic demands from most countries, peripheral and emerging, representing about 85% of countries and world population on the margins of the restrictive circle of the rich members of the

12 Although recurrent, either dogmatic readings by part of the left, or conservative efforts to delegitimize Marxist critical approaches, the fact is that from its origin its formulators have paid attention to an extended version of class struggles. One can see the various publications of Lenin on the issue of gender when this issue was neither on the political agenda of States, nor on the dominant political forces. See Lenin (1956).
The need to understand the hegemonic structures of power and their connection with the production of wealth on a global scale (capital), placing the interstate contradictions and political disputes, as well as the asymmetries and hierarchies, requires the comprehension of the dialectic of “globalization” and a perspective that escapes the ethnocentrism reigning in the IR.

The interweaving between global and interstate dynamics are more complex; and the international events occurred in the post-Cold War era contradicted “globalists” discourses: the formation of new States (in the former Yugoslavia, former USSR, former Czechoslovakia, Eritrea, South Sudan), the resurgence of separatist movements claimants of territorial States (Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, in Russia; Xinjiang and Tibet, in China; in the Caucasus; in Kurdistan; in the Basque Country; in Scotland); the civil wars and the resulting dispute for the State apparatus (particularly in Africa, such as DRC, Angola, Rwanda); the growing competition over natural resources (oil, water, diamonds, natural gas) as a central element of national security; the resurgence of trade protectionism as an expression of interstate competition; the formation of new interstate political coalitions (G20, IBAS, BRICS); the activism of diplomacies in international institutions (UN, WTO, IMF); the conflict of national interest in integration processes (as illustrated by the Greek case); the intensification of underground operations and military interventions conducted by the powers (the coup in Venezuela, “color revolutions”, the destabilization of Syria); new demands for national actions when facing cross-border threats (SARS, terrorism, drug trafficking, weapons and contraband, etc.); among others.

In short, the manichaeist approaches are not able deal with the complex interaction between States (their sovereignties) and global dynamics. In effect, social struggles tend to become clogged by the misunderstanding of the importance of States in the various sides that the processes of emancipation/”disemancipation” present, which permeate the international system.

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Sovereignty or “Globalization”? reflections on an apparent antagonism


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ABSTRACT
The article intends to problematize the alleged antagonism between, on the one hand, state capacity and sovereignty and, on the other hand, the integration of markets at a global level. The current manichaeism that tends to reduce approaches to “globalists” or “skeptics” does not contribute to the understanding of the contemporary international system. It is necessary to overcome the supposed antagonism between state-centric and transnational visions, in favor of critical approaches that understand the interlacements between the State and the internationalization of capital, which are crossed by the process of expansion of capitalism in contemporary times.

KEYWORDS
Globalization; State; Capital; International System.