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“Gobernadores, Matriz Productiva Provincial Y Relación Ejecutivo-Legislativo. Evidencias Del Caso Argentino Durante La Presidencia De Cristina Kirchner”

By Por Alejandro Coronel & Y Bernardo Zamichiei

Universidad Católica Argentina

Abstract - Palabras clave: gobernadores, relación Ejecutivo-Legislativo, disciplina partidaria, territorialidad, índice Indep- endencia -Territorialidad.

Keywords : *governors, executive-legislative relation, party discipline, territoriality, independence-territoriality (it) index.*

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“Gobernadores, Matriz Productiva Provincial Y Relación Ejecutivo-Legislativo. Evidencias Del Caso Argentino Durante La Presidencia De Cristina Kirchner”

Por Alejandro Coronel ^α & Y Bernardo Zamichiei ^σ

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I. INTRODUCCIÓN

En la ciencia política moderna, son habituales los estudios en torno a la relación entre los poderes ejecutivo y legislativo, más específicamente la relación entre el Ejecutivo y las votaciones de los legisladores, que incluyen en sus análisis a actores tales como los partidos políticos.

Para el caso argentino contemporáneo, la primera presidencia de Cristina Kirchner comenzó (en términos parlamentarios) con una votación de alta relevancia política y de interés investigativo: la del proyecto que procuraba la confirmación de la Resolución 125 del Ministerio de Economía sobre retenciones móviles a las exportaciones agropecuarias (proyecto PE 013-08 de ratificación de la Resolución ME 125/08).

La relevancia de este hecho se halla tanto en la escalada del conflicto y sus consecuencias político-institucionales como en la discusión de fondo que encierra el empleo de retenciones como instrumento de control de precios, redistribución de ganancias y –lo que generó las mayores discusiones legales– como carga tributaria.

En efecto, el debate por las retenciones móviles cobró estado público en marzo de 2008, y la demanda del sector agropecuario unificó a las cuatro entidades que lo representan, que hasta entonces solían ser consideradas como antagónicas. El nivel de conflictividad política y social llevó a que algunos esgrimieran que ciertos sectores habían instalado un “clima de desestabilización” para hacer peligrar la continuidad del Gobierno. En aras de frenar un paro del

sector agropecuario sin antecedentes en la Argentina, la presidente de la República envió al Congreso un proyecto ratificador de la medida en disputa, con la expectativa de un resultado favorable, dadas las mayorías con las que contaba su Gobierno en ambas Cámaras. El momento más relevante de todo el conflicto tuvo lugar la madrugada en que el proyecto fue rechazado en el Senado de la Nación, tras un empate que dejó la decisión final en manos del vicepresidente de la Nación.

Este desenlace inesperado llevó a plantear distintos interrogantes: ¿cuál fue el criterio de los legisladores (senadores o diputados) a la hora de votar? ¿Respondieron a cuestiones de ideología partidaria (“cohesión”), disciplina partidaria o a los intereses del territorio en el cual fueron electos?

En este sentido, algunos sostenían que el “factor sojero” habría sido decisivo para el rechazo. Desde este punto de vista, se daba por sentado que la iniciativa iba a ser rechazada puesto que las provincias sojeras (con mayor cantidad de representantes en el Congreso) votarían en contra y las no sojeras a favor (movidas por el interés de mayor recaudación).

Esta explicación, si bien se presenta no solo como lógica sino también como plausible, podría llegar a ser reduccionista en tanto que posiciona a lo económico o, mejor dicho, a la matriz productiva de las provincias como el elemento determinante del voto de sus legisladores en lugar de otras cuestiones de neto corte político como, por ejemplo, el rol (oficialista u opositor) que cumplen dichos legisladores frente a sus electorados, o bien la postura (favorable o desfavorable) de los gobernadores, algo ya trabajado en otros escritos (Coronel y Zamichiei, 2009, 2010 y 2012).

Teniendo en cuenta estas cuestiones de corte político, cabe reformular las preguntas anteriormente planteadas con el fin de poder observar empíricamente si esta presunción económico-productiva es válida o es tan solo un mal juego de intuiciones reduccionistas.

De esta manera, el presente trabajo tiene como objetivo principal el de detectar si el comportamiento legislativo de diputados y senadores ha respondido

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bien a intereses productivos de sus respectivas provincias o bien a cuestiones de carácter político. Para ello, se observa el rol político de estos como también la postura de los gobernadores frente a los temas sometidos a votación, incorporando así la cuestión de la disciplina partidaria como otro concepto explicativo alternativo al economicista-productivista.

El presente artículo comienza con una revisión teórica de los distintos enfoques vigentes adoptados para el abordaje de la relación entre los poderes ejecutivo y legislativo y, luego, avanza sobre las estrategias metodológicas empleadas para realizar las mediciones empíricas en aquellas votaciones legislativas del período correspondientes al Gobierno de Cristina Kirchner que cumplen con las condiciones necesarias para poder ser analizadas. Se pretenden conclusiones que provean nuevas perspectivas sobre la teoría y abonen el camino a la generación de nuevas y mejores comprensiones de la dinámica legislativa.

II. EL COMPORTAMIENTO DE LOS LEGISLADORES: UN APOORTE TEÓRICO PARA EL ESTADO DE LA CUESTIÓN

Existen numerosos estudios empíricos en materia de cohesión partidaria en los legislativos nacionales (Bowler *et al.*, 1999; Hazan, 2003) en referencia a diversos factores institucionales. Por mencionar algunos: los beneficios y costos de la disciplina para los miembros del partido (Ashworth y Bueno de Mesquita, 2004), la tensión entre los intereses colectivos de los partidos y los intereses personales de sus candidatos (Fiorina, 1977; Katz, 1980; Cox, 1987; Ames, 1992; McCubbins y Rosenbluth, 1994; Reed, 1994) el vínculo entre el "voto en bloque" y la financiación partidaria (Quinn, 2002), la indisciplina partidaria en sistemas de partido hegemónico (Díaz Rebolledo, 2005) y la ausencia de reelección inmediata de legisladores como causa principal de la disciplina partidaria (Ugalde, 2000; Magar y Weldon, 2001; Nacif, 2002).

Por su parte, se registran diversas tendencias académicas en la relación unidad partidaria y sistema político. Así, algunos estudios sostienen que los partidos se caracterizan generalmente por ser altamente cohesionados en sistemas parlamentarios y presentan poca unidad en sistemas presidencialistas, lo cual genera problemas en el establecimiento de una agenda legislativa por parte del Ejecutivo (Linz, 1994; Diermeier y Feddersen, 1998; Shugart, 1998; Hix, Noury y Roland, 2002; Persson y Tabellini, 2003). Sin embargo, existen investigaciones que contradicen estas afirmaciones en la medida en que destacan en su análisis el papel de los presidentes en la formación de coaliciones legislativas que les sean favorables (Figueiredo y Limongi, 2000; Siavelis, 2002; Amorim Neto, 2002; Weldon, 2002; Cheibub, Przeworski y Saiegh, 2004).

Específicamente en relación a los trabajos académicos sobre disciplina partidaria y dimensión territorial, estos pueden agruparse en diversos enfoques de investigaciones. El primer grupo encara el tema mediante el empleo del Índice de Rice (1925), o una ponderación de este, como herramienta de medición de la disciplina partidaria (Ózbudun, 1970; Ames, 2000), lo cual ubica, para casos como el argentino, resultados del 98 % de cohesión (Morgenstern, 2003).

Un segundo grupo de investigaciones halla resultados muy diversos, al enfocar el tema en base a la dimensión territorial, en particular, la vinculación entre la cohesión partidaria y las dimensiones ideológica y territorial (Moon, 2005; McElroy, 2007), y la relación de la cohesión partidaria con las reglas electorales (Sartori, 1976; Uslaner, 1985; Jacobson, 1990; Mainwaring, 1991; Ames, 1992; Geddes y Ribeiro Neto, 1992; Shugart y Nielson, 1993), especialmente la mayor o menor tendencia a acatar la disciplina partidaria en relación a los sistemas uninominal por circunscripciones, proporcional y mixto (Massicotte y Blais, 1999; Shugart, 2001; Shugart y Wattenberg, 2001; Kunicova y Remington, 2008) o en relación a los sistemas electorales que permiten la competencia en elecciones generales entre varios candidatos por un mismo partido, como es el caso de las listas de "lemas" (Ames, 1995; Chang y Golden, 2001; Hix, 2004).

Damos cuenta de un tercer grupo de estudios, que sostiene que la gran fuente de generación de disciplina está dada, no por las características del sistema electoral, sino por la organización del partido en el Congreso y por la capacidad de este para ofrecer incentivos a cada uno de sus miembros (por ejemplo, nombramientos en presidencias de Comisiones por parte del líder de la bancada), algunos de los cuales asocian los partidos a cárteles (Cheibub, Figueiredo, Limongi, 2000; Jones, 2002; Jones, Hwang y Micozzi, 2009; Calvo, 2007).

Así, Jones y Hwang (2005) adaptan la teoría del cártel, pensada para Estados Unidos, para el caso argentino, la cual sostiene que los legisladores poseen cierta autonomía para controlar sus propias carreras políticas y delegan poder a los líderes nacionales en la medida en que esto promueva sus propios intereses políticos. Esto plantea una ruptura frente a trabajos de otros autores, que se desentienden del rol de los actores subnacionales y que analizan el caso argentino desde diversas perspectivas, ya sea a través de la observación del papel de los intereses económicos del distrito de representación de los legisladores, el análisis de la relación entre los poderes ejecutivo y legislativo como control de agenda (observado a través de los vetos presidenciales) o el estudio de la función legislativa vista desde los intereses detrás de los proyectos presentados junto con los recursos aplicados y la autopercepción de los legisladores sobre su

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Por otra parte, hay otros casos, que si bien involucran cuestiones netamente económicas, no están referidos a cuestiones productivas que permitan establecer si tal provincia se vería afectada y otra no, como sería el caso de una provincia sojera respecto de otra no sojera. Una situación como esa es la de estatización de Aerolíneas Argentinas, ya que para este caso no podemos determinar que hubiera provincias no afectadas por dicha empresa o provincias en donde Aerolíneas no envía vuelos y otras a las que sí, de forma tal de poder distinguir claramente aquellos distritos que sentirían sus intereses afectados de manera positiva de las que lo sentirían en forma negativa.

Esta situación de "generalidad" (en el sentido de que afectan de la misma manera a todas las provincias) se encuentra no solo en el caso de Aerolíneas Argentinas sino también en el de Estatización de las AFJP, 82 % Móvil de Jubilaciones, Aportes del Tesoro de la Nación y Fondo del Bicentenario.

"Dada la escasez de casos, también hemos incorporado el más reciente (que pertenece al segundo período presidencial de Cristina Kirchner) que es el de nacionalización de YPF (que permite distinguir provincias petroleras de provincias no petroleras)"

Por último, aclaramos que la categorización de una provincia como sojera/no sojera, minera/no minera o petrolera/no petrolera ha surgido exclusivamente de datos de organismos oficiales⁴.

Determinados los criterios de selección de casos, resta aclarar las categorizaciones realizadas en torno a la situación político-partidaria del legislador frente al Gobierno nacional o provincial. Para este caso se utilizaron tres categorías con el mismo criterio nacional o provincial: *oficialista*, *aliado* u *opositor*.

Cuando hablamos de *oficialista*, nos referimos a aquel legislador que hubiera sido parte de la lista oficial que llevaba al presidente/gobernador como candidato. En caso de pertenecer a otra lista no oficial, pero que también postulaba al que luego fuera presidente/gobernador electo, entonces ese legislador es categorizado como *aliado*. Por último, si el legislador hubiera formado parte de una lista cuyo candidato a presidente/gobernador hubiera sido otro respecto al que fuera electo, entonces es categorizado como *opositor*.

Sin embargo, la dinámica política argentina nos lleva a tener en cuenta otro aspecto no menos importante: la ruptura de legisladores respecto de los partidos (bloques parlamentarios) que les dieran la plataforma de elección como también el posicionamiento de los gobernadores respecto al poder ejecutivo nacional. En otras palabras, no es nada

extraño que un candidato haya sido electo por el oficialismo y que, luego de asumir, rompa con el partido o el bloque oficialista en la Cámara y se una a otro (opositor o no), o arme un bloque propio (muchas de las veces unipersonal), al tiempo que se declara prescindente de las posturas del partido que le diera cobijo (o de sus autoridades). Algo similar también ocurre con legisladores de la oposición que pasan a ser oficialistas o bien aliados (esta situación es más atendida bajo el término *cooptación*).

Esto motivó una decisión en torno a si la categorización de su postura del legislador respecto al Ejecutivo nacional/provincial debía mantenerse siguiendo el criterio de la lista por la que fue electo (más allá que algunos, aun antes de asumir, ya manifestaran el cambio de postura a favor o en contra del oficialismo) o que fuera actualizándose según los cambios reales de cada legislador.

Para este caso, la decisión adoptada fue la de generar una línea de tiempo para cada legislador (diputado o senador) en donde quedara registrado con fecha exacta cuándo viró de bloque legislativo, hacia dónde fue y qué postura tiene el nuevo bloque conformado/reestructurado. En este sentido, los movimientos fueron, en general, de formación de bloques de exoficialistas que pasaron a la oposición (bloque Peronismo Federal, por ejemplo) o de opositores que pasaron a ser aliados (como el bloque Solidaridad e Igualdad).

Como última aclaración vale destacar que las fechas utilizadas para acreditar el cambio de bloque parlamentario fueron las provistas oficialmente por Secretaría Parlamentaria (de Diputados y de Senadores) en donde figura únicamente la fecha en que los legisladores oficializaron formalmente su cambio.

Adicionalmente, también se construyó una línea de tiempo para los gobernadores, dado que en la dinámica política contemporánea también se pudo apreciar cómo algunos gobernadores aliados se pasaron a la oposición (por ejemplo, algunos de los llamados *gobernadores K*) o cómo algunos opositores se transformaron en aliados (por ejemplo, el Movimiento Popular Neuquino), así como también el caso de oficialistas que pasaron a la oposición (como fue el caso de Das Neves en Chubut). No se descartaron tampoco situaciones en donde los períodos de los gobernadores no coinciden exactamente con el de los legisladores nacionales de su provincia (por ejemplo, Santiago del Estero y Corrientes), en los cuales pudo haber cambios en la provincia (y su postura frente al Gobierno nacional), pero se conservaron a los mismos

⁴En efecto, para el caso del cultivo de la soja y su extensión provincial, yacimientos petrolíferos y mineros y sus pesos específicos en los Productos Brutos Geográficos correspondientes a cada provincia, los datos provinieron de documentos oficiales del Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria, Secretaría de Minería de la Nación y Secretaría de Energía de la Nación.

legisladores como dato insumo, se entenderá por caso (como primera aproximación) a aquella propuesta o tema que fuera llevado a las Cámaras legislativas para que sean sujetas a votación nominal por parte de los legisladores, sin distinción alguna acerca del origen de la misma (es decir, oposición, Ejecutivo, o bloque legislativo oficialista). Es decir que, *a priori*, quedan excluidos todos aquellos casos o iniciativas que no hubieran llegado a la instancia de votación en recinto (por ejemplo las que fueron votadas solamente en las Comisiones parlamentarias).

Ahora bien, como una segunda instancia de filtro o selección, los casos efectivamente analizados son aquellos que, además de cumplir la condición mencionada en el párrafo anterior, hayan generado un nivel de debate nacional que llevase a los gobernadores a exponer sus posturas frente a la cuestión (de forma explícita o implícita).

Aquí se presenta una primera dificultad que es la de determinar cuándo se cumple la segunda condición o no. En este sentido, la decisión tomada fue, en primer lugar, detectar aquellos temas que hicieran que la votación de las iniciativas fueran temas de mención en los distintos diarios nacionales. Es decir, en la medida en que tanto el tema como el hecho de la (futura) votación en el Congreso de la iniciativa presentada fueran mencionados en algún medio periodístico nacional, este ameritaba su selección y seguimiento².

Una vez seleccionada la propuesta, la otra cuestión a resolver giró en torno a cómo determinar la postura del gobernador y la fuente del dato. En este sentido, se realizó una búsqueda exhaustiva no solo en los diarios de tirada nacional (que para el caso argentino hay al menos dos de referencia: Clarín y La Nación), sino también en los principales periódicos de cada provincia argentina.

En uno u otro caso, el seguimiento llevó a poder encontrar apoyos o rechazos por parte de los gobernadores. Se considera explícita a toda manifestación en donde el gobernador deja asentada su postura frente al tema, por ejemplo, en un reportaje, en una solicitada con su firma, en la asistencia a una reunión convocada a tal efecto por grupos de gobernadores u otros actores en donde estos se manifestaron abiertamente en contra o a favor, reuniones del partido en donde el órgano partidario se manifiesta abiertamente en contra o a favor, fotos en las mismas condiciones que lo anteriormente relatado, por citar las más frecuentes.

De esta manera, se determinaron los casos a analizar y se completó la variable "postura del gobernador" con los datos para cada gobernador conforme estuviese "a favor"; "en contra"; o "sin dato", categorización que se utilizó cuando, más allá de la búsqueda exhaustiva, no se pudo obtener información

alguna como para poder ubicar al gobernador en una postura respecto al tema de estudio.

Esta última categoría llevó al planteo de otra situación: la de decidir qué hacer cuando hay muchos gobernadores que de ninguna manera dejan entrever su postura por las fuentes de datos utilizadas. En este sentido, se adoptó el último criterio para la selección definitiva del caso (o su descarte):

- Si hay hasta 5 gobernadores³ "sin datos", entonces estas provincias se descartan directamente del análisis, y
- Si hubiera un nivel de "sin datos" de más de 5 gobernadores (25 % o superior) entonces el caso se descarta por completo.

La delimitación, si bien arbitraria, es una decisión que busca que los silencios de los gobernadores influyan lo menos posible en el resultado. De otro modo, la investigación podría quedar sesgada de acuerdo a cómo queramos interpretar tales silencios o por el sesgo eventual de tener un comportamiento diferente entre gobernadores que expresan sus posturas y los que no, lo cual resultaría empíricamente indemostrable.

De esta manera, cumplieron con las condiciones planteadas las siguientes votaciones preseleccionadas del 2008: Resolución 125, Estatización de las AFJP y Estatización de Aerolíneas Argentinas. Para el 2009, cumplieron estas condiciones: Adelantamiento de Elecciones, Facultades Delegadas, Medios Audiovisuales, y Reforma Política. Para 2010, cumplieron las condiciones el proyecto de 82 % Móvil de Jubilaciones, Aportes del Tesoro de la Nación y Ley de Glaciares. Para 2011, Fondo del Bicentenario. Ahora bien, hasta aquí seguimos el criterio utilizado para la confección del IT. Sin embargo, para el presente artículo se incluye una etapa más para la selección de casos.

En efecto, dado que la cuestión a resolver aquí involucra la disyuntiva sobre decisiones en torno a intereses económicos, hay algunos de los casos mencionados en el párrafo anterior que no califican para ser tenidos en cuenta, ya que son de tipo social o

²Por ejemplo, para todo el año 2008 los temas que cumplieron ambas condiciones fueron solamente 4, a saber: Resolución 125, Estatización de las AFJP, Emergencia económica e impuesto al cheque, y Estatización de Aerolíneas Argentinas. Para 2009 fueron 5 los casos: Adelantamiento de elecciones, Facultades delegadas, Medios Audiovisuales, Impuesto Tecnológico, y Reforma Política. Para 2010 los casos fueron: Reforma del Consejo de la Magistratura, Ley de Coparticipación, Promoción Industrial, Aportes del Tesoro de la Nación, Reforma de los Súperpoderes, 82 % Móvil para Jubilaciones, Ley de Glaciares, Reforma del INDEC, Papel Prensa/Fibertel. Para 2011: Fondo del Bicentenario.

³ La Argentina cuenta con 23 gobernadores y un jefe de Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, que para nuestro caso es tratado al mismo nivel que un gobernador.

puramente políticos, como ser: Reforma Política, Facultades Delegadas, Adelantamiento de Elecciones y Medios Audiovisuales.

Por otra parte, hay otros casos, que si bien involucran cuestiones netamente económicas, no están referidos a cuestiones productivas que permitan establecer si tal provincia se vería afectada y otra no, como sería el caso de una provincia sojera respecto de otra no sojera. Una situación como esa es la de estatización de Aerolíneas Argentinas, ya que para este caso no podemos determinar que hubiera provincias no afectadas por dicha empresa o provincias en donde Aerolíneas no envía vuelos y otras a las que sí, de forma tal de poder distinguir claramente aquellos distritos que sentirían sus intereses afectados de manera positiva de las que lo sentirían en forma negativa.

Esta situación de "generalidad" (en el sentido de que afectan de la misma manera a todas las provincias) se encuentra no solo en el caso de Aerolíneas Argentinas sino también en el de Estatización de las AFJP, 82 % Móvil de Jubilaciones, Aportes del Tesoro de la Nación y Fondo del Bicentenario.

De esta manera, el círculo se cierra a solo dos votaciones dentro del primer período de Cristina Kirchner: Resolución 125 (que permite distinguir provincias sojeras de no sojeras) y Ley de Glaciares (que permite distinguir provincias mineras de provincias no mineras).

Por último, aclaramos que la categorización de una provincia como sojera/no sojera, minera/no minera o petrolera/no petrolera ha surgido exclusivamente de datos de organismos oficiales⁴.

Determinados los criterios de selección de casos, resta aclarar las categorizaciones realizadas en torno a la situación político-partidaria del legislador frente al Gobierno nacional o provincial. Para este caso se utilizaron tres categorías con el mismo criterio nacional o provincial: *oficialista*, *aliado* u *opositor*.

Cuando hablamos de *oficialista*, nos referimos a aquel legislador que hubiera sido parte de la lista oficial que llevaba al presidente/gobernador como candidato. En caso de pertenecer a otra lista no oficial, pero que también postulaba al que luego fuera presidente/gobernador electo, entonces ese legislador es categorizado como *aliado*. Por último, si el legislador hubiera formado parte de una lista cuyo candidato a presidente/gobernador hubiera sido otro respecto al que fuera electo, entonces es categorizado como *opositor*.

Sin embargo, la dinámica política argentina nos lleva a tener en cuenta otro aspecto no menos importante: la ruptura de legisladores respecto de los partidos (bloques parlamentarios) que les dieran la plataforma de elección como también el posicionamiento de los gobernadores respecto al poder ejecutivo nacional. En otras palabras, no es nada

extraño que un candidato haya sido electo por el oficialismo y que, luego de asumir, rompa con el partido o el bloque oficialista en la Cámara y se una a otro (opositor o no), o arme un bloque propio (muchas de las veces unipersonal), al tiempo que se declara prescindente de las posturas del partido que le diera cobijo (o de sus autoridades). Algo similar también ocurre con legisladores de la oposición que pasan a ser oficialistas o bien aliados (esta situación es más atendida bajo el término *cooptación*).

Esto motivó una decisión en torno a si la categorización de su postura del legislador respecto al Ejecutivo nacional/provincial debía mantenerse siguiendo el criterio de la lista por la que fue electo (más allá que algunos, aun antes de asumir, ya manifestaran el cambio de postura a favor o en contra del oficialismo) o que fuera actualizándose según los cambios reales de cada legislador.

Para este caso, la decisión adoptada fue la de generar una línea de tiempo para cada legislador (diputado o senador) en donde quedara registrado con fecha exacta cuándo viró de bloque legislativo, hacia dónde fue y qué postura tiene el nuevo bloque conformado/reestructurado. En este sentido, los movimientos fueron, en general, de formación de bloques de exoficialistas que pasaron a la oposición (bloque Peronismo Federal, por ejemplo) o de opositores que pasaron a ser aliados (como el bloque Solidaridad e Igualdad).

Como última aclaración vale destacar que las fechas utilizadas para acreditar el cambio de bloque parlamentario fueron las provistas oficialmente por Secretaría Parlamentaria (de Diputados y de Senadores) en donde figura únicamente la fecha en que los legisladores oficializaron formalmente su cambio.

Adicionalmente, también se construyó una línea de tiempo para los gobernadores, dado que en la dinámica política contemporánea también se pudo apreciar cómo algunos gobernadores aliados se pasaron a la oposición (por ejemplo, algunos de los llamados *gobernadores K*) o cómo algunos opositores se transformaron en aliados (por ejemplo, el Movimiento Popular Neuquino), así como también el caso de oficialistas que pasaron a la oposición (como fue el caso de Das Neves en Chubut). No se descartaron tampoco situaciones en donde los períodos de los gobernadores no coinciden exactamente con el de los legisladores nacionales de su provincia (por ejemplo, Santiago del Estero y Corrientes), en los cuales pudo haber cambios en la provincia (y su postura frente al Gobierno nacional), pero se conservaron a los mismos

⁴En efecto, para el caso del cultivo de la soja y su extensión provincial, yacimientos petrolíferos y mineros y sus pesos específicos en los Productos Brutos Geográficos correspondientes a cada provincia, los datos provinieron de documentos oficiales del Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria, Secretaría de Minería de la Nación y Secretaría de Energía de la Nación.

legisladores nacionales (por ejemplo, el caso de Corrientes). En síntesis, esta línea de tiempo de gobernadores permitió tener en cuenta los cambios políticos de los gobernadores para todo el período de estudio y para cada votación a analizar.

Como podrá apreciarse, el análisis de los legisladores y gobernadores requiere de un seguimiento permanente. Ya aclaradas todas las cuestiones operativas podemos avanzar sobre el análisis de las votaciones seleccionadas.

IV. ANÁLISIS DE LAS VOTACIONES

En primer lugar debemos destacar que, si bien al momento de redacción los casos que finalmente superaron todos los filtros o criterios de selección totalizan solo tres votaciones, estos han resultado lo suficientemente variados como para posibilitar la contemplación de situaciones diversas.

En efecto, se pueden observar situaciones en donde dentro de cada grupo (oficialistas, aliados u opositores) hay unanimidad de posturas de los gobernadores, pero también donde tales grupos están

divididos frente a alguna propuesta, sean estas iniciativas provenientes de su mismo partido o de otro. Así, entre los gobernadores opositores pueden apreciarse tanto diferencias como unidad (Resolución 125), mientras que los grupos de gobernadores aliados y oficialistas pueden manifestar en diversas ocasiones tanto distintas posturas como la misma postura.

Por último, debemos aclarar que, merced a resultados de estudios anteriores (Coronel y Zamichiei, 2009, 2010 y 2012), quedó demostrado que el análisis de los legisladores requiere ser efectuado por separado para ambas Cámaras. Así, a continuación se encontrarán los resultados del estudio de los senadores y, luego, el de los diputados.

a) Resultados del Senado de la Nación

El orden de análisis de resultados comienza con la tabla general de los votos de los senadores según estos provengan de provincias sojeras, mineras, petroleras o no. De esta manera los resultados obtenidos fueron los siguientes:

Table 1 : Votación Resolución 125. Senadores por provincia sojera o no sojera

		Provincia sojera o no		Total
		Sojera	No sojera	
Voto_125	A favor	11 36,70 %	25 59,50 %	36 50,00 %
	En contra	19 63,30 %	17 40,50 %	36 50,00 %
Total		30 100,00 %	42 100,00 %	72 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Table 2 : Votación Ley de Protección de Glaciares. Senadores por provincia minera o no minera

		Provincia minera o no		Total
		Minera	No minera	
Voto	A favor	11 42,30 %	24 57,10 %	35 51,50 %
	En contra	15 57,70 %	18 42,90 %	33 48,50 %
Total		26 100,00 %	42 100,00 %	68 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Si la hipótesis económico-productiva fuera válida, los números a observar serían del 100 % (o muy cercanos a esa cifra) en los extremos de las diagonales resaltadas en negrita.

Es cierto que para las votaciones observadas, los valores máximos se registran en dichas celdas. Pero el hecho de ser una mayoría lejana al 100 % nos da lugar a pensar en la existencia de otra/s variable/s que

podieran explicar mejor el comportamiento electoral de los senadores.

En este sentido, hacemos un primer corte teniendo en cuenta solamente a los senadores que son oficialistas respecto a los Gobiernos de sus provincias. Si esta variable fuera de influencia nula, entonces deberíamos observar una estructura de respuestas/votaciones similares a las observadas en los cuadros anteriores.

Table 3 : Votación Resolución 125. Senadores *oficialistas de sus gobiernos provinciales* por provincia sojera o no sojera

		Provincia sojera o no		Total
		Sojera	No sojera	
Voto_125	A favor	9 47,40 %	16 66,70 %	25 58,10 %
	En contra	10 52,60 %	8 33,30 %	18 41,90 %
Total		19 100,00 %	24 100,00 %	43 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Table 4 : Votación Ley de Protección de Glaciares. Senadores *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia minera o no minera

		Provincia minera o no		Total
		Minera	No minera	
Voto	A favor	3 23,10 %	8 34,80 %	11 30,60 %
	En contra	10 76,90 %	15 65,20 %	25 69,40%
Total		13 100,00 %	23 100,00 %	36 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Lo interesante con este cruce es que se puede observar que, en el caso en que se mantiene la misma estructura de votación (Resolución 125), los valores se diferencian (lo que marcaría misma estructura pero distinta intensidad), mientras que para la Ley de Glaciares no solo varía la intensidad sino también el sentido de la explicación misma; es decir, para los oficialistas de los Gobiernos provinciales, no importa la estructura productiva provincial, ya que, sean o no mineras, el nivel de rechazo a la iniciativa es alto.

En otras palabras, esto nos estaría indicando con mucha mayor contundencia que, sometido a control por otras variables, la estructura productiva no

es determinante en absoluto del voto de los senadores. Conscientes de la poca cantidad de casos, la extensión o fuerza de este hallazgo no radica tanto en su potencia explicativa sino en poder refutar hipótesis de tipo totalizantes, lo que a su vez nos permitiría hablar de que la postura económico-productiva es de hecho un reduccionismo a desterrar.

En un intento por dilucidar influencias efectivas, incorporamos al análisis la postura de los gobernadores frente al tema en votación. De esta manera, los resultados revelan lo siguiente:

Table 5 : Votación Resolución 125. Senadores *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia sojera o no sojera, y por postura del gobernador sobre la medida.

		Gobernador a favor		Gobernador en contra	
		Sojera	No sojera	Sojera	No sojera
Voto del legislador	A favor	8 57,10 %	16 88,90 %	1 20,00 %	0 0,00 %
	En contra	6 42,90 %	2 11,10 %	4 80,00 %	6 100,00 %
Total		14 100,00 %	18 100,00 %	5 100,00 %	6 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Table 6 : Votación Ley de Protección de Glaciares. Senadores *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia minera o no minera, y por postura del gobernador sobre la medida

		Gobernador a favor		Gobernador en contra	
		Minera	No minera	Minera	No minera
Voto del legislador	A favor	1 100,00 %	3 60,00 %	2 16,70 %	2 20,00 %
	En contra	0 0,00 %	2 40,00 %	10 83,30 %	8 80,00 %
Total		1 100,00 %	5 100,00 %	12 100,00 %	10 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Aquí los datos son contundentes. Si bien no se puede afirmar que la postura del gobernador es la única variable explicativa, sí podemos afirmar que esta postura es un factor mucho más influyente sobre las votaciones de los senadores que las características de la provincia de procedencia.

En efecto, no solo se observa congruencia directa y permanente entre postura del gobernador y

mayor porcentaje de votos de los legisladores sino que, al actuar como variable de control, queda en claro que esta influencia o concordancia actúa de forma independiente de la estructura económico-productiva de la provincia.

Table 7 : Votación Resolución 125. Senadores *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia sojera o no sojera, por postura del gobernador sobre la medida y posición política.

		Gobernador oficialista		Gobernador opositor		Gobernador aliado	
		Sojera	No sojera	Sojera	No sojera	Sojera	No sojera
Voto del legislador	A favor	8 57,10 %	16 94,10 %	0	0	1 50,00 %	0 0,00 %
	En contra	6 42,90 %	1 5,90 %	3 100,00 %	2 100,00 %	1 50,00 %	5 100,00 %
Total		14 100,00 %	17 100,00 %	3 100,00 %	2 100,00 %	2 100,00 %	5 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Table 8 : Votación Ley de Protección de Glaciares. Senadores *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia minera o no minera, y por postura del gobernador sobre la medida y posición política

		Gobernador oficialista		Gobernador opositor		Gobernador aliado	
		Minera	No minera	Minera	No minera	Minera	No minera
Voto del legislador	A favor	2 22,20 %	4 26,70 %	1 33,30 %	2 40,00 %	0 0,00 %	2 66,70 %
	En contra	7 77,80 %	11 73,30 %	2 66,70 %	3 60,00 %	1 100,00 %	1 33,30 %
Total		9 100,00 %	15 100,00 %	3 100,00 %	5 100,00 %	1 100,00 %	3 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Vale aclarar que en los casos de la Resolución 125 y la Ley de Glaciares se presentó una heterogeneidad tal que se dificulta el análisis cruzado. En particular, los gobernadores manifestaron posiciones tanto a favor como en contra del proyecto sin discriminar sus posturas políticas (*opositor, aliado u oficialista*) ni las características de sus provincias (*sojeras, mineras o petroleras*), por lo cual resulta

imposible efectuar una mayor cantidad de categorizaciones, puesto que generan muchas celdas sin casos observados (ver Anexo II).

Del mismo modo, si bien se muestran los resultados para los *aliados al Gobierno nacional y oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales*, estos no se analizarán dado que su número es muy pequeño como para poder tomar significativamente los porcentajes.

Ahora bien, los últimos cuadros son confirmatorios respecto de que la variable política tiene un peso mucho mayor que el factor económico-productivo para identificar el comportamiento legislativo de los senadores.

Resta analizar los resultados de los diputados nacionales.

b) *Resultados de la Cámara de Diputados de la Nación*

Siguiendo la misma estructura de presentación que la realizada para los senadores, estudiamos la votación de todos los diputados, y se observaron los siguientes resultados:

Tabla 9: Votación Resolución 125. Diputados por provincia sojera o no sojera

		Provincia sojera o no		Total
		Sojera	No sojera	
Voto 125	A favor	70 46,10 %	59 59,60 %	129 51,40 %
	En contra	82 53,90 %	40 40,40 %	122 48,60 %
Total		152 100,00 %	99 100,00 %	251 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Tabla 10: Votación Ley de Protección de Glaciares. Diputados por provincia minera o no minera

		Provincia minera o no		Total
		Minera	No minera	
Voto	A favor	19 37,30 %	110 67,10 %	129 60,00 %
	En contra	32 62,70 %	54 32,90 %	86 40,00 %
Total		51 100,00 %	164 100,0 %	215 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia

Como ocurrió en el caso del Senado, aquí también las mayores cifras se hallan en los cuadrantes esperables por la tesis económico-determinista (sojera y minera en contra; no sojera y no minera a favor); sin embargo, los datos siguen distando significativamente del 100 % esperado por dicha postura.

Por ello, al igual que con los senadores, realizamos un primer corte teniendo en cuenta solamente a los diputados oficialistas respecto de los Gobiernos de sus provincias.

Table 11: Votación Resolución 125. Diputados *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia sojera o no sojera.

		Provincia sojera o no		Total
		Sojera	No sojera	
Voto_125	A favor	55 67,90 %	39 70,90 %	94 69,10 %
	En contra	26 32,10 %	16 29,10 %	42 30,90 %
Total		81 100,00 %	55 100,00 %	136 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Tabla 12: Votación Ley de Protección de Glaciares. Diputados *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia minera o no minera

		Provincia minera o no		Total
		Minera	No minera	
Voto	A favor	5 20,00 %	20 31,30 %	25 28,10 %
	En contra	20 80,00 %	44 68,80 %	64 71,90 %
Total		25 100,00 %	64 100,00 %	89 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Vale aclarar que los comportamientos a favor y en contra dependen de cada proyecto en particular y no de una condición previa de oficialismo/oposición. En otras palabras, si bien es posible esperar que, *prima facie*, los oficialistas se muestren a favor de proyectos oficiales y los opositores en contra (y viceversa), esto no siempre ocurre (ni con los gobernadores ni con los legisladores). Por ejemplo, en el caso de la 125, dicho patrón se cumplió entre los gobernadores oficialistas y opositores, mientras que la ruptura vino por el lado de los gobernadores aliados (algunos se pusieron a favor y otros en contra). Pero con la Ley de Glaciares, que al ser una medida de origen opositor hacía esperable un comportamiento invertido (*opositores* a favor y *oficialistas* en contra), esto no ocurrió: muchos gobernadores oficialistas se mostraron a favor de la medida (muchos más que en el caso de la 125) a la vez que las posturas en contra se hallaron entre Gobiernos de provincias mineras sin importar postura política.

Ahora bien, con estos primeros cruces ya se observa un cambio en el sentido de la explicación determinista: el comportamiento de los diputados oficialistas respecto de sus provincias no se explicaría tanto por los intereses o *lobbies* sojeros, mineros, etc., sino por otras variables. Así, tales diputados, sean o no de provincias sojeras, se volcaron mayoritariamente y en porcentajes similares a favor de la 125. Del mismo modo, sean sus provincias mineras o no, se volcaron mayoritariamente en contra de la Ley de Glaciares.

Es decir que, nuevamente, queda en claro que las estructuras productivas provinciales no resultan determinantes en las votaciones de los diputados. En otros términos, la economía no es explicación suficiente del comportamiento político.

Como con los senadores, también aquí incorporamos al análisis la postura de los gobernadores frente al tema en votación. De esta manera, los resultados muestran lo siguiente:

Tabla 13 : Votación Resolución 125. Diputados *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia sojera o no sojera, y por postura del gobernador sobre la medida

		Gobernador a favor		Gobernador en contra	
		Sojera	No sojera	Sojera	No sojera
Voto del legislador	A favor	52 81,30 %	38 97,40 %	3 17,60 %	1 6,30 %
	En contra	12 18,80 %	1 2,60 %	14 82,40 %	15 93,80 %
Total		64 100,00 %	39 100,00 %	17 100,00 %	16 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Tabla 14 : Votación Ley de Protección de Glaciares. Diputados *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia minera o no minera, y por postura del gobernador sobre la medida

		Gobernador a favor		Gobernador en contra	
		Minera	No minera	Minera	No minera
Voto del legislador	A favor	2 100,00 %	13 100,00 %	3 13,00 %	3 7,50 %
	En contra	0	0	20 87,00 %	37 92,50 %
Total		2 100,00 %	13 100,00 %	23 100,00 %	40 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Ante todo, aclaramos que la escasez en la cantidad de diputados incluidos en la tabla y la eliminación de los aliados se debe a una doble condición: por un lado, a una cierta cantidad de ausentes en el momento de la votación, y por otro lado, al hecho de que algunos gobernadores presentaron posturas imposibles de rastrear.

Hecha la aclaración, observamos que nuevamente los resultados son concluyentes y no dejan lugar a dudas. La posición a favor o en contra de parte del gobernador presenta una influencia mucho mayor que las características productivas de la provincia de donde proceden los diputados.

Tabla 15 : Votación Resolución 125. Diputados oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales por provincia sojera o no sojera, por postura del gobernador sobre la medida y posición política

		Gobernador oficialista		Gobernador opositor		Gobernador aliado	
		Sojera	No sojera	Sojera	No sojera	Sojera	No sojera
Voto del legislador	A favor	50 78,10 %	38 97,40 %	0	0	5 83,30 %	1 11,10 %
	En contra	14 21,90 %	1 2,60 %	11 100,00 %	7 100,00 %	1 16,70 %	8 88,90 %
Total		64 100,00 %	39 100,00 %	11 100,00 %	7 100,00 %	6 100,00 %	9 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Tabla 16 : Votación Ley de Protección de Glaciares. Diputados *oficialistas de sus Gobiernos provinciales* por provincia minera o no minera, por postura del gobernador sobre la medida y posición política

		Gobernador oficialista		Gobernador opositor		Gobernador aliado	
		Sojera	No sojera	Sojera	No sojera	Sojera	No sojera
Voto del legislador	A favor	0 0,00 %	1 2,60 %	2 66,70 %	18 100,00 %	3 75,00 %	1 12,50 %
	En contra	18 100,00 %	37 97,40 %	1 33,30 %	0 0,00 %	1 25,00 %	7 87,50 %
Total		18 100,00 %	38 100,00 %	3 100,00 %	18 100,00 %	4 100,00 %	8 100,00 %

Fuente: elaboración propia.

Como se explicó anteriormente, la escasez de diputados se debió a factores coyunturales de las votaciones, en este caso agravadas por la división en múltiples categorías de control. Por ese mismo motivo, no podemos analizar en mayor detalle el caso de los aliados (ya que de seguir dividiendo en categorías no habría casos para llenar las casillas). Más allá de esto, se puede observar que en los demás casos se mantienen las tendencias señaladas hasta aquí.

V. CONSIDERACIONES FINALES

En lo que hace a la relación entre poderes ejecutivo y legislativo, en los últimos años, el mundo académico ha comenzado a incluir a los actores subnacionales como un factor interviniente. En este sentido, hasta tiempos recientes la bibliografía refería al papel "legislativo" de los gobernadores con un carácter más anecdótico o testimonial que científico. En aras de completar este vacío académico, algunos estudios se han orientado hacia la necesidad de medir empíricamente la mencionada influencia de los gobernadores.

Sin embargo, en lo referente a algunas leyes relativas a cuestiones económicas, siguen imperando criterios excluyentes de las posturas de los legisladores, por lo general con explicaciones simplistas basadas en

determinismos del tipo económico. Antes que tenerse en cuenta el rol de los gobernadores, se suele hacer mayor referencia a los intereses de las provincias representadas en el Congreso Nacional o al papel de los *lobbies* económicos afectados. Pese a que dicha influencia había sido mensurada en trabajos anteriores, en ámbitos académicos diversos sigue escuchándose la postura economicista.

Ahora bien, más allá de tales posturas reduccionistas, es interesante controlar las investigaciones y los instrumentos desarrollados hasta el momento para medir la influencia de los gobernadores en el comportamiento legislativo de diputados y senadores.

Así, los resultados obtenidos en la presente investigación demostraron, en primer lugar, que el factor productivo provincial no es determinante a la hora de la votación legislativa. Si bien sugiere cierta influencia, esta no es claramente determinante. En términos prácticos, los representantes de una provincia sojera no necesariamente votan a favor de los intereses sojeros, ni los provenientes de distritos mineros legislan necesariamente a favor de los *lobbies* de la minería.

En segundo lugar, al incorporarse variables de control tales como la postura del gobernador y la posición política frente al Ejecutivo nacional, los datos

no dan lugar a dudas: frente a estos factores, la estructura productiva de la provincia resulta de mayor irrelevancia para explicar el comportamiento del voto legislativo de senadores y diputados nacionales. En otras palabras, la posición que fije el gobernador es más importante que los intereses productivos.

Si bien estos intereses pudieran influir directamente sobre los gobernadores y, luego, como por carácter transitivo, sobre los legisladores, lo que esto nos estaría mostrando es que, para los legisladores, la política es una variable preponderante por sobre la variable productiva.

Por último, queda confirmado que en el actual sistema político argentino, la territorialidad posee un peso específico propio y que, por ello, requiere de un análisis mayor al que se le dio históricamente. No obstante, lo que hay que tener en cuenta para entender las votaciones de los legisladores no es tanto la matriz productiva de sus terruños de origen, sino las posiciones que coyunturalmente presenten los líderes territoriales. Esto es lo que se buscó demostrar en investigaciones previas y que aparece fortalecido por el presente estudio.

Pese a todo, y conscientes de la escasez de casos que se han podido trabajar, dejamos abierta la posibilidad a distintos factores explicativos que puedan surgir a futuro, como así también resta comprobar si este fenómeno inicialmente observado es propio de la dinámica argentina o característico de los países federales latinoamericanos. Por lo pronto, podemos afirmar que todo parece indicar que para comprender la dinámica del Congreso Nacional argentino, los gobernadores importan.

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ANEXO I

Listado de proyectos considerados para el análisis

Año	Proyectos mencionados en diarios de tirada nacional	Origen	Gobernadores sin postura	Situación del proyecto	Resultado del proceso legislativo
2008	Resolución 125	Oficialismo	0	Votación finalizada	Rechazado
	Estatización de las AFJP	Oficialismo	4	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
	Emergencia económica e impuesto al cheque	Oficialismo	7	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
	Estatización de Aerolíneas Argentinas	Oficialismo	5	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
2009	Adelantamiento de elecciones	Oficialismo	0	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
	Facultades delegadas	Oficialismo	19	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
	Medios audiovisuales	Oficialismo	1	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
	Impuesto tecnológico	Oficialismo	22	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
	Reforma política	Oficialismo	3	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
2010	Reforma del Consejo de la Magistratura	Oposición	---	Proyecto en trámite	
	Ley de Coparticipación	Oposición	---	Proyecto en trámite	
	Promoción Industrial	Oposición ⁵	---	Proyecto en trámite	
	Aportes del Tesoro de la Nación	Oposición	4	Votación finalizada	Aprobado ⁶
	Reforma de Súperpoderes	Oposición	---	Proyecto en trámite	
	82 % Móvil Jubilaciones	Oposición	5	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
	Ley de Glaciares	Oposición ⁷	5	Votación finalizada	Aprobado
	Reforma del INDEC	Oposición	---	Proyecto en trámite	
	Papel Prensa/Fibertel	Oposición	---	Proyecto en trámite	
2011	Fondo del Bicentenario	Oficialismo	1	Votación finalizada	Aprobado

⁵Este proyecto fue presentado a instancias de los propios gobernadores (de diferentes signos políticos). Fue categorizado como opositor no tanto por el origen en sí, sino por la postura en contra del Ejecutivo nacional.

⁶Aprobado solo en una Cámara. Al haber implementado por motu proprio el Ejecutivo la medida aprobada en Diputados, esto generó que su tratamiento quedase sin efecto en el Senado.

⁷Si bien la iniciativa contaba entre sus redactores al senador oficialista Filmus, lo categorizamos como oposición debido al antecedente del poder ejecutivo que vetara dicha iniciativa en período legislativo anterior.

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The Engagement of Brazil with Africa in the New Century: Convergence of Moments

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Abstract - This article treats about the engagement of Brazil with Africa in the new century, which reflects a time in which there was an increase in presence of Brazil in the continent motivated by, not only changes in the conditions of stability in Africa, but also by Brazilian diplomatic investments through African countries and by also favorable internal Brazilian economic conditions, which enabled economic growth and international proactivity. On the Africa side, the new international integration divides in the NEPAD's autonomist mood and a "new scramble for Africa" by the countries interested in investing in the continent. On the Brazil side, Lula government foreign policy pursuit revert the distance settled during the 1990's, by improving not only incentives to the Brazilian companies but also bilateral cooperation, commerce and high level meetings.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Africa is present in Brazil's international relations even before its organization as a national state, constituting the dynamic trade that operated outside the rules of the Portuguese colonial empire. During this period, the contacts were intense at both commercial and proximity among elites, especially those devoted to the slave trade. After the end of slavery and the slave trade, respectively in 1888 and 1850, Africa went through a long period of neglect on the part of Brazil, so that Alberto da Costa e Silva says the effort to rethink the Brazilian dialogue with the African continent, especially in political and diplomatic fields, date only from the eve of African independences, in the twentieth century.

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century the approach was improving progressively, ranging from the speech that found no support in the practical actions, in the 1960s, to a more pragmatic emphasis, in the 1970s, interspersed with some periods of estrangement. Meanwhile, in Africa, the independence processes unfolded, some milder, others with extreme violence.

In the twenty-first century, however, on both sides of the Atlantic the availability of internal conditions joins the political will and relations gain new momentum. Currently, the sophistication and complexity of international relations of states and domestic economies convert this new approach in direct

investments, high-level visits, coordination of positions in the context of South-South relations, in addition to increasing trade, with a more sophisticated agenda compared with previous ones. This article aims to analyze the reunion between Brazil and Africa in the twenty-first century and the convergence of moments on both sides of the Atlantic which have created favorable conditions for the growth of bilateral relations.

II. THE NEW AFRICA'S INTERNATIONAL INSERTION

The international integration of independent Africa, as well as the process of independence of many of its countries, happened in the midst of the Cold War. This insertion occurred either through an attempt at autonomy, with the Non-Aligned Movement and the struggle for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), or with its internal conflicts as being instrumentalized by disputes between the two powers. In this sense, in the period of Détente, conflicts between the United States and Soviet Union were largely transferred to the peripheral countries, particularly those in Africa, attributing strategic character to the region.

The end of the Cold War, therefore, imposed a new condition to international relations in Africa. The loss of strategic importance that these countries had in bipolar disputes meant that, in the 1990s the continent was consigned to oblivion, and, thereafter, to deal with unfinished conflicts remnants of disputes between the old powers, which still were compounded by strategic marginalization, loss of ability to bargain, loss of economic importance, the consequences of the lost decade and the livelihood of colonial paradigms.

If in the Cold War period the existence of conflicts have led to disorganization and impoverishment of the continent, in the 1990s this situation was aggravated, because in these countries, not only the conflicts did not end, but also they lost the financial and strategic support of the great powers, which helped to maintain social cohesion. Conflicts, by the way, have become endemic, were aggravated or, in some cases, new conflicts arising from disputes over the control of the states. This situation abounded the "afropessimism" in analyzes about the continent. In this sense, the World Bank came to estimate that by the rate of the 1990s, it

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would take forty years for black Africa regained the level of the 1970s. (SARAIVA, 2008)

Given the "Saharan tragedy", it was multiplied the number of peacekeeping operations of the United Nations in Africa and the Great Powers, as well as the UN, engaged in humanitarian aid policies to Africa, which delimited the continent's participation in international relations that decade. Welfare proposals, mostly conditioned to liberal reforms, which channeled resources from rich countries to the region, were ineffective in combating the Africans problems and, face its failure, were being abandoned at the turn of the millennium.

At the beginning of the XXI century, passed the gap of the post-Cold War, Africa, in the words of Vizentini, gives a "new jolt" and takes on a new level of international integration. According to José Flávio Sombra Saraiva, there are three central concepts that fuel this transformation: gradual advance of democratization and containment of armed conflict; economic growth grounded in fiscal responsibility and social concern, and elevation in confidence of elites through new forms of cultural and political renaissance.

While the political aspect highlights the role of South Africa, Libya¹, Nigeria, Algeria and Senegal in the transformation of the AUO into the AU and in the launch of NEPAD, in economic terms, the South African industrial strength and substantial oil resources of Algeria, Nigeria and Libya were added to the strong increase in investment and trade promoted by China in particular, but also India, Brazil and Arab Countries. Moreover, Africa, as a traditional exporter of commodities and agricultural products, has benefited from the appreciation of some commodities and from the demand for strategic resources that Chinese growth imposes, which Africa has in abundance.

The South Africa post-Apartheid has also acted in world diplomacy aimed at reforming international institutions in order to provide a more multipolar world, where African countries have greater voice. This country also has been actively promoting multilateralism in Africa, for example, by the creation of the Community for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the growing number of multilateral conferences based in African countries.

All this resulted in a sharp acceleration in economic growth and more assertive international affairs of African countries. This is what is called the Rebirth of Africa.

Throughout the first decade of this century, Africa had an average growth of 5% to 6%, their average inflation rates were contained in 6% and exports in 2006 and 2007 were 43% and 45% of GDP, while foreign investments correspond, on average, to 19.4% of GDP - a percentage very close to that of Brazil, although considered low for economic sustainability (SARAIVA, 2008: 88).

From the academic perspective, rebirth corresponds to a tendency of Africans to go over the waywardness of several experiments of imported models. The idea of using unprecedented opportunities permeates the new internal discourse of African intelligence.

Despite the changes, there are still some concerns that hover over the continent, as the issue of poverty, which in many countries is still worrying, the possibility of a new cycle of indebtedness, generated mainly by Chinese policy in Africa, little diversification of the African economy and the persistence of corruption.

Moreover, the international financial crisis has introduced new challenges. The African economy was not as affected as the developed countries, but there was a reduction of Chinese investments, offset by just advancing capital of the Persian Gulf. In short, the continent continues to live a cycle of growth, but it is precisely here that lies the challenge for the future, to the extent that one questions how growth will be maintained in the context of less international capital available for investments.

Even so, Africa has presented figures and both positive and innovative initiatives that lead the continent to be seen as the new frontier of capitalism.

The Rebirth of Africa and its new international role are grounded on two pillars, one internal - NEPAD - responsible for the spirit of self-management of the continent, without outside interference and promoting their own development, and an external one, which is the rediscovery of the continent by foreign investors and the process that has been called the "new scramble for Africa."

a) *NEPAD - New Partnership for Africa Development*

NEPAD is a program of the African Union, adopted in 2001, with autochthonous proposes and carried out by Africans. This document is related to the "Rebirth of Africa", because it represents an initiative of resumption of confidence and identity reconstruction of the continent. In this sense, African leaders claim to be taking the reins of their own destiny, refusing to accept economic and political disqualified leaders and be conditioned by circumstances.

According to José Flávio Sombra Saraiva (2002), to some extent, the NEPAD is not exactly unheard of in African politics, insofar as it is a strong contribution from previous projects, such as the African Renaissance, from the late 1990s, Omega Plan, of Senegal, and the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP), of South Africa. Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa thus become protagonists of NEPAD Plan.

¹All the references to Libya in this article are related to the situation before the civil war.

Despite having roots in other previous projects, NEPAD is a constructive reaction of African leadership in difficult times and Saraiva considers that there is some originality in the document.

Part of the recovery and reconstruction of the self-esteem of African identity, according to the document, depends on the consciousness of the African people in relation to their contribution to the world and the appreciation of it, is that Africa is the cradle of humanity, either by owning mineral, ecological and cultural resources. The self-confidence that Emerges, however, protects these resources in order to be used to generate wealth and well-being for Africans themselves.

The objective of NEPAD is to eradicate poverty and place African countries, both individually and collectively, on the path of sustainable growth and development and to halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process.

The agenda proposed by NEPAD seeks the renewal of the continent, based on national and regional priorities, namely: prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, democracy and human rights, through the development of clear standards of verification, transparency and participatory governance; macroeconomic stability; establishment of a transparent legal and regulatory framework in the financial markets and auditing public and private sector; promotion of education, technical training and health, with priority to the problem of AIDS, malaria and other diseases; promoting the role of women; promote infrastructure development, agriculture and diversification between agribusiness and manufactures; and strengthen the State to be able to create and enforce legal rules and maintain order.

Also NEPAD has ambitious goals, such as to achieve and maintain an average GDP of the countries in 7% pa in the fifteen years following the drafting of the document. Among the strategies to achieve these goals is the diversification of productive activities, stimulating competitiveness and increased exports.

All this depends on building a strong and competitive economy, which, in times of globalization, becomes a necessary condition to remove Africa from marginalization and so it can participate effectively in the global economy and international politics. NEPAD leaders identify that, if the enormous natural and human resources of the continent are used appropriately, it can be achieved equitable and sustainable development. This is a call for a new relationship of partnership between Africa and the international community, especially developed countries, aiming to overcome the past of unequal relations.

The idea of the project is to fill gaps in strategic sectors, namely: infrastructure, information technology and digital communications, energy, transportation, poverty reduction, education, reduction of brain drain,

health, agriculture, environment, culture, science and technology. The state's role is highlighted in growth and economic development.

As for resources to be mobilized for this purpose, capital flows are identified as one of the strategic pillars. African leaders have identified the need to fill a gap of around 12% of their GDP with capital flows, most of which must come from outside the continent, in the form of debt relief, Development Assistance (ODA) and private capital (NEPAD, 2001). Regarding the latter, it is intended to give attention to investors' perception that Africa is a continent of high risk, treating the security of property rights and regulatory frameworks. Interim measures are planned to mitigate the risk, including credit guarantee schemes.

Institutionally, the plan has progressed, creating a secretariat based in South Africa, a Steering Committee, an Implementation Committee, and five task groups to identify and implement projects in the focus areas of the plan.

Interpretations about the importance of NEPAD ranges from the most optimistic, as to Saraiva that compared NEPAD to Marshall Plan, to the extent that they both wanted to sew the "frayed fabric of the economy and politics" of their target countries, to the vision of the pessimists, who consider the NEPAD as a piece of empty rhetoric.

The response from governments and international institutions, especially financial ones, was enthusiastic. But criticism arose on the part of intellectuals, social movements and NGOs within and outside Africa.

In Brazil, one of the most controversial voices in criticism of the document is Wolfgang Döpcke (2002), which states that the NEPAD takes globalization as inevitable and does not question it, accepting the liberal hegemonic discourse and integrating it to its proposal. He characterized NEPAD as an "Africanization of Western liberal proposals." Citing *Herald* newspaper, Wolfgang Döpcke also criticizes the NEPAD, characterizing it as a "vehicle of neocolonial imperialist countries to exploit and subjugate the African continent." Furthermore, he states that, in relation to the concrete and sectoral priorities, the plan is conventional and development policies are similar to those of past decades. Saraiva, however, suggests a tonic of cautious optimism.

Given these interpretations, a balance that can be made more than ten years since the launch of the partnership is likely that his main legacy is the spirit of self-management that took leaders and African population, to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the country. Vizontini, citing the nationalist leader of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, states that "for the first time Africa is achieving some autonomy to reorganize itself based on a regional balance of power" and that is the uniqueness of NEPAD.

b) *The Rediscovery of Africa*

The world is watching with the utmost attention the international reintegration of Africa, so says Saraiva. It draws up in the continent a strong competition between new actors, who, rather than weakens it has increased Africa's elbow room in international relations.

According Pío Penna Filho, the responsible for the rediscovery of Africa is undoubtedly China. The rapprochement between China and Africa dates back to the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the massacre of Tiananmen Square (1989) resulted in the isolation of China imposed by the West. Africa was seen by Beijing, then, as an alternative to overcome isolation, as it was one of the few regions of the world that did not come out against the massacre. The political counterpart, in the view of the African countries, was the presence of an ally on the Security Council.

Although the approach has been initiated by the political field, the predominance of the Chinese presence in Africa is in the economic area. According Saraiva, China

landed in Africa in a structural way: Chinese State Owned Enterprises - SOEs were pioneers, but the private sector and subnational actors also have significant importance; major infrastructure projects generate millions of jobs, promote economic development and help in rebuilding after wars; Chinese goods, extremely cheap, allow Africans access to an level of consumption previously unimagined; and the Chinese financial aid, which was announced in 2009 in an amount of \$ 10 billion, leaves Africans enables to refrain from request loans from IMF and be more selective with Western help. (VIZENTINI, 2010)

Moreover, some characteristics of Chinese investments' approach have proved an advantage of this country in Africa: the Chinese do not hesitate to invest in troubled areas, the Chinese oil companies are prone to employ large amounts of money and work in order to get rights for exploration and development in countries with large energy resources; companies associate indistinctly to national governments, public and private companies, in order to establish long-term local presence, although countries may seem unpromising immediately; and China does not care about the objections that the U.S. or other Western countries may do in relation to choice of partners.

The year 2005 is noteworthy in relation to Chinese investment in Africa. That year, landed on the continent about a thousand of Chinese companies and hundreds of thousands of workers from the same country. Since then, the Chinese presence is growing increasingly and expectations are that, with the global economic crisis that has been designing since 2008, China earns even more space in Africa, taking the space left by countries in difficulties.

The boldness of China comes to "invade" the spaces already consolidated as belonging to

Westerners. China has acquired Swiss oil company Addax Petroleum, which controlled wells in Nigeria, Gabon and Cameroon, it presented a project to build an oil pipeline in Kenya, which will extract oil from Sudan and acquired rights over oil in Niger, and it discusses a partnership with Britain's Tullow Oil for exploration of oilfield discovered in Lake Albert in Uganda. (BOSCO, 2010)

One of the great advantages of China in Africa is the volume of demand for raw materials, minerals and oil, to fuel its rapid growth. Currently, from the ten main suppliers of oil to China, four are in Africa, namely Angola, Sudan, Congo-Brazzaville and Libya. According to Vizentini, Angola became the largest supplier of fuel to China, surpassing Saudi Arabia. Moreover, at the current rate of growth, China should further increase its energy deficit, which means a great potential for Africa.

Figures published in the article "China ups the Ante in Africa" and cited by Port Amaury de Oliveira (2008) give us an idea of the magnitude of the Chinese presence in Africa. Investments, both in trade, manufacturing and processing, natural resource exploration, development and communication, are of the order of \$ 6.27 billion. The trade grew from \$ 11 billion in 2000 to \$ 50 billion in 2006. The projects are 720 in 49 African countries, plus another 58 under construction, all funded by preferential loans. In addition, a China-Africa Development Fund will be created for Chinese companies wishing to open new business in Africa (OLIVEIRA, 2008:87).

However, there are many criticisms of the Chinese operations in Africa, both in relation to the fact that most countries' trade balance is in deficit and the quality of products, indebtedness caused by the Chinese loans and indifference and even violations of human rights protection schemes. Nevertheless, the impact of Chinese performance among most African countries is positive, being exalted, especially when compared to Europe.

In what concerns to India, despite the rediscovery of Africa is a typical phenomenon of the 2000s, this country has an outstanding performance on the continent since the 1990s. An example is the economic cooperation, led by the program Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC), which was responsible for a project for small scale industries in Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Ghana and Ethiopia. More recently, the Indian Eximbank launched the Focus Africa to promote and meet Indian entrepreneurs to create business centers. (Vizentini, 2010)

The interest of India, like China's, is underpinned by the need for energy resources, raw materials, agricultural products, markets and investment space. All this resulted from the strong economic growth of India. In this sense, according to Oliveira (2008), which differentiates India from China is the approach of

their companies. While the former is more risk averse, the latter adopts a strategy that gives greater integration in domestic markets. This means that China opts for a strategy of greater control of the supply chain, both up and down, which creates the appearance of smaller enclaves and diffusion effects of the benefits of investments (OLIVEIRA, 2008:76)

Another difference between the two Asian emerging countries is that the Indian effort is driven primarily by corporate forces, while Chinese is the joint result of the levels of government, party and business. The result is that China obtains better performance.

South Africa, despite not being a foreign investor on the continent, has acted as an external actor in African countries individually and competes with the powers and emerging countries vying for space in Africa. South Africa is the largest economy in Africa, not only for its size but also because it is a hub for the distribution of imported goods to the rest of the continent. However, despite the South African economy is modern and has a good industrial base, it is still behind countries like China, India, Russia and Brazil. Still, Vizentini qualifies South Africa as leader of Black Africa and compares the performance of that country in its area with the immediate insertion of Brazil in relationship to South America (Vizentini, 2007).

In fact, South Africa post-apartheid, not only emerged as the most developed country in Africa, as happens to have a significant role in international politics, both seeking a seat on the Security Council of the United Nations, as forming alliances with other emerging as in IBSA and, more recently, by integrating BRICS.

At the regional level, SADC - South Africa Development Community is the locus where the prominence of South Africa is exercised. If on one hand the entry of South Africa in regional arrangement is a challenge given that disparities arise from differences in GDP, the huge trade surplus relative to other EU countries and dependent on other members have in relation to infrastructure ports and roads supplied by South Africa, on the other hand, its accession to the bloc added value to the organization, increasing linkages with the global economy.

The external actors presented so far do not represent all of the countries that invest and seek space in the African economy that is reborn. It may also be referred to the European countries, which were not analyzed because they are traditional actors on the continent, present since the colonial period, and for that reason are not exactly protagonists in the rediscovery of Africa.

Moreover, Brazil, which converges to its rise as an emerging country with the Rebirth of Africa, finds in this continent room to expand its investments and it is an actor who excels in the "race" for Africa. A more

detailed analysis of the rediscovery of Africa by Brazil will be made in the next section of this article.

III. BRAZILIAN FOREIGN POLICY FOR AFRICA

After centuries of intensive contacts between Africa and Brazil, be it the slave trade, or the cultural influence of African slaves on Brazilian culture, relations between the two sides of the Atlantic were silenced for nearly a century. Although there are theoretical divergences², the so called Independent Foreign Policy -PEI³ (1961-1964) is a milestone for the return to contacts between Africa and Brazil. With it, Brazil has defined a specific policy directed to Africa, positioning itself in favor of decolonization and identifying common aspirations between Brazil and Africa in the areas of economic development, protection of commodity prices, industrialization and desire for peace. This position can be considered a milestone because previous governments adopted a position of alignment or, at least, not confrontation with the colonial powers. Moreover, the orientation of Brazilian foreign policy for Africa met the new needs created by industrialization process of the previous decades.

The resumption of an Africanist policy by the Foreign Ministry was consolidated during Responsible and Ecumenical Pragmatism Officer (1974-1979). In this sense, the Brazilian vanguard in recognizing the independence of Angola in 1975, was a milestone. Thus, there has been "consistent practice", in the words of Saraiva, to what had been gestating in the level of speech during PEI. Africa in this period has been identified as an area of economic and strategic interests virtual and this was one time considered "the golden years" of African politics in Brazil (SARAIVA, 1999). This period marks the installation of the first Brazilian company in black Africa.

In the 1980s, however, the difficulties in maintaining the promising relationship of the 1970s were evident. The developmental model, which guided the diversification of partners of Brazilian foreign policy and Brazil's rapprochement towards Africa, showed signs of exhaustion (Saraiva, 2002). Both Africa and Brazil were affected by the debt crisis, and, in the case of Africa, the impact was aggravated by IMF adjustment plans and the conflicts of the Cold War. Still, some specific initiatives have been engendered, as the first Brazilian president's visit to the continent in 1983, when President

²As for Amado Cervo, in "History of Brazil's Foreign Policy", the anti-colonialist and self-determination discourse was not consistent with the abstention in the UN on the issues of Angola and Algeria, for Saraiva in "Transatlantic Perspectives: Africa and Brazil in the contemporary world", 1961, the starting year of PEI, is a key year for the reunion between Brazil and Africa.

³To know more about Brazilian foreign policy periods see CERVO, Amado Luiz; BUENO, Clodoaldo. *História da Política Exterior do Brasil*. Brasília: UNB, 2002.

João Batista Figueiredo travelled to Nigeria, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Cape Verde.

a) *The selective choices of the 1990s and preparation to the present time*

In the 1990s, Brazil's relations with Africa, which had gone through moments of great prosperity in the previous decades, enter in decline, which was called by

Saraiva "look sleepy." (SARAIVA, 1999) The trade volume backed to levels of the years 1950/1960. (SARAIVA, 2010)

This decline is given by unfavorable contexts on both sides of the Atlantic. In Africa, the deep crisis, caused by foreign debt, the crisis of social epidemics, and the tumultuous political transitions to democracy, which in many cases resulted in violent civil wars, meant that the continent was increasingly sidelined from the international system.

Brazil in its turn has undergone a reorientation of its foreign policy, which ruled him out of their tradition to favor developmental characteristics of the Normal State⁴ and relations with developed countries. The emphasis is now on North-South vertical relations, instead of horizontal South-South relations, in that the orientation of Brazilian foreign policy of this period was to join the total insertion in neoliberalism and globalization. Moreover, it contributed to the decline in trade that followed the withdrawal of the State of export financing and the need to import oil from Argentina, in order to balance the economic weights inside the Mercosur. (Vizentini, 2010)

José Vicente de Sá Pimentel (2000) divides the vision of the framers of Brazilian foreign policy for Africa of that moment between nostalgic and doomsayers. The first emphasized the historical responsibilities and compared the 1990s with the 1970s, extolling the past at the expense of the former. The others gave emphasis to the catastrophic situation of crisis on the continent, having this as a factor that hindered the dialogue with the African continent. This last group was called by Saraiva as African pessimists, which, to this author, have dominated the Brazilian decision-making process over the decade.

Despite the extreme views, Brazilian foreign policy towards Africa in the 1990s made selective choices, namely, South Africa, Angola, ZPCSA and CPLC. According to Pimentel selectivity was justified on the grounds that a sole African policy would not be the most appropriate in the face of such a great diversity among their countries.

South Africa is recognized by the strategic value of its geographical position and because it is the most traditional and main partner of Brazil in the continent. Angola, which in the 1990s had not yet resolved their conflicts remnants of independence, stands out by the Brazilian presence in UN Peace Mission in that country,

by the presence of Brazilian investments, even in times of war, beyond the privileged relationship legacy from the fact that Brazil was the first country to recognize the independence of Angola.

Regarding ZPCSA, there was a gradual resumption of operation. The Zone, although it was formalized in 1986, was relatively forgotten in subsequent years, but with the revival meetings were held in 1990, 1994 and 1998. Finally, the CPLC, which despite its somewhat lax, in the words of Saraiva, has been consolidated as part of promoting cooperation between countries.

Despite the selectivity that characterized the period, each of the three governments of the 1990s had its peculiarities in relation to Africa and they deserve to be analyzed. Starting with Fernando Collor, who despite having initiated the fled from Africa and the reduction of the Brazilian diplomatic corps on the continent, he visited Africa in 1991, and the Brazilian government help in structuring the Navy's war of Namibia in the context of the process of independence. Regarding Collor's visit to the continent, Saraiva said it is surrender to the forces of nationalism and a Brazilian diplomatic tradition of diversification of partners⁵.

With Itamar Franco, African politics have a sigh of engagement. It is in Itamar that ZPCSA is reactivated and the CPLP organized the Meeting of Portuguese Language Chancellors. Vizentini points out that the highlights of this government was the bilateral and multilateral support, via the UN, to the peace process and reconstruction in some countries, such as Angola. It should be noted also that most of selective choices that will characterize the year 1990 were drawn in the government of Mr. Franco.

President Fernando Henrique Cardoso- FHC had different approaches towards Africa along his two governments: in the first instance, Africa occupied a modest place, and in the second, during the second term, a certain inflection, which would be qualitatively deepened by Lula government's foreign policy. The actions that stand out are the more active participation of Brazil in UN peacekeeping missions, which most

⁴According to Amado Cervo, in "History of Brazil's Foreign Policy", the Normal State would be characterized by subordination to the center of capitalism, the alienation of "robust nucleus of the national economy," the transfer of income abroad and regression of the nation to "functions of social childhood" (CERVO, 2002). This type of rule characterized the Latin American governments in the 1990s, mainly in Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela and Mexico. The Normal State is one of three paradigms that, according to this author, characterized the Brazilian State in the last 80 years: Developmental State (1930-1989)- State entrepreneur who drags society on the path of national development by overcoming structural economic dependency-, Normal State (1990-2002) and Logistic State (2002 - to present), which will be seen below.

⁵President Collor inaugurated the Normal State in Brazil, that is why initiatives through Africa are considered surrender to a Brazilian tradition of diversification of partners.

were in Africa; presidential visits, while maintaining selectivity; and the signing of the South Africa and Mercosur Framework Agreement.

Vizentini highlights that with the crisis of real (Brazilian currency) in 1999 and the change of posture of FHC in relation to globalization, which, in his speech, goes from "inevitable" to "asymmetric", Brazil and African states start to have greater convergence in world diplomacy and in multilateral fora, particularly economic ones. This shift in discourse and attitudes seems to be the point closest to the foreign policy of the next government. However, it should not overestimate the importance of this turnaround, considering that the great revival of Brazilian Africanist policy occurs under Lula, as will be seen in the next subsection.

b) The Lula Government's Foreign Policy for Africa

Lula's rise to power in 2003 represents in Brazil's relations with Africa a lifting in the Brazilian Africanist policy to the "state of art" (SARAIVA, 2010). This approach in Brazil-Africa relations is part of a context of major changes in Brazilian foreign policy as a whole, especially compared to the previous government. In this subsection, we will present the changes that the new government brought to the foreign relations of Brazil and then its implications for an Africanist policy and what it has to novelty compared to other periods.

According to Amado Luiz Cervo (2008), the Lula government's foreign policy fits the Logistics Paradigm. In this paradigm the state transfers the responsibilities of the state entrepreneur to society, which characterized the developmental paradigm. The State focuses on providing logistical support to enterprises, preferably, but not exclusively, to the private sector, for the purpose of strengthened it in international comparative terms. Interdependence with the globalized world, in this case, operates by aggregating national enterprises and international supply chains through direct investments abroad.

Besides the logistical approach of the Brazilian state, another feature of the foreign policy of the Lula government is the option for South-South relations. Accordingly, Tullo Vigevali and Gabriel Cepaluni claim that one of the main changes from Cardoso to Lula is the difference of perception and ideology of these leaders and their teams about the constraints and opportunities of the current international order. The thesis postulated by them is that

FHC's foreign policy advocated the idea of "autonomy through participation" in the international system, as opposed to the pursuit of "autonomy by distance", which prevailed until the end of Sarney's tenure (VIGEVANI; OLIVEIRA, 2004; FONSECA JR., 1998), while Lula da Silva sought to place Brazil on the world stage accentuating autonomous forms, diversifying partners and Brazilian strategic options... emphasis on South-South cooperation to

seek greater balance with countries of the North, making adjustments, increasing the country's international role and consolidating program changes in foreign policy. (VIGEVANI; CEPALUNI, 2007) (Free translation)

This strategy of the Lula government was named by the authors as "autonomy through diversification."

The Brazilian Africanist policy of Lula's government falls in both South-South approach and the Logistic State. To Saraiva (2010), foreign policy for Africa under Lula gained more permanent bases, near a state policy. The same author characterizes it as a very well balanced mix of idealism with realism. In the external environment, a new vision of globalization by both Brazil and Africa, farther from the neoliberal vision and closer to the real interdependence, which, according to Cervo (2008), gives the tone of the approach. Internally, on the other hand, there is a convergence of moments that favor the approach. In Africa, as it has been seen, the first decade of this century was characterized by relatively high rates of growth, restructuring of states and societies and end conflict. In Brazil, the economic growth of the decade was also significant and became more sophisticated than in other periods by the association of social programs, which improved the income distribution in the country, with the character of the Logistic State, which created conditions for expansion of national economy and that finds in Africa a field for this state more economically mature.

Vizentini (2010) provides some views about the African policy of the Lula administration:

- a) Solidarity Dimension - On this view, the engagement with Africa would be an international extension of government social programs.
- b) Diplomacy of prestige - On this view, the policy would have no substance and therefore would be a waste of time and money.
- c) Business Diplomacy - According to this view, the African policy of the Lula government would be a kind of soft imperialism, which differentiate from the Chinese presence only in form and intensity.

Many were the critics to the engagement of Brazil with Africa as it had a poetic or lyrical connotation, but both former President Lula, as former foreign minister Celso Amorim expressed in their speeches and state actions itself that relations with Brazil and the continent were based on specific interests and that Africa is a priority for Brazil. The connotation was neither patronizing, reproducing the speech to expiate the guilt of past colonial exploitation, nor exploiting, aiming at the exploitation of large reserves of natural resources. It was building a true partnership. (SILVA, 2009)

The concrete interests referred to in the official discourse can be seen in the growth of trade from \$ 5 billion in 2002 to \$ 26 billion in 2008 (Amorim, 2009).

Besides the commercial field, relations have outstanding performance in the area of investment, mainly in oil, mining, infrastructure and services, cooperation in health, technology, diplomacy, security and defense. Vizentini, however, says that the most important pillars of this recent approach are the strategic and economic ones, in the sense that they are very important for the Brazilian world projection.

Within the economic pillar, trade relations have produced results that demonstrate the importance of the approximation of the African continent. By 2008, Brazil was the 11th partner in Africa and among the developing countries, only behind China and India. Regarding the previous government, the results of the change in the importance of Africa are patents: between 1995 and 2002 exports to Africa grew 76%, while between 2003 and 2009 it grew by almost 400%, whereas the performance of imports was somewhat more modest, with a growth of 260% in the first period, against 326% in the second. (MFA, 2010)

It is worth mentioning that most of Brazil's exports are manufactured goods (MDIC, 2009) and it is one of the strategic points of the engagement with the continent, since, historically, Amado Cervo (2008) points out that the power of attraction of Africa on Brazilian leaders is precisely in being a market for Brazilian manufactures, while they are rejected by the first world. Another strategic aspect can be demonstrated in the role of Africa during the international crisis, when, despite the flow of trade have reduced the decline in exports to the continent it was much smaller than the fall of Brazil's total exports, which resulted in a increased participation of African countries in absorption of Brazilian products. (MFA, 2010)

Concerning Brazilian Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), in 2006, for the first time in history, the volume of investments made was larger than received investments, reaching a record \$ 32.3 billion (KPMG, 2008:4). This placed Brazil in the 12th position among the largest investors in the world, even ahead of China (KPMG, 2008:6). In Lula's government, installing Brazilian companies in Africa played an important role in bilateral relations, as it was seen as an instrument to strengthen ties with the countries of the continent, being favored by presidential diplomatic policy. In this sense, Brazilian FDI through Africa grew 16,39% (FDC, 2010).

These results are not only fruit of the convergence of favorable moments on both sides of the Atlantic, Brazil has made major diplomatic investments, where, incidentally, lies much of the criticism of skeptics regarding the approach to Africa. There were conducted 28 visits of President Lula throughout his tenure and 67 visits by Foreign Minister Celso Amorim (MFA 2010), and much of the president's visits were accompanied by groups of businessmen, representatives from various ministries and intellectuals. The number of posts opened on the continent has

grown and several stations that had been closed were reopened. The Brazilian government canceled the debts of some African countries in meeting the Millennium Development Goals, as in the case of Mozambique, which the pardon reached 95% debt (Vizentini, 2010). Moreover, the very structure of the Foreign Ministry has been changed: the former Department of Africa and the Middle East was divided, giving rise to a department exclusively for the African continent.

On the other hand, there were 48 visits by heads of state and government and 66 visits of African ministers of foreign affairs (MFA, 2010), almost identical to the number of visits of Celso Amorim, which shows great reciprocity of African states. In relation to the open of positions of African countries in Brasilia, only between 2003 and 2006, the number jumped from 16 to 25 (Vizentini, 2010). In the political area, Brazil has the support of the CPLC countries in various Brazilian candidates for positions in international bodies such as the Security Council of the United Nations and the Director-General of FAO (MFA, 2010).

With regard to international cooperation, a diplomatic investment relatively cheap in monetary terms, we should highlight the fact that Brazil has passed from the category of receptor to donor of cooperation. In large part, this change is linked to the initiatives towards Africa. Brazilian institutions like Embrapa, SENAI and Fiocruz are prominent actors in this process. The focus of the cooperation is the Portuguese Speaking African Countries (PALOP, in Portuguese), which receive 74% of Brazilian cooperation destined for Africa (Vizentini, 2010), especially in Mozambique, which is the second recipient of Brazilian cooperation in the world, only behind Haiti.

A prime example of how Brazil projects its global influence through diplomatic investment in Africa is the case of biofuels. In 2008, Brazil argued the importance of biofuels as a development opportunity for African nations and, in fact, Brazil has developed cooperation projects in African countries in this area, particularly through trilateral cooperation with developed countries. This, however, falls within the context of the Brazilian project to turn biofuels into an international commodity, which would be very advantageous for the Brazilian economy.

Despite being motivated by fairly pragmatic interests, that does not invalidate the mutual benefits of the rapprochement between Brazil and Africa, thus recipient countries also benefits from the allocation of infrastructure resulting from cooperation, the formation of national expertise and opening new possibilities for areas where economic development can earn. In the current international environment, it is important for Brazil to have strong partners who collaborate in building a multipolar international order (Vizentini, 2010).

In the security field, Brazil has acted through the CPLC and his work in the UN Commission for the

Peacebuilding, presiding the configuration for Guinea-Bissau. The revitalization of ZPCSA, in a context of reactivation of the American 4th Fleet in the South Atlantic, with the Luanda Action Plan making efforts to strengthen cooperation in the region, seems of great importance, but has not yet reached its full potential in the view of Vizentini (2010).

South American-Africa Summit is a cooperation mechanism between two priority regions for Lula's foreign policy, bringing together representatives of the AU and UNASUR, and it finds its origins in the relationship between Nigeria and Brazil. Not coincidentally, these two countries co-chair the executive body of the mechanism, ASACOF. Also in South America, SACU and Mercosur signed preferential trade agreement in 2008. Moreover, Egypt has signed Free Trade Agreement with Mercosur and Morocco signed a framework agreement.

But what's new in this policy? How does it differ from the intense closeness between Brazil and Africa in the 1970s? In fact, the similarities are many. Brazil, as well as in the first decade of this century, was undergoing a period of great economic growth, the approach was driven by pragmatism (Responsible and Ecumenical Pragmatism Officer), and this turned into concrete actions, such as the recognition of Angola and the increased flow of trade.

However, Saraiva (2010) identifies six characteristics to show that this is not a repetition of the past. The first one is the fact that there is a coordinated strategy based on national interest and their protagonists, among them businessmen responsible for the expansion of Brazilian capitalism. The second one involves a conceptual shift, but also a practical one, in which east vicinity of Brazil are reactivated as one of the preferred regions for contact, cooperation and trade. The other feature is the revision of culturalist discourse in favor of a more structural approach and pragmatic. The fourth characteristic concerns the public, so that the current policy has more publicity and it is legitimized by political and social consensus, through institutions such as Parliament, universities, businesses and the general public. The fifth characteristic is the fact that Brazil is working on a South-South setting in order to enable the construction of a common interest between Brazil and Africa. Finally, the sixth feature is the rejection relationships merely instrumental, as occurred before.

This latter feature, together with the first, is perhaps the most relevant one, since in the 1970s relations were strongly motivated by the energy scarcity of Brazil, so that, as the country would adapt its energy to other sources and that oil prices were decreasing, relations with Africa were becoming less strategic and more neglected. With regard to coordination between government and private economic actors, it is the foundation of the Logistical State and it

materializes itself in the growth of Brazilian direct investments on the continent.

IV. CONCLUSION

During the first decade of the twentieth century, Brazil's relations with Africa have intensified and deepened greatly. It was noted, however, that more than a big project, this increase was largely favored by the convergence of global economic growth, internal growth with stability of the Brazilian economy and the Rebirth of Africa, which produced significant growth rates of their GDP.

Despite this convergence of favorable moments, there was significant diplomatic investment of Lula's government, in a way to excel in relation to foreign policy for Africa by other governments. From the side of Africa, receptivity to these investments was also observed, including initiatives under NEPAD to promote such investments and make African countries more attractive from an institutional standpoint.

For both Africa and Brazil, the approach falls in broader international insertion and economic development strategies. NEPAD aims Africa to act more autonomously, reducing dependence on traditional powers, and boosting the economy of the continent, where the presence of Brazil fits the expectations. As an emerging country that seeks to expand its international investments, Brazil is presented as part of a new class of actors interested in investing in Africa, emerging countries, and as the country is interested in direct investments (FDI) and sectors that stand out are those of infrastructure and exploitation of minerals, Brazil also meets the profile of economic development envisaged by NEPAD.

Africa to Brazil is part of the strategy for South-South relations, in which Brazil seeks horizontal relations with developing countries, as opposed to vertical ones with developed countries. This profile of relationship gives more leeway to Brazil to give way to economic growth and the increasing internationalization of the economy. But Brazil has not only economical interests in Africa, it also has political ones, by seeking support and votes needed for reforms of global governance that Lula chose as priority.

Thus, the approach of Brazil and Africa in the first decade of this century is the result of favorable international and bilateral convergence of objectives and strategies on both sides of the Atlantic, which were captained favorably to the growth of bilateral relations. NEPAD and the foreign policy of Lula's government were to meet one another and reinforced each other in order to refine the relations between Brazil and Africa.

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Feminist Discourse Analysis in Islamic Feminism

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Abstract - The discussion in the current debate primarily explores the major areas in Islamic discourses that are criticized by scholars and critics. The current debate aims to investigate and illuminate the true and transparent Islamic picture of the areas (criticized) by the western school of feminism. An attempt has been made to link the debate in the prevailing scholarships to find out the relevant answer to the questions put forward by the mentioned feminists and to develop a paradigm more harmonious and acceptable in the old discourses. Besides, the debate encompasses valuable inputs and provides an argument that leads to mediation between the two poles of controversies.

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Feminist Discourse Analysis in Islamic Feminism

Muhammad Salman^α, Dr. Arab Naz^σ, Waseem Khan^ρ, Umar Daraz^ω, Qaiser Khan[¥] & Muhammad Hussain[§]

I. JUSTIFICATION OF THE DISCOURSE

The discussion in the current debate primarily explores the major areas in Islamic discourses that are criticized by scholars and critics. The current debate aims to investigate and illuminate the true and transparent Islamic picture of the areas (criticized) by the western school of feminism. An attempt has been made to link the debate in the prevailing scholarships to find out the relevant answer to the questions put forward by the mentioned feminists and to develop a paradigm more harmonious and acceptable in the old discourses. Besides, the debate encompasses valuable inputs and provides an argument that leads to mediation between the two poles of controversies.

II. THE ARGUMENT OF THE CURRENT STUDY

The present study is a qualitative approach based on secondary sources towards the study of feminism and Islamic feminism. The information is collected from books, journals, religious scripts and other related sources within the given framework. The world feminism (women studies) is a very wide subject, which requires a great depth and breadth of scholarship which is surely not possible in the current debate to be studied and discussed. When the term feminism is used internationally it has different type of trajectory but when the term is Islamized and the word Islamic is add to feminism, it takes a different course which is more difficult to define and more strange to assess as compare to White feminism. Because there is a horrible division in the Islamic world and a sizable number of interpretations of the Qur'anic text and the prophetic traditions (the primary sources of Islamic law) which makes the issue more complicated. Further, the exploitation of the meaning of Qur'anic verses for political goals in the Islamic world is another dimension of the phenomenon. In this regard, the current debate is moving to link the issue in the ongoing debate and to

clarify the ambiguity in this regard. The discussion is divided in the following main dimensions:

III. ISLAMIC FEMINISM: AN INTRODUCTION

This part of the discussion provides some detail about the issue of feminism in Islamic perspective and opens the discussion in a wide range of debate.

IV. ISLAMIC LAW OF EVIDENCE

This part of the paper gives details about the laws of evidence which is called as is discriminatory against women and rationale is given from Ayah Number 282 of Surah number, 2 of Quran.

V. THE CONCEPT OF VEIL IS AN ISSUE FOR MUSLIMS AND NON-MUSLIMS

This part is based on three primary argument; the veil is not exclusively original with Islam as often argued, there is greater need to understand the real essence of the Qur'anic text with regard to veil and the west has made it a more aggravated issue then ever before.

VI. ISLAMIC FEMINISM AND POLITICS

This section deals with the matter that the women rights or feminist movements are used as an effective instrument in politics.

VII. ISLAMIC FEMINISM: AN INTRODUCTION

Whenever we enter in to a feminist debate the first question that we have to answer is that, who are feminist? Those who dare to break the conspiracy of silence about the oppressive, unequal relationship between men and women, and who want to change it (Turtle 1987: 107- 8). The concept of feminism varies from place to place and time to time under the changing circumstances it has different meaning (Moghadam 2002b: 12). The concept came to Muslim world first in Egypt in 1880s and the term 'feminism' first appeared in 1909 when Malak Hifni Nasif published a collection of articles and speeches in a book entitled *Al Nisaiyat* (meaning something by or about women). Politically, in 1923, Egyptian women first used the term 'feminist' to define themselves and their organization "Al-Ittihad al Nisa'i al-Misri' (the Egyptian Feminist Union). (Haq and Aslam, 2005) the women in Muslim world hesitantly adopted the term feminism in 1970s but their main stress was to break the myths against the position of women in Islam.

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"The term Islamic feminism was used for the first time in Turkey by Nilufer Gole in her edited book *The Forbidden Modern* (published in Turkish in 1991 and in English in 1996), and in articles by Yesim Arat and Feride Ajar. The South African activist, Shamim Shaikh, applied feminism to Islam, again providing in her writings and speeches evidence of the term being clinched by Muslims "(ibid) as Islam is presented as generally oppressive against women, if we examine the history of Islam we will find the strong position of women in social life for example Khadija (the first wife of the holy Prophet PBUH) was a business woman. His wife Ayesha was well known and respected as an expert in Hadeeth (in the top ranking interpreters of Hadeeth) and participated in wars also (Saadawi, 1980). This suggests that Islam is not oppressive in the sense it is projected rather Islam presented a very liberal view and provide a new direction. The oppression of women in Islam is conspiracy and the oppression of women is a one sided view based upon false notions. Even, some of the critics of Islam with their westerners' counterparts regard Islam as a hurdle in feminist efforts. There may be two reasons for criticizing Islam. The first is they do not know the real Islamic essence, ideology and teaching of Islam, about women rights and duties while secondly they are criticizing Islam in order to cover their deficiencies and inner enmity. This is not the case with the white feminists only as most of the ignorant Muslims believed that Islam and feminism are mutually exclusive.

Some of the journalists and politicians recklessly write about the oppression of women in an Islamic society without talking to the woman under the veil. They are unable to appraise the respect and protection that a woman enjoys in that very system that was established 14 centuries ago "yet, by writing about cultural issues like child brides, female circumcision, honor killings and forced marriages (and attaching these cultural practices to Islam) they wrongly believe that they are coming from a point of knowledge"(Alisha, 2010). This is true that in most of the Islamic states where the majority of the Muslims have these issues but then there is again the need to enquire (a) whether the problem is caused by religion or the culture of that state?. (b) And the problems of the feminism in any Islamic state in which they arise should be carefully examined and responded keeping in view the context whether that state is really Islamic or it just claims to be?

If feminism is the name of struggle for the equal rights of woman and for a moment we suppose that (all the feminists have agreed on the form of equality that they seek for women in the society) then the Islamic teaching provides the best ground for feminism as Quran says: in relation to God. "For men who submit [to God] and for women who submit [to God], for believing men and believing women, for devout men and devout women, for truthful men and truthful women, for steadfast men and steadfast women, for humble men

and humble women, for charitable men and charitable women, for men who fast and women who fast, for men who guard their chastity and women who guard, for men who remember God much and for women who remember - for them God has prepared forgiveness and a mighty reward" (33:35). "Whoever performs good deeds, whether male or female and is a believer, we shall surely make him live a good life and we will certainly reward them for the best of what they did" (16:97).

It is only in relation to each other and society that a difference is made - a difference of role or function. The rights and responsibilities of a woman are equal to those of a man, but they are not necessarily identical with them. Equality and identity are two different things, Islamic traditions maintain - the former desirable, the latter not. Men and women should therefore be complementary to each other in a multi-function organization rather than competitive with each other in a uni-function society.

VIII. ISLAMIC LAW OF EVIDENCE IS DISCRIMINATORY AGAINST WOMEN

Some critics of Islam are of the view that Islamic law of evidence is discriminatory against women. They base their criticism on one ayah of holy Quran "And call to witness, from among your men, two witnesses. And if two men be not (at hand) then a man and two women, of such as ye approve as witnesses, so that if the one erreth (through forgetfulness) the other will remember. And the witnesses must not refuse when they are summoned. "(282) they (the critics) also put forward a Hadeeth of the holy prophet that is, "women are deficient both in prayer (due to menstruation) and in intellect (due to their witness counting for less than a man's)" (Haq and Aslam, 2005: p351). Their argument is sacrificial they do not enter in to the realm of theological debate; they do not feel the need to take in to account that the law can be modified. However the intention here is to make an argument on intellectual ground that no mullah or so called Alim takes the pain to do so. If one ever ask them i.e. *Mullas* and so called *Alims* how we can defend Quran (ayah's number 282) against the claim that Islamic law of evidence (with reference to Ayah 282) is discriminatory against women? All of them will have the same answer" this is the order of God and no argument is required in its favor". This is true for the order of the Divine force, but the need is to take an insight in the mentioned verses and discover the deep rooted wisdom in these ayahs and in the contextual analysis of the verses in which it is revealed.

However, in the debate of the current paper, this is important not to divert the flow of the subject in the ongoing argument which is still the same that those who criticize these laws, how we can argue to defend Islam in this regard? It is to be noted that not only this

Ayah and *Hadeeth* is the soul base of their argument, they (critics) further develop their theory of objection to Islam in the law of inheritance where a male gets double the share of women and thus the status of women in Islam is half to that of a man. The objection certainly they raise with bias and due to lack of knowledge of Islam and Islamic law of evidence. As per Quran, there are two types of people living in this world, one are believers and the other nonbelievers. For those who believe in Allah no argument is necessary and for those who do not believe in Allah no argument is possible. To see the inheritance law in the verses of Quran, one can see that Islam first define the right of a female and then of the male, while the economic activities are certainly the responsibility of male where female is forgiven in this regard. In this context one could see and analyze the verses of the Holy Quran. One angel that is more important is that the Muslims shall make themselves duty bound to present the true picture of Islam to the world fulfilling their duty and obligations so that the maximum people are saved from the chastisement of hell. Being followers of the rational religion, Muslims shall be rational and convincing. They are to be patient and knowledgeable so that they can put across their view point in a rational and convincing manner and with the force of knowledge to make the nonbelievers believe their view point.

The *Ayah* on which they (critics of Islam) have based their criticism pertains to business matter i.e. *Nikah* sail and purchase contract, in other words this *ayah* deal with those cases which pertains to financial matter or future obligations if reduce to writing, the instrument shall be attested by two men, or one man or two women, so that one may remind the other, if necessary, an evidence shall be led accordingly. In all other matters, the court may accept, or act on, the testimony of one man or one woman, or such other evidence as circumstances of the case may warrant (even in some cases the holy Prophet Muhammad PBUH had accepted the testimony of one (truthful man as cited in the commentaries on Qanunay- Shahadat, Vol,2: p222).

In *Zinah* case four male witnesses are required to prove the case is meant to say that there are different types of cases and for these cases different number of witnesses is required. In the cases specific to women, evidence of only one woman is sufficient to prove the case. To negate their criticism, firstly the *Ayah* requires two male to give evidence. When the male is available then there is no need to produce woman as a witness, but if two men are not available then only one man and two women are required to prove a case pertaining to business matters. It does not mean that the status of woman is reducing to half to that of a man. The wisdom behind this matter is that Islam does not want its women followers to be dragged in to courts to confront all sort of questions put to them. Moreover testimony of one

woman along with a man will suffice if she does not forget. Furthermore, it is a concession given to woman to be accompanied by another woman while attending court so that she would feel comfortable where as the concession is not available to man. Imagine how much respectful and caring is Islam towards women in all matters. In *Zinah* case she has not been burdened with giving evidence, only male are require to produce evidence. In the case specific to women, the testimony of one woman is sufficient. For example, in the birth of a child whether a child was born by particular woman, the child was alive or dead at the time of birth etc, *Shahadat* (evidence) of a single woman is sufficient. These critics intentionally hide the true picture of Islam by not bringing in to fourth the wisdom behind the matter in order to mislead the people. Even those so called enlightened moderate would not want their ladies to be available in courts to face the pricking questions put to them by the opposite counsel in the jam-packed court room with the maximum number of males (Qanunay-shahadat, 1984).

While to see the context of *Ayah*, 282 this is to be noted that another objection is raised by the liberal forces against the Haddood ordinance in Pakistan and again there is a conspiracy of misuse against them. We can count hundreds of cases in which the women are being discriminated under these laws but that problem is separate from this matter that is (one male and two female witnesses as mentioned by Quran reduces the status of women to half as compare to that of a man). The advise to all those feminists (western as well as Islamic) who criticize Islam on the basis of *Ayah* Number, 282 of Surah Number Two of Quran that they should not stress on one *ayah* as mentioned above, rather they should first, read the *Ayah* in revelation context and second, they should read the whole Quran to understand the message in its universality and application and if it is not possible then at least they should study all those *ayahs* revealed to describe the relations of women in society. Again it is necessary for *Mullas* or the so called *Alims* to broaden their sphere of knowledge and prepare them to face the challenges of modernity and further, they should not look towards west or any other side for the solutions of their problems. This change in the attitude of *Mullas* is also necessary to save the common man from the embarrassment of the criticism that his or her religion has no rational grounds to defend its teaching.

IX. THE CONTROVERSY VEIL (HIJAB/PURDAH)

Another major criticism on Islam is that it restricts the independence of women by imposing veil as an obligation on her. Many of the critics go too far in their bias towards Islam when they carelessly attach the origin of veil exclusively to Islam. This is just because of their stubborn attitude to words Islam that they try to manipulate this phenomenon in a negative direction for

the defamation of Islam. This to realize in first instance that the veil is not originated with Islam (as commonly perceived). The earliest text regarding veiling is an Assyrian legal text of the thirteenth century B.C. It restricts veiling to respectable, women specifically prohibiting it from prostitutes and even the women of lower casts (Keddie, 1990). If someone argues that the complete veiling is imposed by Islam, the argument is wrong because it is not acceptable in a sense that the first visual depiction of top-to-toe veiling comes from bas-reliefs in Palmyra, Syria, in the first century C.E. (The people identified were northern Arabs, but they had no -direct connection with the first Muslims (Keddie, 1990). Further, not only veiling but the avoidance of male contact is also a pre-Islamic phenomenon that dates back to first century AD and the study of history makes it clear that the early Muslims adopted these practices from the peoples who lived near them and whom they conquered. It is also an important point that in the pre-Islamic Arab the veil was used to differentiate between the free women (who wore the veil) from the slaves (Keddie 1990).

The veil and its misconception by the many feminists have been misconceived as such people have no deeper understanding of the holy Quran and Hadeeth. The text of the Quran is either not understood rightly or it is more often misinterpreted while this is to say that the (ayahs) that according to jurists are specific to the wives of the prophet in the matter of veil. In this regard to quote one of the four ayahs (regarding veil in Quran) that is sufficient to support the argument. "And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigor, or children who know naught of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn unto Allah together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed (Surat-un-Nur 24:30-31).

The ayah contains many other things as stated below:

1. A Muslim woman is ordered not to display her beauty and adornment (*Zeenah*) except for 'that which must ordinarily appear of it': (*Ma Dhahara Minha*), or 'that which is apparent.' The word *Zeenah* has two related meanings in this context. As Mawdudi writes that (a) natural or bodily beauty, and; b) acquired adornment such as a ring, bracelets, and clothes. The part of *Zeenah*, exempted from the above injunction, was interpreted in two ways: a. the face and the hands. This is the interpretation of the majority of the jurists, past and Present.

This interpretation is confirmed by *Ijma* (consensus) that a Muslim woman is allowed by Islam to uncover her face and hands during pilgrimage and even during the prayers, while the rest of her body is regarded as 'awrah (that which should be covered)". Some (Islamic scholars) criticize this interpretation despite the fact that this interpretation is based on the authority of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), especially the well-known tradition narrated by Ayesha (one of the most accurate transmitters of the traditions of the prophet) in which the prophet Muhammad says: "If a woman reaches the age of puberty, no part of her body should be seen but this' – and he pointed to his face and hands."

The second argument put forward by Mawdudi in this context (what appears out of necessity) "Whatever appears of the woman's body owing to uncontrollable factors such as blowing of the wind, or out of necessity such as the bracelet's or even the outer clothes themselves" (Mawdudi). However, in the current scenario and for the purpose of the current study the concern in this section is precisely the veil (hijab) and the debates related to it, because if we draw on the lines of Mawdudi which (under this subject) along with the veil cover the subject of *libas* (dress) the argument will become very complicated. The veil has been made a problem in the feminist debates in the Muslim world, as it is an established notion that the veil was stressed for the identity of Muslim women (which is a major problem for the west nowadays) a hot debate has been underway that the unveiling of Muslim women is a struggle against their beliefs as Muslim? Or it is the subversion of their identity? The tide of imposing ban on veil in the west (France, Belgium, Italy and Germany) has generated a hot debate whether one cannot practice his or (her) religions according to her beliefs? Or is it not something ridiculous that a Christian, Jew or an atheist would teach a Muslim how to practice his or her religion? Or the most important question that, the western believes of democratic pluralism is under threat after making such prejudicial legislations that target specific religion.

Even in the west there are some voices that stress on the confinement of women to the boundaries of the house for example, "when the Italian nominee to the European Commission in October 2004, Rocco Buttiglione, declared that he thought woman's place was in the home under the protection of her husband, he spoke like many conservative Muslims" (Olivier Roy, 2007). If such voices are present in the west then why Islam is targeted only.

However this is not the real subject here and it is important to find out the essential objectives of the veil as pointed out by Mawdudi in the light of the tradition of the holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that the veil does not mean full-face, veil means modesty in dress and to hide everything except what appears out of necessity

(hands and the face) according to the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). If we notice the Taliban' ideology and examine it in the light of the interpretation of Mawdudi, we will find that, their concept of veil is more strict than that which is taught by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as they along with the full face veil stress on stockings and gloves to be use by women for veil (Purdah) these two concepts of veil one traditional (having its roots in the verse of Quran and the tradition of the holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the second one (as stated in Qutb and use it for my own interpretation) that is stressing on Quran but is not based on it but upon *jahiliyah* (ignorance).

We as Muslims ever tried to find out the detail about the order of veil in Quran and Sunna'h? The answer of 99% would be a big no when they will ask the question from their selves. If this is the case then how we expect that we will know the true concept of veil (in the light of the teachings of Quran and Sunna'h) and its origin (as a mark of identity or as a tool of confinement of women in the Muslim society). How we can claim that we can satisfy the questions of those Western visitors to the Muslim world who are usually been struck by the phenomenon of the veil, with which so many Muslim women in towns cover their faces and bodies. As it is pointed out that the veil is not exclusively original with Islam and Arab women of the Prophet's time did not veil their faces and while the Quran stressed the desirability of sex-modesty and discouraged Promiscuity, the veil is not mentioned. It is said therein that when women appear in public, they should bring their scarves down to their bosoms and that they should not make a display of their charms (Rahman, 1980). On one occasion, when women were teased in the evening by the "Hypocrites" at Medina, Muslim women were asked to "draw their outer cloaks close to them so that they will be known and not hurt" and the "Hypocrites" were told that if they persisted in teasing women, they would be expelled from Medina. It is certain, however, that as used in Muslim society the veil had the dual and allied function of status symbol and an exaggerated expression of modesty. The veil was not worn by the lower classes in towns; it was also absent from the countryside. (Rahman, 1980).

Now for a moment leaves it to the sisterhood of Islam whether they want to choose to wear the veil or they want to go unveil in the streets. Why we are obsessed with the thing that is exclusively a personal issue or this is the narrow mindedness of the westerners who cannot see the Muslim values that pushes their values in to the realm of insignificance. Why, as Muslim we are unable to see there are many daring issues to be addressed than *hijab* which is not that much a big problem. Similarly, the leaders of the west are interfering in the personal life's of the Muslim women then how they claim that they are respecting the universal charter of human rights as they have declare *hijab* as a crises

point on the basis of false arguments. Even to quote hear Yvonne Ridlly who very elegantly defend *hijab* in Britain and ridicule the criticism on *hijab* when she says" And yet in Britain we have had the former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw describing the *niqab* the face veil revealing only the eyes - as an unwelcome barrier. When, oh when, will men learn to keep their mouths shut over a woman's wardrobe?" We also had Government Ministers Gordon Brown and John Reid express disparaging remarks about the *nikab* - both these men come from over the Scottish Borders where men wear skirts!!

In this context, a series of other parliamentarians enter the fray describing the *nikab* as a barrier for communication. If this was the case, can anyone explain why cell phones, landlines, email; text messaging and fax machines are in daily use? Who listens to the radio? No one switches off the wireless because they cannot see the face of the presenter." (Ridley, 2006) "There may be 1,001 Muslim feminist critiques on the European *burqa* ban and its attendant jokes and jibes, insults, and ridiculousness, but what should remain clear is that we Muslim feminists are not just about the *hijab*" (Alisha, 2010). There are many daring issues as pointed out earlier which are more significant and demand prior attention not only of the Muslim feminists but also of the *olimas*. "At the moment, the Muslim feminist agenda (even if there was a hazy idea of one) is limited both by the media's obsessive preoccupation with the *hijab* and small scope of issues we can tackle from a Muslim feminist perspective" (Alisha, 2010).

The main construct throughout this discussion on veil from different (traditional, radical, modernist Muslim and western) perspectives is that (a) the *hijab* is not a big issue of concern as there are many other issues of serious nature i.e. economic crises etc (b) the question of *hijab* should be left solely to sisterhood of Islam so that it can be dealt in a smooth manner and (c) that whenever the issue is suppressed it became more eminent and it is used as an issue for misleading the masses as it is evident that Raza Shah used all the government potential to unveil women but the trend surfaced in the university with increasing numbers of veils. In Afghanistan, in sixties the unveiling of women was attempted by the government and initially it gained some support from almost all the strata's of women but gradually the trend began to reverse and finally the Taliban government introduced even a more restricted phenomenon of veil. This is the tragedy of *Ummah* that it does not attempt to question the traditions set by the myth making *mullas* and who ever try to do so he or she is labeled as Kafir or Murtad (apostate).

X. ISLAMIC FEMINISM AND POLITICS

Unlike other subjects of the social sciences "orthodox political science has been slow to incorporate

a gendered perspective into its approach "(Silverberg 1990: cited in waylen1996). This is difficult for the discipline of politics and "The traditional subject matter of the discipline - 'high politics — treaties, wars, power politics as it is played out in the top echelons of the public sphere, not to mention the institutional politics of parties, executives and legislatures, is typically-male dominated"(Waylen, 1996). The purpose of borrowing this argument for the discussion on Islamic feminism (which is used in the context of the third-world in general) is to make it clear that the politics is clearly male dominated and the feminism or its related movements are politicized one way or the other. Here we will randomly present some glimpses of the politics of feminism in different Islamic states to support the argument that feminism in the Islamic world is politicized and the women rights (their provision or denial) or (their support or opposition) is subject to a specific political interest of the most Islamic political parties.

Let us first start from Pakistan, in this very country there are a number of religious political parties with countless ridiculous twists with regard to the rights of women according to their changing interests. These orthodox have ever resented against the participation of women in the political life. In Pakistan, the story has started since 1949 with the protest over the presence of two women parliamentarians in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, which was a move for even minimal rights for women and has encountered opposition from these forces. In 1965 presidential elections, it was a shock for the people that fundamentalist J-I (Jamat-Islami, which had a clear-cut stance in 1951to53 that women cannot become the head of the state) supported the candidacy of women (Fatima Jinnah) against Ayub Khan. After the dissolution of the assemblies in August 1990, it sat with Syeda Abida Hussain, an independent woman politician and a federal minister, as part of the combined opposition, in the same year in general elections; it again sought to acquire the support of PPP on some seats. The shocking twist in the story is that, in the same year its representative walked out of the TV program because it was hosted by a lady. There are countless stories about their (Islamic political parties) on-and-off swings in their stances on the question of different aspects of women's rights for political gains, like Fazlur Rahman is reported to have stance that" women cannot participate in the election" but when he was made the chairman of the committee for women affairs he said that" the participation of women is not that much a big issue"(Khan, 2009).

In the case of Iran the use of feminist slogans for political uses is more eminent domestically as well as internationally. If we recall the story of the efforts of the Shah with the full use of government authority for unveiling campaign, and those who had supported the veil supported the revolutionaries. Again after the

revolution and government enforced veil and also removed the top judges from their post, the feminists struggled against the new government, but these movements were soon politicized (began to be used for political purposes).

We should not ignore the propaganda campaign of the western media against Iran and it's continues stimulation of the sentiments of women against their government. It is true on the other hand that the women had or denied of their rights in some respects in Iran but we should ask the question that, the western media is doing this solely for rights of women of Iran? And the answer will be certainly no. This makes the argument clear that women rights or the feminism or its related movements are misused for political purposes in the Muslim as well as against the Muslim world.

XI. CONCLUSION

The paper thus concludes to summarize an extensive debate which was surely a stupendous task for us because of lacking the authority on the interpretation of Quran and Hadeeth. Certainly, it is not easy to conclude the debate with accuracy as what is concluded is

- (a) All the Muslim feminists should try to read the ayahs of Quran in their complete context.
- (b) The common man should also have at least some knowledge of the Quran or if not then he or she should not try to inter in to these complicated debates.
- (c) We should not completely rely on Westerners for the concepts of the rights because, we have a guide or a code to these rights and the only need is to modify or inline it with the modern day usage.
- (d) And lastly it is true (as some of Muslim feminists criticize that the interpretations of the text and the traditions is from the male perspective) they should remember that men cannot be feminists they can only be the supporters of feminism, or women rights. At the end of the day they (women should struggle for their rights not only in the field but also in academics.

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Democratic Decentralization and People's Participation in West Bengal

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Abstract - After forty years of experiments in democratic decentralization, the constitutional directive was taken seriously and by 73rd (Amendment) Constitution Act of the Indian Constitution, the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) were accorded constitutional sanction. In order to ensure effective participation of the people in line with the requirements of local democracy as well as to revitalize and reorient the civil society, new institutions in the form of Gram Sabha were brought into being. The state of West Bengal pushed the idea of local democracy a step further by devising another institution below the Gram Sabha, namely, Gram Sansad to ensure more effective and more functional grassroots democracy.

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Democratic Decentralization and People's Participation in West Bengal

Rajiv Sen

Abstract - After forty years of experiments in democratic decentralization, the constitutional directive was taken seriously and by 73rd (Amendment) Constitution Act of the Indian Constitution, the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) were accorded constitutional sanction. In order to ensure effective participation of the people in line with the requirements of local democracy as well as to revitalize and reorient the civil society, new institutions in the form of Gram Sabha were brought into being. The state of West Bengal pushed the idea of local democracy a step further by devising another institution below the Gram Sabha, namely, Gram Sansad to ensure more effective and more functional grassroots democracy. Consequently, people's participation in democratic processes as well as developmental activities assumed new and challenging dimensions. The present study seeks to identify and measure the level of people's participation in the grassroots democratic institutions particularly in the newly devised institution of Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads of West Bengal.

I. INTRODUCTION

Despite Gandhi's felling for 'Village Swaraj' a compromise was made, that was one of the serious draw backs of the national leaders who drafted the constitution, in which Panchayati Raj Institutions(PRI) were placed in the non-justiceable part of the constitution, the directive principle of the State policy as Article 40 . The article read "the state shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such power and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as unit of self-government" (The Constitution of India). However, no worthwhile legislation was immediately enacted either at the national or state level to implement it. In fact, the panchayats was never taken seriously by the state governments. More often they were considered unnecessary irritants both by the elected representatives of parliaments and state assemblies and the bureaucracy. They lacked resources to meet their responsibilities and were suspended on the simplest pretext and election to re-constitute their bodies rarely took place.

II. 73RD CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ACT. -1993

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of Indian Constitution has had a checkered history. It strug-

gled for near about three years to see the light of the day as an Act. The Rajiv Gandhi Government introduced a Panchayati Raj Bill in 1989, which was passed by the Lok Sabha, but it failed to gain the requisite majority in the Rajya Sabha. The V. P. Singh Government also tried to pass a Bill in 1990 on the Panchayait Raj, but it lapsed with the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. In 1991 the present Congress Government again introduced the Bill on the Panchayati Raj with some modified provision. The bill was referred to a Select Committee by the Parliament. The bill was first discussed by a Parliamentary Committee and then by Parliament. It was passed by the Lok Sabha on December 22, 1992 and by the Rajya Sabha on the following day. After ratification by 17 State Assemblies, including West Bengal and Bihar, both opposition ruled states, the President gave his assent to the Bill on April 20, 1993 and it became an act through a Gazette notification. The act was brought into force with effect from April 24, 1993.

The main characteristics of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment act are that the act proposed to established Gram Sabha consisting of all the voters in the Panchayat area, it established a three tier system on Panchayati Raj in an ascending order (except the states whose population is less than 20,00,000) the Panchayat at the Village level, intermediate level, and District level at the top. The member of all these Panchayats will be directly elected by the people. Members of the Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha (MPs) and Legislative Assembly (MLAs) from the area would continue to be members of these bodies with the right to vote in the meetings of the panchayats but they have no right to vote in the election of Chairpersons of the intermediate and district level panchayat and they are also debarred from being Chairperson of these pachayats. The term of each panchayat would be five years and election would be held every five years under the supervision, direction and control of the State Election Commission/ Commissioner and if superseded in a mid-term would election within the six months. The reconstituted panchayat serve for the remaining period of the five year term only.

The act also provided for reservation of seats, for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their percentage to the total population of a panchayat. It has further reserved the seats of the Chairpersons for the SC & ST candidates in all the three

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tiers of the New Panchayati Raj System in direct proportion to their percentages to the total population of the state; out of these reservation seats one third will be reserved for SC & ST women. The 1993 Act also provides that one third of the seats in the Panchayats at all levels will be reserved to women including the SC & ST women. The Act directed the states that reservation is carried out by rotation in each and every panchayat at each level. Another feature of the Act is that it has left to the States to decide the question of reserving seats for backward classes.

The financial paucity has been one of the main causes of PRI's failure in the past. To remove this hurdle, the panchayats has been empowered to levy and collect appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees and they would be entitled grants-in-aid from the consolidated Fund of the State. Every five years, the State Government would appoint a Finance Commission to review and advise the State Government on the principles governing distribution of funds to the panchayats. The manner of the audit of the panchayat accounts would be decided by the State Government. The State Government would also devote power to the panchayats to prepare plans for economy development and social justice. Significantly, a whole new schedule called the Eleventh Schedule has been drawn up to ensure a better utilization of Center and State funds. The schedule contains entire agriculture and allied activities, minor irrigation schemes, land reforms and improvement small industries including food processing, cottage industries, rural housing, drinking water, rural electrification, poverty alleviation programmes, primary and secondary education, vocational education, health and family welfare schemes, public distribution system, welfare schemes for weaker and handicapped sections etc.

III. PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN DECENTRALIZED GOVERNANCE IN WEST BENGAL

Reorganization of the system of local government was one of the most important of the institutional changes brought about by the Left Front Government in West Bengal from late 1977 onward. In the process, West Bengal has created a history of participation of the common people through the process of decentralization, which is unique in India. A system of democratic elections to local bodies at anchal, block and district level was instituted, and elections to these local bodies were held in 1978. They have subsequently been held every five years, making West Bengal the only state in India to have had regular elections to local bodies every five years for the past 35 years. The aim has been to provide a share of fiscal resources of the state to the local bodies, and the panchayats (at various levels) have also been assigned a large and substantial

range of responsibilities, that were earlier seen as under the purview of the district level bureaucracy. In addition, the composition of the panchayats has reflected the caste, class, occupation and gender composition of local society, (even if not completely) more faithfully than panchayats anywhere else in the country. There has been substantial representation of the rural poor and the socially deprived groups, as well as women, in the elected bodies. All this has helped to change the power equations in the rural society as well as encouraged the social and political empowerment of women and social groups that were earlier marginalized. (West Bengal Human Development Report, 2004)

IV. THE WEST BENGAL PANCHAYAT (AMENDMENT) ACT., 1994 : GRAM SABHA AND GRAM SANSAD

The necessity to give a particular shape to grassroots democracy became a reality with the introduction of 73rd Constitution Amendment. It sought to integrate the democratic processes at all level by formalizing a mechanism where in people in all levels would have an opportunity to participate openly in matters which concern their welfare and development. The amendment thus ushered in an era of decentralized governance to harness local wisdom in a democratic way.

The West Bengal Panchayat (Amendment) Act, 1994, a Gram Sabha has been defined as 'a body consisting of person registered in the electoral rolls pertaining to a Gram' where a Gram is 'any Mouza or part of a mouza or a group of contiguous Mouza or parts thereof as on how the State Government may notify. A Gram Panchayat will have a jurisdiction over the territorial limits of such a Gram as notified by State Government'. (The West Bengal Panchayat (Amendment) Act, 1994)

Gram Sabha meeting shall be held once every year during the month of December. One-twentieth of the total members of the Gram Sabha shall form the quorum. The resolution of Gram Sansad and views of Gram Panchayats shall be placed before Gram Sabha for deliberation and recommendations. The questions and recommendations coming before Gram Sabha shall be recorded and referred to Gram Panchayat for its consideration. The annual Budget before being finally formulated by Gram Panchayat must be approved by Gram Sabha. Other important issues like annual plan of Gram Panchayat and annual report of the activities of the Gram Panchayat shall also be discussed in the Gram Sabha. The Gram Sabha is the voice of the people and it arises their grievances and watches over the functioning of the panchayat. The Gram Sabha can be an effective forum for mobilizing the masses in relating to community activities, by gathering the people under the umbrella and interacting the issues of mutual

interest. In West Bengal, holding an annual meeting of Gram Sabha in the month of December is compulsory. The Gram Sabhas were conducted meetings regularly

but the attendance of the people's are not satisfactory which clearly show in the table-1.

Table 1 : Year-wise data on meeting of Gram Sabha as up to 31.03.2008

Year	No. of Gram Sabha	Ave. no. of electors per Gram Sabha	Total no. of meeting held with quorum	Ave. no. of attendance in each meeting	No. of Gram Sabha meeting adjourned	No. of Gram Sabha which have not held any meeting
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1996, Dec.	3329	9988	2094(63)	2986(30)	-	1054
1997, Dec.	3329	10013	689(21)	2987(30)	-	644
1998, Dec.	3329	9706	2761(83)	2952(29)	115	568
1999, Dec.	3330	9985	2952(89)	526(5.5)	133	378(11)
2000, Dec.	3360	10015	3102(92)	522(5)	584	258(8)
2001, Dec.	3360	10093	2513(75)	-	962	847(25)
2002, Dec.	3358	8370	1932(58)	472(5)	629	1426(42)
2003, Dec.	3354	9664	3015(90)	637(7)	12	339(10)
2008, Dec.	3239	10,535	1694(52)	948(9)	-	1545(48)

Source : Annual Administrative report, DPRD, West Bengal 1997-98, 2003-04, 2008-09.

**Figures in bracket indicate %.*

V. GRAM SANSAD

The concept of Gram Sansad incorporated by the West Bengal Panchayat (Amendment) Act, 1992, has been widely acclaimed by political observers as an epitome of participatory democracy. It consists of all registered electors of a constituency (single member or double member) within the area of a Gram Panchayat. Thus the meeting of a Gram Sansad implies a meeting of all the electors of a constituency. In a sense, it is the large entry at the grassroots level below the Gram Panchayat.

Under the law, the Gram Panchayat is required to convene at least two meetings of every Gram Sansad in a year, annual meeting in the month of May and half-yearly meeting in the month of November. In addition to these two statutory meetings, a Gram Panchayat may hold extra-ordinary meeting of a Gram Sansad at any time if the situation so warrants or if the situation, so directs.

The main function of Gram Sansad is to guide and advice the Gram Panchayat in regard to the schemes for economic development and social justice, identification of beneficiaries for various poverty alleviation and food security programmes, constitution of one or more beneficiary committees for ensuring active participation of people in implementation, maintenance and equitable distribution of benefits of one or more schemes in its area. A Gram Sansad may raise objection of any action of Pradhan or any other member of Gram Panchayat for failure to implement any development work properly. Further, it's mandatory for the Gram Panchayat to place in the meetings of Gram Sansad the budget and audit report of the accounts of the Gram Panchayat for deliberation, recommendation and suggestion of Gram Sansad.

The West Bengal Panchayat (Amendment) Act, 2003 has made it obligatory for a Gram Panchayat to act upon any recommendation of a Gram Sansad relating to prioritization of any list of beneficiaries to scheme or programme so far as it relates to the area of Gram Sansad. However, the Gram Panchayat decides in a meeting that such recommendations are not acceptable or implementable under the existing provisions of the Act, Rules or Orders, such decision of the Gram Panchayat shall be placed in the next meeting of the Gram Sansad. The quorum of the Gram Sansad meeting is ten percent (10%) and the meeting should be adjourned in the absence of quorum. The adjourned meeting of Gram Sansad shall be held after seven days at the same venue and at the same time and attendance of at least five percent (5%) members will make quorum.

The goal of the meeting is for villagers to:

- 1) Discussed local needs, suggest new programmes and allocate existing funds among competing needs;
- 2) Discusses selection of beneficiaries of anti-poverty programmes and logistical issues concerning sanctioned schemes; and
- 3) Monitor and review the performance of elected representatives regarding the implementations of public projects and used of public funds;
- 4) The members of Gram Sansad also have access to the accounts of expenditure and are able to question elected officials for the use of public funds and implementation of public projects. (Ghatak and Ghatak 2002)

Till the early nineties, the gram panchayat or village councils had little formal accountability to the people whom they represented. The only effective

control the electorate could exercise was through their votes in the next election. The situation was substantially changed with the introductions of the Gram Sabha (village council level annual meeting of the voters) and the Gram Sansad (constituency level six month meeting of the entire electorate of a constituency) in the early nineties, subsequent to the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of the country in 1993. The Gram Sabha or village council, comprising 10,000-15,000 voters, would have to meet once a year to review the proposed budget for the next year and the previous year's performance. The village council meetings cover a large numbers of voters and as a result often them limited opportunities to exercise effective control over their elected representatives as well as to provide inputs to the planning process. The village constituency meetings are held twice a year about 700 voters in which the elected officials and villagers meet in a public place to discuss local needs, new programmes, and choose beneficiaries of existing programmes, and inspect the accounts of expenditure and budgets.

The village constituency meeting might at first glance appear to be a purely consultative and monitoring forum vis-à-vis the elected panchayat representatives. However, they do enjoy a large status. The village council has to consider every resolution

adopted at the village constituency meeting and decision and action taken on them will have to be reported at the next such meeting. If a village council fails to consider the constituency level meeting resolution of fails to place the draft budget, statement of account and audit reports in such meeting, that would be consider a serious lapse and the auditors would declare all expenditures of the village council as illegal in their report. As a result of this clause people participating in these meeting in effect do participate in actual decision-making and are not just advisors and monitors to the actual decision-makings. The village constituency meetings are being held in West Bengal only for the last couple of years. Since, 1998 meetings have been regularly held in practically the entire around forty-five thousand constituencies over the state. (Ghatak and Ghatak 2002, p 49)

The people's are directly participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the various schemes or projects through the Gram Sansad in West Bengal. The Left Front Government has made various acts for this purpose in the state legislature. The Gram Sansad meeting has conducted regularly but the participation of the people's has not satisfactory. The average attendance of the people has within the 10-13 per cent which is clearly showed in the table-2.

Table 2 : Year - wise data on meeting of Gram Sansads as up to 31.03.2008

Year	Total no. of GP	Total no. of GS	Ave. no. of elector s per GS	Total no. of GS meetings held in May	Ave. no. of attendan ce in each meeting in May	Total no. of GS which did not held meeting	Total no. of GS meetings held in Nov./Dec.	Ave. no. of attendan ce in each meeting in Nov.	Total no. of GS meetings adjourne d in Nov.	Total no. of GS which did not held meeting in Nov.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1996	3313	36125	808	-	-	-	32101(89)	145(18)	-	4024
1997	3313	36179	804	28412	121(15)	-	30816(88)	142(18)	-	5363
1998	3329	44506	741	10435(29)	-	-	44104(99)	122(16)	1175	403(1)
1999	3330	44634	746	43346(97)	90(12)	-	43872(98)	94(13)	2496	762(15)
2000	3360	45167	748	42910(95)	88(12)	2257	43246(96)	96(13)	4929	1921(4)
2001	3360	45167	750	43770(97)	86(12)	1397	42829(95)	79(11)	11056	2338(5)
2002	3358	45095	798	42340(94)	86(12)	2780	41625(92)	94(12)	9231	3470(8)
2003	3354	45154	752	4705(10.4)	89(12)	40392	41120(91.07)	88(11.7)	5335	4034(9)
2004	3354	45245	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2006	3354	45168	752	40590(90)	84(11)	4564	43735(97)	64(8.5)	6645	1433(3)
2007	3354	44122	771	43619(98)	84(11)	1513	41553(94)	64(8)	-	2569(6)
2008	3351	37067	938	-	-	-	22310(60)	142(15)	4305(12)	10452(28)

Source : Annual Administrative report, DPRD, West Bengal 1997-98, 2003-04, 2008-09.

*Figures in bracket indicate %

Average attendance at Gram Sansads and Gram Sabhas meeting has been relatively low and declining in recent years. Official data indicate that average attendance at Gram Sansad meetings decline from around 16 per cent in 1997 to around 12 per cent in 2001, which from Gram Sabha meetings, where attendance was 30 per cent in 1997, and the decline has been even sharper. There is also evidence of cases when the attendance at meetings falls below the quorum and these therefore have to be adjourned. In addition to the factors mentioned above, it is possible that low attendance reflects other tendencies which need to be addressed. One importance reason is the lack of effective functional and administrative power of the panchayats is the tendency for the local political forces controlling the panchayats to try and get their decision adopted at higher levels rather than mobilize local people.

Decentralized governance is a very labour-intensive process, both for the elected representatives and for the people themselves, who are thereby called upon to spend a lot of time and engage simply participating in decision-making. The framework for decentralization in the state called for meeting of the Gram Sansads and the Gram Sabhas at list twice a year. But for most rural people, especially the rural poor, the ability to participate in such meeting is not only a function of the inclination to do so, but also the ability, given the pressures of time involved in wage labour or cultivation, as well as other necessary activities, including the large amount of unpaid labour that is still regularly performed in rural areas. Therefore, it would not be surprising to find that attendance of Gram Sabhas and Gram Sansads is sporadic and haphazard, even the local community is otherwise with the functioning and accountability of the panchayats.

The state government is clearly considering in some new initiatives to strengthen further the system of decentralization, make it more flexible and responsive to the people's needs. The concern for some change stems from the perception that elected representatives at each level tend to believe that the decision-making authority should stop at their own level. But of course, the main aim of the decentralization process is that the ability to influence decisions should permeate down to the people who are affected by these decisions. This in turn means that people's participation has to be understood in a new way— it cannot be that the Panchayat Samiti or the Zilla Parishad decides what to do and then tells the people what they have to participate in. Rather, the representatives have to participate in the efforts of the people and the communities themselves.

There has recently been a decision of the West Bengal Government to create Gram Unnayan Samitis, to be created by the Gram Sansads. These would be representative committees to carry out decisions and

monitor the activities of panchayats. These would include not just the winners of panchayat elections but also the looser as well as other relevant constituents, such as those involved in developmental activity and other citizens. These Gram Unnayan Samitis are to be watchdog bodies, who also work in collaboration with the panchayats, and the attempt is clearly not make the entire process more transparent and non-partisan, and also to involve as many people from the local community as possible. While the law regarding this has been passed as The West Bengal Panchayat (Amendment) Act 2003, the rules are still being framed and the nature of participation has not yet been formalized. In addition to this, the new Amendment Act creates a Block Sansad and a Zilla Sansad where representation of lower tiers is adequately provided, and stipulates the constitution of functional sub-committees at the gram panchayat level. This is designed to improve the possibility of village level planning. However, the full implementation of this and the effects on the power and functioning of the elected panchayats are yet to be seen. It is important to ensure that such changes do not in any way affect the constitutional powers of panchayats as elected representative bodies.

Those who were attending the meetings a striking fact is that these meeting were overwhelmingly male dominate event in spite of official politics targeted towards empowering women, such as reserving one-third of the seats in the village councils. Not that woman did not come at all, but their participation level was extremely low. A distinct feature of the village constituency meetings is that those who participate were largely members of supporters of the same political party or the other those who do belong to any political party kept away from the meetings. Majority of the voters who were present belonged to the party of the elected member and there were no voices of opposition in these meetings. (Ghatak and Ghatak, 2002)

VI. CONCLUSION

However, the fact to be realized is that if Panchayati Raj Institutions are to become a vibrant vehicle for the empowerment of rural people, a lot more need to be done. In sum and substance following recommendations may be suggested for future policy implementation. First, Decentralized Governance cannot run successfully without proper knowledge and skills towards grassroots democracy. Awareness development is the most crucial task for injecting an attitude within the people in general and women in particular towards participation in the decision making process in grassroots institutions. Second, Local training programmes and workshops are to be created to empower women which tread gender issues and build their confidence, as well as analyze the particulars of panchayat operation. Women's organizations are to be created and strengthened so that women can exchange

information and discuss ways to address their common problem. Third, lack of information is one of the major causes for low attendance in Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads meetings. Gram Panchayat should announce properly the date, time and venue of the Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads meetings at least seven days before, so that, the villagers may be well aware about related information on Gram Sansads. Most of the rural people are engaged in agriculture activities, some of them are casual labour. Women mainly spend all their energy to maintain the household. So, Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads meetings should be organized at the afternoon, when rural people can be free for their day time jobs. Forth, the political parties should understand and play a positive role for making the Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads effective. It depends on the political will of the ruling political party whether they can use the Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads as a direct democratic institution or a rubber stamp. Fifth, the poor rural villagers may attend the Gram Sansad meetings if they get some sort of benefit from the Gram Sansad. The beneficiaries of different government Schemes are selected in the meeting of Gram Sansads and the final list will prepared by the Gram Panchayats out of the beneficiaries selected by Gram Sansads on priority basis. The rural underprivileged people attend the Gram Sandas meetings to enroll their name in the beneficiaries list. But, at the present time the Gram Sansads do not prepare the beneficiaries list. The Gram Sansad should work actively if they have got sufficient fund and responsibility and provide the benefit for the poorer section of the rural society. Sixth, at present, the Gram Sabha is only a recommendatory body. Its decisions are not binding. It is recommended that the Gram Sabha should have the authority to take decision on all matters coming within its purview. Regular, mandatory Gram Sabha will bring direct democracy to the forefront. Last but not least, the mail dominated rural social structure is still not reconciled to the women's participation in politics. Media creates a supportive environment for women members by letting society know about their accomplishments, and by influencing public opinion in support of women's reservation and rights. "Women's organizations are to be created and strengthened so that women can exchange information and discuss ways to address their common problem."

It is true that the Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads are not working according to expectations. But, it cannot be said that it has achieved nothing. The journey of Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads as a grassroots institution is not very long. Within this time period Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads are making themselves as an institution where rural people can think about their betterment. We have reasons to be optimistic about the scenario. In near future, the Gram Sabha and Gram Sansads can be sculpted as an

important institution for democratic accountability and people's participation.

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Before start writing a good quality Computer Science Research Paper, let us first understand what is Computer Science Research Paper? So, Computer Science Research Paper is the paper which is written by professionals or scientists who are associated to Computer Science and Information Technology, or doing research study in these areas. If you are novel to this field then you can consult about this field from your supervisor or guide.

TECHNIQUES FOR WRITING A GOOD QUALITY RESEARCH PAPER:

1. Choosing the topic: In most cases, the topic is searched by the interest of author but it can be also suggested by the guides. You can have several topics and then you can judge that in which topic or subject you are finding yourself most comfortable. This can be done by asking several questions to yourself, like Will I be able to carry our search in this area? Will I find all necessary recourses to accomplish the search? Will I be able to find all information in this field area? If the answer of these types of questions will be "Yes" then you can choose that topic. In most of the cases, you may have to conduct the surveys and have to visit several places because this field is related to Computer Science and Information Technology. Also, you may have to do a lot of work to find all rise and falls regarding the various data of that subject. Sometimes, detailed information plays a vital role, instead of short information.

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4. Make blueprints of paper: The outline is the plan or framework that will help you to arrange your thoughts. It will make your paper logical. But remember that all points of your outline must be related to the topic you have chosen.

5. Ask your Guides: If you are having any difficulty in your research, then do not hesitate to share your difficulty to your guide (if you have any). They will surely help you out and resolve your doubts. If you can't clarify what exactly you require for your work then ask the supervisor to help you with the alternative. He might also provide you the list of essential readings.

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26. Go for seminars: Attend seminars if the topic is relevant to your research area. Utilize all your resources.



27. Refresh your mind after intervals: Try to give rest to your mind by listening to soft music or by sleeping in intervals. This will also improve your memory.

28. Make colleagues: Always try to make colleagues. No matter how sharper or intelligent you are, if you make colleagues you can have several ideas, which will be helpful for your research.

29. Think technically: Always think technically. If anything happens, then search its reasons, its benefits, and demerits.

30. Think and then print: When you will go to print your paper, notice that tables are not be split, headings are not detached from their descriptions, and page sequence is maintained.

31. Adding unnecessary information: Do not add unnecessary information, like, I have used MS Excel to draw graph. Do not add irrelevant and inappropriate material. These all will create superfluous. Foreign terminology and phrases are not apropos. One should NEVER take a broad view. Analogy in script is like feathers on a snake. Not at all use a large word when a very small one would be sufficient. Use words properly, regardless of how others use them. Remove quotations. Puns are for kids, not grunt readers. Amplification is a billion times of inferior quality than sarcasm.

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33. Report concluded results: Use concluded results. From raw data, filter the results and then conclude your studies based on measurements and observations taken. Significant figures and appropriate number of decimal places should be used. Parenthetical remarks are prohibitive. Proofread carefully at final stage. In the end give outline to your arguments. Spot out perspectives of further study of this subject. Justify your conclusion by at the bottom of them with sufficient justifications and examples.

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Key points to remember:

- Submit all work in its final form.
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- Please note the criterion for grading the final paper by peer-reviewers.

Final Points:

A purpose of organizing a research paper is to let people to interpret your effort selectively. The journal requires the following sections, submitted in the order listed, each section to start on a new page.

The introduction will be compiled from reference matter and will reflect the design processes or outline of basis that direct you to make study. As you will carry out the process of study, the method and process section will be constructed as like that. The result segment will show related statistics in nearly sequential order and will direct the reviewers next to the similar intellectual paths throughout the data that you took to carry out your study. The discussion section will provide understanding of the data and projections as to the implication of the results. The use of good quality references all through the paper will give the effort trustworthiness by representing an alertness of prior workings.



Writing a research paper is not an easy job no matter how trouble-free the actual research or concept. Practice, excellent preparation, and controlled record keeping are the only means to make straightforward the progression.

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To make a paper clear

- Adhere to recommended page limits

Mistakes to evade

- Insertion a title at the foot of a page with the subsequent text on the next page
- Separating a table/chart or figure - impound each figure/table to a single page
- Submitting a manuscript with pages out of sequence

In every sections of your document

- Use standard writing style including articles ("a", "the," etc.)
- Keep on paying attention on the research topic of the paper
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Title Page:

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The summary should be two hundred words or less. It should briefly and clearly explain the key findings reported in the manuscript-- must have precise statistics. It should not have abnormal acronyms or abbreviations. It should be logical in itself. Shun citing references at this point.

An abstract is a brief distinct paragraph summary of finished work or work in development. In a minute or less a reviewer can be taught the foundation behind the study, common approach to the problem, relevant results, and significant conclusions or new questions.

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- Fundamental goal
- To the point depiction of the research
- Consequences, including definite statistics - if the consequences are quantitative in nature, account quantitative data; results of any numerical analysis should be reported
- Significant conclusions or questions that track from the research(es)

Approach:

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- Center on shortening results - bound background information to a verdict or two, if completely necessary
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Approach:

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- If use of a definite type of tools.
- Materials may be reported in a part section or else they may be recognized along with your measures.

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- Simplify - details how procedures were completed not how they were exclusively performed on a particular day.
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Approach:

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What to keep away from

- Resources and methods are not a set of information.
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The principle of a results segment is to present and demonstrate your conclusion. Create this part a entirely objective details of the outcome, and save all understanding for the discussion.

The page length of this segment is set by the sum and types of data to be reported. Carry on to be to the point, by means of statistics and tables, if suitable, to present consequences most efficiently. You must obviously differentiate material that would usually be incorporated in a study editorial from any unprocessed data or additional appendix matter that would not be available. In fact, such matter should not be submitted at all except requested by the instructor.



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- Sum up your conclusion in text and demonstrate them, if suitable, with figures and tables.
- In manuscript, explain each of your consequences, point the reader to remarks that are most appropriate.
- Present a background, such as by describing the question that was addressed by creation an exacting study.
- Explain results of control experiments and comprise remarks that are not accessible in a prescribed figure or table, if appropriate.
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- Do not discuss or infer your outcome, report surroundings information, or try to explain anything.
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Approach

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- Put figures and tables, appropriately numbered, in order at the end of the report
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Figures and tables

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- Give details all of your remarks as much as possible, focus on mechanisms.
- Make a decision if the tentative design sufficiently addressed the theory, and whether or not it was correctly restricted.
- Try to present substitute explanations if sensible alternatives be present.
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- Recommendations for detailed papers will offer supplementary suggestions.

Approach:

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Methods and Procedures	Clear and to the point with well arranged paragraph, precision and accuracy of facts and figures, well organized subheads	Difficult to comprehend with embarrassed text, too much explanation but completed	Incorrect and unorganized structure with hazy meaning
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References	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring



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