

REVISITING DEPENDENCY AND DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

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INTRODUCTION

Dependency and Development in Latin America, called as DDLA (CARDOSO; FALETTO, 1969, 1979) is, certainly, the book published by Latin Americans that has had ever the greatest impact in the social sciences and in social and political thought across the world. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, one of the book authors and former president of Brazil, along with Enzo Faletto, has recently offered in the pages of *Studies in Comparative International Development* a reassessment of the book (CARDOSO, 2009). He has also, by way of showing how the method of analysis they drew upon – historical-structuralism – is still valid for analyzing the contemporary world, provided an overview of the global situation, with special reference to Latin America.

In the following pages, I will argue, however, that Cardoso's reassessment of the book conceptual scheme is partial and that this has to do with his present conceptual and political views, as shown in the very same article. This is deeply connected to the

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angle from which he sees globalization and especially present-day Latin America. Although he argues for a “global social democracy” and rejects the view that his government implemented neoliberal reforms, attacking also what he names “populism” in a new guise, this former argument is hardly true, while the second is far too much tributary of a view that there would be “two lefts” in Latin America: a good, rational, democratic one and a bad, demagogic and at least potentially authoritarian other. I shall proceed without and beyond polemical intentions, thus avoiding as much as more specific political discussions, as well as sticking basically to *DDLA* and Cardoso’s recent formal assessment. Nevertheless, this is not entirely possible insofar as an analysis of Latin America is at stake, with reference specifically to those concepts. Those issues must be, however, taken up for both an assessment of the book’s present possibilities and of Latin American and global realities. It is true that it might be simply argued that dependency theory is no longer relevant. Conversely, it can be argued that dependency theory has to a great extent vanished from sight, but the problems it addressed remains as pressing as ever (cf. PECAUT, 1985). That is the path this article will take, pointing out why this is so.

I will proceed by, first, pointing out the limitations of Cardoso’s reconstruction of his own argument. Next, I will relate this to his view of globalization and to an approach I find more adequate. I will, then, deal with the Latin American predicament, summoning also evidence that corroborates the usefulness of the concepts originally presented in Cardoso and Faletto’s book. I shall finally make a last point, insofar as in the Latin American context *DDLA* worked very much as a critical theory, questioning mainstream views of development, although it refused the idea of absolute and

inevitable stagnation. How that would work now is something that needs, at least, to be briefly addressed.

DDLA'S CENTRAL CONCEPTS

Although Cardoso affirms the validity of his former framework to an analysis of the contemporary world, he does so very selectively. In fact, the main stress of this contention is on the political element that was present in *DDLA*. That was a very key achievement, which did represent a break from the usual theories of dependency, mainly Frank's (1967) definition of development as necessarily creating underdevelopment, regardless of whatever else happened, short of socialist revolutions, of course. Not that Frank was entirely wrong from a descriptive standpoint, as I will argue below. He had, however, turned in many cases an empirically verified situation into a teleological necessity, theoretically dressed. Cardoso and Faletto did not accept this sort of point of view, though how much the book was a reaction against it or an independently crafted contribution should be open to scrutiny, since the first draft of *DDLA* is of the same year as Frank's publication. It is probably the case that the book had much to do with Latin American debates about the insurmountable stagnation that seemed to have come about in the early 1960s of the regional economies (SERRA, 1976).

The fact is that Cardoso and Faletto argued, in variance also with modernization theory (which Cardoso nevertheless partly embraced before and to which he occasionally returns¹), that developmental paths are not, so to speak, divinely ordained. According to a widespread conviction, worldwide and in Latin America, including in particular the United Nations Economic Commission

¹ See Cardoso, 1967.

for Latin America (ECLA), the state would mobilize society and to a great extent assume the task of promoting development, when that succeeded (CARDOSO; FALETTO, 1979, p. 3-4). But countries differed according to the coalitions that would come to power in each of them and make use of the state, within structural constraints that were not, however, insurmountable (CARDOSO; FALETTO, 1979, p. 3-5). To use a current social science jargon, path dependence was crucial, yet it did not determine outcomes, which were mediated by human agency. Dependence was both an external relationship and internally structured as “a particular type of relationship within underdeveloped nation” (CARDOSO; FALETTO, 1979, p.15). In fact, they went as far as observing, in the 1979 “Post scriptum” to the English edition of the book, that they did not intend to measure “degrees of dependency”, but to enquiry into whom and which classes and groups development served (CARDOSO; FALETTO, 1979, p. 201-212) – missing, however, an opportunity to grasp what below will be focused upon as the “semiperipheral” situation. It is curious also that Cardoso pays no attention to the theme of coalitions in his recent commentary of the classical text, consisting this in an issue that must be explored, since it may tell us a lot about development and even Cardoso’s perspectives.

Central as political underpins were, the structural elements of the book were of paramount importance in the analysis too. I would like specifically to underline the definitions of dependency, center and periphery, development and underdevelopment. Although he mentions, in passing, “underdevelopment” as characteristic of the Brazilian economy in relation to the US, as well as the idea of center and periphery (CARDOSO, 2009, p. 301), these plays basically no role in his recent discussion. Furthermore, he does not actually dismiss the idea of “dependency”, but underplays its importance,

underscoring “development” instead as the core of the book (CARDOSO, 2009, p. 298). This seems not to withstand comparison with the actual text by Cardoso and Faletto, though.

They defined very clearly and carefully these different and key concepts. While dependency would imply the relative lack of power of Latin American countries vis-à-vis the powerful countries of the world – the US and Europe, of course –, those whose state and other economic agents had the means to autonomously engage in economic and political decisions, the ideas of centre and periphery referred to the roles which each country played in the international economy. These were, up to them, basically of two kinds: commodities producers and exporters, on the one hand, and manufactures producers and exporters, on the other. Development and underdevelopment were characterized by the relative level of differentiation of the economies at stake, comparatively – which, at that point, related to the industrial level of development which had been achieved in each of them (CARDOSO; FALETTO, 1979, p.16-24). Of course, there was an overlap of these categories, which formed two main, self-reinforcing clusters. Moreover, although Cardoso (2009, p. 297) dismisses now the vulgar theories of imperialism (without telling us which exactly they were), he explicitly included the conceptual apparatus of his own dependency theory, which would be no theory at all, he argued then, within Lenin’s theory of imperialism. It was, he added, merely complementary (CARDOSO, 1975). It is within this sort of perspective that we should place one of the great innovations of the book: “dependent development” (CARDOSO; FALETTO, 1979, p. 6). Although there is some warrant to speak of it as the first sparks of what is usually misleadingly called “globalization” (too vague a term, in fact) and especially the affirmation that it is after “development”: dependent development meant the continuation of

the lack of autonomy that beset those countries, the mere mitigation of their peripheral position, as well as a relative diminution of their underdeveloped character. The core of Raúl Prebisch's and the ECLA strategy to overcome the problems that beset the periphery and industrialization was becoming a more complex phenomenon.

To be sure, a lot has changed since the book was originally published in 1969 and it would make no sense asking the authors that they remain absolutely consistent with their former argument, in particular at a moment when the world has changed so much. But one could perfectly argue that, in fact, the structure of the global economy to a great extent reproduces such patterns, however, with greater variability, introducing ever greater complexity. Hence a more faithful reading of the book may be totally warranted.

Two main elements have been crucial for changes in relation to the 1970s. The first is the third industrial or techno-scientific revolution, with all the accompanying changes in patterns of production and consumption (post-Fordism, micro-electronics, flexible accumulation and pluralized consumption, etc.), as well as the further financialization of capitalism (CASTELLS, 1996, 2000). On the other hand, the rise of a number of countries which have managed to industrialize and to some extent emulate the patterns of the now so-called "North" economies has also been a feature of the same period. The first issue has led to a great leap forward for capitalism, inaugurating an entirely new pattern and period of accumulation, which left behind precisely most of the countries in the then "Third World" which were apparently catching up, in a more dependent (like Brazil) or independent (like India) way (AMSDEN, 2001). These were relatively successful, in any case, in producing manufactures with reasonable levels of added value, partly surpassing the mere commodities producing phase. The

differentiation this entailed in the global economy led indeed to what some authors would call “semiperiphery”, although often the state, rather the country, were the unit of analysis in such conceptualizations (WALLERSTEIN, 1974, 1980, 1988).² While the existence of a capital good sector (or Department I of the economy, in a Marxist view) may be seen as differentiating these industrialized countries among themselves, as suggested by the French Theory of Regulation (BOYER; SAILLARD, 2000), due to their – relative – technological prowess, countries such as Korea (and Taiwan, we might add) hardly fit the definition, as Evans (2009, p. 333) observed. But the concept seems to describe the rise of a number of countries in the last fifty years or so, although in itself it has remained rather imprecise.

That double, techno-scientific and finance capital, revolutions have in any case pushed most of those countries strongly back into their position. In this regard, development had indeed empirically generated underdevelopment in a relative scale (although areas such as Africa in particular, but also parts of Latin America, have experienced it in absolute terms). To be sure, a mix of path dependence, especially the US, much more prepared to make that leap, and political possibilities answers for this disjunction and the locations of countries within the new configuration. The differentiations in trajectory are too big to be treated here, even if we do not take Korea and Taiwan, in consideration. But even Brazil and India, whose unfolding would be relatively similar in many respects (PEDERSEN, 2008). In this regard the theory seems therefore still to hold water, since its main concepts – dependency, centre and periphery (plus semiperiphery), and development and underdevelopment – can do a good job in framing contemporary

² This is however probably reductive, being therefore a better idea to keep the focus on whole countries rather than merely on states.

realities. The issues, as well as the overlap between such categories, remain real enough. In addition, realist political assumptions about size, population, resources, weaponry, citizen allegiance, effective government, diplomacy, etc. (MORGENTHAU, 1949, 1967) also must, as usually, be seen as relevant to define the power of states in the global arena as well as their interplay, including therein market size, which stands out in the cases of China and India.

This is no mere globalization, though. Either countries remain agrarian (as just too many in Latin America, where many were actually totally, as Chile, or partly, as Argentina, “reprimarized”, losing much or entirely its industry – even Brazil suffering somewhat from this syndrome), or they took mostly the path of *dependent development* (the cases of Korea and Taiwan being, as already pointed out, more complicated, demanding perhaps a category that could make more relative their position within the global “South”). While multinational or transnational corporations, as well as finance capital, have their own interests, they remain firmly tied to the central countries of the West and Japan. China has had indeed much more autonomy, which has to do with its revolutionary past, but even in this case it is still to be seen how it will develop, without prejudging its future stand in the global society, even though the sheer size of its economy is absolutely overwhelming.

Kohli (2004, 2009) has insisted on the role of the state, but on its relation to social classes too, for an understanding of the patterns and potentialities of development in the “South”. In this regard, although his excessive stress on the virtues of the “cohesive capitalist state” is problematic, working mainly for small countries and specific geopolitical conditions, he shares with Cardoso and Faletto’s book the correct understanding that coalitions are crucial for the outcomes of development. In fact, Cardoso and Faletto pointed

out that success cases were those in which “elite” coalitions with some pro-development slant had been able to create legitimacy and some stability insofar as they sorted out problems above, between “elites”, but also below, that is, attracting also the “masses,” the popular classes to the dominant coalition (CARDOSO; FALETTO, 1979, p. 5).

This much is very relevant and, although logical issues, such as the “embeddedness” of an autonomous bureaucracy (EVANS, 1995) must be taken into account the decision to analyze social forces in relation to the state helps capture a great deal of the history of economic development, if not carried out in a reductive and determinist way. Nevertheless, coalitions should also be more strongly inserted within geopolitical and broader cultural-political frameworks. This would lead us to a better comprehension of the different paths globalization has assumed in the “South”. In his discussion, Cardoso (2009) does not really address this sort of question in analyzing the recent changes that occurred in Latin America’s relations with the US government, the international financial institutions and the transnational corporations. These agents have had an enormous sway over Latin America, which has constituted its direct, albeit not particularly relevant, zone of influence. More seriously, Cardoso mentions just in passing the alliances that have been internally established in order to steer “development” (or its contrary) in a direction or another (CARDOSO, 2009, p. 306). Everything is resolved thus a confrontation between good global social democracy (whose definition begs the question) and populism. No social movements (unions are dismissed as irrelevant in the Brazilian case in particular), no social classes, no left-right alignments, have room in his analysis. This is entirely contrary to the method and the actual demarche of *DDLA*. In fact, as Evans (2009, p. 323ff) pointed out,

as to the relation with so-called globalized forces, Cardoso seems to merely accept as inevitable sheer “adaptation” (CARDOSO, 2009, p. 300-1, 306).

These are the main points that a less skewed reading of Cardoso and Faletto’s *DDLA* may present. They make, I believe, the book even more contemporary. Its concepts are, to be sure, in need of adaptation, but appear as widely relevant for an understanding of the global society that the twenty-first century carries on building.

LATIN AMERICA AND OTHER SEMIPERIPHERAL AND PERIPHERAL AREAS

For someone who has so strongly criticized enclave economies and embraced the Prebischian standpoint that is sticking to commodities export, could not be good for a country in the long-run (*DDLA*: passim), Cardoso’s (2009, p. 309-10) support of the Chilean model (only partly transformed since the end of the military dictatorship) may come as a surprise. Argentina paid dear for its failure to industrialize further, in some part due to its being a very rich meat and wheat export country in the first half of the twentieth century, despite, as his book had shown, it being included in those dependent developing which he and Faletto had newly identified. Chile is not even like that. But, insofar as his is, a perspective which embraces, at the economic level, a rather passive adaptation to globalization, which in fact continued to a great extent during the first Luís Inácio Lula da Silva government (DOMINGUES, 2007), this is perfectly understandable.³ It is hardly understandable how he can see México, with its skewed development of export goods for the

³ However, it is true that Brazilian diplomacy has been very active, although variations can be found in the Cardoso and Lula governments.

US in its Northern region, as a success case, except if we also grasp his statement that seizing opportunities in the global market is the only way possible in the contemporary world (CARDOSO, 2009, p. 310-13) – in Mexico’s case, indeed regardless of very problematic consequences (especially in what concerns dependence, which he seems now to frame rather as “asymmetric relations” – a point that should not detract from the issues raised by dependency theory, as noted by KEOHANE; NYE, 1977, p. 9-11).

It is true also that Brazil has a much bigger and much more diversified economy, with indeed a capital goods sector, only comparable to India’s in the former “Third World.” This provided more leeway, yet the country took indeed a neoliberal route, although later and with lesser depth than most of its neighbors. Cardoso was instrumental in this respect, ahead of a coalition of center and rightwing forces, including the main old oligarchies, rejecting any alliance with social movements and socially organized forces (even with industrial businessmen relationships were at best shaky; finance capital and new entrants in the privatized markets, especially telecommunications, were much more highly regarded). Also poverty alleviation programs were initiated during his presidency, but in their form and extent were part of the neoliberal agenda. Along with, but also beyond the needs of macroeconomic stability, the political use of the “exchange rate,” pushing semi-parity with the dollar – although never as absurd as what Carlos Menem did in Argentina – made possible the stability of his government and in fact his reelection, leading to a currency crash just after the latter (KOHLI, 2004; LAUTIER; MARQUES PEREIRA, 2004).

Let me make it clear: I do not mention these issues with a polemical intention, but two points must be made. First, while fighting over words is surely useless, it seems just too obvious that the

goals of the Cardoso's governments were exactly the same as those imposed everywhere by the US government and the international financial institutions (International Monetary Fund and World Bank): commercial opening, privatization, fiscal and monetary orthodoxy, even the poverty alleviation schemes, etc. But the widespread effect of the monetary stabilization can hardly be exaggerated either. It had two aspects. If the attempt at curbing inflation for good was at its core, a political feature soon became at least as important (in fact it became the key issue, along with the interest of stakeholders in the newly globalized Brazilian financial market): bringing along the "poor" of the country, not through their organizations, with which Cardoso's government had no dialogue, but as individuals who were desperately in need of economic security. Cardoso showed thereby that he had learned the lessons of his own book: a coalition of "elites" had been put together, including foreign capital, that could also cement an alliance with the popular sectors, but, in this case, regardless and indeed to a great extent against social movements and popular organizations. To be sure other Latin American countries took this much further – culminating in particular in the Argentine tragedy of 2001 – in what may be called the "transformist" path taken by the subcontinent in the last decade of the twentieth century, changing in order not to change much. The model is the same, with differences of degree and emphasis (LAUTIER; MARQUES PEREIRA, 2004; BOYER; NEFFA, 2004; DOMINGUES, 2008: ch. 2; 2012a: Part II; 2012b). And so is Cardoso's acceptance of the rules of the global, neoliberally steered global economy, as Evans, as mentioned above, stresses.

Within the present order Latin America's situation is not good at all. If Brazil seems to make some progress, although its economic growth has picked up with greater sustainability only very

recently and its economic structure is underdeveloped in relation to that of the central countries (US, Europe, Japan – maybe also Korea and Taiwan and, possibly soon, China, too), in relation to which it is a rather dependent and semiperipheral country, most other countries are even in a worse position (DOMINGUES, 2008: ch. 2; 2012a: Part II; 2012b). Chile is trapped in its primary export pattern, Argentina has suffered industrial involution and Mexico was caught up in the “maquiladora” pattern of assemblage of products of low value-added production. The other countries of the region have had very limited industrialization. They export oil, making the richness of a rentier state, as in Venezuela’s regular pattern, or agrarian and pastoral commodities – or else, cocaine. Investments in science and technology, research and development, were raised recently, but do not surpass one percent in Brazil, and 0,5 percent in Argentina and Mexico, Chile trailing behind, while the other countries in the region invest almost nil in this key area for contemporary economic development (data for 2008, from RICYT, 2008). Innovation clusters, also key to contemporary development, practically do not exist in the region, with the exception of just a handful in Brazil (BOTAGARAY; TIFFIN, 2002). That much can be easily accommodated within *DDLA*’s conceptual framework.

Yet, a different path has been trod by democracy, implying a complicated and tense disjunction in the subcontinent’s recent history. Cardoso (2009: 304-08) recognizes that much, although duly qualifying some aspects, such as problems with the rule of law, and mistakenly framing others, especially the absence of a democratic culture – which does not need to be Protestant and individualist, contrary to what his curious outburst of modernization theory demands. A true “molecular democratic revolution” was staged throughout Latin America, led by popular movements in the

1980s-1990s. It implied far reaching changes in political culture, institution building, with shortcomings in particular in what concerns the civil citizenship of the popular classes (albeit not with regard to the property of the upper ones, for two centuries always safely protected above anything else), popular participation, in a situation of increasing social complexity, pluralism and a changed pattern of social movements, they themselves also very pluralized (ÁLVAREZ; DAGNINO; ESCOBAR, 1998; AVRITZER, 2002; O'DONNELL et al., 2004; DOMINGUES, 2008, ch. 1). Cardoso glosses over these developments and is wont to concentrate on one issue, which falsifies this unique process of democratic development: the opposition of the bad populists to the good global social democrats. In this way rather right-wing, authoritarian governments, such as that of Colombia, also disappear from view, with attacks focused only on the anachronistic armed struggle of the country's guerrilla forces.

Cardoso clearly draws upon the division of the “two lefts” crafted by Castañeda (2006). For this author, populists, like Chávez and Morales, are backward, while modernizers such as the Chilean socialists and democrats, as well as Lula, are the way forward. But this characterization does not correspond to reality: the Latin American left is much more diversified and, besides, to lump Chávez and Morales together, for instance, is to totally misunderstand different processes, one based on the status apparatus in Venezuela (a sort of “Cesarism” oriented to the poor) and a far-reaching process of democratization from below carried out by social movements under the leadership and influence of Bolivia's indigenous population (a point Munk, 2009, makes in a different way).

It is hard to see in what Evo Morales could be characterized as a populist (DOMINGUES; GUIMARÃES; MOTA; PEREIRA DA SILVA, 2009), let alone the vacuity of the concept, problematic

in the past and at best totally unspecified today (at worst it may work more as a term of abuse than an interpretive category). As to Lula, Cardoso does speak of populism, albeit in a milder way. It is difficult to see how he could be classified as a populist, by any means. It is true that the Lula government has been, since his re-election, changing course toward what some have been calling a “new developmentalism” (BOSCHI; GAITÁN, 2008), which is in any case still a far-cry in relation to what we can find in other areas of the planet, especially in China and the East Asian countries. If there are no strong departures in economic policy, investment in science and technology has grown, as noted above, and social policies supporting the poor, especially the Bolsa Família, have led to a strengthening of the internal market. New links with business and labor, as well as with social movements more broadly, have been crafted as well (PEDERSEN, 2008, p. 156). Whether this will come to configure a new policy pattern and a new developmentalism remains to be seen.

The social democracy issue could lead us far afield and I do not want to go in any depth in this regard. Suffice to note that in this specific coordinates such a label is more likely to confuse than to enlighten. First due to its being based on that false distinction between the “two lefts”; but also because the context, the social bases and especially the policies of social democracy used to be very different from what has been put in practice. This obtains especially in relation to the focused social grants that have come to characterize so much of Latin American welfare (HAGGARD; KAUFMAN, 2008), as well as to a myriad of new questions, raised by new social movements, which have been at the forefront of the political agenda. We need indeed to look at such issues with fresh eyes, but confronting them would lead us into a discussion also about definitions that cannot be carried out here.

Let me expand the argument by comparing Brazil and India economically, countries which Evans (1995) and Kohli (2004), in fact, due to their ideal-typical method, did not even recognize as “developmental” states, although the latter was more hopeful that a more capitalist-class oriented state could be emerging in the late 1990s in South Asia.

Both Brazil and India have important industrial infrastructures. These were originally partly developed by the state. The former was always much more open to transnational capital. As is well-known, it has faced in particular enormous difficulties in building any sort of inroad into high-technological areas. The latter has been much more closed and has banked much less on transnational capital, with a state-based economic framework until the present, but has been growing much faster. While other issues may account for its recent high rates of growth, this has happened also with the considerable impulse of its software and call-centre sectors. If Brazil has found difficult to develop high-technology areas, India’s software sector remains also tied mainly to the low-value operations of international business: its firms are to a great extent basically subcontractors for foreign companies. Call-centers limitations speak for themselves (DOMINGUES, 2008, ch. 2, 2012a; Part II, 2012b; PEDERSEN, 2008, p. 94-7; LIMA, 2009). That is, neither of them has been able to breakthrough to a position of control over the main technologies and patterns of accumulation of the center of the global capitalist system and their economy remains largely underdeveloped in relation to those of the US, Europe and Japan. India seems to be less dependent, but both remain firmly within the semiperiphery, for the sort of production they are actually able to accomplish, except for some more or less important niches they manage to occupy, which are sometimes anecdotally presented as

proof of their achievements. While, as argued above, other countries in Latin America embraced an involutory path, with Mexico being caught in the “maquiladora” trap, the other countries in the South Asian region having remained mainly agrarian (Pakistan) or developed only light industrialization (Bangladesh) (ZAIDI, 2004; MILAM, 2009). They remain underdeveloped, dependent and peripheral.

China poses more complex problems. Nolan (2004), for instance, observed that China is in fact, despite its size, a backward, underdeveloped country, increasingly dependent, and faces tremendous challenges for its development. Others authors stress the push for development of the Chinese economy, its build-up of more sophisticated industrial products, as well as its embrace of network forms of production, including alliances with transnationals, which have been in the forefront of recent advanced economic developments everywhere. This is true in particular in the information technology industries, which Evans (1995, p. 7-11) pointed out as the sector from which a “conspiracy for development” might gather strength and where the relative fortunes of Korea and Taiwan were made, indeed. Others still stress China’s great autonomy in relation in particular to the US. Although development is now the key theme of Chinese life, and China’s present and future remain rather controversial, most would not deny that it may become a main – that is, a “central” – economy in the next decades, for some even dislocating the US as the most powerful country in the world, which is likely to be a very far-fetched view (NAUGHTON, 2007; ARRIGHI, 2007; MACNALLY, 2008; BRANDT; RAWSKI, 2008).

In contrast, other former socialist economies traverse the opposite route. Russia, which world-system theorists have considered in any case, as always, a semiperipheral country, has been stuck in

this rank, despite efforts to move forward: all indicators, especially, it could be argued, its backwardness in terms of technological innovation, bog it down in a less favourable position than its leadership might desire (LANDE, 2009).⁴ In Eastern Europe, in turn, many differences emerged. Some countries, especially in the Visegrad region (Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, the Check Republic), managed to thrive to a considerable extent, becoming however dependent on foreign corporations, seemingly advancing perhaps close to a central position, in any case maintaining a semiperipheral one. Most other countries, such as Estonia, have been turned into big “sweat shops” and export-platforms for transnationals aiming at the West European market, with very little internal differentiation (BOHLE; GRESKOVITS, 2007).

In all these cases of course path dependence counts a lot. The situation in which these countries faced the new phase of capitalist accumulation and, more generally, “modernity”, which begun basically in the 1990s, namely, their degree of previous development, as in fact indicated by Cardoso (2009, p. 300-315) as to Latin America, has been crucial for their further development. In addition, however, the internal coalitions, different political systems, how ruling groups not only agree among themselves but also bring along the population in a “hegemonic” project, cultural traits, the sum of which result then in their distinct options, is pivotal. It answers for what could be called distinct and contingent “modernizing moves” (more or less centered, that is, with a clearer or less clear intentionality and direction course), which are responsible for the specific forms and

⁴ Along with, but against too, Wallerstein, who stated that the semiperiphery is merely a transitory position (to the center or the periphery), Lande, with reference to Russia, stresses that it is also a fixed one. It would probably be better to look at the issue in a more open perspective: the semiperiphery might be then seen as usually very stable, but allowing for a lot of dynamic change.

contents that development – or lack thereof – has assumed in all of them. China in particular seems to be taking advantage of a number of propitious elements, but these have been politically mobilized, even though its future remains open, due to its internal dynamic as well as to its relations with the outside world.

Be that as it may, these new questions do not by any means turn the framework of *DDLA* obsolete, although they require more subtlety indeed, as Cardoso (2009, p. 296) himself demands, considerable updating. This is true in both theoretical and methodological terms. Very much heir to classical political economy, via the old ECLA, and Marxism, that book was not really concerned with culture and had not therefore properly made an argument against modernization theory, nor sketched a different theoretical framework in this regard. This may certainly be useful to analyze different developmental paths, without “culturalisms” and, even less, essentialisms – what I have called modernizing moves above replacing the teleology of modernization theory. Greater social complexity, due to internal pluralism and globalizing pressures need to be dealt with too, since they imply, for instance, different social movements and orientations to consumption. More empirically, the global economic situation, rules of global trade, investment and intellectual property, democracy and social mediations between state and society, military power and geopolitical issues, new social movements, human development indexes and social policies, just to name a few, in and outside Latin America, are topics to be tackled in a renewed analysis. In fact, contemporary sociological, political and social theory in general must be brought to bear on such a renewal.

However, *DDLA* is still a vigorous classic, which speaks to the present, not merely as a good exemplar of social science, but as a theoretical statement whose underlying social reality, unfortunately,

has not changed as much as its authors had hoped. New elements in the debate about development must be also addressed, which do not necessarily fit well within this sort of theory as it exists at present, without however losing sight of their main trust, that is, inequality of wealth and power within and between nations, which is the clear consequence of dependency, center-periphery relations and underdevelopment, as well as unequal internal structures.

CONCLUSION

This article has proposed a broader reading of Cardoso and Faletto's 1969 classic, emphasizing some different aspects in relation to the appraisal of one of its authors. That is just natural: a book as important and rich as it is, albeit not very large, allows for different readings and interpretive selections and weights. Beyond that, *DDLA*, although usually absent from discussion about development, appears as a very useful conceptual tool for analyzing the contemporary, globalized world. Its main contributions must, however, as I have tried to show, resume Cardoso's discussion of Latin America, but also pointing to the situation of countries in Asia and Eastern Europe, need to be recovered and more strongly underlined. Political agency is important, but so is the "structural-historical" analysis that the authors provide. In particular Latin America, along with Africa, seems to be far from overcoming the questions and problems that gave rise to dependency analysis and specifically *DDLA*. If internal questions must be addressed, it is also true that the global environment for development must also be challenged, agency returning to the fore, although very careful and clever strategies must be mobilized to accomplish this task.

Democracy in Latin America at least has continuously developed and this may lead to a new breakthrough, whatever other paths to development may be found in other regions. It is impossible to imagine that authoritarian states might be able today to mobilize its populations towards this goal, probably the democratic mobilization of its citizenry being the only way instead to resume such sort of effort. In Brazil, at least development is becoming a more debated issue, concentrating thoughts and energies across political and ideological differences. Latin America may follow suit. Once again, this classical book is may have an important role to play in the debate.

Finally, a word on critique. *DDLA* and its counterparts in dependency theory were very important for the development of critique in Latin America, seeping into other critical approaches elsewhere in the world. Two issues stand out here. The first is that the concept Cardoso and Faletto developed in the book, completed by the idea of semiperiphery, are much more precise, although perhaps less rhetorically effective, than the vague idea of the “global North” and the “global South”. Secondly, this is directly connected to the unequal global power and unequal material conditions that featured in the book’s description and conceptualization of Latin American history, its present and futures prospects. This is so regardless of some ambivalence about the meaning of “dependent development”. It may receive a more positive signal as just the beginning of current “globalization” (CARDOSO, 2009, p. 298-315) recent appraisal, caveats about different possibilities for the several countries in the world notwithstanding) or a more negative one, as for instance especially in the 1979 “post scriptum”, where they stated that socialism alone was the solution to the issues at stake in the book (*DDLA*, p. 216). How to escape the peripheral (or semiperipheral)

predicament they pointed out remains in any event very much a question for Latin America and indeed the whole world. A basis for a critique of modernity as it actually exists remains therefore valid today as it was before, from a peripheral or semiperipheral standpoint. After all freedom, equality, solidarity, and responsibility, at the individual and the collective levels, along with the benefits of material development, were at the heart of the modern project (DOMINGUES, 2002, 2006). They seem to remain so as well as inscribed in the contemporary conscience of the human species.

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ABSTRACT

This article revisits the main thesis of Cardoso and Faletto's classic *Development and Dependency in Latin America*, confronting the re-evaluation Cardoso himself has recently made of the book. It revises and updates some of its theses, relating them to global changes, in variation also with Cardoso's newly found perspective. Development is thereby revisited in the third, contemporary phase of global modernity. The article closes with a brief discussion of critical theory.

KEYWORDS: Cardoso. Development. Global changes. Latin America.

RESUMO

Este artigo revisita a principal tese de Cardoso e Faletto sobre o desenvolvimento e dependência clássicos na América Latina, enfrentando a reavaliação recentemente feita, de Cardoso, do livro. Ele revisa e atualiza algumas das suas teses, relacionando-as às mudanças globais, em variação também com a perspectiva recém encontrada pelo autor. O desenvolvimento revisita na terceira fase contemporânea da modernidade global. O artigo termina com uma breve discussão da teoria crítica.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Cardoso. Desenvolvimento. Mudanças globais. América Latina.