

Latin american economic integration: A preliminary comparative analysis of the contributions of Celso Monteiro Furtado and Ruy Mauro Marini



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ABSTRACT

Since the 1960s, around the ECLAC, there have been several debates and theoretical confrontations, in which relevant themes about Latin America were discussed. Among these, the regional integration, discussed by several authors, stands out. In this way, this paper intends to make a bibliographical review

based on a brief comparative analysis of the contributions of Ruy Mauro Marini and Celso Furtado on the question of regional integration. The research aims, therefore, to consider the divergences and / or convergences of these thinkers, trying to understand how is treated the issue of regional integration while developing their thinking. We will focus here specifically on the study of the works of the authors, for the understanding of this question, those published between the 1960s and the 1990s, problematizing both authors during this period.

Keywords: Regional integration, Latin American Thinking, Center-Periphery, Globalization.

1 INTRODUCTION

The article intends to outline a preliminary analysis of the thought of Ruy Mauro Marini and Celso Monteiro Furtado about Latin American integration, it is important to emphasize that the research in question is ongoing.

Regionalization today has become the object of controversies and political disputes in all sectors of modern society, particularly in academia, which has led to the emergence of new theoretical questions about this phenomenon in the Social Sciences. Therefore, the understanding of the thought of these authors can bring new answers to these questions and rethink the integration in this conjuncture, adapting even methods of analysis in the face of the structural changes that have occurred in capitalist society since the theme was approached by the academy.

The originality of this research lies in combining these different thinkers whose theoretical framework is opposed with the purpose of reflecting on macroeconomic policies in Latin America.

The pertinence, therefore, of this study is even greater when we consider the terms of the strategic international relations developed by Brazil with its neighbors, although here the work does not aim to directly analyze the details of Mercosur and Latin American regional integration, the fact is that without the elaboration of these more general questions regarding the reading of these phenomena it would be difficult to directly address such issues, It is through this theoretical basis and with the development of these mediation tools with reality that the importance of this work is demonstrated.



The idea of organizing macro-regional instruments aiming at the economic integration of one or more countries appears around the 50s, however, this was accentuated with the structural changes that reached the foundation of the world economy from the 1980s.

The deepening of global changes, especially with the rise of Ronald Reagan to the U.S. government, made the theorizations apparently distant from reality about political and economic integration begin to materialize gaining relevance in the political scenario of several countries.

The paper does not intend to discuss the various concrete experiences of regional integration carried out in Latin America, such as Mercosul¹. The objective in question is to comparatively analyze the works of Marini and Furtado on this theme.

The grouping of different countries in the same commercial, political and/or economic bloc causes, apart from economic and political strength, provides the growth of excellent results in foreign trade, which in political terms in interactional relations can mean more political strength in world forums or greater bargaining weight in multilateral affairs.

In the current phase of world capitalism it is essential to emphasize that the multiplication of economic blocs is unprecedented, multilateral or bilateral treaties have followed the same trend. Increasing in numbers and becoming alternatives to the expansion of supranational structures.

The integration varies according to the models, so we can talk about integrations to denote plurality of processes, which can be grouped into several types. We can bring together the regional projects whose specific objectives are trade among themselves, or group nation-states in which the proposal goes beyond a mere commercial integration constituting a common market and intends to be a more elaborate political project with supranational bodies.

Latin America developed with the participation of significant investments of foreign capital from the mid-1950s, which led to rapid industrial development in some countries of the region. However, this process implied the deepening of dependence

Integration in Latin America has been the object of study and debates by numerous authors who have focused on the most varied themes about macro-regional economic projects and the new

¹ The Treaty laid the foundations for the constitution of the (Southern Common Market) MERCOSUR, laying the foundations for a new regional policy in Latin American history. In December 2004, Mercosur and the Andean Community of Nations signed a reciprocal status agreement between the associate members establishing the Cuzco Declaration to create the South American Community of Nations. The original name of the union was changed to the current Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) in April 2007. There are several previous experiences such as the First Pan American Conference of 1889 that brought together 18 countries, being renamed in 1910 the Union of the American Republics. Other trade blocs also suggested in this period such as the ABC Pact bringing together Brazil, Argentina and Chile in 1915. In 1947, the Union of American Republics was reconfigured, and the OAS (Organization of American States) was established in its place. In the year 1960 the ALALC (Latin American Free Trade Association) is constituted, the signatories Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay hoped to create a common market in Latin America. In 1980 ALALC was renamed ALADI (Latin American Integration Association). In 1969, the Andean Pact brought together Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia. In 1973, the pact gained its sixth member, Venezuela. The name of the organization was changed in 1996 to CAN (Andean Community of Nations).



perspectives that opened up from globalization with the growth of inter-regional organizations and the strengthening of supranational regulatory frameworks.

Thus, it is intended to address the different perspectives contained in the thought of Ruy Mauro Marini and Furtado about regional integration. This will be done through a comparative analysis in historical perspective with the objective of understanding how the Latin American regional issue is addressed in both and its evolution in the works of these authors.

We will focus on embracing the ideological, political differences and convergences, as well as the economic and historical perspectives between both authors. We will analyze in a brief study the construction of the ideas of the two thinkers, highlighting the views and their changes over time. That is, we will point out some particularities in the respective thoughts, as well as the conceptual and ideological divergences and contextualizing each one historically. We emphasize here that there is no way in this brief introduction to expose the totality of each thought, but that we will point out the necessary bases and the main concepts that guide each thought so that the reader can have the facility for the understanding of both.

1.1 FURTADO AND MARINI: INTERPRETATIONS ON LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

In the current historical moment it is necessary to rescue the thought of Furtado and Marini, two important names of ECLAC and the ² theory of dependence in this discussion, being of notorious relevance the rereading of these progressive authors with the objective of thinking new parameters for the modernization of the theoretical instruments in order to dynamize the macro-regional public policies.

In the present conjuncture old social economic dilemmas represented by economic underdevelopment are presented on a new paradigm through regional integration, globalization has provided productive restructuring on a global scale which had as one of the consequences the increase in commercial competition between nations, which led to increased social inequalities among underdeveloped countries.

The acceleration of this process and the expansion of industrialization worldwide provided the expansion of investments in peripheral countries, these nations in turn encountered difficulties due to the little expansion of local markets, this difficulty caused obstacle to the economic expansion of these countries. In this sense, for Furtado, in the works in which he discusses globalization, he suggests that

² ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations (United Nations), with 44 states and eight non-independent territories as members. In addition to the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC includes Canada, the United States of America, Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Japan. The objective of this organization is the study and promotion of policies for the development of member countries. It is an institution that brought together great names of Latin American developmentalist thought such as the Argentine Raul Prebisch and the Brazilian Celso Monteiro Furtado.



economic integration can be a strategy to face the disadvantages of peripheral countries in the face of the rise of globalization.

Furtado also reiterates that integration can be a way to foster the economic development of peripheral nations, seeing with positivity projects aimed at economic and political union between these countries. Envisioning in this perspective a mechanism for the political and economic emancipation of the peoples of the underdeveloped countries, stressing that this must be, however, done with planning appropriate to the economic realities of the different nations.

One of the main factors responsible for the low effectiveness of investments in many underdeveloped countries is, admittedly, the insufficiency of the size of local markets. As industrial investment diversifies, the problem worsens. [...] The advancement of technology generally takes the form of increasing the minimum economic dimensions of production units. It is therefore natural that consideration has been given to circumventing this obstacle by means of various forms of integration of national economies. (FURTADO, 1983, p. 231).³

The process of economic integration within the world capitalist system from Marini's perspective means the deepening of inequalities for the countries of the periphery for the benefit of the major economic centers, especially the world financial and economic center, the United States, which in turn will have therefore the increase of American political influence around the world to ensure the defense of their economic interests. In his view, the economic expansion of world capitalism was accentuated with the monopolistic process with integrationist tendencies that was expressed with the increase in capital exports. The other industrialized countries were subjected to the penetration of North American investments, becoming centers of capital exporters.

The capitalist logic, which subordinates investment to the expectation of profit, takes these capitals to the regions and sectors that seem most promising. The consequence is, through the repatriation of capital, an increase in the surplus, [...]. The economic frontiers of the United States are thus incessantly expanded, the amalgamation of interests in the countries contained therein intensifies, and it becomes increasingly necessary that, in various ways, the government of Washington extend beyond the territorial limits the protection it affords to its nationals.

[...] The expansion of world capitalism and the accentuation of the monopolistic process kept the integrationist tendency constant, which is expressed today, more obviously, in the intensification of the export of capital. [...].

The other industrialized countries, which, subject to the penetration of U.S. investments, became centers of capital exports [...] (MARINI, 1966, não paginado).

Furtado disagrees with Marini being optimistic about the economic advantages that could be obtained with the development of a macroeconomic project involving a set of underdeveloped countries, because with the improvement of infrastructure, reduction of costs and the gains of scale that be obtained by companies through economic integration, would also take these benefits to the whole population,

³ I'm working with the 1985 edition, but the first edition is from 1967.



The external savings created by agglomeration [...] can be realized in benefits of the company, in which case they entail a reduction in costs. Other times they revert directly to the benefit of the collectivity, not being visible in the industrial costs. [...] the creation of an infrastructure for transport, energy, banking, media, and information services [...] (FURTADO, 1983, p. 232).

According to Marini (1972), the export of capital from the great capitalist centers to the countries of the periphery will result in industrial expansion, intensifying class struggles and increasing the internal contradictions of the capitalist system. In this process countries with important regional relevance, act as subcenters radiating imperialism, serving as political and economic entrepôts between the great powers and the other countries of the periphery, this imperialism expands the social inequalities between the Latin American countries. The solution for Marini lies in the irradiation of the revolutionary process through the Latin American countries, in the union of the Latin American masses against their respective national bourgeoisies arguing that the imperative of building a revolutionary project more than popular, therefore, socialist.

For Marini (1966) the revolutionary process cannot be restricted to a single country, but must be continental, which, in turn, would have as a consequence the Latin American integration itself. The revolutionary process is confused with integration itself. While in his interpretation integration into capitalism would induce the form of sub-imperialism.

[...] The relations between the industrialized countries encourage the process of imperialist integration encourage its own negation. [...] mainly, at the level of relations between these countries and the colonized peoples, [...]. The export of capital to these nations boosts [...] the development of their industrial sector, contributing to create new situations of conflict, from two points of view – internal and external – and to propitiate a crisis that alters the conditions in which this industrialization is processed.

[...] Industrialization translates, in a lagging country, into the sharpening of contradictions of various kinds: between industrial groups and latitudinarian-exporters; between industry and agriculture in the domestic market; between the large rural landowners and the peasantry; and between the business groups and the working class, [...]

[...] an imperialist expansion of Brazil in Latin America, which corresponds [...] to a sub-imperialism or the extension of US imperialism [...] It is in the perspective of this economic and military integration of Latin America, commanded by U.S. imperialism supported by Brazil, that the subsequent evolution of inter-American policy must be considered.

[...] The conjunction of the popular movements of Brazil and the other Latin American countries, that is, the internalization of the Latin American revolution, is, therefore, the counterpart of the process of imperialist integration, [...] (MARINI, 1966, não paginado).

Marini (1972), points out that economic integration within capital has a propensity for imperialism being controlled by the economic centers for the benefit of maintaining the economic system and supporting the reproduction of capital as well as the concentration and centralization of political, economic and military forces.

According to his perception this phenomenon in capitalism is in part the unfolding of the political-economic forces engendered in the center of capitalism that unifies the productive forces of the Latin American countries, characterized by being an imperialist movement that represents the super-exploitation of labor, whose political logic is the domination of the peripheral countries through



the repression and destruction of popular resistance movements, at the same time that the contradictions of this political and macroeconomic system have as an inevitable consequence the irradiation of the Latin American revolution and its own ruin.

The super-exploitation of labour on which imperialism is founded, under the sign of which it seeks to integrate the countries of the region, establishes an arrhythmia between the evolution of the productive forces and the relations of production that allows only the overthrow of the system as a whole, with all that it represents in exploitation. destruction and degradation. [...] [...] the process of imperialist integration⁴ of the systems of production in Latin America [...] if the repression that is carried out here against the revolutionary movements, the more conditions imperialism will tend to prolong its existence against the current of history. Conversely, the generalization of the Latin American revolution tends to destroy the main supports and its victory will represent a death blow. (MARINI, 1972, p. 23).

These striking differences between the two authors were maintained throughout the 80s. However, evidence suggests a gradual convergence between Furtado and Marini from the 90s onwards. The readings about Marini's work show that over the years the author went from an absolute divergence in relation to Furtado's thought to an approximation of it. As the following excerpt demonstrates, the author's thought emphasizes the growing importance of integrated and solidary Latin America from the new political context of the 90s, which are expressed through the global political-economic reconfiguration resulting from the financialization process.

Thus we come to our third question, which refers to the possibility of the existence of an integrated and solidary Latin America in the face of the fields of forces that make up the new world order. We are not only concerned with the emergence of large economic blocs in Europe, in North America, in Asia. We are particularly concerned about the tendencies towards the transformation of the state order, which are present at the global level, which are present at the global level, can definitively balkanize the region, if it does not channel them towards greater integration. (MARINI, 1991, não paginado).

Marini's formulations present a new stage of historical development in the 90s. The analysis of the following fragment also corroborates the hypothesis of an approximation between both authors. For Marini, Mercosur assumes great relevance as a political and economic bloc that opposes itself, whose proposal seeks to be an alternative to a direct policy of collaboration with the hegemonic centers. In addition to emphasizing the importance of assuming the regional projects developed by the countries of Central America, mentioning the initiatives of CARICOM and the Andean Pact.

[...] Mercosur assumes increasing importance at the Latin American level, opposing the political direct understanding with the major centers that develop Chile and Mexico, having led, in the case of the latter, to a process that should end with the signing of a free trade agreement with the bloc constituted by the United States and Canada. Venezuela, for its part, is moving towards greater integration with the Central American countries, to which it has already proposed the formation of a free trade zone, which will undoubtedly be a point of

⁴ Marini uses the idea of "higher integration" to criticize the economic dependence of nations by stating that economic integration is a phenomenon intrinsic to capitalism, this concept of integration differs from integration by economic blocs, but is used by Marini to criticize regional integration within the framework of capitalism.



attraction for the Caribbean community (CARICOM), in addition to seeking the revitalization of the Andean pact and rapprochement with Mercosur. [...]. (MARINI, 1992, p. 143).

As the previous analysis indicated over the years Marini changes his position, if before, the imperative for Latin American integration is the realization of the revolutionary process, now it can be realized within the limits of capitalism. If before integration was seen only as a deepening of the contradictions of the capitalist system, now Marini makes a rereading by considering that even in capitalism integration can take place in various ways, in other words, if it is thought from the countries themselves depend as a way to counter the growing economic harassment and the projects of economic integration that are carried out from the hegemonic centers.

Although it must be emphasized that at no time does Marini abandon the revolutionary premise and supplanting of the capitalist system, even when he considers a certain model of integration between Latin American and Latin American countries in the framework of capitalism to be viable.

2 PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Finally, the preliminary analysis carried out indicated that Marini's thinking has evolved into a more favorable position about regional integration. Obviously, one must consider the fact that the research is still ongoing. However, it is noteworthy that in several fragments analyzed from the work of both authors, as we have shown throughout the text, Marini changes his position, converging with that of Furtado.

It is also important to point out that Marini considers that the process of integration to be carried out within the framework of capitalism between countries, must involve political parties, social movements, trade union organizations having the greatest possible popular participation, while highlighting the importance of society so that integration is not a mere integration between markets, but first of all a political project that embraces the whole of society.

Moreover, it should be noted that although he considers integration within the framework of capitalism to be possible, at no time does the author exclude the supplanting of this system, on the contrary, the revolution remains the way to overcome the contradictions existing in bourgeois society.



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