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Editorial

Editor-in-Chief

Miguel Rocha de Sousa

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José Palmeira

Miguel Ângelo Rodrigues



This new issue of Perspectives tackles the issue of geopolitical strategy, when in a midst of war in Europe, that is the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, these issues have regained particular and utmost importance by the nature of geography and political will and intervention.

The **first article** by Yunus Emre Özigci, named *"On the Phenomenology of War and Peace Studying the Ukrainian Event"*, further explores the philosophical dimension of war and peace in Ukraine. This method by means of applying an ontological approach to Phenomenology, namely using the background from Husserl and Heidegger, tackles this issue and discusses it within an international relations framework. As the author frames in his article: *"The study of war (and of peace) is not exempt from the fundamental problem of the IR theories, which is none other than the act of theorising in a purely intersubjective field that brings serious ontological and temporal problems into the study."* This is a, yet prevalent, and up-to-date important reflection on today's world, amidst the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which is still ongoing.

The **second article**, by Tlhokomelo Rethabile Monethi, about: *"Is Africa ready to join the blockchain revolution? A feasibility study"*, is a clear focused assessment of blockchain technology. This emergent technology mostly applied on crypto-asset markets has led to many stampedes, bursts,

and even collapses. But is yet relevant, as a tool for practice as ledger registry, which might trace all transactions and thus, help on avoiding corruption, and adding value to the public sector service, by becoming more transparent and efficient. This exercise is done by assessing its feasibility within Africa, namely, in Nigeria, South Africa, and the Central African Republic.

The **third article** by Solomon I. Ifejika, studies *"Rising Incidences of Post-Electoral Disputes in Nigeria: Implications for Democracy"*, the post-electoral petitions, due to elections suspected malpractices and electoral disputes. The rule of law in Nigeria, specifically applied to electoral practices and results is scrutinized accordingly. This paper has a clear political science approach, intertwined with legal electoral practice and is worth reading as a particular case study in Africa, Nigeria. The author presents paths to more transparent electoral practices and thus a more stable democracy, with yet less post-electoral petitions.

The **fourth article** by Filipe Silva Fernandes, under the title: *"The civic and political participation of young people in Portugal"*, also presents a political science approach, based upon a questioner untangling the mystery of low political participation and intervention by youngsters.

The results for all EU are known of low political engagement, even with social networks, media, and political rallies and demonstrations. It is

presented that in Portugal youngsters do tend to participate even lower than in the rest of the EU. This result, which does not come as a surprise, might also explain low economic development and low political and civil sentiment and engagement. The results might explain and explore ways to curtail those losses, and bring and foster a clear and higher civil and political engagement in Portugal. This essay might be also relevant to some Mediterranean or Southwest Europe countries.

The **fifth piece** is a book review, by resuming two books in Portuguese: *Gaspar, Carlos*. (2019). "O Regresso da Anarquia: Os Estados Unidos, a Rússia, a China e a Ordem Internacional." And *Gaspar, Carlos*. (2020). "O Mundo de Amanhã". These books are relevant for an established scholar on the field of International Relations.

Thus, from the first article we start from a philosophical/phenomenological view of the IR world on the Ukraine war and peace, then, we approach the issue of technology (blockchain in Africa), also on a relevant yet global IR approach. The other two articles, we have a political science approach, respectively on Nigeria, electoral petitions, and on low youngsters political and civil engagement in Portugal.

So, for all being said, this *Perspectivas* issue, is a journey across the geopolitical world, from Europe, US and Africa, where we all get richer and more acquainted with relevant research in political science, international relations, international law and even economics.

The editorial team.



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Atlantic and the Lusophone space.

Sobre o fenómeno da guerra e da paz Estudo do "evento" ucraniano

On the Phenomenology of War and Peace Studying the Ukrainian Event

Yunus Emre Özigci

Resumo—Os estudos atuais sobre o acontecimento e o fenómeno da guerra (e da paz) reflectem os problemas ontológicos e temporais da teorização das RI, decorrentes da natureza puramente intersubjectiva do campo das RI, da sua falta de âncora de objetividade autónoma em contraste com as ciências positivas e sociais. Como tal, os estudos teóricos neste campo tornam-se processos genéticos, alterando o dado imediato, pré-teórico e intersubjetivo dos fenómenos e acontecimentos das RI nas suas narrativas, de acordo com as suas construções anteriores. No entanto, a fenomenologia, com a intervenção da ontologia fenomenológica onde esta recai na teorização, oferece noções e ferramentas para um acesso e descrição pré-teóricos da imediaticidade intersubjectiva dos mesmos. A fim de delinear um tal estudo, este artigo examina o acontecimento da Guerra da Ucrânia e, através dele, os fenómenos da guerra e da paz. Tenta descrever a sua imediatez pré-teórica e intersubjectiva na sua unidade sintética em termos ontológicos e temporais. Esta tentativa traz à tona uma base descritiva e temporalmente progressiva de dados composta pela referencialidade à intersubjetividade interestatal, às formas interaccionais "dadas" dos actores envolvidos, que formam a unidade sintética do acontecimento (a Guerra Ucraniana e o estado de Paz precedente/próximo) e dos fenómenos relacionados (guerra e paz).

Palavras-Chave — Guerra, Paz, Ucrânia, Rússia, Fenomenologia, Relações internacionais

Abstract—The current studies of the event and the phenomenon of the war (and of the peace) reflect the ontological and -ensuing- temporal problems of the IR theorising, stemming from the IR field's purely intersubjective nature, from its lack of the anchor of self-standing objectivity in contrast to the positive and social sciences. As such, the theory-based studies in the field become genetic processes, altering the immediate, pre-theoretical, intersubjective givenness of the IR phenomena and events within their narratives, in accordance to their preceding constructs. Yet, the phenomenology, with the intervention of the phenomenological ontology where it relapses itself into theorising, offers notions and tools for a pre-theoretical access to and description of the intersubjective immediacy of them. In order to outline such a study, this paper examines the event of the Ukrainian War and through it, the phenomena of the war and the peace. It attempts to describe its pre-theoretical, intersubjective immediacy in its synthetic unity in ontological and temporal terms. This attempt brings forth a descriptive and temporally progressive ground of givenness composed of the referentiality to the interstate intersubjectivity, to the "given" interactional forms of the involved actors, which form the synthetic unity of the event (the Ukrainian War and preceding/ upcoming state of Peace) and of the related phenomena (war and peace).

Keywords — War, Peace, Ukraine, Russia, Phenomenology, International relations.

Submitted—21-05-2023. **Accepted**—27-06-2022.



Key Terms

Givenness: The innerworldly appearance of an event and of the related phenomenon/phenomena-, in pre-theoretical and intersubjective immediacy.

Appresentation: The givenness' inherent, intersubjective and immediate co-presentation of related events, phenomena and temporal states that makes it appear meaningfully as a synthetic unity.

Intersubjectivity: Expansion and "expanded" appearance of objectivity through collective recognition of meanings, entities and phenomena that have otherwise no direct correspondence with the objectivity in the narrow sense.

Mitsein: The Heideggerian depiction of the intersubjectivity as the inherence of the being-with-others to being, the a priori interactional nature of being in contrast to the Husserlian "monadologic intersubjectivity" depicted as "constituted" through communicative processes, the social sciences' intersubjectivity of social/ socio-psychological processes and to the Husserlian "transcendental intersubjectivity" that is mainly "inherited" yet also "product" of the communicative processes.

Mitwelt: The intersubjective world/ environment and the intersubjectivity of the world/ environment as inherent to being-as-Mitsein, lived-in and referred-to in the innerworldliness.

Universal reduction: Putting into perspective the mental acts that form the meaningful appearances of things through bracketing the assumption of the objectivity of the world and of the meanings attached to things, events, phenomena.

Eidetic reduction: Putting into perspective, through bracketing, the given thing's, event's, phenomenon's "generic way of presenting itself".

1 Introduction

As of August 2023, the war in Ukraine has been going on with no immediate prospect of peace. Depending on their nature and the degree of involvement with Russia or Ukraine, the war has also been affecting the non-belligerents and affected by them, with consequences on the general shape of the interstate relations, in other words, the international "system". Eventually this individual event of war shall end in reaching to a state of peace, which will also be related to an individual event, that of the "Russo-Ukrainian peace".

The Russo-Ukrainian War already is and will continue to be, together with the Russo-Ukrainian peace that will ensue it, a forthcoming matter of the IR studies. The well established ways of thought in the field, namely the realist/structural realist, liberal, constructivist and also-post-structuralist schools (and their derivatives) will narrate this war (and peace) in accordance with their already present theoretical grounds and constructs. The narratives of these specific events will substantially differ among themselves, as do these schools' definitions and approaches to the phenomenon of war. The realists/structural realists shall deal with this event on the basis of "objective", even "quantifiable" power-relations, interests or threats¹, or on that of the also -"objective" class -relations/ dialectic in the case of the Marxist realism, and form a causality narrative. The (neo)liberals will approach to the event through the prism of the rationality, the irrationality (of cooperation and of conflict), the interdependence and the lack of it,

1. Be they systemic or reductionist in Waltz' terms. See for example Waltz, Kenneth, *Theory of International Politics*, (Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing 1979); Waltz, Kenneth, *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, (NY: Columbia University Press 2001); Morgenthau, Hans, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, (NY: Alfred A.Knopf 1948); Mearsheimer John J., *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, (W. W. Norton Company, 2014) Gilpin, Robert, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1981). On the perception and balance of threat Walt, Stephen M., *The Origins of Alliance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1990); Power-transition as hegemon-rising power dialectic Organski A.F.K *The War Ledger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1984); Richard Ned Lebow 2010, "The Past and Future of War", *International Relations* 24(3): 243270; For Marxist "realism": Lenin, Vladimir I., *Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, (Martino Fine Books 2011).

the "enabling" or failing normative frameworks including the States' regimes and international institutions². The constructivists shall centre their study on the intersubjectivity as product (and re-product) of communicative/ social (and psycho-social) processes, consequently on the social constructs and narrate the event through perceptions, discourses, identities, social interactions, practises and motivations³. The post-structuralists, on the other hand, shall target these narratives/ meta-narratives, dissect world-views, universal validity assumptions and related discourses through de-centering/ de-constructing and shall build their own alternative, critical after all- "narratives" on their own after all- selected parameters and pre-postulations such as freedom, participation, diversity or antithetically- sovereignty, oppression,

2. See for example Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry 1999, "The Nature and Sources of Liberal International Order", *Review of International Studies* 25(2):179-196; Charles Lipson 1984. "International Cooperation in Economic and Security Affairs", *World Politics*. 37 (1): 123; Keohane Robert, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1984); Nye Joseph S., *The Paradox of American Power* (NY: Oxford University Press 2002); Risse-Kappen, T., *Cooperation Among Democracies: The European Influence on US Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995); also Copeland Dale C., *Economic Interdependence and War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2015), Keohane, R., and Nye. J.S., *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company 1977); Barnett, Michael and Finnemore, Martha, *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2004). In addition, Morgenthau's work needs to be related to the liberal notions as well, as regards regimes, international law and the domestic/ international public opinion therefore values- as restrictive parameters, Morgenthau 1948, op.cit.

3. Wendt Alexander, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999); Onuf Nicholas, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (London: Routledge 1989); Onuf Nicholas, *Making Sense, Making Worlds: Constructivism in Social Theory and International Relations*, (London: Routledge 2013); Also Katzenstein, Peter J., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (NY: Columbia University Press 1996).

violence⁴.

The IR study of the event shall produce as many narratives as there are theoretical grounds, constructs and their derivatives or critics, each being coherent enough with its own grounds.

But the event itself, the Ukrainian War, is *singular*, both ontologically and temporally. As such, it is not bound to the multiplicity of the narratives about itself. In fact, the *self-standing* singularity of the Ukrainian War as event shall constitute a contradiction not only with this multiplicity but also with each individual element of it due to their *common ground* that fundamentally separate them from the event itself. This common ground is theorising, the theoretical attitude, which works against its basic aim of grasping the phenomenon or event when it is pursued in a *purely intersubjective* field of study, such as the IR.

The IR field is purely intersubjective in the sense that its actors, phenomena and events have no direct correspondence in the objectivity, no *self-standing* substance. No one has directly experienced a State, a nation, a war, a border, an international organisation as "themselves". These experiences are mediate, *appresented* by other, concrete, immediate experiences on the ground of an intersubjective attribution of meaning. The IR phenomena and events are thus "given" without an immediate, direct objectivity anchor. As such, the IR field contrasts, not only to the sphere of the positive sciences but also, to an extent, to that of the social sciences. The matters of

the positive sciences are self-standing, objectively present and thus accessible independently from a theoretical construct, at least as possibility. The social sciences, for example the sociology or the socio-psychology, operate *between* the intersubjectivity and the objective reality: They study real, objectively present individuals' groupings in their intersubjective "life" through their communicative processes, motivations, behaviour patterns, and constructs. The self-standing presence of their "subjects" provides the study with an independent "anchor" *approximate* to that of the positive sciences, if not identical.

Consequently, in the fields of the positive and the social sciences, theorising serves its purpose of enabling the study and the grasp of phenomena and events: Given that these are anchored to objectivity in their fashion, therefore independently accessible, the theoretical constructs' validity may be assessed independently against "facts" for the former and "actors/subjects" in the case of the latter. However, in the IR field which lacks such an anchor, where there is but the purely intersubjective *givenness* of phenomena and events without direct correspondence in the objectivity "as themselves" but only appresentation, theorising goes beyond its reason of existence.

The IR theorising approaches the given phenomenon/event such as the war (and peace)/ the Ukrainian War (and peace) from pre-postulates that also replace/ fill the gap of the objectivity anchor. These pre-postulates may be imported from or inspired by other disciplines, as in the examples of constructivism's sociology/ socio-psychology grounds or the realist/ structural realist schools inspiration from microeconomy. Within the IR sphere, these operate differently from their original fields due to the lack of "anchor", form rather a *Weltanschauung* of the researcher, which becomes a genetic ground in the study, as the IR theorising assumes a *genetic, constitutive* function. "Theorising" in the field of the pure intersubjectivity which is relatively immune to the intervention from an independent reality ground but having pre-postulates at the same time as the necessary starting point, alters and reshapes the immediate, intersubjective, pre-theoretical givenness, fits the phenomena and events into the its pre-built theoretical framework in its narrative of them.

4. Ashley R., 1996. "The Achievements of Post-Structuralism", in Smith S., Booth K., Zalewski M, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp240-253; Bartelson J., Teorell J., 2018. "After De-Centering: A New Research Agenda for State Making", in Bartelson J., Hall M., Teorell J., eds., *De-Centering State Making: Comparative and International Perspectives* (Edward Elgar Publishing); E. Jeffrey Popke 2003, "Poststructuralist ethics: subjectivity, responsibility and the space of community", *Progress in Human Geography* 27 (3): 298-316; O'Tuathail, Georaid and Dalby, Simon, eds., *Rethinking Geopolitics*, (New York: Routledge 1998); Chris Brown 1994, "Turtles All the Way Down: Anti-Foundationalism, Critical Theory and International Relations", *Millennium* 23 (2): 213-236; Der Derian, James, *Critical Practices in International Theory* (London: Routledge 2008), pp188-207 on the "eternal return of ethics in IR"; Der Derian, James. and Shapiro, Michael, *International/ Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (Lexington Books 1989); Bartelson, Jens, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995).

In other words, it approaches to the phenomena and events as malleable material, which brings ontological and temporal complications into the study. The genetic function, therefore the ontological complication of the IR theorising is related to defining the coming-into-being of the phenomena and events in accordance with its preceding, *a priori* ground in contrast to the innerworldly, pre-theoretical givenness of them. Its temporal complication stems from the accomplishment of this genetic narrative. Once formed, for the theoretical approach's consistency, it must be carried upon the *immediacy* of the phenomenon or event at hand, therefore upon its *post-genetic* givenness which is not necessarily identical to its genetic narrative. It therefore temporally distorts the immediacy of the givenness in reference to the narrative of its *past* coming-into-being. The multiplicity of the IR theories and their narratives stems from the *multiplicity* of these pre-postulations and ensuing narratives related to the *singularity* of the immediate, pre-theoretical, intersubjective givenness of the IR phenomena and events, with their ontological and temporal complications of the same nature.

But is there a way of meaningfully studying the IR phenomena and events, here the Ukrainian war (and peace), in their intersubjective, immediate, pre-theoretical givenness? In other words, is it possible to conduct an IR study without theorising (or de-centering with the same effect), therefore without ontological and temporal complications? Phenomenology promises this *in general* and the first sub-section of this paper will be reserved to debate the "reductions" as the method it proposes, to be able to reach to the eidetic "irreducibles" of the givenness to be studied. The second sub-section shall propose an outline for the phenomenological description of the givenness on this basis, "as it appears" in a synthetic unity on its proper ontological and temporal meaning grounds. There the Husserlian phenomenology's understanding of intersubjectivity which "relapses" into a genetic description as well as its depiction of temporal states as egologically (and artificially) divided to the detriment of the givenness in its synthetic unity shall also be debated through the prism of the Heideggerian phenomenological ontology. Here, the Heideggerian understanding of

the intersubjectivity as *Mitsein* and *Mitwelt* shall be proposed and integrated to the study. As to the temporality, the Heideggerian conceptualisation of having-been (with), dwelling-with and to be-with shall be integrated to the otherwise more givenness-centred Husserlian temporal states of *retention-protection* (the actuality), the recollection (the past state) and the *anticipation* (the contingent future state) to express the givenness in its synthetic unity.

2 Studying the War and the Peace

The givenness of war (and peace): Eidetic reduction toward the irreducibles

How are the war and the peace given immediately, pre-theoretically and intersubjectively? How they appear, as events and phenomena, without theoretical interference and alteration? How they may be worked with as they "are", not as a narrative of a theoretical construct (or a theoretical deconstruct) where they constitute rather malleable materials of the theoretical attitude? In Husserlian terms, how the IR study pertaining to the war and the peace may "return to things themselves"⁵?

The endeavour engenders a question of method and a question of form. The question of form shall be dealt with in the following sub-section. The method, on the other hand, is already proposed by phenomenology (assuredly out of the IR field), namely as the universal and eidetic reductions for putting into perspective, the theoretical attitude as attitude, the *Weltanschauung* as *Weltanschauung*, the construct as construct, the narrative as narrative in order to display the phenomena and events "as they appear". The first reduction aims at reaching to the immanence of the "subject" through suspending/ bracketing/ putting into perspective the "naive belief in the world", the "natural attitude" which also encom-

5. Husserl, Edmund, *Logical Investigations*, ed. Dermot Moran. (London: Routledge 2001), p 168

passes the theoretical attitude and constructs⁶-that are issue of the former, in furtherance of the Cartesian doubt. Husserl proposes that in doing so, "nothing is lost"⁷: The sphere of immanence which has in fact everything lived or potentially to be lived, as it is the venue of the intentionality⁸. This "egology", which continued to be controversial in Husserlian thought despite his revision in the *Crisis*⁹, will not be further debated in our context. It is however important to state that at the first glance, the phenomenological/ universal reduction on behalf of the State has no at least immediate- sense since the State is not "ego"but an intersubjectively constituted "entity". Still, it is also of note that the State is "given"and referred-to pre-theoretically as a *simulacrum* of subject, since it "acts"at that immediacy of appearance and only an a *posteriori* theoretical effort "invalidates"this appearance¹⁰. This peculiarity of the constitution of the State unifies, to a degree, the universal reduction with the eidetic reduction, making the former at least partially "valid", yet as part, as content of the latter.

The eidetic reduction is toward the thing's *generic way of presenting itself, its Erscheinen*¹¹ and constitutes our focus in the context of war

6. Husserl, Edmund, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy Ideen I-* (Hague: M. Nijhoff 1983),pp. 5155. This also includes the suspension of the criticism of the "naïve belief", which is inherently attached to it, issue of it, in questioning or even negating. Phenomenology's attitude in bracketing, however, is not predicating or judging, therefore attributing a supplementary content to what already "is". Husserl's emphasis on the "disinterested spectator"(See Michele Averchi 2015, "The Disinterested Spectator: Geiger's and Husserl's Place in the Debate on the Splitting of the Ego", *Studia Phaenomenologica* 15:227-246) applies to this fundamental act of phenomenology, which is the reduction.

7. Husserl, Edmund. *Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy (Ideen I)*, (Indianapolis: Hackett 2014), p91

8. Jacques Taminiaux, "Immanence, Transcendence, and Being in Husserl's Idea of Phenomenology" in Sallis, J.C., Moneta, G., Taminiaux, J., eds, *The Collegium Phaenomenologicum. The First Ten Years*, *Phaenomenologica*, vol 105, (Dordrecht: Springer 1988), pp. 4776.

9. Husserl 1970,op.cit., p168 and for a return to "egology", p182.

10. The lived, immediately given meaning of the State-as-subject simulacrum precedes a "mere convenience of expression", which is, as judgment, reflective and therefore a posterior, unlike the reference given to Stein in: Salice A., Schmid, H.B., *The Phenomenological Approach to Social Reality: History, Concepts, Problems*, (Springer Switzerland 2016), pp 2-13

11. Taminiaux 1988,op.cit., p62

and peace. Here, however, it becomes necessary to point out to the distinction between the phenomena and the events of war and peace, between the inauthenticity (being "any"of its kind among its kind in the sense of "generic") in Heideggerian sense and its individuality, which both may be counted as the thing's generic way of presenting itself¹²: An immediate givenness of war and peace-may be reduced to a phenomenon that is its inauthentic state or to its own individuality as specific event. Are we talking of "any"war/peace or, for example, of the "Ukrainian War"and peace? Do we have to talk of "any"war/peace in a reduced state in order to talk of the reduced state of the Ukrainian War? In other words, how the current occurrence in Ukraine is given, individually or "inauthentically"?

Here the answer is "both"and it appears simultaneously with another question, that of the *temporal precedence* in givenness. The experience of the ongoing event in Ukraine consists, in its most immediate and "rawest"form, of a series of occurrences: Declarations of persons on behalf of their States and institutions, movements of military units and materiel, advances and retreats, clashes, bombings, casualties, "fallen"and "retaken"territories. Yet these occurrences appear/ are given meaningfully in reference to/ in appresentation of a meaning ground which is "there"and precedes occurrences. As such, the myriad of occurrences become eidetically reducible to this meaning ground, at the first glance to the phenomenon of war, which is irreducible. As it is, the phenomenon is "inauthentic" in an adaptation of Heidegger¹³. It is "any"war (as the state of "anyone"of the Dasein)". But is that all? Are (or may) for example, the belligerents, the space or the fundamental discord as individuating elements (be)

12. Not "authenticity" in Heideggerian sense of the Dasein's being, since the Dasein is toward its own authenticity in the anticipatory resoluteness and the authenticity always remaining at the anticipatory resoluteness.

13. See Heidegger, Martin, *Being and Time*, (Albany: SUNY 1996), p111; Heidegger, Martin, *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1985), p245: Heidegger depicts inauthenticity in the context of the Dasein. A phenomenon is not Dasein. However, this state of "inauthenticity"also fits in the context of the eidetically reduced "thing", as the depiction of the experience of a specific chair being possible with the experience of the "generic"chair shows (see Taminiaux 1988, op.cit., p62).

suspended, bracketed in this reduction? It is of note that the ongoing war in Ukraine is not given as pure phenomenon but as a specific, individual occurrence with a form and temporality. The series of occurrences that are exemplified above do not appear meaningfully in reference to "any" war but to a specific war. What is, after all, immediately and intersubjectively given in "everydayness", which equates to a pre-theoretical state within the "lifeworld", is not an amorphous phenomenon of war but an individual occurrence, the Ukrainian War. Yet, the individuality of the givenness is meaningful only *with* the phenomenon and the phenomenon may be given in the everydayness only *with* the individual event. In other words, the phenomenon and the individuating elements form a unity that constitutes the "Ukrainian War's generic way of presenting itself", therefore the aim of the eidetic reduction, the irreducibles of the object of the study.

The reduction *ipso facto* puts into perspective the individually attributed *contents* of *not indifferent-spectators*, who elaborate and "enrich" the synthetic unity of the givenness. The horizon to be bracketed not only consists of "everything" *a posteriori* to the immediacy of the givenness, which are the narratives in general sense, but also of the *Weltanschauung* and the theoretical attitude/construct that are *a priori*, in reference to which the givenness is "rearranged" into the narrative.

Until where the reduction is to be performed and where it reaches to the irreducibility of the givenness?

Clausewitz and then Aron seem to have already performed their *tacit* reduction toward the *phenomenon*, by stating that the war is the continuation, the ulterior stage of interstate politics¹⁴, be it a *real* war or an *absolute* war¹⁵. This reduction has been followed by others in the study of war quite matter-of-factly¹⁶. Still, the war and diplomacy (politics) seem to be further reducible to a common denominator, namely to "interstate

interaction" of which they appear as "modes". Yet, this further reduction carries the war (and the peace) out of their given meaning ground. This is similar with furthering the reduction of the experience of a "specific" chair beyond a "generic" chair and toward its material (wood) that does not directly appresent but alters, *denatures* the very meaning ground of it.

The *phenomena* of war and of peace that are reached through the reduction are by nature "amorphous", devoid of concrete content. They however form the meaningful unity of the givenness with irreducible individuating elements. The eidetic reduction is not applied to an idea but to a state of affairs, an occurrence, an event in the everydayness, to something which is immediately, intersubjectively, individually, pre-theoretically given. The reduction, as mentioned above, should not extend to denaturing the givenness itself (as from chair to "wood"). The *residuum*, the *specific* war (and peace) event's "generic way of presenting itself" is that of the direct, immediate, intersubjective and "non-interfered" meaning ground of the event, the meaningful whole of irreducibles in relation to which the multitude of the experienced elements of the event appear (such as declarations, war effort of all kind, actual fighting and so on).

Grounds for a phenomenological description: Intersubjectivity as *Mitsein/Mitwelt*, temporality and appresentation

The reduction therefore constitutes the method to reach to the unity of givenness of the phenomenon and of the individuating elements of the event that is being studied, here the Ukrainian War. By nature, the reduction makes the study *descriptive*, since the bracketing of the theoretical attitude, construct and narrative¹⁷ *ipso facto* puts the explicative effort between the same parentheses.

How to describe a war (and peace) event on its eidetically reduced ground? The description of the war (and peace) event is mainly the description of

14. Von Clausewitz, Carl, *On War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007); Aron, Raymond, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* (Oxon: Routledge 2017).

15. Von Clausewitz 2007, *op.cit.*, pp223-225

16. Szanto, Balazs, *War and International Relations: A Critical Analysis* (Oxon: Routledge 2022), p21;

17. As well as the their "negative" version of the post-structuralism, which is naturally bound to what it "de-centers".

subjects/ State-actors *in their relatedness* to the event, in their being the subjects of the event, in their act of making the event appear. Yet on which ground and with which terminology this relatedness may be described?

The immediate givenness of the State-actor within the field of the IR is that of a simulacrum of a true subject in the *fundamental* state of interaction with "Others". The interaction here is inherent to the actor's being and as such, irreducible¹⁸. As such, the actor meaningfully "is"/ exists *relative* to other actors and vice versa. Consequently, the "Other" is inherent to the actor through interaction as the actor is inherent to the "Others" in the same manner.

The purely intersubjective nature of the IR field resides, as mentioned in the introduction, on its being composed of co-constituted and co-assumed entities and meanings that have no direct correspondence in the objectivity, in total contrast to the sphere of the positive sciences and in *partial* contrast to that of the social sciences. Beyond this *generality*, the *interactional* nature of the intersubjectivity comes forward at this point. The irreducibility of the interaction in the State-actor's being differentiates the intersubjectivity in the IR field from the Husserlian understanding of the intersubjectivity in a similar manner to the case of the constructivist intersubjectivity. Husserl theorises through depicting the "personalities of higher order" (including the State) *genetically* in the *Cartesian Meditations*¹⁹ through social/

18. For the fundamental character of the (interaction with) "Other" to the subject-self, see Husserl's depiction of the experience of the "Other" through encounter, empathy and givenness of the irreducibility of the other to ego/mine-ness: Husserl 1982, op.cit., pp92-105, 108-116; Husserl, Edmund, Sur l'intersubjectivité. Trns. Ed. Depraz N. (Paris: PUF 2001), pp27-29, 63-87, 382-383. The interaction with the Other constitutes the intersubjectivity of the world (and provides the Husserlian egology's solipsism problem with a remedy). As such, it appears as fundamental to the innerworldly existence of the subject. On the other hand, Heidegger defines the interaction with the "Other" as inherent to Dasein in its/ which is being-with/ *Mitsein*, therefore neither as a product of experience nor as a collective (social) act of constituting a common environment which are a posteriori: "Being toward others is not only an autonomous irreducible relation of being, as being-with it already exists within the being of Dasein... Empathy (Einfuehlung) does not first constitute being-with, but is first possible on its basis, and is motivated by the prevailing modes of being-with in their inevitability", Heidegger 1996, op.cit., p117

19. Husserl, Edmund., Cartesian Meditations (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff 1982), the Vth Meditation

communicative processes. Even in his later work the *Crisis*²⁰, his passage to the transcendental intersubjectivity still appears on the ground of the "inherited" product of the communicative processes instead of clearly preceding them, therefore repeats his *theorising*, only with a change in its temporal state.

However, the Heideggerian term of *Mitsein* (being-with) fully expresses this pre-given, inherent-to-being, fundamental nature of the intersubjectivity and separates it from the understanding of produced, a *posteriori* intersubjectivity of the constructivism and of the Husserlian phenomenology²¹.

Secondly, the interaction is possible and meaningful only in a common environment of the entities-in-interaction. The givenness of the intersubjective environment is referential to all State actors-as-*Mitsein*, being an "anchor" that *pre-theoretically* replaces the self-standing objectivity of the world as its simulacrum, like the State-actor's givenness as simulacrum of the true subject. This is approximate to the notions of "international system", "international order", "international community" or "international structure". However, these IR notions reflect their *Weltanschauung*-theoretical attitude-construct-narrative line. They are inherently genetic, therefore prone to theorising's complications. On the other hand and as is with the *Mitsein*, the Heideggerian term of *Mitwelt* fully expresses the givenness of the interstate intersubjectivity as referred-to by every actor-in-*Mitsein*.

The structural realism's polarity terminology is useful for *expressing* the given *Mitwelt*²². The legitimacy of using this terminology *outside* of its (bracketed) theoretical construct but within its original, *pre-theoretical* meaning stems from the structural realism's quite accidental assumption of the pre-theoretical givenness as part "objectivity" before proceeding with its theoretical effort. As is with the realist school's *assumption* of the State-as-actor, the structural realist *references* to

20. Husserl, Edmund, The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. (Northwestern University Press 1970)

21. Heidegger 1985, op.cit., pp238-239; Heidegger 1996, op.cit., pp111-112, p116.

22. Waltz 1979, op.cit., pp129-145, 161-170

multipolarity, bipolarity (and then unipolarity) precede the structural realist theorising, which comes a *posteriori* as definitions and explications. The polarity terms for expressing the *Mitwelt* thus constitute part of the phenomenological description of the war (and peace) event in question.

Yet the *Mitsein(en)* and the *Mitwelt* refer to the substance in the description of the war (and peace) event. The given substance is not *temporally* "isolated", a "dimensionless moment" akin to a "dot" in geometry. It appresents a past and a future that makes its actuality meaningful. *Temporality* is inherent to the pre-theoretical, immediate givenness of the event and as such, it even *precedes* both causality and history which are, in contrast to temporality, *narrated* with the theoretical attitude and thus become *reducible*. The phenomenological description of the substance of the war (and peace) event should therefore be a temporal one. The temporal terminology to be employed here is Husserlian, namely the *retention-protention* and the *anticipation*, yet not without incorporating some proposals of Heidegger on time.

The retention-protention defines the actuality of the experience of something through the unity of its immediate past and immediate future states. Husserl's example to that is a music piece where the individual notes are not grasped self-standingly but as a meaningful whole in *progressive* retention of the last note played and in *protention* of the next note to be played²³. Still, the experience of something "static" / not progressive as to its substance (in contrast to the music piece), for example that of a "chair", is also a retentional-protentional continuity and as such, a givenness as a meaningful synthetic unity. However, this synthetic unity is not necessarily confined to its "actuality". The Husserlian phenomenology's terms "recollection" and "anticipation" express the non-actual elements of the synthetic unity. Yet, how are they incorporated to the actuality to fully and meaningfully form the givenness?

Here, it is difficult to state that Husserl's separation between the retention and the recol-

lection²⁴ is justified in relation with the synthetic unity of the givenness. The recollection may not be an "arbitrary" intentional act of the subject (ego) that is independent from the givenness itself. Not denying the *intentional*²⁵ nature of the act from the subject's perspective, from the angle of the givenness itself, it appears as the givenness' living, immediate retentional-protentional actuality's *appresentation* of contents on a past *horizon*, forming its synthetic unity in the temporal sense. Likewise, the anticipation expresses the givenness' appresentation of its non-immediate future on a *horizon* of contingencies and *not* another independent egological intentional act related to the future²⁶. This horizon cannot not be infinite, since the actuality of the givenness, in appresentation, *ipso facto* determines the extent of contingencies. Here the anticipation appears as the reverse-recollection, the integral part of the retentional-protentional actuality of the givenness on the basis of appresentation. This is also the case when it includes the contingency of the givenness' invalidation/ suppression in positing its temporal and substantial "completion"²⁷.

The past and future temporal appresentations of the givenness may be searched within the substance in its living, immediate actuality. The Heideggerian concepts of *Mitsein* and *Mitwelt*, as related to the givenness, make the horizons of recollection and of anticipation appear in shape. Again not possibly denying intentionality from the subject's perspective, the three Heideggerian temporal states of having-been (with), dwelling-with and to be-with²⁸ bring forward, from the givenness' angle, the appresentation's (as well as

24. Carr, David, *Time, Narrative and History*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1991), p24

25. In the phenomenological sense, expressing the subject's mental processes in relation with the object as intended.

26. Also see *Ibid.*, p.24

27. It is interesting to see this connection within the framework of the Heideggerian anticipatory resoluteness towards authenticity, as a sort of "completion": "Dasein's past must be appropriated for its own authentic future so as to constitute the authentic Self", A. Mansbach, 1991, "Heidegger on the Self, Authenticity and Inauthenticity", *The Jerusalem Philosophical Quarterly* 40:65-91. Still, the terminus cannot necessarily be such a "positive" completion: The invalidation is also a completion and is not a necessarily constant future state as in the case of "authenticity".

28. Heidegger, Martin, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1982), pp266-267

23. Husserl, Edmund, *Leçons pour une phénoménologie de la conscience intime du temps*. (Paris: PUF 1964), pp39-50

intentionality's) inherence to the *Mitsein* and through the *Mitsein*, to the *Mitwelt*. Consequently, the givenness of something in the purely intersubjective field of the IR appears in substance *and* in temporality through the *relatedness* of the *Mitsein(en)* and of the *Mitwelt* to it. These temporal states are still compatible with and *complete* the more *practical* terms of recollection, retention-protection and anticipation. As such, the three Husserlian terms need to be taken beyond their "egological" Husserlian understanding, within the framework of the ontological and temporal synthetic unity of temporality and substance through appresentation and in their inherence to *Mitsein* and *Mitwelt*.

Lastly, there is a need to underline the ontological and temporal unity of the war and the peace in their phenomenological description. Here Clausewitz's statement about the war's being the continuation of politics by other means is of note. It refers, beyond causality, to consecutiveness, to the temporal relationship between the two states of affairs (peace and war). The actual givenness of the war ontologically and temporally appresents the *preceding* and *upcoming* givenness of the peace, as being consecutive to a retained-as-recalled peace and as being toward an anticipatory peace. Through appresentation, the war is given in a synthetic unity with the two states of peace, to which actors-in-*Mitsein(en)* (in their relatedness to the givenness) and the *Mitwelt*-references are inherent.

3 Phenomenology of the Ukrainian War and Peace

On the grounds of the previous section, the study of the Ukrainian war in its synthetic unity with the preceding and the upcoming peace through appresentation, consists of;

- The reduction and the description of the intersubjective reference to *Mitwelt*, including the preceding bipolarity and its transformation into the successive stages of the post-bipolarity. This description is to extend to the actors-in-*Mitsein* as they are related to the current war event within/ according to

the *Mitwelt*. As such, this part expresses the *retentional* elements of the Ukrainian War with the recollectional content as appresented by, integrated to and thus forming the retentional-protection actuality of the event.

- The description of the anticipatory horizon of peace and of the interstate *Mitwelt*, extending to the actors-in-*Mitsein* as they are related to the event, through appresentation of the actuality of the event of the Ukrainian War.

Retentional elements of the Ukrainian War

In February 2022, *Russia invaded Ukraine*. In bracketing all explanation and judgement, all theoretically built a *priori* ground for them, all a *posteriori* narrative that harbours definition, causes/consequences, morality, rationality, justification and so on, *this* appears as the rawest, most immediate expression of the event, the facticity to which everything that is bracketed refers. Yet the pre-theoretical givenness of this specific occurrence does not consist only of the "Russia invaded Ukraine" statement: This facticity *appresents*, also immediately and intersubjectively, its substance and temporality that includes past, actual and future states in a synthetic unity. This appresentative completion of the givenness makes visible the State-actors' *Mitsein as related to it* as well as the *Mitwelt within* and *in reference to which* it meaningfully appears, providing the phenomenological description of this specific event with ground and content.

Let us begin outlining the description of the Ukrainian War by its intersubjective context, the interstate *Mitwelt's* "generic way of presenting itself" in retentional-protection actuality, where the retention is extended to and meaningfully formed by "recollection".

It would probably be correct to start with the early post-bipolarity as the nascence of the continuum toward *this* war. Here the immediate givenness of the early post-bipolarity does not only appresent the passage from the bipolarity to the post-bipolar interstate *Mitwelt* but also takes

its very meaning from it, more like the invalidation of the bipolar *Mitwelt's* givenness. The givenness of the bipolar *Mitwelt* was reducible to a central dialectic of the two poles which the State-actors referred-to in their *Mitsein(en)*, be they pole, aligned or non-aligned²⁹. It is useful to reiterate that here, the use of the polarity terminology to depict the irreducible givenness of the interstate *Mitwelt* pertains to an intersubjective reference. Therefore it does not refer to the a *posteriori* structural realist explanation³⁰, but to the *preceding* structural realist "assumption". The givenness of a central dialectic appresents restricted alignment mobility³¹, therefore restricted policy mobility in State-actors' interactions/*Mitsein*. The referential transformation of the interstate *Mitwelt* was given as the invalidation of this central dialectic³²: The "unipolarity" was narrated on the ground of this invalidation³³. The *invalidation* provides the earlier "post-bipolar" times with meaning ground on which the theoretical attitude built its narratives upon its varying postulations, **such as** the that of "unipolarity" with its material explanations and normative aspects or that of the "multipolarism/polycentrism" with its *antithetic*, critical, reactio-

nary therefore also normative- contents³⁴.

Why the invalidation and not the validation of something constituted the ground reference of the early post-bipolar *Mitwelt*³⁵? Apparently, this givenness presented an inherent "incompleteness", expressible as the cancellation of a thesis without replacing it with something intersubjectively self-evident. Waltz's *earlier* suspicion on the nature of the post-bipolarity indicates this givenness of "incomplete transformation" in a structural realist narrative³⁶. The post-bipolar environment indeed preserved some fundamental elements of the bipolar practices, statuses and structures despite the invalidation of the bipolarity itself. The bipolarity "ended" but not wholly: *Liberum veto* of the P-5 continued in the UN Security Council, the issues of nuclear and conventional arms' balancing remained "bipolar", NATO preserved its original identity (therefore its *potential* opponent) while *creating* new measures against new threats and so on.

The early post-bipolarity thus appeared with inherent contradictions, which reflected on the Russian *Mitsein*. Even very early after the USSR's disintegration and at a time when the westernist "euphoria" in terms of the later Russian "critics" was strong in Russian politics³⁷, Moscow encouraged, supported and protected pro-Russian regimes, factions and on occasion secessionist mo-

29. Non-alignment being meaningful as a reference to the bipolar dialectic.

30. Waltz 1979, op.cit.

31. In contrast to the preceding multipolar *Mitwelt*. See also Sayle T.A., *Enduring Alliance: A History of NATO and the Postwar Global Order*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2019), pp1-17; Waltz 1979, op.cit., pp168, 170-173; De Keersmaeker, Goedele, *Polarity, Balance of Power and International Relations Theory: Post-Cold War and the 19th Century Compared*. (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan 2018), pp16-21

32. With the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and then of the USSR.

33. See Charles Krauthammer 1990/1991, "The Unipolar Moment", *Foreign Affairs*, 70(1):23-33.

34. The widespread and to a degree inconclusive debate on the existence, validity or durability of the unipolarity displays this, while the invalidation of the central dialectic is a given: See, for example, Robert Jervis, "Unipolarity: A Structural Perspective", *World Politics* 2009 61(1):188-213; John Ikenberry, Michael Mastanduno, William C. Wohlforth, "Introduction: Unipolarity, State Behavior and Systemic Consequences", Eds. Ikenberry, Mastanduno, Wohlforth, *International Relations Theory and the Consequences of Unipolarity* (Cambridge University Press 2011), pp1-32; Monteiro, Nuno, *Theory of Unipolar Politics* (Cambridge University Press 2014) Robert A. Pape, "Empire Falls", *The National Interest* 2009 (99):21-34; Christopher Layne, "This Time It's Real: The End of Unipolarity and the Pax Americana", *International Studies Quarterly* 2012(56,1):203-213; Mearsheimer, John J., *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (Yale University Press 2018)

35. For comparison, the passage from multipolarity to bipolarity showed the character of the validation of the latter, with its distinct nature, see also Waltz 1979, op.cit.

36. The bipolarity's continuation in an altered state. Kenneth Waltz 1993, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics", *International Security* (18:2):44-79

37. See for example Tsygankov, Andrei P., *Russia's Foreign Policy Change and Continuity in National Identity*. (Lanham: Rowman Littlefield 2016), pp59-96

vements within the ex-USSR countries which displayed a potential to "adhere" to the "West". This created frozen conflicts in Moldovan, Georgian and arguably Azerbaijani territories³⁸, transformed Belarus into a strongly pro-Russian State and Ukraine into a scene of "dialectic equilibrium" of questionable sustainability between the ethnically/ linguistically defined pro-Russian and pro-Western factions³⁹.

During this period the concept of the "near-abroad" gained substance⁴⁰ as the expression of a sort of "outward-sovereignty" on the newly independent countries, within the meaning framework of the Russia- "West" interactions in political and normative senses. This appeared as a recollected content from the past bipolarity horizon (of the USSR) that was intergrated to the retentional-protentional actuality of the Muscovite *Mitsein*. This appresentation resides on the actual Russian *Mitsein's* reference to the "incompleteness" of the passage from the bipolarity into post-bipolarity. Another example to the same appresentation appears as the Russian stance toward the post-bipolar international conflicts/ Western military interventions, ranging from uneasy neutrality to intense criticism such as in the cases of the Ko-

sovo incident and the Second Iraqi War⁴¹. The interventions were mostly labelled as "unilateral" and were linked to the "unipolarity", therefore to "structural" objections to the post-bipolar state of the international politics on the recollected referential grounds of the bipolarity. It was accompanied by the *reactionary* discourse of multipolarity/ polycentrism which existed *in reference* to the "unipolarity" (therefore not self-standingly) in political and normative senses⁴². Here the Russian counter-proposal to "unipolarity" rather appeared a bipolarity-like, rigid political and normative bipolarisation which was further reinforced through her growing rapprochement with China that displayed the same "concerns"⁴³.

The differences in referring to the "incompleteness" of the early post-bipolar *Mitwelt* were increasingly displayed, through events of the Russo-Western discordance. The successive NATO (and EU) enlargements toward the ex-Warsaw Pact countries (as well as these countries' willingness of integrating to the "West" politically and normatively) clashed with the "Russian near-abroad". The "unilateral/ unipolar" interventions in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Iraq and Libya apparently fuelled the Muscovite appresentation as recollection integrated to the actuality- of the bipolar references including for example arguments pointing at the lack UN Security Council mandate as well as at the dismissal of the Russian interests and positions as a "grand power"⁴⁴. Also, Russia vocally reacted to the normative "penetration" of

38. See Coyle, James J., *Russia's Border Wars and Frozen Conflicts* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan 2018); Jackson, Nicole J., *Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS: Theories, Debates and Actions* (London: Routledge 2003), pp81-139; Ryan Kennedy, 2016. "The Limits of Soft Balancing: The Frozen Conflict in Transnistria and the Challenge to EU and NATO Strategy", *Small Wars Insurgencies* 27(3): 512-537; Nicola Lemay-Hebert N., 2018. "The Frozen Conflict that Turned Hot: Conflicting State-Building Attempts in South Ossetia", *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 5(53): 151-159; Souleimanov, Emil, *Understanding Ethnopolitical Conflict: Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia Wars Reconsidered*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan 2013)

39. As examples, see Kalb, Marvin, *Imperial Gamble: Putin, Ukraine and the New Cold War*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press 2015), p127 as to Kosovo Conflict's influence on the public opinion; Coyle 2018, op.cit., pp42-46 for the Orange Revolution; Vladimir Panitko (Director General) *Kyiv International Institute of Sociology "The Ukraine Presidential Election: Comparing the 2010 and 2004 Exit Polls"*, <https://www.kiis.com.ua/materials/articles/The%20Ukraine%20Presidential%20Election.pdf>; and also, data related to the Ukrainian Census 2001 : <http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua> for a demographic overview of the regions.

40. See Zhao Huasheng for a "pro-near abroad" account: March 2021, <https://valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/russia-and-its-near-abroad-challenges-and-prospect/>

41. See also Zacklin, Ralph, *The United Nations Secretariat and the Use of Force in a Unipolar World: Power v. Principle*, New York: Cambridge University Press 2010), pp91-154

42. See Melville A., Shakhleina T., eds., *Russian Foreign Policy in Transition: Concepts and Realities*, (Budapest: Central European University Press 2005) for the evolution the three "fundamental policy papers" of the Russian Federation (Foreign Policy Concept, Military Doctrine and National Security Concept) from 1993's Foreign Policy Concept onwards; See also Elena Chebankova 2017, "Russia's Idea of the Multipolar World Order", *Post-Soviet Affairs* DOI:10.1080/1060586X.2017.1293394

43. As early as the 1997 "Russian-Chinese Joint Declaration on a Multipolar World and the Establishment of a New International Order": <http://www.lawinfochina.com/display.aspx?id=7131&lib=tax&SearchKeyword=&SearchCKeyword=>; also see Catherine Jones, *China's Challenge to Liberal Norms: The Durability of International Order* (London: Palgrave Macmillan 2018); Ann Kent, *Beyond Compliance: China, International Organizations and Global Security*, (Singapore: Nus Press 2009)

44. See the consecutive versions of the three fundamental policy papers in Melville, Shakhleina, op.cit.

the West into the near-abroad, as during the events of the colour revolutions⁴⁵ and the emergence of the GUAM initiative⁴⁶ which notably included Ukraine, as its inner balance visibly tilted in favour of the pro-Western faction. The Russian reaction did not reach to the level of direct confrontation during this period.

The Russian President's address at the 2007 Munich Security Summit⁴⁷ constituted, at least in hindsight, the referential passage from the early into the late phase of the post-bipolar *Mitwelt*, which has been characterised by the revivification of the bipolar-like Russo-West interactions, in the sense of further increasing the "incompleteness" of the passage to the post-bipolarity (instead of progress toward a completion). There, Putin depicted the Muscovite *Mitsein* in reference to the interstate *Mitwelt* as to Russia's place there and the incompatibility of the Western *Mitsein* with it, underlining the NATO enlargement process into the near-abroad. Except unprecedented clarity, these were not new. However, Putin also announced in no uncertain terms that Russia would take countermeasures in line with what had been depicted, which contrasted to the Muscovite avoidance of direct confrontation until then, including the more than 7 years' of the Putin government.

This "passage" was validated by its audience's partial recognisance of it: Germany and France *de facto* blocked⁴⁸ the grant of MAPs to Ukraine and Georgia at the 2008 Bucharest Summit. During the same year, Moscow effectively displayed the "passage" by militarily crushing the Georgian attempt against the secessionist entity of South Ossetia and by recognising the latter's and Abkhazia's "independences"⁴⁹. The "West"s response was "protest" and relatively insubstantial

45. See Gerlach, Julia, *Color Revolutions in Eurasia* (Cham: Springer 2014); Mitchell, Lincoln A., *The Color Revolutions* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2012); Stent, Angela, *The Limits of Partnership: US-Russian Relations in the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2014), pp97-134

46. <https://guam-organization.org/en/>

47. <http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>

48. And *de jure* "postponed". See James Arbuthnot, 2008. *The Bucharest Summit and the Future of NATO*, *The R.U.S.I. Journal* 153(3):40-44

49. Asmus, Ronald D., *A Little War That Shook The World: Georgia, Russia and the Future of the West* (New York: Palgrave McMillan 2010).

solidarity with Tbilisi. This was followed by the US' initiation of the "Reset" with Russia⁵⁰. In 2010, the Ukrainian "balance" tilted in favour of the pro-Russian faction as Yanukovich won the elections⁵¹.

Yet soon after, the "Arab Spring" soured the "Reset" climate, since the "West"s apparent compliance with the Russian vision of her near-abroad did not extend to that of "matters of international importance"⁵², therefore to the generality of the interstate *Mitwelt*.

In 2014, Ukraine had *another* "revolution" (after her colour revolution) which displayed the contrast between the early and late post-bipolar state of affairs. Kiev had then the necessity to choose between signing the EU Association Agreement and the EAEU Agreement, directly opposing its pro-Russian and pro-Western factions. The pro-Russian government chose the EAEU, the opposition initiated the "Euromaidan" and the government fell⁵³. Russia militarily intervened as she did in Georgia, secured the secessions in Donetsk and Lugansk regions, occupied and then annexed Crimea⁵⁴. The annexation, triggered Western reaction in form of sanctions, which proved to be at best of limited efficiency as the main sectors of the Russian trade with

50. See Stent 2014, op.cit., pp211-234; "US-Russia Relations: "Reset" Fact Sheet" The White House Office of the Press Secretary 24 June 2010, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/us-russia-relations-reset-fact-sheet>; Excerpt: "The Reset that never was", *Foreign Policy* December 9, 2016, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/12/09/the-russian-reset-that-never-was-putin-obama-medvedev-libya-mikhail-zygar-all-the-kremlin-men/>; Karl Roberts 2014, "Détente 2.0? The Meaning of Russia's "Reset" with the United States", *International Studies Perspectives* 15(1):1-18.

51. See D'Anieri, Paul, *Ukraine and Russia: From Civilized Divorce to Uncivil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2019), pp175-210

52. Also see Stent 2014, op.cit., pp235-254; Antonio Perra 2016, "From the Arab Spring to the Damascus Winter: The United States, Russia and the New Cold War", *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* 3(4):1-24 and Alexander Vysotsky 2014, "Russia and the Arab Spring", *Connections* 14(1):41-64

53. D'Anieri 2019, op.cit., pp211-252; Hahn, Gordon, *Russia, the West and the New Cold War* (Jefferson: McFarland and Company 2018), pp177-221

54. See Hahn 2018, op.cit., pp222-285

the "West" were spared⁵⁵. The sanctions and even the limited yet visible NATO's collective defense "recovery" process in the Wales 2014, Warsaw 2016 and Brussels 2018 Summits⁵⁶ did not channel the Russian side to revise its policies. Simultaneously, the Russo-Chinese rapprochement gained momentum as Beijing provided Moscow with secure alternatives of its energy exports and with Chinese capital for the grand projects in the Russian Far-East⁵⁷. The crises provided the late post-bipolar meaning ground of confrontation with more substance.

In 2015, Russia upgraded her support to the Damascene regime to the level of direct military intervention against the opposition supported by the "West", going outside of the near-abroad and into the domain of the "matters of international importance" in force. The Russian intervention practically saved the regime from collapse, balanced the Western influence and then reversed the course of the war⁵⁸.

The late phase of the post-bipolarity may thus be reduced to the following, in relation with the Russia- "West" interactions:

- The Muscovite *Mitsein* becoming gradually confrontational in increased retention of the "bipolarity-references" to the detriment of that of its "invalidation", through

55. Irina Shchetinskaia 2016. "Economic Sanctions against Russia after Crimea: Limitations of Impact", North Carolina State University Journal of International Studies, Vol.6 Spring/Fall; Konstantin A.Kholodilin, Aleksei Netunajev 2019, "Crimea and Punishment: The Impact of Sanctions on Russian Economy and Economies of the Euro Area", Baltic Journal of Economics 19(1):39-51

56. See Burton, Joe, NATO's Durability in a Post-Cold War World, (Albany: SUNY 2018), pp156-166

57. Indra Overland, Gulaikhan Kubayeva, "Did China Bankroll Russia's Annexation of Crimea? The Role of Sino-Russian Energy Relations", in Blakkisrud H., Wilson-Rowe E., eds., Russia's Turn to the East Domestic Policymaking and Regional Cooperation (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan 2018), p100, pp104-111; Helge Blakkisrud, "An Asian Pivot Starts at Home: The Russian Far East in Russian Regional Policy", in Blakkisrud H., Wilson-Rowe E., eds., Russia's Turn to the East Domestic Policymaking and Regional Cooperation (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan 2018), pp11-30

58. See Geukjian, Ohannes, The Russian Military Intervention in Syria (McGill-Queen's University Press 2022); Phillips, Christopher, The Battle for Syria: International Rivalry in the New Middle East (New Haven: Yale University Press 2020), pp213-231

presentation of the incomplete passage.

- "The West"s inconsistencies and inner discordances face to the Russian confrontationality gradually surface, also appresenting the incompleteness of the passage into the post-bipolarity but from a diametrically different angle from Moscow's. Whereas Moscow retained, through appresentation, the preserve "bipolarity-like" part of the incomplete passage, the Western inconsistency shows its retention of rather the bipolarity's "invalidation" part.
- The weakness of the Western reaction validates the Russian confrontational stance as to its anticipatory horizon, appresenting the validity of further moves on the same line. As such and at least to a degree, the late post-bipolarity appears like the *reversal* of the early post-bipolar positions of the "West" and Russia toward each other, when Western advances in the form of NATO/EU enlargements and western normativity-motivated interventions in third countries were being objected but not effectively deterred by Moscow.
- Russia's validated confrontationality spreads from the near-abroad into the generality of the "matters of international importance", gradually altering the more "unipolar" nature of the early post-bipolar *Mitwelt* into a political and normative bipolarisation (with the discourse of multipolarity/polycentrism), attracting actors that are currently or potentially discordant with the "West"s normative and political preponderance.

The Russian *Mitsein* of the late post-bipolarity inherently projected these retentional-potential "irreducibles" of the Russo-"West" relations to its anticipatory horizon. As to the near-abroad, this horizon included the domestication or the neutralisation of the pro-western regimes on the ground of the apparent/"given" weakness of the western reaction until then. With Georgia being relatively isolated

and Moldova being held in arm's length by the "West"⁵⁹, increasing pressure on Kiev appeared as the immediate component of the Russian *Mitsein* as related to the near-abroad (and the relations with the "West" in that context). The war constituted a contingency, among others, on this narrowed horizon.

The said contingency's becoming actual seems to have followed the elimination of other contingencies: Ukraine did not accommodate her attitude to Russian positions on the matters of the occupied Ukrainian territories. She did not step back from its pro-Western foreign policy including NATO/ EU membership aspirations. She continued to reinforce her military. In other words, she did not recognise Russia's anticipatory horizon but "undermined" it with her own. On the other hand, the Russo- "West" relations conduct during the late post-bipolarity did not appresent, as a strong contingency, a forbidding western reaction in the case of "war". It might not be incorrect here to say that, during the months of gradual escalation, the US President's repeated statements which neatly excluded the *possibility* of deploying US troops in Ukraine reinforced the anticipation of the limited/ undetering western reaction⁶⁰.

This, in its turn, seems to have appresented the anticipation of the quick neutralisation of the Ukrainian resistance, with ensuing effects/ meanings related to the near-abroad and to the interstate *Mitwelt* in general, in line with the Russian *Mitsein*.

The anticipatory horizon of the Ukrainian War: The contingencies related to the upcoming peace

As mentioned before, the war is a phenomenon and an event that appears in a synthetic unity with a temporally retained and an anticipated state of peace. In the context of the ongoing Ukrainian War, the upcoming state of peace presents a horizon of differing contingencies, in relation with the individual horizons of the belligerents and of other principal- involving actors. These horizons

at the very beginning of the event have also visibly changed in line with its (temporal) progress and have the potential of changing further.

To begin with the instigator of the war event, during the earlier days of the invasion, the *contents* of the Russian anticipation of the upcoming state of peace were apparently the cessation of the coherent military opposition and the quick decapitation of the Kiev regime, therefore the creation of a Belorussian-like, Russia-friendly government, the Ukrainian political scene's "denazification"⁶¹, the country's demilitarisation or at least, the cancellation of Kiev's anticipations of joining the NATO through the imposition of constitutional neutrality. The Russian discourse on the invasion other than the bilateral-level arguments- had heavy emphasis on the NATO expansion⁶², in line with the post-bipolar Russian *Mitsein* and its so far validated- confrontationality at its later stage. For Ukraine, the initial anticipation of a peace apparently consisted of securing Western aid, stopping the Russian advance or delaying it long enough to reach to a solution other than a total defeat, even including constitutional neutrality or plebiscites in seceded or Russia-annexed Ukrainian territories in 2014⁶³. In this state of affairs, the "West"s earlier anticipatory contents of the state of peace after the first shock which included providing the Ukrainian government with means of asylum, since the fall of Kiev seemed almost inevitable then- appeared to be largely "defensive" in terms of preventing a total collapse in Ukraine. The rapid yet restricted aid to Ukraine, consisting of defensive weaponry or non-lethal military material depending on the contributor

61. To be translated more or less as purge and pacification of anti-Russian elements

62. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/24/putins-speech-declaring-war-on-ukraine-translated-excerpts>

63. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/30/ukraine-offer-neutrality-meaning-constitution-russia-what-does-neutral-status-country-mean-how-would-it-work>; <https://news.sky.com/story/ukraine-war-zelenskyy-says-ukraine-is-willing-to-consider-declaring-neutrality-and-offer-security-guarantees-to-russia-12576688>; <https://www.ft.com/content/7b341e46-d375-4817-be67-802b7fa77ef1>; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dereksaul/2022/03/29/russia-ukraine-talks-ukraine-hints-at-progress-on-crimea-while-both-sides-optimistic-on-putin-zelensky-meeting/?sh=4f806e6e27d3>

59. In terms of NATO and the EU membership aspirations

60. <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/02/24/politics/us-troops-ukraine-russia-nato/index.html>

country, effective sanctioning of Russia⁶⁴ and the acceleration, almost as a reflex, of the political and military "awakening" of the NATO's collective defence identity which had been reluctantly underway since the 2014 Wales Summit⁶⁵ are fitting to this framework.

As regards the Ukrainian *Mitsein*, the anticipatory state of peace was reducible to "survival", mere existence as autonomous entity, including limited restrictions on sovereignty as mentioned above. As regards Russia, the state of peace to be achieved through "victory" transcended Ukraine and extended to a sort of revalidation of a bipolar-like central dialectic, the solid establishment of Russia's "equal counterpart" status with the "West" interlinked with exclusivity/ outward sovereignty in its "near-abroad". In this sense, victory appresented the progress, if not the achievement, of the Russian *Mitsein* in reference to the late stage of the post-bipolar interstate *Mitwelt*.

As regards the "Western" actors, the discourses being bracketed, the initial anticipations related to the war appeared more or less as temporal extensions of their Russian policies of the later post-bipolarity. Newer NATO members of East Europe, in particular Poland and the Baltic Republics⁶⁶ mobilised for stopping Russia in Ukraine or at least guaranteeing their own security through raising substantial NATO commitment, in fact *continuing* to further validate the bipolar-like central dialectic "vision" of Moscow from the "other side". The UK and the US continued with their *relative* determination on display in particular after the 2014 events, as they pioneered sanctioning Russia and helping Ukraine, also "affirming" the bipolar-like central dialectic envisioned by Moscow yet by acting toward its invalidation. The EU-core, in particular Germany, continued with her attitude of *relative* balancing/ *relative* appeasement as adapted to early war circum-

stances, displaying reluctance in *militarily* helping Ukraine and favouring a "diplomatic" solution to the outright invasion.

The progress of the war seems to have altered the anticipatory horizon of these principal actors to an extent, yet not fundamentally. Russia has obviously been failing to reach to its anticipatory positions/ initial war aims. She was defeated on the Kiev and then the Kharkov fronts and forced to withdraw to the borders. She was stopped and partially pushed back in the Southern front, has so far failed to breakthrough in the Donbas front. Still, Ukraine's current counter-offensives have not broken through the existing frontline either.

Currently, the Russian anticipations of peace, in parallel to the narrowing of the frontline, seem to have been changing toward rather "defensive"/ "conservative", even "face-saving" contents, still with recognisance of 2014's and the current war's territorial gains, as they were "annexed"⁶⁷. Ukraine, on the other hand, seems to have let aside her earlier openness to constitutional neutrality and plebiscites in Crimea, Lugansk and Donetsk as the war front was pushed away from her vital areas and the Russian momentum apparently faded. Kiev is currently anticipating a state of peace that would consist of the Ukrainian territorial integrity and a true independence from the Russian "near abroad" which means the annulment of the late post-bipolar *de facto* Russian restrictions on her alignments, more clearly on her westward, NATO (and EU) policies, which had proved to be very much in place as the Bucharest Summit of 2008 and afterward amply showed. In other words, the Ukrainian anticipation of the upcoming peace seems to have transformed from mere survival and limited-independence into independence (also in foreign policy) and territorial integrity, as it had been before the war, yet at the current circumstances, *through* the war⁶⁸.

64. Early in the war: <https://fortune.com/2022/02/28/russia-ukraine-sanctions-economy-timeline/>; for the war-related up-to-date sanctions list: <https://www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/news-insights/latest-news-headlines/sanctions-against-russia-8211-a-timeline-69602559>

65. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_192648.htm; "Ukraine war: Russia demands annexations recognised before talks", 2 December 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-63832151>

66. With the notable exception of Hungary, which also continued with its relatively pro-Russian inclination.

67. <https://www.euronews.com/2022/09/27/occupied-areas-of-ukraine-vote-to-join-russia-in-referendums-branded-a-sham-by-the-west>

68. Reuters' outline of November 2022 about the peace-stances of the two belligerents has not substantially changed as of February 2023: [urlhttps://www.reuters.com/world/europe/what-are-russia-ukraines-positions-talks-end-war-2022-11-30/](https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/what-are-russia-ukraines-positions-talks-end-war-2022-11-30/)

Here the Western actors' anticipatory horizon of peace seem to have been ranging from a state of affairs *partially* validating the Russian *Mitsein* as regards the near-abroad (an acceptable *diplomatic solution*) to the radical transformation of the late post-bipolar *Mitwelt* at least as regards Russia (a Russian defeat). The shaping of this horizon is dynamic, depending on what the progress of the war appresents to the individual Western actor's *Mitsein* as related to the late post-bipolar *Mitwelt*, which would form the future state of the characteristic, ontologically and temporally given inconsistencies among the Western actors. Despite the increased coherence among the Western actors in the war climate, it is still not possible to speak of a reliable collective anticipation - therefore of reliable collective acts-. As immediate examples, Germany's and US' long wavering about and failure in granting adequate numbers of Leopard II and "Abrams" tanks to Ukraine for a decisive offensive not even talking about the grant of an adequate number of fighter planes may be cited. A diplomatic solution through searching a "midway", the exhaustion of the willingness to support Kiev's war effort are still among contingencies and is susceptible to prevail if, for example, the current Ukrainian offensive does not yield results. The statements of the Chief of Staff to NATO Secretary General, though withdrawn, give an indicator to these inconsistencies and their contingent forms⁶⁹.

In short, Russia is now fully engaged into this war and currently she has not been achieving an end compatible with her anticipations, yet she is not being "defeated" or exhausted enough as yet for her horizon of peace be cancelled. The West is not coherent enough to engage further and definitely invalidate, in deeds, the Russian anticipations in instigating the war. Ukraine's preservation and actualisation of her anticipations are dependent on the West's coherence and acts. Still, this appearance of stalemate is not sustainable, as the event of war is ontologically and temporally unsustainable.

But how can the anticipatory horizon of peace be described, in completion of the Ukrainian

War's givenness as a synthetic unity in ontological and temporal senses?

Russia's "failure to win" defines a *part* of contingencies of that horizon. The "failure" may be given in the forms of military rout, war losses' and sanctions' becoming intolerable⁷⁰ or domestic political transformations which would prohibit the continuation of the offensive war. Regardless of form, the failure would equate to the invalidation of Russian *Mitsein's* anticipatory horizon related to the upcoming state of peace. The description of that part of the peace horizon may be outlined as follows:

- Ukraine's "independence" from the pre-war *de facto* restrictions of the post-bipolar *Mitwelt's* late stage, such as those related to her NATO and EU memberships.
- Degradation or disappearance of the "near-abroad" in the sense of the Russian preponderance over most of the ex-USSR countries that is characteristic in particular to the late post-bipolar *Mitwelt*.
- The reversal the late post-bipolar process that has been making Russia an alignment alternative for state-actors in political and normative discordance with the "West".
- Decrease of the post-bipolarity's "incompleteness" of transformation from the bipolarity, through the invalidation of its retentional contents in the Russian *Mitsein*, which are the "preserved" references of the preceding *Mitwelt* as mentioned before.

On the other hand, a Russian "victory" can be reducible to the validation and the furtherance of the Russian *Mitsein* related to the post-bipolar *Mitwelt*. In this sense, other than the total Ukrainian defeat, also a "diplomatic solution" that would actualise some part of the Russian anticipatory horizon would present the same character, with even more validity. Peace through the defeat and surrender of Ukraine might limit the said "validation and furtherance" since the

69. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/nato-ukraine-war-land-stian-jenssen-b1101073.html>

70. Similar to Germany's exhaustion in Autumn 1918

war-induced increase of the Western coherence, NATO's recovery/ mobilisation and heavy sanctions against Russia would probably remain intact. On the other hand, a peace that would consist of Ukraine's constitutional neutrality and cessation of territory, the validation and the furtherance would be more complete, as it would degrade the recently increased coherence among the Western actors and suppress the rationale of the sanctions.

The description of the peace horizon with reference to Russia's "victory" may be outlined as follows:

- Validation of the "near-abroad" as Russia's outward-sovereignty over the ex-USSR countries with the exception of the three Baltic NATO and EU members.
- Validation and furtherance of Russian alignment alternative for State-actors in actual or anticipatory political and normative discordance with the "West".
- Decrease of the post-bipolarity's "incompleteness" of transformation from the bipolarity, through the invalidation of its retentional contents in the Russian *Mitsein*, which are the "preserved" references of the preceding *Mitwelt* as mentioned before.
- Decrease of the post-bipolarity's "incompleteness" of transformation from the bipolarity, through the weakening of its retentional contents in collective Western *Mitsein* that are related to the "invalidation" of the bipolarity's central dialectic, as mentioned before. Therefore, the replacement of the post-bipolarity's "negative" ground by a validation of something, here of a political and normative central dialectic in the interstate *Mitwelt*, possibly in the form of a bipolarised multipolarity, thus effectively ending the "post-bipolar *Mitwelt* in ontological and temporal senses.

4 Conclusion

The study of the war (and of the peace) is not exempt from the fundamental problem of the IR theories, which is none other than the act of theorising in a purely intersubjective field that brings serious ontological and temporal problems into the study. As the IR theorising lacks the anchor of self-standing objectivity in contrast to the positive *and* social sciences, it becomes a genetic process that reshapes the immediate, intersubjective givenness of phenomena and events as "malleable material" and temporally distorts them as it has to impose its genetic narrative upon their post-genetic immediacy. The IR theorising inherently lacks access to the IR phenomena's and events' immediate, pre-theoretical, intersubjective givenness as it "is", as it "appears", as it is "given".

However, there is a possible way for a pre-theoretical, descriptive study of the immediate, intersubjective givenness in the field, with notions and tools for anchoring the study directly to the givenness of the phenomena and events, without pre-postulates, preceding constructs and ensuing narratives that create the said ontological and temporal complications. The Husserlian phenomenology's notions of intersubjectivity, reductions, appresentation and temporal states, *after* their revision through the prism of the Heideggerian phenomenological ontology to remedy their own relapses into the genetic processes of theorising, may enable the researcher to study the IR phenomena and events without distorting them. This paper's first purpose was to outline *the* possibility of a phenomenological study of the IR phenomena and events.

Still, outlining the grounds of such a study is not meaningful without content, without effectively studying a given phenomenon and an event. The notions themselves are not self-standing in the innerworldliness and the method is little different from "rumination" without being expressed "in content". The proposed study's basic notions and its reductive/ descriptive method must be displayed *with* the givenness in order to be meaningfully expressible. In other words, proposing a phenomenological study needs conducting a phenomenological study "of something". This paper took the current and very consequential event of

the ongoing Ukrainian War and its immediate appresentation of the war and peace phenomena as content. It attempted to describe its givenness as synthetic unity in ontological and temporal terms, in its pre-theoretical, intersubjective immediacy and in what it appresents.

The study of the Ukrainian War and related peace gives, through appresentation, a pre-theoretical, pre-causal descriptive ground composed of "inter-appresenting" actors-in-*Mitsein* and of the interstate *Mitwelt* that are reducible to their relatedness to the event and the phenomenon. Here comes forth the temporal progress, in successive phases, of an ontologically discordant/confrontational relationship between Russia on the one side and the "West" on the other, on the ground of the incomplete and invalidation-based (rather than the validation of something) transformation of the bipolar *Mitwelt* into the post-bipolarity. This relationship precedes and appresents its material and discursive forms and contents. The event of the Ukrainian War and peace appear as the manifestation of this relationship in its temporal process and is likely to manifest, as content, its future (and possibly final) form within the upcoming state of peace, which is to give the actors-in-*Mitsein* and the interstate *Mitwelt* in their relatedness to it, in their "new" form. On this anticipatory horizon of the event and through appresentation, of the upcoming descriptive ground of "inter-appresenting" actors-in-*Mitsein* and of the interstate *Mitwelt*, there are two general contingencies that might be conducive to the ontological and temporal achievement/end of the post-bipolarity (and its characteristic "incompleteness") together with the related forms of interstate interactions. The first one is a Russian "victory" with the emergence of a form of bipolarised multipolarity in line with the Russian *Mitsein*. The second one is a Russian "defeat", with the emergence of a form of political/normative "unipolarity" in line with the "Western" *Mitsein*.



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Estará África pronta para aderir à revolução blockchain? Um estudo de viabilidade

Is Africa ready to join the blockchain revolution? A feasibility study

Tlhokomelo Rethabile Monethi

Resumo—Este estudo avalia a disponibilidade dos governos africanos para adotarem a tecnologia de blockchain, que ganhou reconhecimento mundial desde o aparecimento da bitcoin em 2008. O documento analisa se os governos africanos, tendo em conta os seus desafios políticos, económicos e sociais, estão preparados para abraçar a revolução blockchain. A investigação centra-se num estudo de viabilidade de vários países africanos, incluindo a Nigéria, a África do Sul e a República Centro-Africana, utilizando uma abordagem de métodos mistos que combina métodos de análise de dados quantitativos e qualitativos. O autor baseia-se nos quatro elementos interdependentes de um estudo de viabilidade de Jennifer Bridges, que incluem a viabilidade política, a viabilidade económica, as capacidades técnicas e a conformidade legal e regulamentar.

O estudo analisa a forma como a tecnologia de blockchain pode fornecer sistemas transparentes e fiáveis para combater a corrupção e a má gestão nas estruturas governamentais, que contribuem para a má prestação de serviços na região. Além disso, a investigação avalia os potenciais resultados positivos e negativos da implementação de blockchain no desenvolvimento africano, tais como um aumento do investimento direto estrangeiro e da produtividade e uma redução das despesas supérfluas.

Palavras-Chave — 4IR; Tecnologia de blockchain; Governação eletrónica em África; Viabilidade da adoção blockchain; Prestação de serviços públicos.

Abstract—This study assesses the readiness of African governments to adopt blockchain technology, which has gained global recognition since the emergence of bitcoin in 2008. The paper examines whether African governments, given their political, economic, and social challenges, are prepared to embrace the blockchain revolution. The research focuses on a feasibility study of several African countries, including Nigeria, South Africa, and the Central African Republic, using a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods. The author draws on Jennifer Bridges' four interdependent elements of a feasibility study, which include political feasibility, economic feasibility, technical capacities, and legal and regulatory compliance.

The study examines how blockchain technology can provide transparent and reliable systems to combat corruption and mismanagement in government structures, which contribute to poor service delivery in the region. Furthermore, the research evaluates the potential positive and negative outcomes of blockchain implementation on African development, such as an increase in foreign direct investment and productivity, and a reduction in wasteful expenditure.

Keywords — 4IR; Blockchain technology; E-governance in Africa; Feasibility of blockchain adoption in Africa; Public service delivery.

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1 Introduction

Since Satoshi Nakamoto's white paper popularized the digital currency *bitcoin* in 2008, blockchain technology has gained considerable notoriety worldwide. Nakamoto was inspired by Stuart Haber and W. Scott's idea to create a system where document timestamps could not be tampered with (Hayes 2022). Although Nakamoto's blockchain technology gained popularity through its digital currency applications (that is, with cryptocurrency like Bitcoin), the technology has branched into various other usages-including that which forms the subject of this paper. Owing to its secure, cost-effective, and agile digital structures, members of both the private and public sectors have sought to explore how governments could adopt this technology to ameliorate their systems. In the public sphere, many countries, such as Estonia and the United Kingdom, have successfully begun implementing the technology into their systems.

However, for some states, this adoption remains out of scope-even though pressure from local and international actors is *forcing* governments' hand. To this effect, the paper aims to analyse whether African governments-considering their political, economic, and social challenges-could be ready to join the rising blockchain revolution. To do this, the paper employs four, interdependent elements of a feasibility study as outlined by Jennifer Bridges in an article on Project Management (2021).

The first element studies the political (operations) feasibility of implementation. This includes capacity, resources such as human capital, and the governments' goals and objectives; it also includes the users of the technology: the people. Is there a market for the product? How have citizens responded to blockchain technology, whether domestically or globally? The second element is an analysis of states' financial ability to support the technology-that is, the economic feasibility. Provided that the state meets the above two prerequisites, the third analysis looks at the country's technical capacities: materials, skills, necessary

support infrastructure. The fourth analysis explores the domestic and foreign legal and regulatory compliance of blockchain technology and its requirements.

In order to support this investigation, the paper studies how several African countries fare on this possibility 'scale'. The study includes the continent's largest economies, Nigeria and South Africa, as well as the weakest Central African Republic. The research borrows from the Information Technology, Governance, and Developmental Economics schools. This is because the paper will be looking at the economic, social, and political impact that this digital infrastructure has had on development-and, on governments-in the region. This development can be measured in terms of an increase or decrease in statistics: an increase in foreign direct investment and productivity, and a decrease in wasteful expenditure, for example. The research will employ mixed research methods: a quantitative approach, performing statistical analyses to study the extent of development-where there has been; as well as study existing literature on the possible positive or negative consequences of blockchain implementation on African development.

1.1 How ready is Africa for the blockchain revolution?

Before studying the region's readiness for this change, it is important to first explore what a blockchain is. That is, among others, what it aims to do, and how it aims to do it. Simply put, a blockchain is a digital database of information that is distributed among network users. In a typical database, information is stored in a table that could easily be edited. In blockchain technology, on the other hand, this information is stored as a series of 'blocks' that, when full, are linked together chronologically, forming a chain-hence the name 'blockchain' (Hayes 2022). The chronological nature of this linkage guarantees that the information could not be altered; and, the distribution of data creates decentralization, which heightens the authenticity, security, and transparency of information on the chain (Hayes 2022). There are a number of ways to build this chain network. For example, open to public participation; privately governed by an organization

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that controls who has access to the network; permissioned networks in which individuals or groups grant access to the network via invitation; or, where multiple structures maintain a blockchain in consortium, sharing responsibility for activity and access (IBM 2021). It is owing to this structure that different applications of the technology are being explored, like how it could improve government systems.

Public service delivery (or lack thereof) has increasingly been the nexus of citizen dissatisfaction across numerous African countries, as seen through the rampant protests of the last five years (IIAG 2020 in White 2021). In an article on South Africa, Rebone Tau highlights how, in addition to corruption, mismanagement in government structures-stemming from the lack of skills and the proper infrastructure-contributes to poor service delivery (Tau 2021). Luz (2019) adds to this sentiment, positing that corruption from resource revenues (natural or otherwise) and "shady financial dealings" contribute to Africa's stymied economy. Further, the COVID-19 pandemic increased corruption¹ risks in Africa-reflected in the low average Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) score of 32/100 (Seychelles: 70/100, Somalia: 12/100)², with the majority of countries scoring below 50 (Transparency International 2023). This shows stagnant or worsening corruption levels, posing significant threats to global peace and security.

Public and private actors believe that to combat phenomena such as the above-described, African governments need to implement transparent, reliable systems. This is where blockchain technology comes into play. As will be shown in the paper, blockchain's transparency and immutability can help mitigate corrupt practices in various sectors, including land registry and resource management. By doing so, African governments can potentially experience the political and economic benefits discussed herein, fostering development, stability, and prosperity for their nations.

The next four sections analyse the feasibility of

1. For the purposes of this research, corruption is studied through Transparency International's 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI).

2. The numbers on the CPI represent a country's perceived corruption level, ranging from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

implementing blockchain technology in the region, looking through operational (political and social), economic, technical, and legal prisms. Each is discussed, in turn, below.

2 Africa and the blockchain revolution

2.1 *Politics, government, and the operational feasibility of blockchain technology*

Contrary to contemporary belief, the big push for the adoption of blockchain technology in the public sector has not been 'forced onto' developing countries by the Global North-it actually comes from the South (Capici and Kim 2019). In fact, it has been countries of the South that have since set a precedent for blockchain adoption in the sector. To illustrate, in 2017 China became the first country in the world to test a national cryptocurrency: the digital yuan (e-CNY). In 2022, the government ramped up its testing to more Chinese cities; and, its growing success sets it up to challenge the dollar's position as the global currency-especially, considering that China is gearing up to be the world's largest trading partner (Huang 2022).

Since around 2018, African governments have expressed interest in creating government-regulated blockchain-based services-like central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) (Simons 2022). In March 2018, Sierra Leone became the first country in the world to employ blockchain technology to verify votes in their March elections (Perper 2018). Nearly four years later, another African state set a record in the blockchain sphere, with the Central African Republic becoming the first in the region to accept Bitcoin (and other cryptocurrencies) as an official legal tender (Al Jazeera 2022). The Central African Republic is the second country to have made Bitcoin a legal tender: El Salvador, which is also a developing country, made the announcement last year, but rollout has since been hampered by global and local scepticism (Al Jazeera 2022). Regardless, the sentiment remains.

In addition, of the nine countries in the world that have fully launched CBDCs, Nigeria-with its eNaira has become the first and only country in the region to have built one (Rathburn 2022) as at May 2022. Unfortunately, the planning, implementation, and reception of these pro-

jects has been less than ideal. Simons (2022) identifies the issue behind the slow adoption of blockchain-based or digital financial projects as the overreliance on government to be "the bank of the masses". He supports this position by stating that African governments are better at connecting their citizens—that is, creating national infrastructure—than serving them (Simons 2022). This view is paradoxical, considering the service-provision protests alluded to earlier, which highlight governments' inability to do either of these things—i.e., connecting and serving.

Furthermore, to this previous thought, Osei et al. (2021) highlight how Ghana's e-Zwich showed immense promise as Africa's first biometric (digital) payment system, but failed to live up to its potential due to government's poor customer relations. The problem came from having not educated the citizens (the market) on the system, and how it works—even failing to properly market the existence of the product. To elaborate, Ghana's 2018 financial report showed an 8.85% drop in e-Zwich usage from the previous fiscal year due to citizens finding the system to not be user-friendly (Ministry of Finance - Ghana 2018).

Nigeria's eNaira has faced a similar fate. The digital currency has received mixed reception since its launch in October 2021: the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) neglected to properly communicate what the eNaira was, and what it could—and was meant to—do (Benson 2021). This maladministration has resulted in backlash from the public, as well as international actors (an event which will be discussed further in the technical feasibility section). Local and international private actors have stepped forward to aid governments in bridging this service provision gap. Withal, this only raised concerns over control and stewardship (among others)—even though, as Simons (2022) modifies, the notion that government has to be the only actor to advance national policies has become increasingly outdated.

The right to own land is party to UN SDGs 1, 2, 8, and 12. Even so, land is central to conflict in many African countries because of corruption surrounding land and property ownership. To exemplify, every second African citizen in 2013 had been affected somehow by land corruption by government officials (Transparency International

2013). With this, private actors have offered to help governments bridge these service delivery gaps—with mixed results.

On one hand, private real estate firms such as the Land LayBy Group in Kenya have lobbied for widely-accessible blockchain-based land registry records to curb corruption (Mwanza and Wilkins 2018). It is important to note that Kenya, as at 2021, was home to Africa's largest informal settlement of Kibera, with over 250,000 dwellers (Bloxham 2020). Still, as Mwanza and Wilkins (2018) add, the Kenyan government had proven hesitant to allow this adoption. Ghana, on the other hand, succeeded in this regard. To solve Ghana's historically unenforceable and cumbersome land tenure system, the government is working with private blockchain innovator Benben to revolutionize their land-registration system (BigchainDB 2020; Bridges 2021). Ultimately, reducing corruption has significant political impacts, including enhanced public trust in government and institutions, improved political stability, strengthened democratic governance, and more effective governance. Economically, it fosters economic growth by redirecting resources to productive activities and attracting foreign investment. It improves the investment climate, reduces poverty by equitable resource allocation, ensures proper resource management, and enhances infrastructure development by reducing costs and improving quality.

Syed Omer Husain from Input Output Global (IOG) identifies one reason (of many) why African governments have been hesitant to explore the technology. Per Hussain (2020), since blockchain-based projects allow citizens to be in charge of their agency, they would facilitate a shift of power from government back to the people. As an interviewee in Hussain (2020) conveys: "[T]here's no way government is going to let this [blockchain] be disruptive...ceding power requires someone to cede power to, and it's not going to be [to] an algorithm". This tendency to refuse to cede power is particularly true for Africa, where power has often driven state leaders to extreme measures to get and keep it for extended periods of time. Equatorial Guinea's President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo is one such case: by 2022, still, President Mbasogo remains in power in the coun-

try, following his coup d'état in 1979. This makes him the longest serving national leader in the world. Unfortunately, his tenure has been far from stellar: corruption and maladministration in the central African state has come at the expense of his citizens, as shown by a 67% poverty rate as per 2022 (African Development Bank 2023; BTI Transformation Index 2022).

Another reason for governments' hesitation towards blockchain adoption, according to Rao (2018), is that governments could not control nor regulate cryptocurrency owing, in part, to the lack of local and international legislation to that effect. This event is explored deeper in the legal *feasibility* section. Notwithstanding, Hussain (2020) suggests that governments should embrace blockchain technology to reinvigorate trust between governments and their citizens-leaving their fears of the "depolicitization" of services behind.

One way that blockchain technology ensures trust in systems is through a feature called *Smart contracts*. Smart contracts are automated contracts in which the terms between the buyer and seller (or, in this case, citizen and public service provider) are directly written into the blockchain code, which is then distributed along the chain (Frankenfield 2022). This process ensures traceability, authenticity, and security of transactions-factors whose absence from current systems has contributed to the waning trust Africans have in their governments.

Here is one possible use case: in South Africa, only one body-i.e., the parliament-appointed Auditor-General has the power to 'check' government's financial activities. Through blockchain technology, as Dinham (2018) shows, every South African citizen could assume this role, instead of having one body for this oversight function. Cryptocurrencies are transparent because transactions are distributed to new computers (called nodes) every time a new transaction is made, and anybody could track and trace said transactions-and their balances-through specialized platforms such as Maltego (Maltego Technologies 2021). The process is similar to how a customer could track the delivery of their packages through an app or a website. This ability would, in turn, help curb events of wasteful expenditure in the public sector.

An example of such an event is the R480 million (about US\$30.4million) worth of marked Rustenburg Local Municipality vehicles that were bought in 2018, but remain unused (Masungwini 2022). This, Masungwini (2022) continues, despite Rustenburg having one of the worst service delivery records in the country. To further reflect the importance of Africa joining the digital revolution, a 2019 African Development Bank report on the project's potential on the region supports Dinham, Hussain, and Faleg's sentiments. The report also stresses the need for governments to become agile, working with the private sector and development partners to create sustainable development strategies-such as the adoption of blockchain technology-for public service provision (African Development Bank 2019).

There is clearly still a long way to go before African governments could join the blockchain revolution. In some cases, such as with Ghana and Nigeria above, governments have proven keen to explore and adopt the technology. However, unfortunately, even though the will might be there, the means becomes a substantial obstacle. This event is explored below.

2.2 *Economic/financial feasibility*

As reflected in the previous sections, numerous scholars highlight the benefits of introducing blockchain technology into African economies. However, as a region composed of developing and least developed countries, the economic feasibility of this adoption warrants concern.

Although Africa had one of the least shares of global debt in 2019 (i.e., 1.9%), most countries on the continent owed more than their GDP-worth in national debt in the same period (Gold 2021). In 2021, three of Africa's largest economies: Nigeria, Egypt, and South Africa, had GDP-to-debt ratios of 35.7%, 83.2%, and 70%, (FDFA 2021; O'Neill 2021; Kamer 2022; SA Treasury 2022) respectively. The COVID-19 global pandemic-coupled with Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the interest-rate hike by the US Federal Reserve, have further worsened the region's debt crisis. Despite efforts to suspend debt in the region, the figures remain alarmingly high³, thus putting more countries at

3. R9.9 trillion (US\$625 billion) in 2020

risk of defaulting (Gold 2021). More is the operative word in this statement, pointing to the fact that in 2021, Zambia became the first country in Africa to default on its debt during the pandemic era.

From the above statistics, it is clear why the economic feasibility of studying and implementing such revolutionary technology would be subject to analysis. To draw a comparative picture, the table below provides an estimated cost of implementing blockchain technology for a single government project.

Table 1: Estimated cost of one blockchain project per month (Banerjee 2021)

Factor	Freelancer / hour (US\$)	Outsourcing / hour (US\$)
Front-end developers	80,00	70,00
User-interface (UI) Developers	40,00	40,00
Blockchain developers	200,00	200,00
Miscellaneous	2 000,00	1 500,00
Turnaround time (hrs)	50	30
Tools (minimum cost, per month)	1 500,00	1000 ⁴
Hosting	1 000,00	200 ⁵
Native blockchain (Ethereum – ETH ⁶)	1735.20	1735.20
Price for 1 ETH as at June 13th 2023		
Maintenance (as required)	7 000,00	Varies by contractor
Total⁷ (US\$)	24,735.20	7,035.20 + Varies

4. Minimum cost

5. Ibid

6. Smart contracts run on Ethereum's native token ether (ETH).

7. Total = factors per hour x turnaround time. Costs per month, as well as that of 1 ETH and maintenance, have been excluded.

From Table 1 above, it is evident that outsourcing a project would be the most economic option. However, the cost above is for just one project. According to Banerjee (2021), government tasks like record-keeping require Opportunistic Solutions software, which is custom-built to solve very precise problems. This means that each identifiable problem would require its own blockchain project.

Now, considering that record-keeping is a crucial part of every service provider's work, and taking the South African government as an example;

With 128 State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) working across 9 provinces in South Africa (Gov.za 2020), each SOE would require its own record-keeping project in each province. That is:

$$128 \times R156\,426,00 \text{ (US\$ } 9\,300,00 \times 16.82^8) = R\,20\,022\,528,00 \text{ for the first month in one province;}$$

Assuming all 128 SOEs operate in all 9 provinces, it would be

$$R\,20\,022\,528,00 \times 9 = \text{about R}180.2 \text{ million for the first month}$$

Looking at the R480 million wastage by the Rustenburg Local Municipality mentioned earlier, that would be enough to install new record-keeping software in every SOE in every province twice over (R480 million ÷ R180.2 million). That means that the South African government could very well afford blockchain technology—they just have not come around to implementing it. Moreover, the Government had allocated R2.4 billion in February 2022 to "modernize" the country's Information and Communication Technology, so as to accelerate the road to universal connectivity that would accommodate digital technology like blockchain (Odendaal 2022).

Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the data applies to one of Africa's biggest economies. With 10 of the poorest countries in the world hailing from the continent (Ventura 2022), it would be prudent to perform the same study on the opposite end of the GDP spectrum. Cen-

8. USD - ZAR exchange rate as at July 9th 2022

tral African Republic, which-as discussed earlier-recently announced that it will be recognizing cryptocurrency as a national legal tender, is also the fourth-poorest country in the region (Ventura 2022). The Republic's GDP was US\$1.9 billion in 2021 less than 1% of South Africa's US\$276.1 billion (African Development Bank 2022a; African Development Bank 2022b).

Using the same formula employed in South Africa's case: the Central African Republic has about 32 ministries (Anadolu Agency 2021) operating in 16 prefectures.

This means that if we were to assume that every ministry operates in each prefecture; and, assuming that it would cost an upwards of R156 426,00 per blockchain-backed project, government would require, hypothetically;

$R156\,426,00 \times 32 \text{ ministries} = R5\,005\,632,00$
for the first month in one prefecture; and,

$R5 \text{ million} \times 16 \text{ prefectures} = \text{about } R80$
million for the first month.

That would be approximately 4% of the annual GDP spent in just one month. For a country that is already struggling economically-like the Central African Republic-a blockchain project would not be financially feasible; unless, of course, it is implemented gradually over a very long time. Economic improvement, positively, is the reason the government opted to legalize cryptocurrency. According to the CAR's Presidents chief of staff, Reuters (2022) reports, the President supports the Draft Law Governing Cryptocurrency bill because, he believes, it will open up new opportunities for the country, ultimately improving the citizens condition.

Notwithstanding, proponents of blockchain technology in the public sector continue to advocate for the positive impact that its adoption would have on these economies. First, blockchain technology improves access to financial services by allowing access to funds from anywhere in the world-with the added benefit of significantly reduced cross-border transaction costs (Reiff 2021). To illustrate, according to the World Bank (2019, in Gogo 2019), traditional banks charge as much as 10.2% on international transfers, 7%

more than the SDG goal of 3%. Cryptocurrency, on the other hand, presents a less expensive alternative. A Kenya-based exchange called BitPesa, for example, claims to only charge between 1-3% (depending on the cryptocurrency and amount) for international transactions (Gogo 2019).

Domestically, Central Bank Digital Currencies-or CBDCS, as discussed earlier in the paper-would substantially cut financial costs by cutting out middlemen (banks), and the reduced risk that comes from more transparent and secure transactions. This point leads to financial inclusion. Second, with smart contracts, issues with land titling and registration could be solved, as the information is stored in temper-proof blocks. This is important because land is a resource from which all natural resources come, which makes it a crucial element for development (**Encyclopædia Britannica 2019**).

Third, the global push for blockchain adoption has exposed Africa's limited access to digital technologies. To that effect, citizens have resorted to building their own Internet infrastructure in their communities. In war torn northern Uganda, Harrisberg (2021) introduces, a local businessman has created an Internet and phone network to ensure that villagers in the area maintain access to work and studies online.

The blockchain movement could be the key to helping underdeveloped countries bypass traditional, ineffective systems, so as to close developmental gaps (GetSmarter 2022). To elaborate: PwC (2021) predicts a R29,7 trillion (US\$1.86) trillion global economic recovery hike by 2030, as people's trust in the financial system returns. In the same vein, the World Bank (2019, in Gopaldas 2021) estimates a GDP growth of up to 3% for every 10% advancement in technology.

In essence, African states are in evident need of transparent financial systems to revitalize their development. As reflected earlier, corruption is one of the leading causes of the region's stifled economic growth, as wasteful and irregular spending in the public sector that has diminished public trust in the system. Fortunately, blockchain technology offers a solution to this malaise, through its open and secure systems. Alas, though, even if governments have interest in adopting the technology, the means to either study or implement it

are lacking. So, to whether it is financially feasible for Africa to explore blockchain technology in its sectors, it varies between domestic economies.

The sad reality is that a majority of African governments would not be able to afford this exploration. The few that can, are either hesitant or wholly against it: because the existing inefficient system works for them; lack sufficient understanding of the technology; or, are afraid of what it would mean for their hold on power. There are, of course, those who possess both the means and the willingness to explore blockchain technology for public systems. The challenge, as alluded to above, comes from a lack in the technical resources to carry out the technology. This is discussed next.

2.3 *Technical feasibility*

Having analysed the political and economic feasibility of blockchain technology in Africa, this section aims to study its technical feasibility. That is, do African countries have the necessary infrastructure, as well as the necessary skills, to support the technology. According to Faria (2022), four people out of ten in Africa had access to the Internet in December 2021. This is an alarming figure, considering how important the Internet, and digital connectivity in general, has become—especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many aspects of life had to 'go digital' to limit transmission.

Mobile connectivity is also required for blockchain technology. That considered, one of the primary goals for the proposed African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is to work towards inclusive digitalization and subsequent connectivity for Africans (Faleg 2021). In order to meet this goal by 2030, the World Bank (2017, in Faleg 2021) estimates that African governments will require an investment of about R1,5 trillion.

Although slower than the rest of the world, Africa's telecommunications infrastructure has made substantial strides: Jackson (2021) points to a doubling of Internet speeds in the region, coupled with data costs that have nearly halved between 2015 and 2019. Onyango (2021) supports this position, adding that Africa's most technologically advanced countries charge less for 1 GB of data than the global average of US\$4.07

(about R65): South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria charge R45, R36, and R14 respectively. To this previous point, it is important to note, Gopaldas (2021) adds, that Africa's telecommunications sector was able to leap-frog tech development as soon as digital technology became cost-effective. This means that countries were able to move from fixed-line to mobile connectivity all while on near non-existent infrastructure (Gopaldas 2021). Unfortunately, these achievements are still not enough to meet the increasingly growing demand for connectivity in the region. This means that they also fall short of adequately supporting the current technology wave.

To illustrate: the Bank of Ghana introduced the world's first ever biometric money (the e-Zwich) in 2008—through its subsidiary, the Ghana Interbank Payment and Settlement System (GhIPSS). The aim of this innovation was to usher the country into the era of cashless economies, therefore working towards socio-economic development and inclusion (Albrecht-Heider 2020). The project has, however, met considerable technical (and operational) challenges. Osei et al. (2021) highlight, among others, "...connection failure, frequent breakdown of equipment, sluggish service delivery process and long queues..." as challenges to the successful adoption of the technology. As a result, their study found, a drop in e-Zwich usage due, in part, to finding the system inconvenient (Osei et al. 2021). This led to citizens reverting to cash.

It is because of these difficulties that private actors have stepped forward to help governments better roll out their digital projects. German tech organization KfW has partnered with the GhIPSS to improve Ghana's e-Zwich. As a result, other initiatives like the Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP) are starting to use the e-Zwich system (Albrecht-Heider 2020), which also works towards poverty-reduction.

Nigeria's CBDC, the e-Naira, met similar technological challenges. According to Adepotun and Oji (2021), "...the level of digital infrastructure, network reliability, low Internet penetration...", among others, jeopardize the e-Naira's sustainability. On October 26th 2021, several news outlets in and around Nigeria reported a 'sudden' disappearance of the e-Naira's digital wallet from Google's

Play Store. This removal followed immense negative reviews and poor application ratings which, regrettably, the CBN blamed on Nigerians, instead of taking responsibility for the glitches that the users experienced (Abiola 2021).

Evidently, the private sector plays a crucial and continued role in Africa's digital transformation. An estimated 3 300 "tech start-ups" hailed from Nigeria alone in 2020, with South Africa following with 660, and Kenya with 600 (Saleh 2022). In the blockchain space, the South Africa-based cryptocurrency exchange Luno is the largest in Africa, with an estimated 1.5million users across 40 countries (Ogunjuyigbe 2022). Luno is also the first exchange to have a presence in two of Africa's largest economies, Nigeria and South Africa (Ogunjuyigbe 2022). Crypto exchanges work like conventional bureau de changes in that they allow users to buy different currencies. The difference, here, is that one could exchange fiat for cryptocurrency, as well as cryptocurrencies for others.

Although native platforms like Luno exist, Africans can-and do-still use some international exchanges. Binance is the most popular international exchange, and is also the largest exchange in the world as of May 2022, with over 28.5 million users in October 2021 (McGovern 2022). Per Larnyoh (2021) African users on the platform increased by 2000% despite numerous national restrictions-notably, Ghana's Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and, ironically, the Central Bank of Nigeria. In fact, Binance recorded a 114.3% increase in African users in just the period between January and April 2021 (Larnyoh 2021). This shows that Africans are warming up to blockchain technology, that the market exists.

However, there is concern that the skills to self-develop infrastructure is lacking. Pawczuk, Massey and Holdowsky (2019) support this position. They present that a quarter of respondents to their 2018 and 2019 survey on blockchain felt that the lack of in-house skills and understanding on the subject had been a barrier to adoption of the technology (Pawczuk, Massey and Holdowsky 2019). Sawahel (2018), IITPSA (2020), and Kaaru (2020) further highlight the still-inadequate supply of blockchain skills, shifting the lens towards the education sector.

In 2018, there was already a great call for African universities to offer blockchain-related courses and training, as almost half of the global top 50 universities were already providing such (Sawahel 2018). University of Johannesburg (UJ) in South Africa is one of the few learning institutions that offer courses related to blockchain technology (incorporated into their financial engineering course), and cybersecurity (Hawkes 2018). In 2022, the public institution also revealed that it would start offering certificates and degrees secured with blockchain technology to combat results fraud and provide hassle-free credential verification (BusinessTech 2022). This initiative shows that private actors have partnered with public education institutions to bridge the skills and knowledge gap. For example, the partnership between Liquid Intelligent Technologies (or Liquid Tech) with the University of Johannesburg (Hawkes 2018).

Private learning institutions have also championed the blockchain-education movement. For example, Blockchain African Ladies (BAL) is a non-profit educative forum that brings African women together through blockchain education (BAL 2022). The organization has members from Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, Kenya, Ghana, and Uganda, among others (BAL 2022). Other private institutions include South Africa's Vega, and the Red and Yellow Creative School of Business (Terenzi 2018 in Sawahel 2018). The former school offers blockchain courses at tertiary level, while the latter allows students to pay their tuition fees in cryptocurrency (Terenzi 2018). The above paragraphs reveal that there is a skill shortage for the study and adoption of blockchain technology.

Now, the question is: what exactly are these missing skills? Hiremotely, a platform for remote-working recruitment, identifies six of the most essential of these skills. First, a proficient understanding of blockchain technology. That includes what it is, how it works, and what it aims to do. Second, proficiency in at least one programming language-be it C Suite JavaScript, or Python. Some languages are specific to the blockchain project or application for which they are used. For example, Solidarity is specific for Ethereum, and Bitcoin was initially built on C++ (Hiremotely 2022). In addition to these languages, a blockchain

developer must understand how algorithms work, and for what purpose. Fourth, one must have a firm understanding of cryptography (extensive data protection) and other cybersecurity principles. Fifth, experience with distributed, decentralized systems like the blockchain's, as well as in peer-to-peer networking: all blocks are "peers", and this lack of hierarchy rids of central control of information. Lastly, a knowledge of smart contracts is also essential, considering that a lot of projects rely on this automated verification protocol (Hiremotely 2022).

It is, then, in light of this skills gap that researchers like Kaaru highlight the importance of getting the education sector on board. With public and private institutions providing access to relevant learning resources, states can bridge the human capital gap, and, ultimately, lead to the development of appropriate technical infrastructure for blockchain technology in Africa. On the plus side, it should not be difficult for Africa's estimated 716 000 software developers (AfricaNews 2022) to build their blockchain development skills. Notwithstanding, there is considerable potential to use the existing technological skills and mobile infrastructure to develop applications based on blockchain, which make services such as eGovernance, eCommerce, eHealth, and digital finance more secure and reliable.

In a nutshell, although Africa is considerably behind in terms of technological advancement, it shows incredible promise. Technological advancements such as Ghana's e-Zwivhich is the world's first biometric money, and Nigeria's eNaira, support this position. Albeit met with a series of obstacles, these projects have set a precedent for what is possible.

The public sector has proven more than willing to provide both the technology and the technical expertise to support these public projects-especially, considering the strides that actors in this sector have achieved. Case in point, the Luno cryptocurrency exchange, which is the largest in the region; as well as other providers of blockchain-based solutions, who are partnering with the public sector to improve service delivery. A gap in knowledge has inspired the need for such partnerships: a gap that has been attributed to the slowed exploration and adoption of blockchain

technology in the region. Fortunately, learning institutions are beginning to heed the call for formal technical training-a movement that will positively impact Africa's development.

2.4 Legal/regulatory feasibility

In Africa, as with the rest of the world, the blockchain revolution has faced considerable backlash-particularly, concerning the technology's ethical and legal ramifications. To this effect, this section seeks to identify whether Africa is ready to embrace this technological advancement by studying the region's regulatory environment. Owing to its decentralized, transparent, and open properties, one of the main concerns over the adoption of this technology is if-and how-it contravenes with existing domestic and international legislation (GIZ 2019). The financial application of blockchain, in particular, has borne the brunt of legal scrutiny.

Even though blockchain-based systems are neither compatible nor incompatible with regulation (Gakwaya et al. 2020), governments across the globe have been hesitant to accept cryptocurrency because its decentralized nature means that they cannot control it (CEO Today 2022). Therefore, instead of regulating the technology itself, governments have resorted to regulating its applications. This is because certain elements of blockchain technology-notably the requirement of access to personal information and the non-reporting of financial activity-have potentially illegal and unethical uses. Citing these characteristics, as a result, governments have sought means to oversee the technology. These events and (attempts at) regulation follow.

The protection of personal data has become an increasingly important function of governments, and Africa-albeit slowly-is no different. In January 2011, Cape Verde, through the landmark General Legal Framework for the Protection of Personal Data of Natural Persons, became the first country in Africa to have legislated the protection of personal information (Hogan Lovells 2022). To date, Hogan Lovells (2022) continues, 33 countries have followed in these footsteps-with Zambia having enacted legislation to regulate the digital economy in 2021. In the context of Africa's adoption of blockchain technology, it is crucial to consider how

these advancements align with data protection regulations. The continent's model instrument on the protection of personal data and privacy is the 2014 African Union Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection, which only 14 countries, regrettably, had ratified by April 2023 (African Union 2023). Other regional data protection regulations include the 2008 East African Community Framework for Cyberlaws; the 2010 Supplementary Act on Personal Data Protection of the Economic Community of West African States; and, the 2013 Southern African Development Community model law for unified ICT Market policies in sub-Saharan Africa (Gakwaya et al. 2020). However, the challenge lies in harmonising blockchain technology with international data privacy regulations like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). According to Baker McKenzie (2022), many data protection laws in Africa draw inspiration from GDPR, sharing key principles like data subject rights and processing principles. While not identical, these laws align with GDPR to a significant extent⁹, acting as a framework for international data protection. Further, without the proper supporting legislation and frameworks, the adoption of blockchain technology-and any digital infrastructure for that matter-is stalled; and, creates space for illegal and unethical practices. To this effect, Whitehouse (2020) proposes a structured and coordinated Pan-African approach to blockchain regulation, through which the technology's full potential can be realized, and the protection and verification of personal data can be achieved.

Withal, concerns remain-notably, in the apparent impossibility to delete information from a blockchain, which appears to conflict with the right to erasure. The right to erasure, also known as the right to be forgotten, gives an individual the right to request the erasure of their data from databases once the information is no longer required. For example, an applicant can request a company delete their CV from file should their application be unsuccessful. There are very few laws that ex-

PLICITLY recognize the right to erasure on the continent; some existing legislation just allude to it. In South Africa, for instance, the Protection of Personal Information Act of 2020 only calls for deletion of information if it is "...inaccurate, irrelevant, excessive, out-of-date, incomplete, misleading or obtained unlawfully"(Weeks 2013). Kenya's Data Protection Act of 2019, conversely, terms it the right to erasure, and allows for this deletion of information "without delay"(Atamba 2021). It is now possible to see-even if just on the surface-why blockchain technology might be a major area of concern for legislators.

Another regulatory concern for blockchain technology is the non-reporting of financial activity, which legislators feel helps mask financial crimes. To combat financial crimes such as money laundering, fraud, and cyber crime, traditional banks follow KYC (Know Your Customer) processes and Financial Action Task Force (FATF) frameworks (N26 2020). Through these, they identify suspicious accounts and transactions, and then report them to regulatory bodies-usually formed by the government and central bank. Cryptocurrency, on the other hand, is borderless and decentralized, making it difficult for governments to apply local monetary policies to financial transactions-even if they originate from within their borders (CEO Today 2022). Regardless, as mentioned earlier, governments are still exploring ways to regulate aspects of the technology.

One way that governments are doing this, is the establishment of Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs), through which they can issue their own cryptocurrencies (which they can regulate and monitor), and (hopefully) limit other digital currencies (CEO Today 2022). Another way, is through the regulation of blockchain and cryptocurrency applications. A common event in Africa is the move towards the taxation of crypto assets like digital currencies, utility coins, and security tokens. The South African Revenue Service (SARS) for example, regulates these assets in terms of the Income Tax Act 58 of 1962, and the Value-Added Tax Act 89 of 1991 (Ukwueze 2021). This means that interest earned on these assets is treated as income, and transactions made using cryptocurrency are subject to VAT rules. The same case is true for Nigeria, wherein crypto-

9. Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda have data protection laws aligned with GDPR, though with variations. South Africa's POPIA provides broader protection covering natural and juristic persons, unlike GDPR. Mauritius' Data Privacy Act aligns with GDPR, with differing provisions.

currency is regulated by the Personal Income Tax, companies Income Tax, and Value Added Tax Acts. Essentially, blockchain regulation puzzles regulators from developed and developing countries alike. Nevertheless, governments still need more straightforward regulatory strategies.

Proponents of blockchain technology oppose regulation, claiming that the act itself contradicts what the technology stands for. However, advocates of regulation believe that it has more advantages than considered. For one, regulation allows for public protection by decreasing the risk of blockchain investment, and increasing investment by institutions (Wu 2022). For Gailey (2022), regulation provides stability in "a notoriously volatile market", could protect long-term investors, prevent fraudulent activity within the crypto space, and "...provide clear guidance to allow companies to innovate in the crypto economy". As Ukwuze (2021) adds, having an effective and efficient crypto regulation would make it easy to detect the negative criminal applications of blockchain, and provides a source of revenue for governments.

Nevertheless, African governments lack the adequate regulatory structures for these applications. Prinsloo and Henderson (2021) posit that this stalled approach to blockchain regulation has resulted in businesses moving offshore: Luno, for example, is registered in London, with a 'presence' in Singapore. For governments that have shown more positive attitudes toward the technology, strides have been made to reach this regulatory ideal.

One such notable step, is the establishment of sandboxes. Sandboxes are environments in which innovators can test technologies in real-time, while leapfrogging the legal requirements for full adoption (GIZ 2019). The publishing of Kenya's Stakeholders' Consultative Paper on Policy Framework for Implementation of a Regulatory Sandbox to Support Fintech Innovation in the Capital Markets is one such case. Through this initiative, the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) recognizes cryptocurrencies as a capital market-based Fintech innovations (Pavia e Ansaldo 2019). Even though cryptocurrencies remain unregulated in the country, these efforts show that this position might change in the future. Other African countries with regulatory sandboxes are Nigeria,

South Africa, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Mauritius, Ghana, and Mozambique (Ngari 2021; IFWG 2022).

In sum, the legal feasibility of African countries joining the blockchain movement rests firmly on the domestic and regional regulatory environment. One of the main issues with the technology, for regulators, is whether the technology infringes on existing legislation-and if so, how.

Although blockchain technology is not entirely compatible or incompatible with formal regulation, governments that are open to the technology have been exploring ways to regulate the technology's applications-particularly cryptocurrency. For other regulators and legislators, concerns over access and protection of personal information, as well as the non-reporting of financial transaction synonymous with crypto transactions, has influenced the stalled approach to the adoption of the technology. Still, legislation to regulate blockchain technology itself does not exist yet-with governments and regional bodies relying on existing legislation to regulate the technology and its applications.

To meet the global technological advancements halfway, some African governments have developed sandboxes for the controlled testing of technological innovations within their borders. Others are looking to develop CBDCs, so as to create digital currencies they can monitor and regulate against financial crimes. Regulation, according to its advocates, has many advantages, including the protection of citizens against the aforementioned crimes, providing stability of assets, and creating revenue streams for governments that could be used to better their countries. Regardless, proponents of blockchain technology are against regulation. This conflict of positions creates an uncertain environment for blockchain adoption in the region; and, therefore, leaves analysis truly wondering whether Africa is ready to join this technological movement.

3 Conclusion

The fourth industrial revolution has opened up possibilities for the public and private sectors alike to transform their processes. Digital advancements like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and

blockchain technology, in particular, promise avenues to completely revolutionize said processes. Blockchain technology, which is essentially the chronological storage of data in a series of 'blocks'-that in turn secures this data-has provided an alternative to traditional data storage.

In the public sector, blockchain technology has an array of applications that could tackle some of the struggles that African governments face: the decline in the quality of service delivery. Public service delivery (or lack thereof) has increasingly been the nexus of citizen dissatisfaction across numerous African countries. In fact, the big push for the adoption of blockchain technology in the public sector has come from actors in the developing world, who see the potential that the technology has on national socio-economic development, as well as on political processes. To exemplify, some of the biggest strides in the adoption of blockchain technology (and other digital movements) have been made by the developing world: Ghana with the first biometric money (eZwich); Nigeria with one of nine Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs) in the world; Kenya with its accommodating regulatory environment; as well as the Central African Republic-joining Ecuador, another developing state-in allowing the use of cryptocurrencies as national legal tenders.

Although the reception of the technology varies across countries on the continent, the above shows that governments are aware of a gap, and are therefore exploring ways to bridge it. However, that is easier said than done. The purpose of this study, then, was to study how possible (that is, how feasible) it is for Africa to join the global technological movement.

The four facets that are explored: political/operational, economic, technical, and legal feasibilities, seek to determine this readiness in studying, first, whether (and how) African states-and their people-react to blockchain technology. Second, studies whether these African states can afford to implement-or even study-the technology. Even though Africa had one of the least shares of global debt, most countries in the region still owe more than their GDP-worth in national debt. Zambia, for example, made headlines during the global COVID-19 pandemic era, as the first country in the region to default on its debts. A lot more

countries are still facing this grim future. It is, therefore, prudent to see whether the implementation of such expensive technology would be possible, or even advantageous, for these states.

For those who can afford the technology, the issue that arises becomes whether the will for this adoption exists, which also speaks to the political feasibility discussed herein. Where means and the willingness exist, a possible roadblock is the lack of the technical expertise required for adoption. That is, whether African countries possess the technical know-how, as well as the infrastructure necessary to support the technology. This third aspect also revealed worrisome information, including that, amongst others, that only almost a quarter of the African population had access to the internet in December 2021. At least some structures exist to attempt to remedy this problem: the proposed African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), for example, which is to work towards the region's inclusive connectivity and digitalization. Nevertheless, some scholars believe that the continent's current technology infrastructure most likely will not be able to support the blockchain movement not yet, anyway.

The fourth facet, legal feasibility, presents an analysis of whether the African regulatory environment is conducive for technological advancements like blockchain. This area is important owing to the backlash that the technology has faced-particularly, concerning the ethical and legal ramifications that come with some applications of the technology. Although the technology itself is neither compatible nor incompatible with local and international legislation, its financial application of blockchain, in particular, has borne the brunt of legal scrutiny. Notably, the requirement of access to personal information, and the non-reporting of financial activity, which have apparent potentially illegal and unethical applications. The former, because of the protection of personal information that forms part of many domestic and international regulations. The latter's issue arises from the international efforts towards the prevention of financial crimes.

Regulations exist to protect the citizen: since blockchain is decentralized, no one body fully owns (and, therefore, can control) it. In light of these, some governments, like South Africa,

owns (and, therefore, can control) it. In light of these, some governments, like South Africa, have resorted to taxation of digital assets, for example, in an attempt to watch over this financial blockchain application. The lack of explicit regulation in Africa has, unfortunately, resulted in the off-shoring of crypto assets and organizations to countries where such legislation and regulation exists. South Africa's Luno, for example, is registered in London. This negatively affects the South African government, since corporate taxes that would otherwise be paid into the country, are being paid elsewhere.

That said, whether African countries are indeed ready to join the blockchain revolution requires further study. The countries explored in this analysis represent the so-called "best" and "worst" of Africa. In order to perform a more informed study, the research requires looking at the "middle"-which was beyond the scope of this paper. Furthermore, since the technology is still relatively new, its impact on development in the region is yet to be seen, and studied.

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Incidências Crescentes de Disputas Pós-Eleitorais na Nigéria: Implicações para a Democracia

Rising Incidences of Post-Electoral Disputes in Nigeria: Implications for Democracy

Solomon I. Ifejika

Resumo—Desde o regresso da Nigéria ao regime democrático em 1999, o país tem continuado a testemunhar elevadas taxas de petições eleitorais apresentadas nos tribunais de petição eleitoral em todo o país após cada período eleitoral, numa tentativa de resolver disputas eleitorais. Todas as eleições que o país realizou - 2003, 2011, 2015, bem como as eleições gerais mais recentes de 2019 produziram um grande número de petições pós-eleitorais. Este estudo baseia-se nos métodos documentais de recolha de dados e análise de dados. Argumenta que o principal factor responsável por esta situação desfavorável é a debilidade do processo eleitoral e das instituições do país, que abre caminho a irregularidades maciças que tornam os resultados eleitorais incríveis e inaceitáveis, conduzindo assim a disputas e à apresentação de petições em tribunais por parte de candidatos lesados e dos seus partidos políticos. O documento opina que as elevadas incidências predominantes de petições eleitorais a serem testemunhadas na Nigéria na Quarta República são prejudiciais e prejudiciais para a prática democrática do país. Perante isto, o estudo sublinha que a Nigéria necessita de tomar medidas urgentes necessárias para resolver a situação. Consequentemente, sugere que a Nigéria deve reforçar o seu processo eleitoral e as suas instituições para alcançar eleições altamente credíveis, transparentes, livres e justas e aceitáveis em tempos futuros. Isto, na apresentação do estudo, ajudará a reduzir ao mínimo a quantidade de petições relacionadas com as eleições e a evitar os efeitos negativos do fenómeno na democracia do país.

Palavras-Chave — Democracia, Eleições, Petições Eleitorais, Tribunais de Petição Eleitoral, Processo Eleitoral.

Abstract—Since Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999, the country has continued to witness high rates of election petitions filed at election petitions tribunals across the country after each election period, in a bid to resolve electoral disputes. All the elections the country has conducted - 2003, 2011, 2015 as well as the most recent 2019 general elections have produced large numbers of post-election petitions. This study relies on the documentary methods of data collection and data analysis. It argues that the major factor responsible for this unfavorable situation is the weakness of the country's electoral process and institutions, which paves the way for massive irregularities that render elections results incredible and unacceptable, thereby leading to disputes and filing of petitions at tribunals by aggrieved candidates and their political parties. The paper opines that the prevailing high incidences of election petitions being witnessed in Nigeria in the Fourth Republic are unwholesome and inimical to the country's democratic practice. In view of this, the study emphasizes that Nigeria needs to take urgent necessary measures to address the situation. Accordingly, it suggests that Nigeria should strengthen her electoral process and institutions to attain highly credible, transparent, free and fair and acceptable elections in future times. This, in the submission of the study, will help to reduce the spate of elections-related petitions to the barest minimum and avert the negative effects of the phenomenon on the country's democracy.

Keywords — Democracy, Elections, Election Petitions, Election Petition Tribunals, Electoral Process.

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1 Introduction

Election is the heartbeat of democracy. It is the only activity that provides all eligible citizens of a country with ample opportunity to directly participate in decision-making regarding their common political aspirations and wellbeing. Therefore, in all named democracies, elections elicit widespread attention due to the high stakes and interests involved coupled with their resultant effects on peace, governance stability and development of democratic ideals. Impliedly, the conduct of elections is very critical to the consolidation and sustenance of the democratic system, as well as the attainment of overall political maturity in both old and new democracies. In view of this, the administration of electoral procedures in both developed and developing societies is generally considered a sensitive and delicate duty as any observed slight irregularities would readily render the processes incredible, and most likely result in petitions or litigations. However, it is noteworthy, according to the Supreme Court of Nigeria that "elections are hardly ever conducted without some irregularities. No matter how well the regulatory authority conducts an election, there are complaints. These complaints, more often than not, lead to formal election petition filed by losers who are unsatisfied about the outcome of the election" (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2015, p. 17).

The rate or number of post-election disputations in courts is regarded as one important parameter for measuring the pace of democratic development; a democracy is said to have been consolidated if post-election petitions are few (Independent National Electoral Commission, 2015). Elections petition cases do occur in all democracies; however, they can be said to be unarguably more prevalent and pronounced in younger democracies than in older democracies. The underlying reason is that, besides their longer experiences of the practice of democracy, most established democracies, especially in Europe and America have long evolved more transparent, ro-

bust and formidable processes, institutions and mechanisms that enable easy conduct of credible and hitch-free elections. On the other hand, institutions and procedures for election administration in democratizing societies, in particular, those of Africa where democratic practices are yet to be firmly rooted, are still substantively very weak. Consequently, elections are usually characterized by massive irregularities. Disputations arising from these irregularities almost always lead to crises and the filling of petitions in the Elections Petitions Tribunals by aggrieved parties who would normally seek redress and justice through legal means. Thus, post-election periods in most nascent democracies often witness the prevalence of election litigations.

Specifically, with regards to Nigeria, it is undeniable that, "since the return to civil rule in 1999, Nigeria's electoral process has been fraught with rancor and protestations, often giving rise to a plethora of election petition cases" (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2015, p. 17). The magnitude of post-election petitions being witnessed each election year in Nigeria since the dawn of the Fourth Republic has been alarming, vividly indicating that the country's electoral process is still faced with certain fundamental challenges. The contestation of these cases at Election Petitions Tribunals unarguably has overarching consequences for the country's democracy. It is against this backdrop that this paper examines the incidence of high rates of election petitions in Nigeria's Fourth Republic with the view to explaining its implications for country's democratic practices. In terms of scope, the study is limited to election petitions related to presidential and governorship elections Nigeria has conducted since the dawn of the Fourth Republic, including the recent 2019 general elections.

The paper is structured into five separate but complementary sections, with the introductory part as the section one. Section two is a reflection on the post-electoral disputes witnessed in Nigeria during the previous republics. Section three analyzes the high incidence of post-election disputes in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. Section four highlights the implications of the phenomenon for the country's democratic practice, while section five consists of the conclusion and recommendation of

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the study.

2 Reflections on Post-Electoral Disputes in Nigeria during the Previous Republics

Post-election petition is generally known as an attribute of electoral democracy. Hence, it is worthy of note that the phenomenon of election petitions is not the feature of the Fourth Republic alone. Previous Republics in the country had witnessed some notable instances of disputations and contestations related to electoral matters. It may be rightly argued that the trend is more pervasive and outstanding under the current Republic than in preceding Republics in terms of frequency and number of cases, the fact remains however, that all elections held in Nigeria from inception had witnessed post-election petitions cases. Undoubtedly, "as noted by the late President Yar'adua during the inauguration of the Electoral Reform Committee in August 2007, since the 1959 elections, which were the last to be supervised by the colonial authorities, all but one election has had its result contested" (Animashaun, 2010, p. 6).

Thus, a convenient point of departure in this regard would be the December 1959 pre-independence general elections, which was to usher Nigeria into nominal independence on October 1, 1960. One notable thing about the 1959 election was that it featured key regional politicians, namely, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chief Obafemi Awolowo, former premiers of the Eastern and Western regions respectively, who unarguably desired to be the "first prime minister" of independent Nigeria (Akinola, 2015). Both of them, Azikiwe and Awolowo relinquished their premierships to Michael Opara and S. L. Akintola respectively and aimed to go to the federal level in Lagos (Isah, 2019). Their counterpart in the north, Sir, Ahmadu Bello, the then premier of the Northern Region preferred to maintain his position, while his deputy, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, led their political party Northern People Congress (NPC) at the federal level of governance (Akinola, 2015).

The outcomes of the 1959 elections provoked one of the greatest electoral disputes ever witnessed in Nigeria's history, even though there was

no Election Petitions Tribunal in the country as at that time to adjudicate the matters. The results of the elections did not produce clear winners for the offices of Governor-General and Prime Minister respectively (Olaniyi, 2013). Out of a total of 7,628,847 votes cast, with voter turnout of 79.5%, the Action Group (AG) got 1,992,364 (26.1%) but won 73 out of the 312 total seats. The Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) polled 1,922,179 (25.2%) votes and won 134 seats out of the 312 seats, while NCNC won 89 seats (Isah, 2019). From the results, the AG won the highest number of votes but had the least number of seats, while NPC won the highest number of seats but only had simple majority. This development gave rise to horse-trading among the first three political parties, which lingered for months and eventually led to the formation of coalition (Olaniyi, 2013). NPC formed a coalition with five other parties and two independents, having a total of 148 seats. Subsequently, NPC and NCNC formed a coalition government which had Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the Prime Minister of the independent Nigeria while Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was the Governor-General. The AG became the official opposition party in the Federal House of Representatives with Awolowo as the leader, while the party's deputy leader, Chief S. L. Akintola, remained the premier of the Western Region (Isah, 2019).

In the words of Olaniyi (2013, p. 291), "these arrangements however, set the Western Region against the other two Regions (North and East). The divisions lingered on till the collapse of the First Republic". As Isah (2019, para. 7) opines:

Perhaps, with little or absence of avenues to ventilate his grievances, Awolowo took a recourse to self-help. No Election Petition Tribunal was constituted to adjudicate on election disputes, just as the number of seats allocated to the north which was under the grip of the NCP was hurtful and humiliating for Awolowo who strongly believed had the best plan and programs for accelerated transformation and development of the country.

Awolowo acknowledged the precarious position of himself and his party, having been excluded from the National Government. Being dissatisfied with their exclusion from power, some politicians,

led by Akintola, broke-away from the AG and formed the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) under the leadership of Akintola. Constitutional crisis in the region propelled the Federal Parliament to declare a state of emergency in the West, leading to the suspension of the elected Western Regional Assembly, which was later re-constituted following new elections that brought the NNDP into power (Isah, 2019). However, intense cold war persisted between Awolowo and Akintola, and the developments snow-balled into series of political crises in the Western Region which saw the collapse of the Fourth Republic on January 15, 1966 (Olaniyi, 2013).

The Second Republic was also not void of post-election disputes. The first election under the Second Republic, held on August 11, 1979, was notable in this regard. With the publishing of the draft 1979 constitution and lifting of ban on politics on September 21, 1978 by the then Olusegun Obasanjo regime, majority of the First Republic politicians found their footings into the political scene. The parties that contested the election were the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP), Great Nigeria Peoples Party (GNPP), Nigeria Advanced Party (NAP), and Peoples Redemption Party (PRP). Alhaji Shehu Shagari NPN, Azikiwe NPP, Awolowo UPN, Aminu Kanu PRP, and Adamu Waziri GNPP, were the presidential candidates that participated in the election (Isah, 2019b). At the end of the election Shagari polled 5,668,857 votes which represented 33% of the total votes. Awolowo of the UPN had 4,916,651 votes which was 29.18% of the total votes. Azikiwe of the NPP scored 2,822,523 votes constituting 16.75% of the total votes. Aminu Kano of the PRP won 1,732,22 which was 10.28% of the total votes, while Adamu Waziri of the GNPP grabbed 1,686,489 which represented 10.02% of the total votes cast. The election result was disputed by Awolowo and Waziri on the ground that the declared winner, Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the NPN, did not meet the constitutional specification. It is stipulated in Section 125(b) of the 1979 Constitution of Nigeria that, for any candidate to be declared winner of the Presidential Election, the person should have both the majority of votes and at least 25% of votes cast in two-third of the

19 States (Isah, 2019b).

Two-third of 19 states should have translated to mean thirteen (13) states, however, there were no fractions of the States. Notwithstanding, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, having won the highest number of votes cast (5,325,684) in twelve States was declared the winner by the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO), the then country's Election Management Body. In view of this, Shagari was challenged by Awolowo and Waziri who insisted that the election result should be annulled since none of the participants met the constitutional requirement to be declared winner and sworn-in as the President. However, on September 26, 1979, the Supreme Court decided the matter in favour of Alhaji Shehu Shagari (Olaniyi, 2013). In the opinion of Onuoha and Fadakinte (2005, p. 6), the Supreme Court's upholding of the election of Shagari was "a judgment of political stability". This was because they believe that the Court understood that delay in handing over power was capable of resulting in further crisis that might pave the way for another take-over of power by the military (Olaniyi, 2013). According to Isah (2019b, para. 24), "even though the controversy over the outcome of the poll was resolved by the Supreme Court, what constituted two-third of 19 states as stated in that judgment was still in disputes". Be that as it may, the decision of the court prevailed in the long-run. Isah (2019c, para. 2) notes that, "in strict sense of the words, the country began to establish Presidential Election Petition Tribunals and other forms of Tribunals against the backdrop of 1979 general elections".

The second election in the Second Republic the 1983 general elections, also did not escape disputations. The Presidential election was held on August 6, 1983. The then incumbent President, Shehu Shagari (NPN), had defeated his main opponents, Awolowo (UPN) and Azikiwe (NPP) with a wide margin. Out of the total of 25,430,097 votes, Shagari (NPN) scored 12,081,471 votes (47.5%). Obafemi Awolowo (UPN) got 7,907,209 votes (31.2%), while Nnamdi Azikiwe (NPP) polled 3,557,113 votes (14.0%). The candidate of the PRP, Khalifa Hassan Yusuf won 968,974 votes (3.8%). Ibrahim Waziri of GNPP had 643,806 votes (2.5%) and Tunji Braithwaite of the NAP polled 271,524 votes (1.0%). Opponents

dismissed the results as massively rigged in favour of the then ruling NPN, while the party (NPN) termed its victory as 'moon slide' (Isah, 2019b). Besides the Presidential elections, a more serious and notable post-electoral disagreement that was witnessed during the second round of election in the Second Republic followed the announcement of the outcomes of the governorship elections held on August 13, 1983.

The disagreements triggered-off intense crises in some states and led to the death of over 70 people and massive destruction of property. However, the violence was mainly limited to 2 of Nigeria's 19 states, Oyo and Ondo, traditional strongholds of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) (Isah, 2019b). Olaniyi (2013) believes however, that it was the case of Ondo State that most attracted the attention of political analysts. The disagreement arose following the declaration of Chief Akin Omoboriowo, the then Deputy Governor of the State, as the winner of the governorship election, by the country's then electoral umpire, FEDECO. Chief Omoboriowo was alleged to have defeated his boss, the then Governor of the State, Chief Adekunle Ajasin. Chiefs Ajasin and Omoboriowo had emerged victorious in the governorship election that brought them into office under the platform of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) in 1979. Notwithstanding, clashes ensued between the duo when Adekunle Ajasin desired to vie for a second term in office as governor of the state, whereas Chief Omoboriowo argued that Chief Ajasin, had assured him that he would not contest for a second term. But Chief Ajasin denied this claim. Chief Omoboriowo, being the sitting Deputy Governor of the State as at that time then defected to the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) (Olaniyi, 2013).

The NPN was an opposition party in Ondo State, but the ruling party in the centre. Omoboriowo contested the Governorship election under the platform of the party. At the end, the outcome of the election triggered-off serious political violence which resulted in the destruction of properties worth millions of naira and killing of some prominent politicians in the State, including, for example, Chief Fagbamigbe (Olaniyi, 2013). It was reported that at least, 40 people were killed in Ondo (Isah, 2019b). Chief Omoboriowo himself managed to escape death. Chief

Adekunle Ajasin, the then incumbent Governor who contested the election under the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), disputed the outcome of the election. He challenged it in the Election Tribunal. At the end, the Tribunal dismissed the matter in favour of the Governor, Chief Ajasin and declared him the real winner of the election (Olaniyi, 2013). However, on December 31, 1983, General Muhammadu Buhari seized power in a military coup and emerged Head of State. General Muhammadu Buhari was later overthrown in another coup by General Ibrahim Gbadamosi Babangida who became the first military President of Nigeria (Isah, 2019b).

The transition presidential election in the short-lived Third Republic, perhaps, witnessed an election dispute that almost plunged the country into another civil war. The protracted transition programme of General Babangida, which started in August 1985, eventually reached its end on 12 June, 1993, with the Presidential election. Unlike other elections that preceded it, the 1993 election was unique in the sense that it was the only Nigeria's election that attracted the most international attention with a total of 3, 000 observers, out of which 135 were foreign observers that took part in the election across the country (Ojo, 2004). The election was contested by two candidates under the two-party system created through a military fiat by the Federal Military Government. The two parties were Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Nigerian National Congress (NNC), one "a little to the left" and the other "a little to the right" (Diamond, 1991; Ihonvbere, 1992). The two presidential candidates that contested the election were Chief M.K.O Abiola (SDP) and Alhaji Bashir Tofa (NRC). Their running mates were Ambassador Baba Gana Kingibe and Dr. Sylvester Ugoh respectively. On the day of the election, voting generally went peacefully and orderly without reports of serious violence or casualties. The outcome of the election was eagerly anticipated (Ojo, 2004).

Partial release of the results by National Electoral Commission (NEC) indicated a victory for the candidate of the SDP, Chief M.K.O Abiola, with a decisive 58 percent of the total votes cast. After announcing the results for 14 states, the announcement for the remaining 16 states was

stopped based on an order issued by the military President, General Babangida. Subsequently, on 23rd June 1993 the Babangida's government suspended the NEC and annulled the election results (Ojo, 2004). The annulment of the election result threw the country into unprecedented political turmoil, especially in the South West. Political analysts observed that General Babangida's government annulled the election having noticed apparently that power would shift to the South. The reason was because, Chief M.K.O Abiola who was leading, based on the results already declared by NEC, was from the Southern part of the country (Olaniyi, 2013). In other words, in his calculations, Babangida anticipated that the victory would go the side of the North, which did not turn-out to be the case, hence the cancellation of the election results. Mass protests led by pro-democracy groups, such as National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) and Campaign for Democracy (CD), attended the annulment of the election, resulting in series of violence and loss of lives (Olaniyi, 2013; Ojo, 2004).

It was reported that, at least one hundred protesters were killed (Lewis, 1994). Another report had it that no fewer than one hundred and twenty (120) deaths were recorded while properties worth billions of Naira were destroyed (Olaniyi, 2013). Olaniyi (2013, p. 293) attests that "the crises which covered major cities in South-West like Lagos, Ibadan, Abeokuta and Akure witnessed wanton destruction of lives and properties". The violence that engulfed the country during the period led to mass exodus of Nigerians of the Southern ethnic extractions, especially the Igbo people, to their home regions (Ojo, 2004). The heat of the crisis and prolonged protests by pro-democracy forced General Babangida out of office, on August 26, 1993, as he eventually constituted an interim Government headed by Chief Ernest Shonekan and handed over power to it (Olaniyi, 2013). Based on a lawsuit instituted by Chief M.K.O Abiola, the assumed winner of the June 12, 1993 Presidential election, a Lagos High Court, on November 17, 1993, declared the Interim National Government (ING) put in place by General Babangida's government, as illegal. Following this, General Sani Abacha assumed power in a coup and dissolved all existing demo-

cratic structures retained by the Interim National Government, and thereby returned the country to a full-blown military dictatorship (Ojo, 2004). That was how the Third Republic, which was generally believed to have been conceived, was aborted; the era thus never existed in Nigeria's political history.

3 The Fourth Republic and High Incidences of Post-Election Dispute

Since the dawn of the present democratic dispensation in Nigeria, most of the elections conducted had largely provoked petitions, as disputations had always sprang-up among participants over elections results. Apart from the 1999 elections which brought the country into the current Fourth Republic, the outcomes of other elections held in 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019 respectively, were variously contested in at Election Petitions Tribunals. To begin with, the 2003 general elections generated a large number of post-elections petition cases filed in the various Election Petition Tribunals in different parts of the country. Precisely, "...at the end of the 2003 election, 560 petitions were filed" (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2017, p. 17). The Presidential election was contested by twenty (20) political parties among which the three (3) major parties were the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA). The presidential election, which was held on 19 April, 2003, was more like a case of contenders against the winner of the election, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo; his major co-contestants or opponents, General Muhammadu Buhari and Chief Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, presidential candidates of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) respectively, separately challenged the results of the election at the Court of Appeal and later the Supreme Court (Alao, 2019).

Based on the election result, the declared winner, the then incumbent President, Olusegun Obasanjo (PDP) defeated his closets opponents with a large margin. He polled 24,456,140 votes, representing 61.94% of total votes cast. Behind him was Muhammadu Buhari (ANPP) who got

12,710,022 votes (32.19%), while Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu (APGA) received 1,297,445 votes (3.29%) (African Election Database, n. d.). Generally, the results of the 2003 elections Presidential, National Assembly, Gubernatorial, were widely condemned by local and international observers and monitors who alleged that the electoral processes were marred by various sorts of electoral frauds and irregularities. The ANPP and the other 28 political parties that participated in the election alleged that the PDP engaged in massive rigging in different parts of the country. The PDP was accused by opposition parties of using its control of the securities agents to rig the elections, and the various reports of both the local and international election observers who monitored the elections on the days they took place seems to attest to the allegations (Ajayi, 2006).

For instance, Justice, Development and Peace Committee (JDPC) had a local team made-up of 30,000 agents that participated in the monitoring and observation of the elections. The JDPC acknowledges in its final reports that, while the presence of security forces helped to maintain law and order in some parts of the country, it however impacted negatively on the spirits and confidence of voters in many parts of the country (JDPC, 2003). In that report, the JDPC overtly stated thus:

Security agents were out to collaborate with and protect the ruling party. In most of the polling stations they did nothing to prevent hijacking of ballot papers by political thugs ... Rigging was peacefully done in the form of ballot box stuffing by mainly PDP party agents collaborating with polling officials (JDPC, 2003, p. 31).

The JDPC report also reveals the involvement of some INEC officials in rigging the election in favour of the ruling party in some parts of the country. As the report has it that:

The ruling party in each of the two geo-political zones (South-South and South-East), with the connivance of some INEC officials and the security officers, unleashed fearsome intimidation against its opponents and succeeded in carrying out mas-

sive rigging of elections in a manner that was reminiscent of the dark ages (JDPC, 2003, p. 37).

Similarly, the Citizens Forum (CF) also observed in its report that the elections were massively rigged and manipulated. As a result, it demanded President Obasanjo and the state governors to resign (Ajayi, 2004). International observer teams such as the European Union (EU), American and the Commonwealth share similar views with the local observers (Ajayi, 2006). The EU team was comprised of 118 observers. The team confirms that serious irregularities undermined the electoral process and marred the elections. The Washington-based National Democracy Institute (NDI) gave the similar report as other election observers about the elections. The NDI expressed that the election results lacked legitimacy, noting that there were observed incidences of ballot stuffing, rigging, voter intimidation, violence and fraud in some parts of the country, particularly in the South-East and South-South zones. On its part, the Commonwealth observer team which was made up of 22 members noted that the elections did not go well in some states. It stated that there was intimidation and break-down of proper electoral processes, specifically in parts of Enugu and in Rivers States (Alli et al., 2003). Giving the confirmations that the electoral processes were highly and massively manipulated, it was not surprising that petitions were instituted after the elections by the key opposing candidates, Ojukwu (APGA) and Buhari (ANPP). The results of the elections were controversial and thus became subject of litigation (Ajayi, 2006).

The candidate of APGA, Ojukwu filed a petition at the court and held that: Obasanjo was not qualified to contest the election; Obasanjo's return as President should be invalidated; a fresh election should be conducted; the Chief justice of Nigeria should take over as Head of State for three months pending the conduct of fresh election; and that the declaration of Obasanjo as winner was unconstitutional. The Court of Appeal which was presided over by Justice Isa Ayo Salami dismissed Ojukwu's petition. Ojukwu then took the matter to the Supreme Court, which also dismissed the petition on the ground that it lacked merit (Alao, 2019). On his part, General Muhammadu Buhari

of the ANPP also vehemently called for a repeat of the presidential and gubernatorial elections. He had been most aggressive and determined in engaging Obasanjo in legal battle over his victory in the election. Buhari was reported to have said, while addressing a press conference at the party's secretariat on the judgment of the Appeal Court, which had earlier upheld the victory of Obasanjo in the 2003 election by dismissing his (Buhari's) petition, that he would not give up no matter the time it would take to pursue his matter to its logical conclusion. In the end, he lost the case at the Supreme Court (Alao, 2019), as the court on December 2004 equally upheld the victory of Chief Obasanjo in the presidential election by confirming the judgment of the Federal Court of Appeal which earlier upheld his victory (Olaniyi, 2013).

With regards to the governorship elections of 2003, controversies arose in many states in relations to the validity of the elections results. The Election Tribunal in Adamawa State, for instance, nullified the victory of PDP's gubernatorial candidate, Governor Boni Haruna, and ordered a run-off election in 14 of the 21 local governments in the state. The Election Tribunal ruled that Boni Haruna, the declared winner, was "not validly elected". The tribunal stated that it was evident that thugs and security officials acted in favour of PDP to disallow agents of ANPP from performing their roles during the last general elections in various local government areas (Akinadewo, 2004, pp.1-2). The most notable among the post-electoral disagreements and controversies that followed the governorship election of 2003 was that of Anambra State. After the elections which were held on April 19, 2003, Dr. Chris Ngige of the PDP was declared the winner by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Dissatisfied with results of the election as announced by INEC, Mr. Peter Obi, the candidate of APGA then filed a petition at the Anambra State Election Petition Tribunal. The tribunal judged the matter and held that Mr. Peter Obi, having won majority of the lawful votes cast at the election, was the winner of the election, and not Dr. Chris Ngige (Beson, Oluwa, Akinrefon & Ezema, 2009; Nigeria Legal Information Institute, n. d.).

The tribunal nullified the election of Ngige on 12th August, 2005 (Eze, Muogbo & Akinwunmi, 2005), and thus declared Peter Obi the winner of the election. Upon this, Dr. Chris Ngige appealed the judgment to the Federal Court of Appeal in Enugu. On March 16, 2006, the Court of Appeal sitting in Enugu dismissed the appeal lodged by Dr. Chris Ngige against the decision of the Anambra State Election Tribunal and upheld the decision of the Tribunal and declared Peter Obi of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) winner. Consequently, on the 17 of March, 2006, Mr. Peter Obi was sworn in as the Governor of Anambra State (Benson et al., 2009; Nigeria Legal Information Institute, n. d.). Worthy of note in the case between Chris Ngige (PDP) and Peter Obi (APGA) is that, though Obi succeeded in reclaiming his rightful electoral victory, the legal battle took almost three years before it came to an absolute end.

The total number of post-election petitions filed in 2007, after the general elections was more than double the number of petitions filed in 2003 (National Democratic Institute, 2008). As the National Democratic Institutes (2008, p. 40) recounts:

Thirty days after the declaration of the result, the cut-of date for filling election petitions, 1,260 petitions had been filed, including eight that dispute the results of the presidential race, 106 challenging gubernatorial outcomes, 131 cases against Senate races, 291 related to the House of Representatives results, and 274 cases regarding state legislatures.

The Presidential election was held on 21 April, 2007. The major candidates that contested the election were Umaru Musa Yar'Adua of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Muhammadu Buhari of All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), and Alhaji Atiku Abubakar of Action Congress (AC). The elections were notoriously remarkable for the massive rigging and frauds that attended the exercise across the country. Both local and international observers said the polls were "not credible" (Al Jazeera, 2008). The elections were described as the worst elections Nigeria ever conducted under the present democratic era owing to widespread irregularities in the electoral pro-

cesses. For instance, "Nigeria's biggest election monitoring group said the presidential poll was so flawed that it should be scrapped and held again" (BBC, 2007, para. 15).

In the same manner, European Union election observers described the elections as "the worst they had ever seen anywhere in the world, with rampant vote rigging, violence, theft of ballot boxes and intimidation" (CNN, 2011. para. 10). The US said it was "deeply troubled" by the elections which it described as "flawed". A United State Department of State's spokesman said the US hoped that the political parties would resolve any differences over the election through peaceful, constitutional means (BBC, 2007). Following the outcomes of the elections as announced by INEC, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua of the PDP emerged as the winner of the highly controversial presidential election. According to the results declared by INEC, Yar'Adua (PDP) won 24,638,063 votes, representing 69.486% of the total votes cast. General Buhari (ANPP) polled 6,665,299 votes (18.798%), while Alhaji Atiku Abubakar (AC) got 2,637,848 votes (7.439%) (Sahara Reporters, 2007).

Form the results above, the PDP candidate, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua who was arbitrarily awarded 24 million votes, even though it was clear that the number of Nigerians that voted in the election was not up to 10 million, came first, and was therefore declared winner by INEC, then headed by Professor Maurice Iwu. Muhammadu Buhari took the second position with 6 million votes, while Atiku Abubakar was awarded the third position with 2.4 million votes (Sahara Reporters, 2007). Muhammadu Buhari and Atiku Abubakar, presidential candidates of ANPP and AC respectively, challenged these elections results at the Presidential Elections Tribunal. Both of them approached the court, asking for the invalidation of Yar'Adua's victory in the election. In the end, however, Buhari and Atiku lost the case as the Presidential Elections Tribunal led by Justice James Ogebe on February 26, 2008, dismissed all the grounds upon which Muhammadu Buhari and Atiku Abubakars petition were premised, and upheld Yar'Adua's victory after passing a unanimous verdict that validated his election (Alao, 2019; Al Jazeera, 2008).

Governorship elections were held on 14 April, 2007, and the elections results were challenged in 35 of Nigeria's 36 states. As of April 18, nine of the 36 gubernatorial elections had been overturned by elections petitions tribunals (National Democratic Institute, 2008), some States. The same trend continued subsequently, as Governorship Elections Petitions Tribunals across the country released final judgments on the many petitions filed in relations to the 2007 governorship elections. In Ondo State, the Elections Petitions Tribunal on 25 August, 2008 nullified the election of PDP governorship candidate, Dr. Olusegun Agagu and declared the candidate of Labour Party (LP), Dr. Olusegun Mimiko as the lawful winner of the April 14 election (Sahara Reporters, 2008). As reported, "the five-man tribunal led by Garba Nabaruma, in its one hour, 15 minutes judgments, also ordered that Mimiko should be sworn in immediately as the governor of the state because he won the valid votes in 12 out of the 18 local governments in the state" (Sahara Reporters, 2008, para. 2).

Similarly, on 11 November, 2008, the Court of Appeal in Benin City upheld the verdict of the Edo State Elections Petitions Tribunal and declared Comrade Adams Oshiomole, the governorship candidate of Action Congress (AC) in 2007 gubernatorial contests, winner of the election and Governor of Edo State. It, thus, overturned the election of Professor Oserhiemen Osunbor, candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), who had been in office as the Governor of Edo State for a cumulative period of 17 months and 11 days. The Court's decision was premised on numerous irregularities that took place during the voting (Vanguard, 2010; Vanguard, 2011). On 15 October, 2010, the Court of Appeal sitting in Ilorin nullified the election of the Ekiti State Governor, Segun Oni, who contested the 2007 gubernatorial election on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). In its verdict, the Court declared his opponent, Mr. Kayode Fayemi, the governorship candidate of Action Congress (AC), legitimate winner of the election and ordered him to be sworn in immediately as the Governor of the State (Vanguard, 2010). This was after Segun Oni had spent almost three years in office as the Executive Governor the State.

On 26 November, 2010, the Court of Appeal

in Ibadan, capital of Oyo State, overturned the election of Osun State Governor, Olagunsoye Onyilola, the candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the April 14, 2007 gubernatorial race, and declared Engineer Rauf Aregbesola, candidate of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) as the duly elected Governor, with the highest number of the lawful votes cast (Vanguard, 2010). The same pattern of event unfolded in many other states, including Delta State, in Emmanuel Uduagah versus Great Ogboru (November 9, 2010), and Rivers State, in Rotimi Amaechi versus Celestine Omehia (October 26, 2007) (Vanguard, 2010). The above scenario discernibly reveals that the 2007 general elections were, indeed, the most flawed elections in the history of Nigeria. Most of the flaws that accompanied the electoral processes were alleged to have been orchestrated by the then ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), in its desperation to retain or capture majority of the states. Indeed, some scholars argued that the 2007 general elections were poorly conducted and manipulated in unprecedented manners to serve the interests of the ruling PDP (Aiyede, 2007; Ojo, 2007; Suberu, 2007a, 2007b).

The 2011 general elections also saw a high rate of post-elections petitions filed in elections petitions tribunals across the country. However, the number of elections petitions that emerged from the 2011 elections was far less than the number of petitions related to the 2007 elections. The then Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Atahiru Jega, acknowledged this fact at a two-day international conference held in Abuja on the theme, "Emerging Electoral Jurisprudence in Africa", where he was said to have stated that the 2011 general elections recorded the least number of election petitions with a total of 733 (Nigerian Bulletin, 2015). Some of the petitions were dismissed at the pre-hearing stage, while few of the elections were upturned (Ojo, n. d.). Represented at the conference by a National Commissioner, Dr., Ishmael Igbani, Prof. Jega offered a breakdown of the petitions as followed: Presidential petitions 2, Governorship 53, Senatorial 90, House of Representatives 198, State Houses of Assembly 390 (Nigerian Bulletin, 2015). Validating Jega's claim, Ojo (n. d.) affirms that, while the 2007 elections generated a whop-

ping 1,750 petitions, the 2011 produced only 733 petitions filed at the various elections petition tribunals in the country. This implies that, comparatively, the 2011 general elections were more credible than the preceding elections, especially the 2007 elections. However, the point remains that it was not devoid of election petitions, despite the wide commendations it attracted from both the domestic and foreign fronts.

The elections were held between April 9 and May 6, 2011. The presidential elections held on April 16, while gubernatorial elections were conducted on April 26. Although the elections were not absolutely perfect, there were concrete improvements. The 2011 elections marked a departure from previous elections, particularly the 2007 elections, that Nigeria had earlier conducted under the on-going democratic experiment, which were heavily flawed with irregularities. The electoral umpire, INEC demonstrated observably strong determination to end Nigeria's ugly history of fraudulent and badly conducted elections, and strove to uphold the expectation of Nigerians to restore and sustain the democratic process in the country (Ojo, n. d.). INEC's performance at the 2011 elections was widely commended by various international and local elections observer groups as a dramatic improvement on previous elections, with prospects for democratic development in the country. For example, in its final report on the 2011 general elections, the European Union Elections Observation Mission (EU EOM) states thus:

Overall, the legal framework for the 2011 General Elections provided an adequate basis for the conduct of democratic elections in accordance with international principles and with international instruments ratified by the Federal republic of Nigeria (EU EOM, 2011, p. 1).

In the same vein, Project 2011 Swift Count, comprising of the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC)/Caritas, Nigerian Bar Associations (NBA) and Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) also concluded that:

...the Nigerian voting populace were provided

with opportunity to exercise their franchise and in general their votes were counted. The April general elections were conducted within the framework of and conformed to the Nigerian Constitution, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) protocols on Democracy and Good Governance, and the African Union (AU) Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa (Project 2011 Swift Count, 2011, p. 1).

The reports of other observer groups that participated in the election monitoring, including the Commonwealth, African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and International Republican Institute (IRI), were in tandem with the foregoing reports (Ojo, n. d.).

The point, however, is not that conducts of the 2011 general elections were completely devoid of imperfections, as earlier noted. For instance, while the United States Department of State acknowledged that the elections were successful and a substantial improvement over 2007 elections, it added that vote rigging and fraud also occurred during the elections (Carson, 2011). Also, Smith (2011) stated that there were reports of certain irregularities, such as underage voting and snatching of ballot boxes in some parts of the country. It was not surprising that the post-election period also witnessed disputations and litigations over the outcomes of the elections. The popular candidates for the presidential election were the then incumbent President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), General Muhammadu Buhari of Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), and Malam Nuhu Ribadu of Action Congress of Nigeria. However, Muhammadu Buhari was seen as the major opposition to Jonathan than Nuhu Ribadu. At the end of the election, INEC announced Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (PDP) as the winner of the presidential race. Based on the results announced by INEC, the declared winner, Goodluck Jonathan won 22,616,416 votes. Next to Jonathan was Muhammadu Buhari with 12,250,853 votes. Malam Nuhu Ribadu who came third had 2,079,151 votes (Reuters, 2011).

After the announcement of the election re-

sults, the CPC, filed a petition demanding the court to nullify the results of the election, in which President Goodluck Jonathan was declared winner with almost 60% of the total votes cast. The ICP premised its argument for the cancellation of the election results on the ground that widespread irregularities bedeviled the election. It specifically, prayed the court to cancel the results of the election in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and twenty-four (24) states, including all seventeen (17) states in the South and seven (7) in the North, namely, Adamawa, Benue, Kaduna, Kwara, Nassarawa, Plateau and Sokoto States. The CPC also alleged INEC and its Chairman, Attahiru Jega of having manipulated the voter register to the advantage of PDP's candidate, arguing that ballots were illegally diverted to the wrong polling units and used for ballot stuffing. The CPC requested INEC to organize fresh elections between itself (CPC) and the PDP, and that a forensic test should be conducted on the DDC machines and ballot box (National Democratic Institute, 2012).

Justice Ayo Isa Salami, President of the Court of Appeals was the one who chaired the panel of the presidential election tribunal. He delivered a major ruling during the pre-hearing session, which allowed the CPC to inspect election materials inclusive of biometric data gathered in the voter registration process. When Justice Salami was suspended in a controversial circumstance, over a matter not related to the 2011 presidential election litigations, he was succeeded by Justice Mohammed Garba. Justice Garba made a clarification of the ruling by Salami, which warranted that the CPC would only examine election materials but was not to take any copies. Taking copies of election materials, as Attahiru Jega, the INEC Chairman had argued, would pose a threat to the security of the nation and undermine the rights of voters. In view of this, the CPC was prevented from submitting election materials as evidence in its petition. After nearly four months of appeals, the Supreme Court dismissed the case on December 28, 2011 and upheld Goodluck Jonathan's election victory (National Democratic Institute, 2012). Jonathan was then sworn in on May 29, 2011 as Nigeria's President on a fresh mandate, for a new four-year period in office.

Regarding gubernatorial elections, it is pertinent to note that the April 26, 2011 did not hold in ten (10) states, namely, Adamawa, Anambra, Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Ekiti, Kogi, Ondo, Osun and Sokoto. This was because the tenures of the governors of these states had not elapsed, as they came into office after legal battles that led to the nullification of the elections of the former incumbent governors. Thus, in the above named ten states, governorship elections were only held after the four-year tenure of the governors ended. Governorship elections only held in twenty-six (26) states. General governorship elections held on April 26, 2011, before the second one which was held in Kaduna and Bauchi States on April 28, 2011 (Ndujihe, 2012). This difference among states of the federation, in terms of the period of conducting governorship elections, it must be noted, is the effect of tribunals' verdict on litigations that arose from electoral disputes at state levels in previous elections. Till the time of this writing, the date for the conduct of governorship elections in Nigeria still varies among some states.

After the elections however, state election petition tribunals upheld the election results in most states. Among some other states, for example, Rochas Okorochoa, gubernatorial candidate of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) had his victory in the April 26, 2011 governorship election in Imo State, challenged in court by the then incumbent Governor of the state, Chief Ikedi Ohakim of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The tightly contested governorship election of April 26, 2011 in Imo State did not produce a clear winner. As a result, a supplementary election was conducted on May 6, 2011 in some local governments where it was said the April 26 election went inconclusive. At the end, Okorochoa narrowly emerged victorious and was declared the winner by INEC. Upon this, Chief Ohakin engaged Rochas in a long legal battle as he challenged the elections results in court. However, on March 2, 2012, the Supreme Court affirmed Rochas Okorochoa as the winner of the election. Justice Sylvester Ngwuta who judged the case struck-out PDP's appeal against Okorochoa for lack of merit, and nullified the judgment of the Court of Appeal, which was the basis of the appeal on, the ground that the appellate court gave rea-

sons for the judgment outside the 60 days allowed under Section 287 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) (Ndujihe, 2012).

In some states, tribunals nullified election results and required INEC to conduct re-run elections. The case of Kebbi State was among the most notable ones during the period. The Appeal Court sitting in Sokoto State, on December 28, 2011, had overturned the judgment of the Kebbi State Governorship Election Petition Tribunal, which had earlier nullified the election of Kebbi State Governor, Alhaji Uman Dakingari, the gubernatorial candidate of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the 2011 election. Led by Justice Laraba Mohammed, the Kebbi State election tribunal nullified Dakingari's election on November 13, 2011 and ordered that a fresh election be conducted within 90 days. Alhaji Usaman Dankingari was dissatisfied with the tribunal's decision and hence, he challenged it at the Appeal Court. Justice Amiru Sanusi, who judged the case at the Appeal Court in Sokoto on December 29, 2011, ruled in favour of Alhaji Dakingari and quashed the judgment of the lower tribunal, thereby affirmed Dakingari's election as Governor of the State. The Appeal Court dismissed the cross-appeal by Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) and its gubernatorial candidate, Alhaji Abubakar Mallam, wherein he asked the Appeal Court to declare him the duly elected governor of the state, for lack of merit (El-Kurebe, 2011).

The verdict of the Appeal Court, however, was unacceptable to the Kebbi State CPC. Therefore, led by the party's state Chairman, Alhaji Suleiman Nasiha Zuru, the CPC took the matter to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court, in turn, quashed the decision of the Sokoto State Division of the Appeal Court, which had earlier upturned the judgment of the Kebbi State Election Petition Tribunal and upheld the election of Alhaji Dakingari, Kebbi State Governor. The apex court nullified the election of Dakingari and ordered INEC to conduct fresh governorship election in the state within 90 days, counting from the date of the judgment. The decision of the Supreme Court was premised on the ground that the Sokoto State Division of the Appeal Court, which had upturned the judgment of the Kebbi State Election Petition Tribunal, failed to give reasons for

its judgment. The Supreme Court held that it was wrong for the appellate court to have given its judgment within the constitutionally stipulated period for determining such cases, and asserted that such action ipso facto rendered the judgment nugatory (El-Kuereb, 2012a). As Justice Walter Onnoghen maintained in his judgment:

It is obligatory for the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court to dispose an appeal within 60 days from the date of the decision being appealed, since section 285(7) implies that both the decision and the reasons for that decision, must be completed within the stipulated time. Any decision without a reason is no decision at all. The judiciary has no option than to work within the time frame provided by the law (El-Kurrebe, 2012a, para. 12).

As ordered by the Supreme Court, INEC conducted a re-run governorship election in the state on March 31, 2012. At the end, Alhaji Dakingari won the election and was declared the winner by INEC. As the results revealed, Dankingari (PDP) grabbed a total of 875,492 votes to defeat his major opponent, Alhaji Abubakar (CPC) who received 17,918 votes (*Channels Television*, 2012).

The 2015 general elections were the fifth round of elections that Nigeria conducted since her return to democratic rule in 1999. The elections held on March 28, 2015 and April 11, 2015 respectively. While the Presidential and National Assembly Elections took place on 28th March, the Governorship and State Houses of Assembly elections were conducted on 11th April. Domestic and international observers described the elections as credible and a major improvement on the 2011 elections. Two things were considered to be symbolic about the 2015 election: first, it saw the defeat of a ruling party and the emergence of candidate of opposition party as winner at the federal level. Second, technologies the PVCs and SCRs were deployed in the electoral process, which significantly impacted on the credibility of the electoral. Despite the progress recorded, the electoral processes witnessed some challenges, and thereby resulted in electoral litigations. Record reveals that more than 600 election petitions were filed at the various election petition tribunals across the country after the elections, by candi-

dates who lost Governorship, Senatorial, House of Representatives and State Houses of Assembly elections (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2017).

The two major candidates for the presidential election were the incumbent President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and General Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressive Congress (APC), who was the principal opposition. At the end of the presidential election, the opposition party's (APC) candidate, Muhammadu Buhari, emerged the winner. The APC also won a large number of seats in the upper and lower chambers of the National Assembly as well as governorship elections in most states across the country. Prior to 2015, such a sweeping victory had not been witnessed in the history of elections in Nigeria. More fundamental to the rare experience of the defeat of an incumbent President by an opposition, was the display of the spirit of sportsmanship and acceptance of defeat by former President Goodluck Jonathan, the PDP candidate. For this reason, there was no electoral disputation and litigation after the 2015 presidential election (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2017).

This post-election development also contributed tremendously to making the 2015 presidential election highly significant in Nigeria's political experience. The winner of the election, Muhammadu Buhari defeated incumbent President Jonathan win over 2.5 million votes. Buhari (APC) won a total of 15,424,921 votes, while Jonathan (PDP) received 12,853,162 votes. Following declaration of the results by INEC, former President Goodluck Jonathan telephoned his rival, Muhammadu Buhari and conceded defeat (BBC, 2015). In a statement credited to him, Jonathan stated thus: "I promised the country free and fair elections. I have kept my words" (BBC, 2015, para. 5). He (Jonathan) sent his "best wishes" to Muhammadu Buhari and "urged those who may feel aggrieved to follow due process... in seeking redress" (BBC, 2015, para. 6). These statements by former President Jonathan remain remarkable in their own rights, in the history of elections in Nigeria, having come from an incumbent who had just lost a re-election bid. As earlier noted, this was the first time in the history of

elections in Nigeria since the return to democratic rule in 1999, that no petition was filed to challenge the outcome of Presidential election (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2017, p. 27).

With respect to the governorship elections of 2015, however, many petitions were filed at election petitions tribunal across the states of the federation. Specifically, in 2015, governorship elections were conducted in 29 States of the Federation, while State Assembly elections held in 36 states (Idowu, 2015). Out of the 29 states, as record shows, there were petitions challenging the results of governorship in 21 states. These states include Abia, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Benue, Ebonyi, Enugu, Gombe, Imo, Kaduna, Katsina, Kebbi, Kwara, Lagos, Nasarawa, Ogun, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers, Taraba, Yobe, and Zamfara (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2017). Majority of these petition cases progressed from the lower tribunals, that is, States Governorship Election Petition Tribunals in the states to Courts of Appeal, through to the Supreme Court, where they were finally put to rest at various times. In all the cases, the Supreme Court upheld the election of candidates earlier declared winners by the nation's election umpire, INEC.

In Abia State, for instance, the two major contestants for the gubernatorial office were Okezie Ikpeazu - Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Alex Otti All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA). After the election, INEC declared the candidate of PDP, Mr Ikpeazu the winner of the election, having polled a total of 264,713 votes to defeat Alex Otti, candidate of APGA who gained 180,882 votes (Channels Television, 2015). Mr. Otti filed a petition at the Abia State Governorship Election Tribunal in Umuahia, challenging the outcome of the election. He argued that Okizie Ikpeazu who was declared winner, was not duly elected by majority of lawful votes. Otti alleged that the electoral process was marred by numerous irregularities including over-voting, intimidation of voters, rigging, failure to collate results and non-use of the Smart Card Readers (SCRs) (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2017). In the end, the tribunal dismissed his case on the ground that he failed to prove his allegations of crime and over-voting beyond reasonable doubt. Dissatisfied with the verdict of the state gover-

norship election tribunal, Mr. Otti appealed the judgment. In the end, the Appeal Court sitting in Owerri, headed by Justice Oyebisi Omoleye, on November 3, 2015, quashed the decision of the lower tribunal and decided the case to the advantage of the petitioner, Alex Otti (APGA), and thereby declared him the lawful winner of the April 11 and April 25 supplementary elections in Abia state (Abdulmalik, 2015).

The Appeal Court overturned the judgment of the lower tribunal and the said victory of Mr. Ikpeazu of the PDP at the election, on the ground that the appellant, Alex Otti of APGA was able to successfully establish his allegation of over-voting. The appellate court also held that Mr. Otti scored the majority of lawful votes cast at the election (Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2017). Okezie Ekpeazu was dissatisfied with the verdict passed by the Appeal Court, hence, he appealed to the Supreme Court. In the end, the Supreme Court overturned the judgment of the Appeal Court and upheld the earlier verdict of the Abia State Governorship Election Tribunal on the ground that Alex Otti of APGA failed to prove his grave allegations of crime held against Okezie Ikpeazu of the PDP as well as to establish the claim of over-voting during the election. The apex court also held that it was unlawful for the State Returning Officer to have cancelled election results in that he had no such right. The court, therefore, validated the election of Okezie Ikpeazu, PDP candidate, as the Governor of Abia State (Okakwu, 2016; Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, 2017).

Other states where the Supreme Court upheld the elections of governorship candidates originally declared winner by INEC, after a long legal battle include but not limited to the following: Akwa Ibom, in Umana Okon Uwana (APC) versus Udom Gabriel Emmanuel (PDP) (see Okakwu, 2016b); Benue, in Samuel Ortom (APC) versus Terhemem Tarzoo (PDP) (see Okakwu, 2016c); Delta, in Ifeanyi Authru Okowa (PDP) versus Olorogun Ogheneteg Emerhor (APC) and Great Ogboru (PDP) (see Ahon & Nnochiri, 2016); Enugu, in Ifeanyi Lawrence Ugwuanyi (PDP) versus Okey Ezea (APC) (see Okafor, 2018); Kebbi, in Abubakar Atiku Bagudu (APC) versus Bello Sarkin Yaki (PDP) (see Channels Television, 2015b); Zamfara, in Abdulazeez Abubakar Yari

(APC) versus Sani Abdullahi Shinkafi (APGA) (see Ugwuanyi, 2016); Yobe, in Ibrahim Gaidam (APC) versus Adamu Maina Waziri (PDP) (see Ikhilae, 2017); Oyo, in Abiola Adeyemi Ajimobi (APC) versus Rashidi Adewole Ladoja (Accord Part) (see Odesola, 2016); and Lagos, in Akinwunmi Ambode (APC) versus Joseph Olujimi Kolawole Agbaje (PDP) (see Adebowale, 2015). In a nutshell, none of the governors'- elect in 2015, whose victories were challenged in courts lost their elections. Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room (2017, p. 33) confirms this fact as it holds that "...all the appellants who challenged the conduct of the governorship elections in their respective States lost their appeals, as the Supreme Court upheld all the disputed Governorship elections conducted by INEC on April 11, 2015".

Like the preceding elections, the just concluded 2019 general elections have also produced a large number of petitions challenging the outcomes of the various elections results in courts across Nigeria. As of April 4, 2019, the number of petitions that emerged from the 2019 polls stood at 735, but rose to 766 as of April 16, 2019 (Yahaya, 2019). Until the time of this writing, the breakdown of petitions filed, as released by the Court of Appeal, is as followed: Presidential election 4; Governorship 54; Senate 207; House of Representatives 101; State Houses of Assembly 402. The four presidential petitions challenging the victory of President Muhammadu Buhari and his party, All Progressive Congress (APC) at the February 23, 2019 election were filed by candidates of four political parties that contested the presidential office. These include: Alhaji Atiku Abubakar of Peoples Democratic party (PDP); Ambrose Owuru of the Hope Democratic Party (HDP); Aminchi Habu of the Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM); and Geff Ojinika of the Coalition for Change (CC) (Yahaya, 2019). Among these however, the petition of the PDP presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, who was Muhammadu Buhari's key opponent during the election, remains the most popular, and thus attracts the greatest attention of close watchers and followers of political events in Nigeria, from within and outside the country.

According to the results as announced by INEC, President Buhari (APC) won the Febru-

ary 23, 2019 presidential election with a total of 15,191,847 votes, whereas his closest rival Atiku Abubakar (PDP) gained 11,262,978 votes (Toromade, 2019). Atiku, being dissatisfied with the declaration of the incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari as the winner, is as of the time of conducting this research, challenging the outcome of the election at the Court of Appeal. He claims that the election was rigged to the advantage of Muhammadu Buhari (Sahara Reporters, 2019). Atiku Abubakar also claims that, according to an internal compilation of results he obtained from INEC's server, he won the election with over 1.6 million votes than Buhari (Toromade, 2019). At the time of this writing, the date for the hearing of the petition had yet not been fixed. The Presidential Election Petitions Tribunal was still being expected to declare the date for the pre-hearing session on the PDP and Atiku's petition. It is during the pre-hearing session, which according to the Electoral Act, 2010 (as amended) must be completed within 14 days, that the tribunal would fix "clear dates" for hearing the petition. In accordance with law, the tribunal has 180 days from March 18, 2019, the date of filing of the petition, to hear and deliver judgment on the case (Adesomoju, 2019).

The governorship polls of 2019, as earlier observed, have so far generated a total of 54 petitions filed at states election petitions tribunals. Some of the states where tribunals have received petitions challenging the victories of governors-elect in the recent 2019 elections include Kano (North-West), Gombe (North-East), Benue (North-Central), Imo (South-East), Delta (South South), Oyo State (South-West) and a host of others. In Kano, the PDP and its governorship candidate, Abba Yusuf, have filed a petition at the governorship election petitions tribunals twenty days after INEC declared Governor Abdullahi Ganduje, candidate of the APC in the election, the winner of the March 23, 2019 governorship election in the state. The PDP and its governorship candidate, Abba Yusuf are challenging the acclaimed victory of Governor Ganduje at the tribunal. The PDP posits that its candidate, Abba Yusuf, was the actual winner of the election and describes any other result as a nullity. The party and its candidate are also arguing that the

supplementary election held by INEC was unconstitutional and unlawful. Moreover, the PDP alleges that the declaration of the March 9 election as inconclusive provided the APC with an opportunity to rig its candidate, Governor Abdullahi Ganduje, back to power (Punch, 2019).

In Gombe State (North-East), where INEC declared Muhammad Yahaya, the governor-elect and candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC), as the winner of the gubernatorial election, three (3) petitions have been filed at the Governorship Election Petition Tribunal in the state with respect to the election (Channels Television, 2019). The three petitions were filed by Jungudu Adamu Jungudu for the People for Democratic Change (PDC), Muhammad Auwal Ibrahim for the All Grassroots Alliance (AGA), and Aliyu Adamu of the Alliance for Social Democrats (ASD). The petitioners are challenging the governorship election in which Inuwa Yahaya of the APC emerged winner. They prayed the governorship election petition tribunal, headed by Justice M. B. Tukur, to compel INEC to grant them (petitioners) access to all the materials used for the governorship election in the state, and to allow them to have certified true copies of the documents and elections results (Africa Independent Television, 2019; Channels Television, 2019). In response, "the tribunal...granted the application of the petitioners asking for the materials, including the certified true copies, from INEC for inspection" (Africa Independent Television, 2019, para. 4). However, the three petitioners - Jungudu Adamu Jungudu (PDC), Muhammad Auwal Ibrahim (AGA), and Aliyu Adamu (ASD) subsequently prayed the tribunal to allow them to withdraw their petitions due to health challenges and inability to fund their petitions (Scan News, 2019).

In Benue (North-Central), Emmanuel Jime, governorship candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC) and his party have filed a petition challenging the victory of the incumbent Governor Samuel Ortom and his party - Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), at the just concluded governorship election in the state. Jime and his party APC are contending, in their petition, that Governor Samuel Ortom whom the Independent National Election Commission (INEC) declared

winner after the March 23, 2019 supplementary election, did not win the lawful required votes to retain his office as the Governor of the state for a second term. He (Jime) also alleges that the election of Ortom was invalid on the ground of non-compliance with the provisions of the Electoral Act, 2010 as amended (Daily Trust, 2019).

In Imo State (South-East), Uche Nwosu, the governorship candidate of the Action Alliance (AA) in the governorship election, has petitioned the Imo State Governorship and House of Assembly Tribunal, challenging the election of Emeka Ihedioha of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) who INEC announced as the winner of the March 9, 2019 election. Nwosu has asked the tribunal to nullify the election of Ihedioha. Among other things, Nwosu, in his petition, is demanding the tribunal to:

Determine and thus declare that Ihedioha did not satisfy the requirement of section 179(2)(b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), having failed to poll not less than one-quarter of all the votes cast in at least two-third of the Local Government Areas in Imo State at the governorship election held on March 9, 2019 (Sahara Reporters, 2019b, para. 8).

In Delta State (South-South), Great Ogboru, candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in the 2019 governorship election is currently challenging INEC's declaration of the incumbent Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), as the winner of the March 9 governorship election in the state. The APC's candidate, Great Ogboru, rejected the results of the election, alleging that the election's process was bedeviled by massive irregularities, such as rigging, vote buying, snatching of ballot boxes and other malpractices orchestrated by the PDP (Sahara Reporters, 2019c). In Oyo State (South-West), the governorship candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC), Adebayo Adedun has filed a petition at Oyo State Election petitions Tribunal, asking for the nullification of the victory of the governor-elect, Seyi Makinde, Peoples Democratic Party's (PDP) candidate, whom INEC declared winner of the March 9, 2019 governorship election in the state (Sahara Reporters,

2019d). Like the presidential election petition, most of the 2019 governorship election petitions filed at tribunals across the country are still ongoing, as of the time of writing this chapter.

4 Implications of the High Incidences of Post-Election Dispute for Nigeria's Democracy

Elections, no doubt, especially in growing democracies are rarely conducted without irregularities in the processes, which often pave the way for disputes among concerned candidates and political parties over the integrity of election results. Consequently, post-election litigation is regarded as an aspect of the electoral process, as it forms part of the follow-up events to any elections in both old and new democracies. However, based on the documented evidences presented in the analysis of the trend of election petition cases in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, in the preceding section, it becomes clear that the country's experience transcends the normal; Nigeria currently witnesses high rates of post-election litigations. This state of affair is highly worrisome as it has certain implications for the country's democracy, which include the following:

5 Indication of Weakness of Electoral Process and Institutions

The current spate of post-electoral disputations and litigations in Nigeria speaks volume of the state of the health of the country's electoral process and institutions. The trend shows that the process and institutions for the conduct of elections in Nigeria are still substantively weak and lacking in the needed capacity to conduct more credible, transparent, and free and fair elections that would be devoid of disputations and controversies. Nyeson Wike, Rivers State Governor, is in agreement with the foregoing position, as he poignantly argues that "...the rising incidence of litigation to resolve electoral issues is an indication of the failure of the electoral process" (Akasike, 2018).

With the inherent weakness of the electoral process and institutions, elections in Nigeria, even the so-called free and fair elections conducted so

far, are characterized by grave irregularities and undemocratic practices which often render the processes and outcomes incredible and unacceptable, thereby leading to litigations in search of redress by aggrieved parties and candidates, as may be concerned. Some of these irregularities include ballot-box snatching, ballot stuffing, vote buying, under-age voting, over-voting, thuggery, intimidation and harassment of opponents. The Nigerian electoral system and institutions have so far been unable to contain or manage these elements in such a manner that they are unable to impact on the credibility of elections and their outcomes.

6 Waste of Financial and Time Resources

Although electoral litigation is a means of claiming political rights, it is expensive and time consuming, and therefore amounts to waste of limited financial and time resources on the parts of the candidates and political parties involved. Former INEC Chairman, Professor Attahiru Jega, validates this assertion as he contends, that electoral and political litigation in Nigeria have turned out to be very expensive and time consuming. As a result, he holds that there should be an effective alternative electoral dispute resolution mechanism, rather than resorting to judicial process (Nigerian Bulletin, 2015). This is true, in view of the state of the poor financial conditions of Nigerian political parties and their candidates.

Where an incumbent President or Governor is involved in an electoral suit, either as a petitioner or respondent, there is no doubt that him/her would resort to public treasury to fund the litigation. This way, the masses are being shortchanged, as certain proportion of the scarce resources earmarked for the delivering of essential developmental goods and services to the electorates are often diverted to the pursuit of personal or associational interest, as against public interest. In the same vein, precious time that ought to be devoted to planning and designing of policies and programmes that would engender democratic dividends to the masses is also wasted at courts/tribunals, especially as most electoral

cases in Nigeria could linger up to two to three (2-3) years, as experience has shown.

7 Unevenness in Time-Schedule for Conduct of Governorship Election

The rampant post-election petitions in the being experienced in Nigeria under the current democratic experience, has put some states off-cycle, in terms of the date for the conduct of gubernatorial election across the states of the federation. No doubt, in many states, electoral litigations and final verdicts of tribunals had resulted in nullification of election and ousting from office of already sitting governors, mostly after the usual long period of legal battle that eats-up major part of the stipulated four-year tenure of office. Giving that the law specifies that the full four-year tenure of office of the succeeding governorship candidates who obtained victory at the tribunals over disputed election, must elapse before the next gubernatorial election is held, affected states now conduct their governorship elections at different dates other than the dates schedule for it within the general election period, as may be scheduled INEC.

To lend credence, because of this phenomenon, gubernatorial elections were not held in ten states - Adamawa, Anambra, Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Ekiti, Kogi, Ondo, Osun and Sokoto, during the 2011 general elections (Ndujihe, 2012). Similarly, during the 2015 general elections, governorship elections were not conducted in six of the thirty-six states in Nigeria, namely Anambra, Bayelsa, Edo, Ekiti, Ondo and Osun (The Guardian, 2015; Idowu, 2015). Also, in the just concluded 2019 general elections, governorship elections did not hold in seven states, namely, Anambra, Bayelsa, Edo, Ekiti, Kogi, Ondo and Osun (Deji, 2019). This unevenness leaves more than deserved for the effective and efficient workings of the Nigerian electoral system in general.

8 Proof of the Slow Pace of Growth of Nigerian Democracy

Perhaps, the overall and most decisive implication of the high incidence of post-elections petitions produced so far by all the elections Nigeria has

had in the prevailing political dispensation, including the recent 2019 general elections, is that the country's democracy is not developing at the expected pace after twenty (20) years of the practice of the system of governance. As acknowledged in the introductory part, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) (2015) posits that the rate or number of post-election litigations is one major yardstick for measuring the pace of democratic development in countries. According to it, a democracy with few or low rate of post-election petitions is regarded as having been more consolidated than one with high rate or number of post-election petitions (INEC, 2015). Evaluating Nigeria's democracy in light of this parameter, thus, vividly indicates that it is not growing at a rate commensurate with the number of years that the country has upheld the practice, since it was re-introduced in the country in 1999.

9 Conclusion and Recommendation

Since the return to democratic rule in 1999, all elections Nigeria has conducted, including the recent 2019 general elections, have on the average, produced varying large numbers of petitions filed at election petitions tribunals at various jurisdictions in the country. The high rates of petitions being witnessed in the current democratic dispensation in the country is largely the consequence of disputes arising from the outcomes of flawed elections into various elective positions. The electoral process in Nigeria is besieged by certain recurring irregularities and/or electoral malpractices, such as rigging, snatching of ballot boxes, ballot stuffing, under-age voting, over-voting, vote buying, thuggery, intimidation and harassment of opponents, among many others. The persistent perpetration of these electoral vices by stakeholders in elections, mainly the political parties, has continuously provoked disputations and contestations over the credibility of elections among participating candidates and political parties.

The large numbers of post-election petitions filed to resolve electoral matters after every election period in the Fourth Republic, is therefore an effect of the flaws in the electoral process. The phenomenon is unwholesome and inimical to Nigeria owing to certain consequences it por-

tends for the country's democratic practice, as demonstrated in the main body of the study. In view of this, the study is of the opinion that Nigeria needs to expedite actions towards curtailing the high rates of post-election petitions being produced by elections in the present democratic experiment. As a way out of the predicament, the study recommends that, Nigeria must revamp and strengthen her electoral process and institutions to conduct highly credible, transparent, free and fair and acceptable elections in future times, so as to reduce the spate of elections-related petitions to the barest minimum and avert the accompanying effects on the country's democracy.

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A participação cívica e política dos jovens portugueses

The civic and political participation of young people in Portugal

Filipe Silva Fernandes

Resumo—De forma transversal entre os países europeus, o envolvimento político tradicional dos jovens é reduzido. A sua ligação a formas de participação formal das diversas democracias representativas do continente europeu é cada vez mais distante, registando-se este afastamento dos jovens face aos partidos políticos e o aumento das taxas de abstenção. Estes jovens têm optado por focar a sua participação através de modos mais informais, como manifestações pontuais, ativismo, assinatura de petições e, claro, aumento da participação com foco em temas sociais e políticos em plataformas digitais como as redes sociais. No entanto, os jovens portugueses não apresentam os mesmos níveis de envolvimento informal quando comparados com os seus congéneres europeus. Os portugueses tendem a ser menos participativos, espelhando uma problemática que se estende visivelmente a toda a população portuguesa, que, de forma mais formal ou informal, também participam pouco. O presente artigo procura compreender a participação cívica e política dos jovens portugueses. Realizaram-se 24 entrevistas e distribuiu-se um questionário ao qual se obteve 262 respostas. Esta amostra permitiu compreender que os jovens se sentem cada vez mais atraídos por modos de participação informal, desconfiando dos partidos políticos e das diferentes organizações. A sua participação pauta-se por ser momentânea, espontânea e direcionada para problemáticas particulares que constituem seus interesses e motivações.

Palavras-Chave — Participação formal; Participação informal; Participação Jovem; Participação política; Portugal.

Abstract—Across European countries, young people's traditional political involvement is low. Their connection to formal forms of participation in the various representative democracies on the European continent is becoming increasingly distant, with young people moving away from political parties and abstention rates increasing. These young people have opted to focus their participation through more informal means, such as occasional demonstrations, activism, signing petitions and, of course, increased participation focussing on social and political issues on digital platforms such as social networks. However, Portuguese young people don't show the same levels of informal involvement when compared to their European counterparts. The Portuguese tend to be less participative, mirroring a problem that visibly extends to the entire Portuguese population, who, in a more formal or informal way, also participate little. This article seeks to understand the civic and political participation of young Portuguese. Twenty-four interviews were carried out and a questionnaire was distributed to which 262 responses were received. This sample showed that young people are increasingly attracted to informal forms of participation, distrusting political parties and different organisations. Their participation is characterised by being momentary, spontaneous and geared towards particular problems that constitute their interests and motivations.

Keywords — Formal participation; Informal participation; Youth participation; Political participation; Portugal.

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1 A evolução dos modos de participação dos jovens portugueses

A sociedade portuguesa é pouco participativa. Ramos (2004) defende que o passado histórico do nosso país não propicia uma evolução positiva da participação. De um modo geral, a sociedade portuguesa que encontramos no início do século XXI tende a manter-se afastada dos polos e dos processos de tomada de decisões. A população portuguesa encontra-se numa posição de cada vez maior envelhecimento. Esta é uma tendência que se tem vindo a agravar, acarretando naturais desafios cívicos, políticos e sociais. Portugal tem um regime democrático desde 1974 - à data de escrita do artigo, portanto, o regime democrático português conta com 48 anos. Considerando o envelhecimento da generalidade da população, é de fácil e óbvia conclusão aferir que uma parte muito considerável da população portuguesa cresceu e formou-se numa época em que a sua participação não era incentivada, atendendo ao carácter restritivo que o regime do Estado Novo impunha sobre a população (ainda que se registasse, formalmente, a realização de inúmeras eleições).

Braga da Cruz (1985) denota uma tendência de ausência de participação da população portuguesa, encontrando aí uma justificação para que tal se tenha repercutido nos jovens portugueses, apesar do amadurecimento da democracia portuguesa.

A medição dos níveis de participação dos jovens (em Portugal, no nosso caso concreto, e incluindo como jovem os indivíduos com idades compreendidas entre os 18 e os 30 anos) tem sido um tema amplamente discutido no espaço público e no mundo académico, com a produção de diversos estudos com esse mesmo enfoque. Demonstrativo de tal é a série de estudos promovidos e publicados pela Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, que procurou aferir o nível de participação dos jovens portugueses. Alguns dos resultados desse mesmo estudo demonstraram que os jovens portugueses já não encaravam a participação política

apenas no seu sentido estrito e formal do termo, como através da votação nos períodos eleitorais e a militância partidária. Os jovens portugueses, a partir da década de 2010, demonstraram a sua prevalência pela participação não-formal.

A participação formal pressupõe o envolvimento direto dos cidadãos com os partidos políticos, uma vez que daqui provêm os atores políticos que se envolvem diretamente nos processos de tomada de decisão. Por seu turno, a participação não-formal caracteriza-se pelo envolvimento dos cidadãos com práticas e modos de expressão que não interferem diretamente com os processos de tomada de decisão.

O principal canal de participação dos portugueses, até ao virar do século XX para o século XXI encontrava-se concentrado nos partidos políticos. Os próprios partidos políticos, então, gozavam de taxas de militância superiores às que, de um modo geral, apresentam nos dias de hoje. Quanto aos jovens como segmento da população total, estes encontravam, principalmente, nas juventudes partidárias o seu canal de comunicação e participação mais direto. As juventudes partidárias assumiam-se, assim, como "os grandes instrumentos de mobilização e canalização da participação política dos jovens" (Braga da Cruz 1990, 248).

Sabendo, portanto, a importância do papel dos partidos políticos e das suas juventudes partidárias, já alguns estudos se focaram nas motivações dos jovens aquando da sua inscrição como militante nestas organizações. Bruter Harrison (2009) destacam motivações morais, sociais e profissionais. As motivações morais pautam-se pela identificação ideológica. Os jovens relacionam-se com os partidos e entram nas suas estruturas dada a vontade de promover as suas ideias com vista à procura de promoção de melhorias das condições de vida gerais. A motivação moral está, de forma inerente, relacionada com a intenção de, através da participação política, poder contribuir para melhorias gerais. Seguidamente, as motivações sociais são caracterizadas pela possibilidade que os partidos políticos conferem aos jovens para que estes interajam com outras pessoas, através do relacionamento com outros indivíduos que partilham uma série de ideias e valores comuns. Por fim, as motivações profissionais são atribuídas

• *Filipe Silva Fernandes.*

pela ambição de alcançar uma carreira política. Naturalmente, a militância ativa num partido político pode conferir a possibilidade a um jovem de procurar uma carreira política através da sua evolução dentro das diferentes estruturas internas ao próprio partido político.

A realidade do primeiro quarto do século XXI demonstra uma queda deste mesmo envolvimento. A "crise dos partidos" (Costa Pinto et al. 2015) faz-se notar, nomeadamente, através da queda assinalável do número de militantes na generalidade dos partidos políticos (Mair et al. 2011). Com os partidos políticos a assumirem o papel de principal canal de envolvimento político por parte dos cidadãos, o que ajuda a justificar tal queda de militância? Magalhães (2005) argumenta que se encontra uma justificação na deterioração da imagem pública da própria atividade política, aliada a escândalos que, em última instância, resultam numa quebra de confiança dos jovens em relação às estruturas que compõem toda a atividade política - como é o caso mais imediato dos partidos políticos. Uma justificação adicional, de acordo com Costa Silva (2022), passa pela falta de eficácia por parte dos partidos políticos em encontrarem estratégias de comunicação que promovam uma imagem positiva e atrativa que fomentem o interesse dos cidadãos (e dos jovens, em particular) nestas estruturas.

Ainda dentro da participação formal, encontramos estudos que revelam que a decisão de um jovem em não exercer o seu direito de voto tem influência no grupo de indivíduos que o rodeia (Magalhães 2008). Ao ato de não votar confere-se, assim, um efeito de contágio que se pode estender de forma a culminar no aumento dos níveis de abstenção. Aqui, pode-se encontrar, de forma plausível, uma justificação para o registo da queda de participação dos jovens neste âmbito também, fragilizando os níveis de participação formal e constituindo um desafio à participação e envolvimento político dos jovens.

A descida dos níveis de participação formal não constitui um obstáculo à subida dos níveis da participação não-formal. Assim, a participação não-formal tem-se tornado proeminente entre os jovens (Fernandes-Jesus et al. 2022), registando-se aumentos de envolvimento dos jovens ao nível de atividades como a assinatura de petições pú-

blica, a adesão a manifestações pontuais e até o boicote, focados em diferentes alvos. Estes modos de participação permitem aos jovens desempenhar um papel ativo.

No entanto, em comparação com restantes países europeus, os jovens portugueses continuam a registar níveis de participação mais baixos. Esta tendência já se haveria verificado na participação formal, com Sloam (2016) a denotar que a mesma se verifica também na participação não-formal. Sloam utilizou como amostra 15 países europeus. No que a este modo de participação diz respeito, o envolvimento dos jovens de cada um desses países através da "utilização de emblemas", "assinatura de petições", "adesão a boicotes" e "participação em manifestações". Atribuindo uma pontuação consoante o nível de envolvimento registado com cada uma das vertentes de participação, os jovens portugueses registaram apenas 64 pontos - tendo em consideração que a média global registada foi de 123 pontos, ao passo que a totalidade possível de pontos se fixava em 500 pontos.

Como modo de procurar solucionar esta realidade, autores como Azeredo (2013) e Albernaz (2020) defendem a promoção de novos mecanismos de participação que aproximem os jovens de novo participação cívica e política. Tal assume-se de vital importância, dado o facto de Pruitt (2017) denotar que, perante a descida dos níveis de participação formal e o aumento da participação não-formal, tal não significa que os jovens se procuram escusar de participar de forma ativa. De acordo com este, os jovens ainda desejam e procuram ser tidos em consideração por parte da classe política, procurando, através das suas diversas formas de ação, influenciar o posicionamento dos políticos e, assim, resultar em desfechos dos processos de tomada de decisão que sejam mais consentâneos com aquelas que são as suas vontades e opiniões.

A evolução da participação não-formal tem acompanhado a própria evolução tecnológica. O espaço virtual assume-se como sendo cada vez mais propício para a promoção da participação dos jovens, que nele encontram um espaço em que, com facilidade, conseguem promover as suas opiniões junto de uma audiência de seus semelhantes. Ademais, com a proliferação e generalização do uso da internet como canal de comunicação - incluindo por parte de políticos em exercício

de funções - gera-se um claro incentivo para que a interação digital constitua um cada vez mais importante canal de comunicação entre representados e representantes, constituindo, assim, um modo de participação cada vez mais influente.

Analisando a evolução destas tecnologias que permitiram o estabelecimento de canais de comunicação mais diretos e acessíveis entre os indivíduos que desejam, de algum modo, assumir um papel ativo de participação cívica e política, encontramos relação de correlação com a subida do número de protestos políticos. Campos et al. (2016) defendem que a internet desenvolveu melhores capacidades para que promotores de protestos políticos conseguissem atingir um número mais elevado de indivíduos. Esta maior capacidade de alcance funcionou como um incentivo à participação, conseguindo cativar mais jovens a participar em protestos e manifestações (portanto, atividades de participação não-formal).

A participação dos jovens, focando-se cada vez mais neste espaço virtual, adquire outras características com consequências para as próprias formas de participação não-formal que, até aqui, conhecíamos. Campos et al. (2016), além de terem reconhecido o incremento da capacidade de promoção e alcance que a internet providencia, também reconhecem os riscos associados à generalização da utilização da mesma para fins de participação. Participar tornou-se um processo mais fácil. A interação por via digital tomou completamente o foco das atenções por parte dos jovens. De repente, estes já não necessitam de se deslocar para protestar determinada ação ou decisão por parte de dirigentes partidários e governantes. Podem, inclusivamente, consoante a disponibilidade do indivíduo em causa, comunicar diretamente com um governante. Assim, os riscos imediatos constituem circunstâncias crescentes em que a participação presencial em momentos de manifestações e protestos é substituída pelo apoio e expressão de opiniões apenas de forma digital. Fonseca (2019) denota que esta é uma tendência de participação cada vez mais proeminente entre os jovens. Dahlgren (2012) defende que este modo de participação digital deve ser acompanhado da participação presencial, de forma a que os benefícios da primeira se possam traduzir em ganhos de eficácia através da segunda.

2 Metodologia

Na metodologia utilizada, incluímos dois modos de recolha de dados: entrevista e questionário. Foram dirigidos convites para entrevistas a jovens integrantes de partidos políticos que tenham experiência em cargos de responsabilidade partidária; dirigentes académicos do ensino superior, desde Núcleos, Associações e Federações de Estudantes; e ainda membros de diversas organizações cívicas que sejam despartidarizadas, ou seja, afastadas de influências político-partidárias, ainda que com intervenção social.

Especificando, no que aos partidos políticos e suas juventudes partidárias diz respeito, entrevistamos jovens do Bloco de Esquerda, Iniciativa Liberal, Juventude Popular, Juventude Social Democrata, Juventude Socialista, e Livre. Quanto às associações estudantis, contamos com a participação de jovens da Associação Académica da Faculdade de Direito de Lisboa, Associação Académica da Universidade do Algarve, Associação Académica da Universidade do Minho, Associação de Estudantes da Faculdade de Direito da Universidade do Porto, Associação de Estudantes do ISCTE-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, ELSA Portugal, Federação Académica de Lisboa, e Federação Académica do Porto. Por fim, o contributo por parte das entidades cívicas foi dado por jovens da Academia Apartidária, AJM Conectados, Associação de Voluntariado Universitário, Conselho Nacional da Juventude, DYPALL Network, Escuteiros, Info Youth, Os 230, Projeto MUNTU - Contrariar o Machismo, e Speak.

Já os questionários foram partilhados de uma forma geral, publicados em diversas redes sociais, bem como disseminados pelas organizações cujos membros foram entrevistados para efeitos da recolha de dados.

O objetivo com esta dupla vertente de recolha de dados passou por alcançar um grupo mais abrangente de jovens para a nossa amostra, não sendo exequível que todos fossem entrevistados. Por outro lado, complementando aos questionários, o facto de se recolherem testemunhos mais aprofundados de alguns jovens com responsabilidades dentro das diferentes organizações a que cada um pertencia, permite-nos aferir possíveis discrepâncias existentes entre jovens que ocupem

lugares de algum relevo e jovens que possam não ocupar esses mesmos postos.

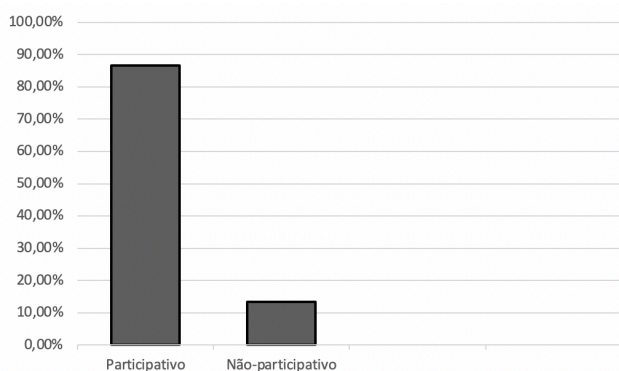
Foi obtida, então, a seguinte amostra: 24 entrevistas e 262 respostas ao questionário permitem retirar determinadas conclusões para, posteriormente, fazer um balanço do estado atual da participação cívica e política dos jovens portugueses.

Foi obtida, então, a seguinte amostra: 24 entrevistas e 262 respostas ao questionário permitem retirar determinadas conclusões para, posteriormente, fazer um balanço do estado atual da participação cívica e política dos jovens portugueses.

3 Análise dos Resultados

De todo o guião da entrevista, foram selecionadas as questões mais relevantes para a escrita deste artigo. Uma vez recolhidos e tratados os dados, apresentam-se os resultados que nos cumpre analisar e discutir:

Gráfico 1: Autoavaliação da participação.



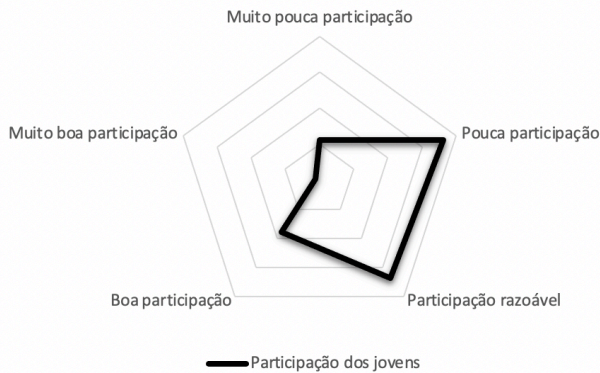
Fonte: Autor.

O Gráfico 1 reflete as respostas obtidas à questão "Procura ter uma participação social e política ativa?", inserida no questionário. 86,6% dos inquiridos respondeu afirmativamente, contrastando com um baixo número, correspondente a apenas 13,4%, que respondeu de forma negativa. No que aos entrevistados diz respeito, não apenas estes consideraram que as organizações às quais eles pertencem são entidades ativas no plano cívico e/ou político, como todos também se consideraram cidadãos ativos nestes mesmos planos.

Em relação a si próprios, os 24 jovens entrevistados defenderam e justificaram sua atividade cívica e/ou política, não apenas através das ações das organizações às quais pertencem e que lhes confere, por inerência, um papel ativo também; mas também vários entrevistados abordaram questões relativas a ações pessoais para lá da esfera de ação dessas organizações. Portanto, vários dos entrevistados demonstraram, efetivamente, ter um papel ativo em diferentes grupos e através de diferentes modos de atuação.

De forma direta ou indiretamente envolvida com questões políticas, os jovens destas organizações consideraram importante alcançarem maior proximidade face ao poder político. Esta é, portanto, uma das principais motivações por detrás da participação. Em última análise, há uma clara compreensão da necessidade de se manterem laços estreitos com o conjunto de atores e decisores políticos, que terão na sua posse a capacidade de tomada de decisão ou, pelo menos, maior capacidade de influência sobre o processo que termina numa tomada de decisão.

O balanço final em relação a esta vertente dos resultados obtidos foca-se no cariz institucional da ação destes jovens entrevistados. Demonstrando os seus modos de participação, estes jovens revelaram uma maior aptidão pela participação institucional. Tal entra, de certo modo, em conflito com a literatura recolhida relativa à participação dos jovens portugueses. A nossa amostra demonstrou que, uma vez ocupando cargos de maior relevância dentro das diversas organizações, surge uma preocupação crescente com a participação institucional e com um cariz de maior formalidade, quando comparada com o tipo de participação mais adotado pela generalidade dos restantes jovens - em que estes, sim, demonstram maior tendência para a aproximação de modos mais informais de participação.

Gráfico 2: Percepção da participação geral.

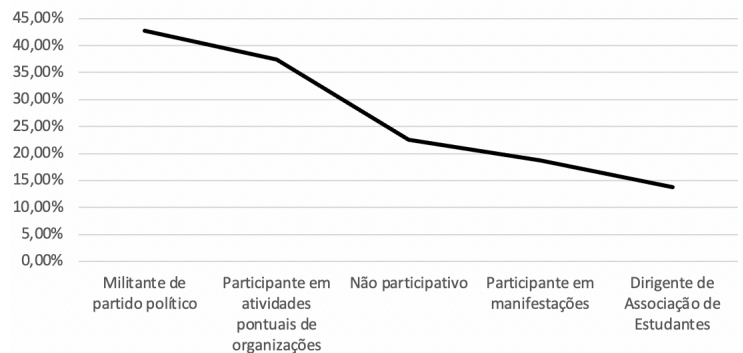
Fonte: Autor.

O Gráfico 2 reflete a percepção dos jovens respondentes ao questionário em relação à participação geral dos seus congéneres. Ou seja, a forma como os entrevistados avaliam o nível de participação global dos jovens. Os valores registados são os seguintes: Pouca participação: 36,3%; Participação razoável: 33,6%; Boa participação: 17,9%; Muito pouca participação: 11,1%; Muito boa participação: 1,1%.

Os valores concentraram-se, principalmente, em Pouca participação e Participação razoável. Ao nível das entrevistas, ficou evidente o descontentamento com o nível de envolvimento da generalidade dos jovens. Os entrevistados - que se consideram participativos, como se percebeu anteriormente - consideram que os jovens portugueses revelam alguma capacidade de participação, mas lamentaram o facto desta mesma não ser mais aproveitada. Ou seja, há uma discrepância, desde logo, entre a percepção face aos jovens que se integram em organizações e jovens que não se integram. A ideia transmitida foi de que, de facto, o modo de participação ainda é relevante, na medida em que muita atividade - seja ela de cariz mais ou menos formal e institucional - é produzida através das organizações. Neste sentido, as organizações portuguesas sentem dificuldade em promover uma maior participação por parte dos jovens portugueses. Esta dificuldade é relatada de modo transversal. Ainda que, durante as entrevistas, se tenha percebido uma maior lamentação alicerçada numa maior dificuldade em mobilizar os jovens por parte dos partidos políticos e juventudes partidárias, o lamento foi transversal a

grande parte das associações académicas e, inclusivamente, a várias das organizações cívicas - ainda que estas últimas sintam menores dificuldades, quando colocadas em termo de comparação com as restantes organizações integrantes desta investigação.

O desfasamento verificado entre as organizações e os jovens é assinalável. Jovens das organizações referiram que estas procuram ir ao encontro dos interesses dos jovens aquando da realização de novas atividades. No entanto, defendem que, mesmo assim, é difícil assegurar a adesão dos seus públicos-alvo (quando estes são os jovens), na medida em que os jovens demonstram resistência em participar de forma atividades nessas mesmas atividades, frustrando as expectativas dos promotores.

Gráfico 3: Modos de participação por parte dos respondentes ao questionário.

Fonte: Autor.

Os resultados obtidos e espelhados no Gráfico 3 são relativamente particulares, sendo alusivos às respostas obtidas através dos questionários disseminados. Quase 43% dos respondentes ao questionário afirmaram ser militantes de um partido político. O número de participantes em atividades pontuais de organizações fixou-se nos 37%. Por sua vez, o resultado de "Não participativos" foi de 23%, colocando esta opção a meio da classificação. Já 18% dos inquiridos referiram ser participantes em manifestações. Por fim, 13% referiu ser dirigente de uma Associação de Estudantes (ou outras organizações académicas do ensino superior).

Como testemunhamos no levantamento da literatura, sabemos que o número de militantes dos partidos políticos se encontra em decréscimo.

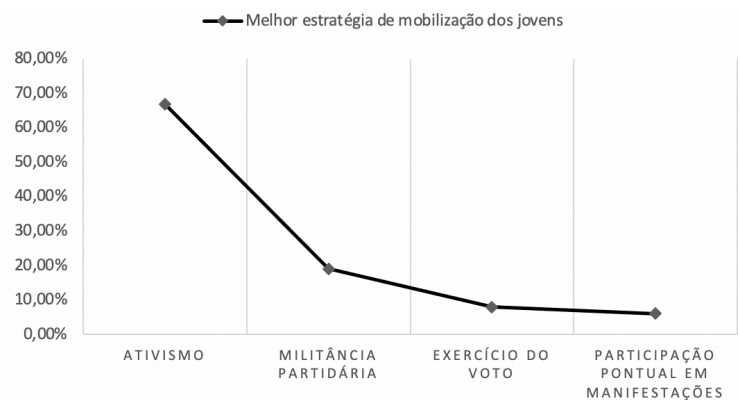
Sabemos também que tal é uma realidade transversal às diversas faixas etárias, com a generalidade dos partidos a atravessar o mesmo problema. Uma vez que os partidos políticos estão em desvantagem numérica em relação à totalidade de organizações que contactámos (são seis em 24), temos de equacionar a possibilidade de indivíduos pertencentes a um partido político demonstrarem maior propensão para responder a iniciativas como esta. Envolver-se na amostra de um estudo é, também em si, um modo de participação ativa, podendo revelar este grupo de indivíduos como mais propensos e mais dispostos a participar neste tipo de iniciativas.

A militância num partido político e o desempenho de cargos dentro de estruturas de estudantes pressupõe a pertença a essas organizações. Este tipo de participação ativa incute responsabilidades e prevê a continuidade do desempenho de determinadas funções dentro das estruturas em causa. Por outro lado, a participação em atividades pontuais de organizações e a participação em manifestações não indica, necessariamente, a existência da referida continuidade, tal como não significa que os participantes têm algum tipo de vínculo com as estruturas organizativas das atividades e manifestações referidas. O somatório da primeira dupla de opções é de 54,6%, ao passo que o somatório da segunda dupla ficou fixado nos 56,1% - dando a nota de que o envolvimento individual numa das opções não valida uma outra participação em qualquer outra das opções, conferindo a possibilidade aos inquiridos de selecionarem mais do que apenas uma das opções disponíveis.

Já no que concerne às entrevistas, poucos eram os membros de associações de estudantes (ou afins) e associações cívicas que também assumissem uma militância partidária. Há um desfasamento cada vez mais acentuado destes dois tipos de organizações face aos partidos políticos, com a demonstração, em inúmeras ocasiões, do desejo de manter esse afastamento. A imagem pública cada vez mais negativa dos partidos públicos é apontada como a principal motivação, seguindo-se da desconfiança de que uma maior aproximação aos partidos políticos pode ter impactos negativos na perceção de um determinado dirigente associativo junto

dos seus parceiros e respetivos públicos-alvo. A militância pode proporcionar conotações políticas indesejadas, aliando tal a uma perceção de que a pertença a um partido político pode ser altamente limitativo ao nível do envolvimento noutros tipos de organizações, considerando que tal lhes pode retirar alguma liberdade de ação. Os jovens portugueses revelam, assim, maior relutância na adesão tradicional a partidos políticos, independentemente das suas convicções políticas pessoais.

Gráfico 4: Melhor estratégia de mobilização dos jovens.



Fonte: Autor.

Os dados recolhidos nesta fase da nossa análise indicam, de forma clara, a perceção dos inquiridos em relação a qual a melhor forma de promover a participação cívica e/ou política ativa dos jovens. 66,8% dos inquiridos respondeu com o ativismo, colocando uma enorme discrepância face às restantes três opções fornecidas. A militância partidária voltou a surpreender, reunindo 19,1% das respostas totais. O exercício do voto e a participação pontual em manifestações registaram resultados próximos, com o primeiro fixado nos 8,0% e o segundo nos 6,10%.

Os resultados obtidos nos inquéritos contrastam de forma evidente com as respostas obtidas nas entrevistas. Nestas, a maior parte dos jovens entrevistados consideraram que a melhor forma de incentivar os jovens portugueses a participar seria através da participação pontual nas manifestações

(que havia registado a pior votação aquando da recolha de dados através de inquéritos).

A velocidade de circulação de informação culmina numa maior abrangência de temas que, diariamente, podem ser colocados no debate público. O acesso facilitado a redes sociais e demais formas de comunicação e informação propiciam a manifestação de opiniões em relação aos mais variados temas, podendo resultar numa maior tendência para a manifestação de uma posição pública que vá ao encontro do assunto mais abordado naquele determinado momento, podendo-se alterar com relativa velocidade num curto espaço de tempo, quando um tema diferente tomar conta das atenções. A organização rápida e momentânea de determinada atividade ou manifestação pode conseguir o objetivo de mobilização com maior taxa de sucesso, precisamente, pelo imediatismo. Com frequência, novos temas são amplamente noticiados e debatidos, incentivando a aplicação de respostas emocionais que ampliam a capacidade de ação imediata de um indivíduo, podendo-o levar a participar de uma forma momentânea.

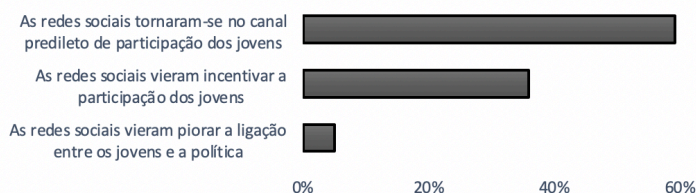
Atualmente, não há tempo para a maturação de determinado assunto na esfera pública. Neste sentido, conseguir o envolvimento contínuo dos jovens face a determinado tema torna-se mais complexo, precisamente, pela quantidade de novos acontecimentos que são noticiados e demonstram amplitude suficiente para que promovam uma reação nos indivíduos. Vários dos entrevistados apontaram, precisamente, para esta circunstância para justificarem as suas opções pela participação em atividades pontuais de organizações, em detrimento de optarem pelo ativismo.

O envolvimento dos jovens com determinados temas é, assim, cada vez seletivo e momentâneo. Os jovens são seletivos em relação ao tipo de temas sobre os quais querem aplicar o seu foco de atenção. Do mesmo modo, são momentâneos no sentido de, no geral, não assumirem um compromisso contínuo com os próprios temas do seu interesse, fazendo a sua participação ser mais sentida naquele que, eventualmente, esteja a receber maior atenção mediática. Uma outra nuance a ter em conta passa pelos jovens privilegiarem cada vez mais o seu envolvimento com temas, sobrepondo-se ao envolvimento com organizações. As organizações podem ser especificamente dese-

nhadas para o envolvimento com um único tema ou conjunto de temas definidos; ou, então, podem promover atividades que, eventualmente, não se coadunam com os principais interesses dos jovens. Neste sentido, estes procuram um envolvimento com base no assunto momentâneo, permitindo-lhes expressar as opiniões que, momentaneamente, lhes estejam mais presentes.

Desta forma, o ativismo reúne condições mais difíceis para conseguir assegurar a participação ativa dos jovens, sendo mais propícia a participação dos mesmos em atividades pontuais.

Gráfico 5: Perceção do impacto das redes sociais na participação dos jovens.



Fonte: Autor.

Os valores registados no Gráfico 5 são os seguintes: 59,1% dos inquiridos defendem que as redes sociais se tornaram no canal predileto de participação dos jovens. 35,9% refere que as redes sociais vieram incentivar a participação dos jovens. Por fim, apenas 5,0% considerou que as redes sociais vieram piorar a ligação dos jovens à política.

As expectativas que se poderiam ter em relação aos resultados que se esperaríamos obter nesta questão foram cumpridas, com quase dois terços dos inquiridos a defenderem que as redes sociais se tornaram no canal predileto da participação dos jovens.

As redes sociais são, efetivamente, um espaço privilegiado no que contende com o incentivo ao debate. O acesso facilitado e generalizado não só possibilita o ingresso de maior parte das pessoas a estas redes como as compele a interagir de um modo recorrente, propiciando a emissão de opiniões por parte dos seus utilizadores. É expectável, portanto, que resulte num maior envolvimento

mento dos jovens com os mais variados temas das, também elas, mais variadas áreas.

Os resultados que avaliam de forma negativa o papel das redes sociais foram quase residuais (5%), coincidindo com o verificado ao longo das entrevistas. A maior parte dos entrevistados defenderam as redes sociais como um veículo de aproximação das pessoas aos temas sociais e políticos. Alegaram que as redes sociais permitem uma facilitada promoção e obtenção de informação, o que, por sua vez, potencializa o debate público, incentivando os jovens a participarem. Consequencialmente, consideram que tal pode gerar pressão nos próprios decisores políticos, conferindo aos jovens uma maior capacidade de influência junto dos decisores, no âmbito do rumo de políticas a adotar numa determinada circunstância. A normalização da participação digital culminou na expressão que um entrevistado utilizou para descrever a participação online: "uma nova forma convencional de fazer política", colocando a participação presencial e digital no mesmo patamar.

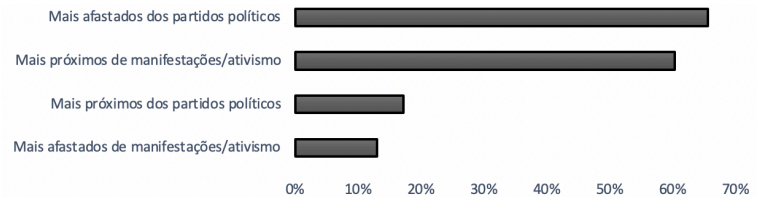
Não obstante, a generalidade dos entrevistados também demonstrou alguma preocupação com o facto da participação online se tornar cada vez mais proeminente no modo de atuação e envolvimento dos jovens. Nomeadamente, a preocupação em deixar evidente que a participação online não se deveria sobrepor ou isolar da participação presencial, mas que esta deveria ser encarada como um complemento ao envolvimento presencial.

Como riscos associados à proeminente participação digital, encontramos, novamente, a preocupação com o "imediatismo"gerado pelo uso das redes sociais, culminando num maior distanciamento e "não-compromisso"de médio/longo-prazo com determinadas causas e organizações, uma vez que a participação digital facilita a interação, mas não tem como resultado um envolvimento físico de proximidade.

Por fim, alguns jovens referiram que a facilidade de utilização das redes sociais desincentiva a participação presencial, dado que estas podem apenas oferecer a "ilusão"de que a voz dos jovens é ouvida, verificando-se uma ausência de consequências através da demonstração de apoio ou contestação apenas através de publicações individuais e interação

com as mesmas. Deste modo, a participação puramente digital torna-se menos consequencial.

Gráfico 6: Proximidade dos jovens aos principais modos de participação.



Fonte: Autor.

A partir do Gráfico 6, verificamos os seguintes resultados: 65% dos inquiridos referiu que os jovens estão mais afastados dos partidos políticos. 60,3% dos inquiridos referiu que os jovens estão mais próximos de manifestações/ativismo. Com valores bastante mais baixos, a defesa de que os jovens estão mais próximos dos partidos políticos recolheu 17,2% das opiniões, ao passo que 13% dos inquiridos referiu que os jovens estão mais afastados das manifestações/ativismo.

Os valores obtidos através desta questão são coincidentes com as expectativas prévias em relação ao seu desenlace esperado. Como denotamos no levantamento da literatura, há uma correlação entre a queda da militância nos partidos políticos e o aumento da participação dos jovens em manifestações pontuais e até num maior envolvimento com o ativismo. Desta forma, tornara-se expectável que, em termos do envolvimento dos jovens com diferentes modos de participação, houvesse uma maior concordância com o afastamento dos jovens face aos partidos políticos, contrastando com uma maior aproximação dos mesmos face à participação através do ativismo.

Ao longo das entrevistas, foi notório o distanciamento de maior parte dos entrevistados face aos partidos políticos (naturalmente, quando considerando os jovens que não foram entrevistados por pertencerem a partidos políticos). Registou-se uma geral concordância quanto às desvantagens da pertença a um partido político por parte dos jovens provenientes de associações cívicas e estudantis. No desenvolvimento desta questão,

evidenciou-se a crescente falta de confiança institucional face aos partidos políticos, evidenciando a imagem negativa com que os partidos políticos e os respetivos atores políticos são encarados. Esta perda de confiança culmina num consequente afastamento dos jovens face a estas organizações convencionais de participação política. Atualmente, em Portugal, existe uma evidente consideração negativa face à ação da classe política. Tal contribui para um afastamento generalizado face aos partidos políticos e a este tipo de envolvimento que exige um compromisso com este tipo de estruturas.

Por contraste, o ativismo beneficia da percepção de ausência de partidização. Ou seja, no cômputo geral, há a percepção de que muitas organizações que se focam na preparação e promoção de manifestações são independentes do poder político, permitindo uma maior autonomia que agrada cada vez mais aos jovens portugueses. Além disso, encontramos um maior interesse por parte dos jovens em relação a este tipo de participação também pela ausência da necessidade de geração de um vínculo que lhes faria ter de assumir maiores responsabilidades por um período de tempo mais longo, permitindo-lhes garantir, concomitantemente, a sua própria independência e capacidade de interação com variadas causas, atividades e organizações sobre as quais sintam, momentaneamente, maior vontade de interagir e se envolverem.

4 Conclusões

O presente artigo tomou como objetivo a compreensão e análise da participação cívica e política dos jovens portugueses. O foco passou por analisar como é que os jovens portugueses mais participavam, quais as percepções dos mesmos em torno da participação cívica e política e delinear algumas consequências provenientes dos modos de participação dos jovens.

Foram entrevistados 24 jovens provenientes de partidos políticos, associações estudantis e associações cívicas. Foi ainda disseminado um questionário que reuniu 262 respostas. A partir de ambos métodos de recolha de dados, procedeu-se a respetiva análise.

A revisão da literatura permitiu-nos aferir a evolução dos diferentes modos de participação,

com a participação formal a tornar-se cada vez menos apelativa aos olhos dos jovens (entre os 18 e os 30 anos). Esta caracteriza-se pela participação convencional, através da militância partidária, por exemplo, uma vez que os partidos políticos são atores diretos nos processos de tomada de decisão. Assim, os partidos políticos, afetados pela imagem cada vez mais negativa que lhes é atribuída pela opinião pública, registam quedas globais dos seus níveis de militância, alastrando-se aos jovens, que se sentem cada vez mais afastados destas organizações. Por sua vez, a participação informal tem assumido cada vez mais esse posto de atratividade perante os jovens. Esta caracteriza-se pelo envolvimento com modos de participação que não participem diretamente nos processos de tomada de decisão. Esta participação pode ser efetuada, nomeadamente, através da participação em protestos e manifestações pontuais, com o envolvimento em movimentos de ativismo a tornarem-se mais apelativos aos mesmos.

Adicionalmente, a participação dos jovens através de instrumentos digitais que promovem a discussão pública tem-se intensificado. As redes sociais são hoje um instrumento cada vez mais proeminente na participação dos jovens, uma vez que lhes possibilita emitir as suas opiniões de uma forma mais direta, manifestando o seu apoio ou protesto perante determinada causa. Não raras vezes, a participação digital sobrepõe-se à participação presencial, colocando dificuldades crescentes nas organizações que procuram materializar os interesses dos jovens em participações presenciais que permitam exercer uma maior capacidade de influência junto dos principais decisores políticos.

Dentro dos modos de participação informal, os jovens portugueses ainda optam por privilegiar a participação em atividades pontuais, não havendo uma evidente ligação a movimentos que procurem assegurar a continuidade da participação, seja ela através de um vínculo com determinada organização ou o emprego de esforço e atenção contínua perante uma determinada causa. Existe, portanto, uma ausência de compromisso dos jovens portugueses com organizações, mesmo que estas abordem diretamente causas e temáticas do seu interesse.

O próprio compromisso para com as causas está, de certa forma, condicionado pela atenção

momentânea a esse determinado tema. Tal demonstra que, numa perspectiva geral, os jovens portugueses não têm um perfil "ativista", uma vez que não se envolvem de forma recorrente na prossecução de certos objetivos referentes a um determinado tema que apoie ou conteste, vagueando entre diferentes organizações pontuais, desde que referentes ao principal tema que esteja na atualidade.

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Recensão

Passados mais de seis meses sobre a publicação da última obra de Carlos Gaspar, e mais de um ano sobre a anterior, é interessante observar que a tese fundamental que defendia (o regresso do mundo internacional à anarquia e a rivalidade agressiva entre os EUA, a China e a Rússia que prefiguram uma Guerra-Fria 2.0) é agora uma evidência e faz os cabeçalhos dos jornais. Obviamente, uso da palavra anarquia é idiossincrático: designa não só o fim da hegemonia indiscutida dos EUA na esfera internacional, mas uma tendência à dissolução da ordem devido à ascensão de correntes nacionalistas diversas. O autor prevê um período de relativa estabilidade no panorama internacional, uma espécie de "trégua prolongada" (Gaspar 2019, 246), mas não é otimista. Na obra de 2020, isso é ainda mais claro (Gaspar 2020, 99)

Ambas as obras incluem uma panorâmica histórica dos diferentes eventos e tendências que influenciaram, e ainda influenciam, as distribuições do poder entre as potências mundiais, desde o início da guerra fria até aos nossos dias, e uma previsão informada sobre o futuro das relações entre estados. O primeiro livro, mais extenso e repleto de referências bibliográficas é utilíssima ao estudioso das relações internacionais num mundo que já não é regulado por uma única potência, os EUA.

O autor recorda que a "balança das nações" durante o período da guerra-fria o mundo era fundamentalmente bipolar, ou seja, o poder estava concentrado nas duas grandes potências nucleares, os EUA e a URSS (Gaspar 2019, 28). Durante este período a China é ainda uma potência em crescimento. Com o colapso da União Soviética, o anterior equilíbrio de poderes desaparece (138) e há um breve "interregno unipolar" (123-173). No entanto, a partir do 11 de setembro (e as ondas de choque que gera), bem como da crise financeira de 2008, assistimos ao fim da hegemonia americana, à ascensão da China e da Rússia (reconhecidas nos documentos da diplomacia americana como "potências revisionistas"). Estabelece-se então uma distribuição triangular do poder entre estas três potências.

A obra está organizada em cinco secções. A primeira, intitulada 'Duas Ordens' explora o

cenário internacional que seguiu a segunda guerra mundial, caracterizado pela desintegração da Alemanha vencida, "que deixa vagos terrenos à mercê dos novos impérios ideológicos" (28). Para o autor, não é ideológico apenas o império da URSS, que segue as profecias da teoria revolucionária leninista e visa estabelecer um império socialista mundial, mas também o império americano, que pretende ter um papel fundamental no panorama global, traduzida em políticas como a doutrina Truman e o Plano Marshall (30). Mas já nesta secção o autor desenha a formação de uma aliança entre a China e a Rússia (fundamentada na ideologia partilhada por ambas), e a cisão provocada pela crise dos mísseis de Cuba (69). Na segunda secção, 'A Dupla Guerra Fria', o autor examina de perto a ascensão da China como potência autónoma e os conflitos ideológicos e estratégicos com o seu antigo aliado (a União Soviética) (80). Na terceira secção, o autor explora os acontecimentos do pós-Guerra Fria, que põe fim à divisão da Alemanha. O autor destaca sobretudo a desintegração da União Soviética, que deixa os Estados Unidos sem rival no plano internacional. Gaspar defende que é uma revolução intelectual favor da democracia, da pluralidade, e da economia de mercado nos países pós-comunistas da Europa de Leste que retira legitimidade ao imperialismo soviético e causa a desintegração da própria URSS (123-124). Mas o autor analisa também o impacto do 11 de Setembro e o falhanço do imperialismo americano que se seguiu, devido à alienação que a invasão do Iraque causa entre os seus aliados (154-155).

Depois desta panorâmica histórica o autor avança a sua leitura do momento atual e a sua previsão para o mundo de amanhã título da obra mais breve, mas não menos interessante. Com efeito, a quarta secção, 'O Regresso da Anarquia', explora as causas do declínio da ordem liberal. Em particular, sublinha o ressurgimento dos nacionalismos que se opõem tanto à globalização como à interdependência de interesse entre os estados. Longe de ser aceite generalizadamente, a ordem liberal coexiste com uma competição estratégica entre os EUA, a Rússia e a China (175-176). A última secção é a mais pessimista. No capítulo 'As Três Ordens', o autor analisa as consequências do fim do momento unipolar, e fala da competição

entre os EUA e a China como análoga à Guerra Fria: uma espécie de "Guerra Fria 2.0" (229).

O autor mostra a volatilidade da nova distribuição tripolar do poder entre os EUA, a Rússia, e a China (234-237) mas conclui que nenhuma das três potências está em condições por si só de neutralizar as outras; nenhuma tem um modelo de ordenamento político reconhecido como legítimo pelas outras; e nenhuma quer arriscar uma escalada nuclear com os seus rivais (245). Por isso, autor afirma que a ordem liberal foi já superada pelo regresso da anarquia, definida como a ausência de uma ordem cosmopolita e o retorno da igual soberania dos estados.

O livro mais breve, *O Mundo de Amanhã*, conclui de modo análogo com a ideia de que "A instabilidade multipolar aumenta quando o sistema internacional é dominado por três grandes potências" (Gaspar, 2020, 99).

É notável o escopo das obras, que proporcionam ao curioso e ao académico uma visão dos fluxos de poder internacional do fim da segunda guerra mundial à atualidade (um período de mais de 70 anos). O leitor beneficia de uma interpretação consistente e coesa de um período longo, complexo e multifacetado. Mas não é uma obra neutra, em que o autor se oculta por detrás de factos e tendências. O autor afirma, por exemplo, que as tentativas de implementação de uma democracia socialista no leste da Europa falharam (e estavam votadas a falhar) porque 'democracia pluralista', 'primado de direito' e 'economia de mercado' formam um todo inseparável (Gaspar 2019, 123); e a sua leitura é por vezes paradoxal: terá a crise financeira de 2008 sido precipitada pelas consequências do imperialismo norte-americano? (242)

Mesmo que nos pareçam às vezes controversas, as obras têm duas vantagens inegáveis: sistematizam as dinâmicas do poder internacional num todo inteligível numa narrativa que chega aos dias de hoje, proporcionando ao leitor geral uma compreensão robusta tanto da situação internacional contemporânea, como das suas origens, dum modo que revela a imensa cultura e experiência. Note-se que, mesmo quando não entra em detalhes, o *Regresso da Anarquia* remete para mais de trezentos estudos. Apesar da diferença de dimensão e de público-alvo tornar as obras difíceis

de comparar, a nossa preferência vai talvez para a segunda, que de vez em quando, foge do quadro geopolítico no sentido mais estrito para falar da tecnologia, do envelhecimento e, de modo geral, revela a profunda humanidade do autor.

EDITORIAL POLICIES

Focus and Scope

Perspectivas is an online peer reviewed journal published by CICP - Research Center in Political Science (University of Minho and University of Évora, Portugal). The journal invites submissions from established academics as well as early career researchers whose work may bring unpublished, innovative and significant theoretical, conceptual, methodological and empirical contributions to the fields of Political Science, International Relations and Public Administration and Policy.

Policy for non-original articles

As norm, the Journal does not accept for publication as originals, articles that have been published elsewhere in languages different from that of submission. However, articles published elsewhere (regardless of original language) may be exceptionally considered by the Journal, provided that the authors state clearly in the submission form that the article is not an original and prove to have permission to reproduce copyright material.

Special issues

Journal welcomes proposals for Special Issues. Proposals for organising special issues should be sent directly to info@perspectivasjournal.com

Book reviews

Book reviews may be submitted at any time. They may be up to 1000 words, and follow the journal's editorial style.

POLÍTICAS EDITORIAIS

Foco e Âmbito

A *Perspectivas* é uma revista científica de revisão anónima por pares publicada pelo CICP - Centro de Investigação em Ciência Política (Universidade do Minho e Universidade de Évora, Portugal). A Revista convida à submissão de manuscritos por académicos já estabelecidos assim com de investigadores em início de carreira, cujo o trabalho tenha potencial para trazer contribuições teóricas, concetuais, metodológicas e empíricas não publicadas, inovadoras e significativas para as áreas de Ciência Política, Relações Internacionais e Administração e Políticas Públicas.

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Como é norma, a Revista não aceita para publicação como originais artigos publicados em outras publicações ou em idiomas diferentes dos da submissão original. No entanto, artigos publicados em outras publicações (independentemente do idioma original) poderão ser considerados excecionalmente pela *Perspectivas*, desde que os autores declarem claramente no formulário de submissão que o artigo não é original e comprovem ter permissão para reproduzir material protegido por direitos de autor.

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A Equipa Editorial da *Perspectivas* está disponível para aceitar propostas para Special Issues. As propostas para a organização de Special Issues deverão ser enviadas para o endereço email info@perspectivasjournal.com.

Book reviews

Book reviews poderão ser submetidas a qualquer altura. Deverão ser compostas por um máximo de 1.000 palavras e estar em conformidade com o estilo editorial da revista.

Submission Requirements

Guidelines for Submissions

Authors must submit their manuscripts online at *Perspectivas'* webpage. All manuscripts must be submitted in Portuguese or in English, however, manuscripts submitted in Portuguese must provide its abstract in English as well. The Journal does not provide translation services, but it may exceptionally translate abstracts at authors' request.

All articles must include an abstract not exceeding 250 words, followed by a maximum of five keywords. Articles can not exceed 8000 words in length, including footnotes, bibliographic references, tables, graphics and figures.

Book reviews do not require an abstract and must not exceed 1000 words in length.

All manuscripts should be provided in editable formats (not PDF) and must be free from jargon, biased and offensive language. Authors are responsible for ensuring that their manuscripts are in accordance to the Journal style.

Details about the author(s) and/or academic/professional affiliations must be provided only where requested during the on-line submission process as to ensure the anonymity of the submission.

Revised articles

When submitting revised articles, authors must signal directly in the text all revisions made. Authors may also send a file with a direct response to the reviewers comments, with no reference to contacts, names or institutional affiliations. This file will be sent to reviewers, hence the importance of keeping anonymity. Answers and revisions should always be as neat and detailed as possible as to avoid any misinterpretations. The revised articles and any other files should be sent to the Journal using the author's login area, and following the articles's identification provided by the Journal.

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Orientações para Submissão de Manuscritos

Os autores devem submeter os seus manuscritos online através da página da *Perspectivas* em www.perspectivasjournal.com. Todos os manuscritos devem ser submetidos em português ou em inglês, no entanto, os manuscritos submetidos em português devem também fornecer uma tradução do resumo em inglês. A Revista não fornece serviços de tradução, mas poderá excepcionalmente traduzir resumos a pedido dos autores.

Todos os artigos devem incluir um resumo com no máximo 250 palavras, seguido de um máximo de cinco palavras-chave. Os artigos não podem exceder as 8000 palavras, incluindo notas de rodapé, referências bibliográficas, tabelas, gráficos e figuras.

Book Reviews não requerem um resumo e não devem exceder 1000 palavras.

Todos os manuscritos devem ser submetidos em formatos editáveis (não em PDF) e devem estar livres de jargões, linguagem tendenciosa e ofensiva. Os autores são responsáveis por garantir que os seus manuscritos estão de acordo com o estilo da revista.

Detalhes sobre o/a(s) autor(e/as) e/ou afiliações académicas/profissionais devem ser fornecidos somente quando solicitados durante o processo de submissão online, a fim de garantir o anonimato do envio.

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Ao submeter manuscritos revistos, os autores devem sinalizar diretamente no texto todas as revisões feitas. Os autores podem também submeter um arquivo de resposta direta aos comentários dos revisores, sem referência a contatos, nomes ou afiliações institucionais. Este arquivo será enviado aos revisores. As respostas e as revisões devem sempre ser o mais precisas e detalhadas possível, para evitar interpretações erróneas. Os artigos revistos e quaisquer outros arquivos devem ser enviados através da plataforma da Revista.

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Os autores devem certificar-se que possuem permissão para reproduzir material protegido por direitos de autor antes de submeterem os seus manuscritos a esta Revista. Os autores devem garantir que possuem permissão para reproduzir figuras, tabelas ou extratos de texto originais de outras fontes. Isto é aplicável à reprodução direta e a qualquer reprodução indireta.

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Mais informações sobre a política de Direitos de Autor estão disponíveis no website da *Perspectivas*.

GUIDELINES FOR ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

Perspectivas Ethics and Malpractice Statement

Perspectivas – Journal of Political Science is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal. The journal is committed to guaranteeing ethics in publication and quality of articles. Conformance to standards of ethical behavior is therefore expected from Authors, Editors, Reviewers, and the Publisher.

All parties involved in publishing an article in this journal (editors, peer reviewers, authors, and publisher) must follow appropriate guidelines for ethical behavior. Editors and reviewers must maintain objectivity and confidentiality and manage potential conflicts of interest. Authors must be honest and disclose their sources and funders. More precisely, to assure high-quality publications, public trust in scientific findings, and proper credit for ideas and results, ethical standards for publication in Perspectivas- Journal of Political Science include but are not limited to the following:

Editorial Team

The Editor-in-chief is appointed by the Scientific Committee of the Research Center in Political Science (CICP). Any concerns regarding conduct of the Editor-in-chief should be directed to the Director of CICP. Editors serve at the will of the editor-in-chief, and any concerns regarding their conduct should be directed to the editor-in-chief.

Duties of the Editors

Based on the double-blind peer review of a manuscript, the Editor-in-chief and the Editorial Team are responsible for determining which manuscripts are best suited for publication.

The Editors should evaluate manuscripts on the basis of their scientific merit, without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the authors.

The reviews should be supported by objective and clear arguments that help the author to improve the article. The reviewers cannot in any circumstances take advantage of privileged informations or ideas obtained through peer review for personal advantage.

Policies, Procedures and Integrity

The Editor-in-chief and the Editorial Team are guided by the policies of the journal's editorial board regarding libel, copyright infringement, and plagiarism. The Editor-in-chief will continually assess the effects of journal policies on author and reviewer behaviour, revising policies as required, encouraging responsible behaviour and discouraging misconduct.

Decisions to accept or reject a manuscript for publication are based on importance, originality, clarity, and the study's validity and relevance to the journal's Editorial Statement. *Perspectivas- Journal of Political Science* will never consider an author's race, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy.

Identifying information will be removed from submitted manuscripts so that reviewers cannot access any information about authors, and vice versa. Reviewer comments to the editors are strictly confidential, and reviewer comments to authors will be made anonymous. The names of the reviewers will be known only to the Editor-in-chief, Editors, and Editorial staff and will remain strictly confidential to authors and other reviewers. The names of the authors will be known only to the Editor-in-chief, Editors, and Editorial staff and will remain strictly confidential to reviewers.

The Editor-in-chief, editors, and any editorial staff will not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the authors, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the publisher.

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To ensure accountability and transparency, the Editor-in-chief will establish systems for managing conflicts of interest for him - or herself, staff, authors, reviewers, and editorial team members.

It is the editor-in-chief's responsibility to promptly investigate accusations of errors in published work and to ensure that corrections and retractions are published in an accurate and timely manner.

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The reviewers should respect the confidentiality of the revision process. The reviews should be supported by objective and clear arguments that help the author to improve manuscripts. The reviewers cannot in any circumstances take advantage of privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review for personal advantage.

Private information or ideas obtained through double-blind peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. Manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential documents. Information contained in a submitted manuscript must not be shown to or discussed with others without written permission of the Editor-in-chief or Editors.

Reviews shall contain no personal criticism of authors. Reviewers should clearly express their views with supporting arguments, and reviews should be conducted objectively and constructively.

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If a reviewer discovers a conflict of interest with an assigned manuscript (resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or

institutions) the Editor-in-chief or Editors must be notified promptly to be excused from the review process.

Any reviewer who feels unqualified to review an assigned manuscript or unable to provide a prompt review should notify the Editor-in-chief or Editors to be excused from the review process.

Duties of Authors

Authors of manuscripts of original research should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the manuscript. A manuscript should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behaviour and are unacceptable.

Peer review is the foundation of the journal publication process. By submitting a manuscript, an author agrees to be an active and responsive participant in by responding timely and appropriately to reviewer comments.

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Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work.

Inclusion of citations in a submitted manuscript with the primary purpose of increasing the number of citations to a given author's work or to articles published in a particular journal constitutes unethical behaviour.

Falsifying or fabricating numerical or experimental data or results in a submitted manuscript constitutes unethical behaviour.

Authorship must be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be acknowledged or listed as contributors.

It is the author's responsibility to promptly notify the editor-in-chief or associate editor if a significant error or inaccuracy is discovered in a published work so that the journal can retract or correct the paper as quickly as possible.

An author should not publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. If authors have used their own previously published work, or work that is currently under review, as the basis for a submitted manuscript, they are required to cite the previous work and indicate how their submitted manuscript offers novel contributions beyond those of the previous work. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical behaviour. Redundant publications involve the inappropriate division of study

outcomes into several articles. Manuscripts that are found to have been published elsewhere, to be under review elsewhere, or to have been published or submitted with undisclosed redundant data will be subject to the procedures and penalties.

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The name, address, and valid email address of the corresponding author must be provided. The corresponding author is the author responsible for communicating with the journal for publication. The corresponding author is responsible for ensuring that all appropriate co-authors and no inappropriate co-authors are included on the manuscript and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the manuscript and have agreed to its submission for publication.

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All sources of financial support for the project or any substantive conflict of interest that might be interpreted to influence the results must be disclosed.

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ORIENTAÇÕES PARA COMPORTAMENTO ÉTICO

Declaração de Ética e de Más-práticas da Perspectivas

Perspectivas, Journal of Political Science é uma revista científica de revisão anónima por pares. A revista Perspectivas assume o compromisso de garantir ética na publicação e qualidade dos artigos. Portanto, espera-se que os autores, editores, revisores e o editor cumpram os padrões de comportamento ético.

Todas as partes envolvidas na publicação de um artigo nesta revista (editores, revisores, autores) devem seguir as orientações de comportamento ético. Editores e revisores devem manter objetividade e confidencialidade e gerir possíveis conflitos de interesse. Os autores devem ser íntegros e divulgar as suas fontes e financiadores. Mais precisamente, para garantir publicações de alta qualidade, confiança do público nas descobertas científicas e assegurar que o devido crédito é atribuído aos titulares das ideias e resultados científicos, os padrões éticos para publicação na Perspectivas- Journal of Political Science incluem, mas não se limitam ao seguinte:

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O Editor-in-Chief é nomeado pelo Conselho Científico do Centro de Investigação em Ciência Política (CICP). Quaisquer preocupações relativas à conduta do Editor-in-Chief devem ser encaminhadas ao Diretor do CICP. Os Editores seguem as indicações do Editor-in-Chief, e quaisquer preocupações relativas à conduta dos Editores devem ser direcionadas ao Editor-in-chief.

Obrigações dos Editores

Com base nas revisões anónimas por pares, o Editor-in-Chief e a Equipa Editorial são responsáveis por determinar quais os manuscritos são os mais adequados para publicação.

Os Editores devem avaliar os manuscritos com base em seu mérito científico, sem considerar raça, género, orientação sexual, crença religiosa, origem étnica, cidadania ou filosofia política dos autores.

As revisões devem ser apoiadas por argumentos objetivos e claros que apoiam o autor a melhorar o artigo. Os revisores não podem, em circunstância alguma, tirar proveito de informações ou ideias privilegiadas obtidas por meio de revisão por pares para obter vantagens pessoais.

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O Editor-in-Chief e a Equipe Editorial são orientados pelas políticas do Editorial Board da revista sobre difamação, violação de direitos de autor e plágio. O Editor-in-Chief avaliará continuamente os efeitos das políticas da revista no comportamento dos autores e revisores, revendo as políticas conforme necessário, incentivando o comportamento responsável e desencorajando a má conduta.

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As informações de identificação serão removidas dos manuscritos para que os revisores não tenham acesso a qualquer informação sobre os autores e vice-versa. Os comentários dos revisores aos editores são estritamente confidenciais, e os comentários dos revisores aos autores serão anônimos. Os nomes dos revisores serão conhecidos apenas pelo Editor-in-Chief, Editores e Equipe Editorial e permanecerão estritamente confidenciais para os autores e outros revisores. Os nomes dos autores serão conhecidos apenas pelo Redator, Editor-in-Chief, Editores e Equipe editorial e permanecerão estritamente confidenciais para os revisores.

O Editor-in-Chief, os Editores e a Equipe Editorial não divulgarão qualquer informação sobre um manuscrito para além dos autores, revisores, potenciais revisores, outros consultores editoriais e o redator.

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A autoria deve ser limitada àqueles que fizeram uma contribuição significativa para a concepção, design, execução ou interpretação do estudo relatado. Todos aqueles que fizeram contribuições significativas devem ser integrados como coautores. Quando existirem terceiros que tenham participado em certos aspetos substantivos do projeto de investigação, deverão ser reconhecidos ou integrados como colaboradores.

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O nome e o endereço de email válido do autor correspondente são dados a ser fornecidos. O autor correspondente é o autor responsável pela comunicação com a revista para publicação. O autor correspondente é responsável por garantir que todos os coautores sejam incluídos no manuscrito e que todos os coautores tenham visto e aprovado a versão final do manuscrito e concordado com sua submissão para publicação.

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As fontes de financiamento da investigação do manuscrito devem ser devidamente reconhecidas. É da responsabilidade dos autores seguir quaisquer obrigações de publicação descritas pelas suas entidades financiadoras.

Todas as fontes de apoio financeiro ao projeto ou qualquer conflito de interesses substantivo que possa ser interpretado para influenciar os resultados devem ser divulgadas.

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No caso de serem encontradas violações documentadas de qualquer uma das orientações éticas, o Editor-in-Chief da *Perspectivas - Journal of Political Science* (agindo de forma independente ou em conjunto com a Equipa Editorial da *Perspectivas - Journal of Political Science*) pode:

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