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Marconi Neves Macedo ^α & Maria Arlete Duarte de Araújo ^ο

Abstract- This scientific paper explores global governance as a political process shaped by the increasing complexity of social relations in the 20th century, intensified by technological advances in transport and communication. The study aims to analyze how pluralism and neocorporatism influence the structuring of global governance and impact the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of public policies. The paper identifies two main bases for understanding global governance. The first is neocorporatism, which arises from the State's need to mediate the interests of diverse groups in a context of increasing social complexity. Neocorporatism is presented as an evolution of corporatism, adapted to democratic environments and characterized by decentralization and flexibility. The second base is the internationalization of social relations, driven by the intensification of interactions between States and the creation of international organizations. The study demonstrates that global governance is structured from the intersection of these two axes. The analysis reveals that public policies are influenced not only by interest disputes on a national scale but also by pressures and guidelines originating from the internationalization of these discussions. The paper concludes that understanding contemporary public policies requires recognizing that the State's activity of mediating interests occurs in a globalized neocorporatist scenario, which internalizes the discussion of public policies. Future research on public policy subsystems should consider both neocorporatist elements and the influences of international organizations, whether of a technical content or political pressure in a given direction.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The intensification of social relations that occurred in the 20th century, especially due to the significant technological development in the transport and communications sectors, led to a deepening of the complexity of the interests of individuals and groups. In

this sense, enormous efforts have been made by state structures, whether Western or Eastern, to mitigate or harmonize potential or existing conflicts that arise in this scenario. This, in turn, also reveals, in the same period, an increase in its institutionalization in two senses: on the one hand, contemplating the informal and formal relations of the State with individuals and groups; on the other hand, contemplating the internationalization of relations between individuals and groups, a phenomenon that demands, in turn, the improvement of relations between States themselves. Regarding the first sense, it is important to note that the recognition of the existence of different interest groups on the same topic demands a more refined understanding of the State's performance in its mediation activity, causing the corporatist perspective to be improved to a neo-corporatist perspective, based on the influences of pluralist approaches. Regarding the second, in parallel to the first, it is essential not to lose sight of the fact that social relations are now occurring on a scale that is no longer limited to national borders, so that it is impossible to ignore discussions on the various topics of interest to the most varied groups, also in the international sphere.

The actions of individuals and interest groups, in turn, have effects on the structure and action of the State itself, so it is necessary to better understand these two aspects of the current scenario so that it is possible to highlight the conditions under which the mediation activities carried out by the State take place, as well as to highlight the result of the actions of the different interest groups that dispute power over the mediation environment itself in order to establish or change public policies that better accommodate their interests.

The global governance is a political model and process that has ended up being established in this context, which is why the objective of this paper is to highlight pluralism as an environment for the emergence of neocorporatism and the internationalization of social relations. This, to show how these two elements can be useful in enabling an understanding of global governance structuring and the characteristics of decentralization and diffusion of the arenas of political dispute that hinder attempts at a systemic view of this global governance.

To this end, it will firstly be studied the pluralism and corporatism in light of the mediation activity

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exercised by the State. Next, the first part of the focus of this work, the neocorporatism will be presented as a form of organization and understanding of the relationship between the State and individuals and groups. Thirdly, the second of the two-partied focus will be the understanding of these relationships in the current internationalized environment, in which relationships between individuals and groups are essentially established through state structures. After that, we will present and characterize the arrangement of global governance that is formed from these two axes and highlight its influence on the formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies. Both perspectives reveal a significant importance for the study of public policies today, an aspect that motivates this study. Finally, it will be concluded that public policies are products not only of disputes of interest on a national scale in each State, but also of the influences originating from the products of the internationalization of these discussions and groups of interest themselves, and that it is important to research how this occurs in different policies.

II. STATE MEDIATION BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP INTERESTS FOR THE CONSENSUAL DELINEATION OF PUBLIC INTEREST: PLURALISM

Much progress has been made in the reflection about and understanding of the collective will during the 20th century and on what it represents, and this has been recorded in the structuring elements of the State. Gradually, the idea of a homogeneous collective will has given way to the understanding that it is constituted by a consensus and that there are a series of different wills that cannot be disrespected, revealing a pluralist logic in which multiple representations of groups coexist.

To understand this progressive phenomenon, it is necessary to start by identifying the elements of the collective will in the materialization of the State and, subsequently, demonstrate the presence of elements in the materialization of the State, also of the pluralist conception of society.

One of the most important solutions in defense of the collective will is the collectivization of control over State property. Since the Renaissance movement, in the historical moment of the Enlightenment, the discussion about the republic has arisen – a term composed of the Latin roots *res*, thing, and *publica*, of the people (LAFER, 1989). This is the theme of an important work of the time, written by the Frenchman Jean Bodin (1530-1596), *Les six livres de la Republique* (1576).

Characterizing the republic as a congregation of family or collegiate groups under a single and same legitimate and sovereign command, he recognizes that not only the grouping around common interests is sufficient to characterize a republic, but also the sharing

of the same laws is necessary. Thus, citizenship begins to be based not on privileges, but on the mutual recognition of submission before the same command (BARROS, 1996).

The republican institution is an essential resource as a means of ensuring that the State's patrimonial forces, held by the people themselves, are used exclusively to carry out their will, unlike what happens in a monarchy, in which a dynasty is sustained by these patrimonial forces. One of the most relevant developments of the republic is the notion of alternating government positions, as an exact consequence of this differentiation in the face of the monarchy (LAFER, 1989). Thus, the republic is an institutional idea that supports democracy, being essential to accommodate the diversity that characterizes the culture of complex societies (MORIN, 2015).

Based on the contributions of Bodin (2012), essentially, it is possible to perceive that the element that consigns the path to be followed in favor of the satisfaction of the collective will is the shared normative, from which today it is identified where the State's economic resources should be allocated. This idea was eventually adopted by Rousseau (1997), who perfected it and presented the concept of popular sovereignty, which constitutes the fundamental premise of democracy, which consolidates the rationalist perspective of contractualism and ends up leaving as a legacy the idea of the Democratic State of Law.

It is important to note, however, an important effect of the liberal revolutions: the establishment of private property and private autonomy as fundamental institutions of the Democratic State of Law. Thus, (a) the State is responsible for the ownership and control of assets only of what is necessary and sufficient to achieve its purposes, and (b) the State should not exploit economic activities for the purpose of profit, of producing wealth, which establishes the notion of taxation – tax collection for the purpose of sustaining the structure of the State – already indicated by Locke (1983).

These limitations imposed on the State establish a necessary relationship between the State and the productive market, whose central theme is the subsistence of the State itself, in parallel with the relationship between the State and its people, whose central theme is the satisfaction of the interests of the collective will. Despite this relational duality, the State must satisfy the collective will.

On the other hand, one of the concerns of democratic political regimes is to ensure that this consensus (an idea associated with the majority) does not become repression of the will of groups (an idea associated with the minority) and individuals. Furthermore, there is an important guarantee that supports this pluralism in operational terms – giving concreteness to Weber's understanding of the

intermediate position of groups between the State and individuals – consisting of the freedom of association for lawful non-military purposes, as set out in the constitutions of Western States.

Considering that it is possible to perceive in the constitutional documents in force in Western States, in general, both the dimension of the formal contractualist abstraction of the political science approach and the dimension of the pluralist substantial concreteness of the sociological approach, for the purposes of the present work, it is necessary, recognizing the importance of the contractualist dimension in political progress that it allowed, to highlight with its pluralistic lens the multiple representations of groups that developed essentially during the 20th century.

The conversion of the idea of popular sovereignty into an effective democratic political regime supported by a republican institutionalization, materializing political freedom, highlights the importance of beliefs as an essential motivation for directing the conduct of individuals and the groups they form to articulate their public actions. Thus, a basic premise of pluralism is met: the multiplicity of centers of power from the establishment of associations of individuals who share similar interests resulting from similar values.

Given that these groups are not capable of imposing their domination over society due to the multiple origins of power, they begin to try to influence the decision-making process, especially public policies, in order to meet their interests (COSTA, 2007). Thus, it is possible to recognize that these groups of individuals, highlighted by Weber, based on the sharing of common values, as identified by Durkheim, especially when it comes to a discussion of economic impact, in terms of Marx's contribution, form multiple representations of groups that come together for directed and organized action in the political arena.

The fact is that interest groups that act on the reality of certain themes or sectors are the main ones responsible for the circulation of the different beliefs that they hold, each from their own point of view, under the object of their interests. Furthermore, it is important to note that these actors, as a result of their interest, develop a certain qualification to deal with the object of their attention, ending up gaining legitimacy in the eyes of society. The recognition of the practical effect of this qualification, in turn, ends up causing their conversion into true “entrepreneurs” of public policy – of course, influencing it in the direction that suits them, each in their own way (KINGDON, 2006b; LASCOUMES; LE GALÈS, 2012a).

Thus, it is clear that the pluralist theoretical conception unfolds into a pluralist pragmatic action, pointing to the need to understand the articulation of these actors among themselves and with the State in a dimension that is clearly more complex than that seen at the beginning of the 20th century by Weber. It becomes

important, then, to understand not only the way in which groups are formed to defend interests and articulate with the State, but also the way in which they operate to make their beliefs and positions viable in relation to a given topic.

Throughout the evolution of the State as a mediator (MACEDO; ARAÚJO, 2023) between the public interest, the interests of groups and individual interests, the role of mediation has always been marked by opposing positions between those who understand that the State should interfere only minimally in private relations and those who understand that the State should actively interfere in the regulation of private activities.

Despite this substantive antagonism, the first moments of the social contract expressed in the contemporary Western model of the State – around the beginning of the 19th century – were marked by the predominance of an individualistic vision of society, based on the prioritization of the rights of individual freedom (private autonomy) and property, due to the predominance of classical liberal economic thought, from Adam Smith, in these state environments.

In light of Smith's doctrine, the State's participation in society was limited to defense in the external dimension and to guaranteeing public order in the internal dimension. In this way, society was seen as a group of individuals who should be able to stand on their own in the search for the satisfaction of their needs, from a perspective that was therefore essentially individualistic (CARNOY, 1988).

In the mid-20th century, the true absenteeism of the State beyond physical security – externally and internally – progressively gave rise to the formation of an economic-based conflict that, despite Locke's expectations, demonstrated the materialization of the situation feared by Rousseau. This situation led to the resounding failure of the absent State proposed by classical economic liberalism, which served as the ideological basis for individualism.

The contemporary State resulting from the liberal revolutions, then, after a process of legitimization that had already lasted approximately a century, was called upon to more intensely mediate conflicts of interest in the private sector, which were essentially economic in nature and based on the antagonism between the industrial and working classes (BEHRING; BOSCHETTI, 2006; PIANA, 2009).

III. FIRST BASIS FOR THE FORMATION OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: NEOCORPORATISM

After a few decades, at the beginning of the 20th century, as one of its intervention tools, the State began to classify individuals into large groups and act as a mediator between the interests of these groups, dealing with the organizations that assumed their



representation (corporations), giving rise to corporatism (VISCARDI, 2018).

In a study of outstanding historical relevance, Schmitter (1974) takes as a basis the questioning of corporatism from its association with the ideologies of authoritarian government regimes, such as fascism and national socialism. He records his perception that, shortly after the defeat of these regimes, the discussion about corporatism disappeared, only to reappear around 30 years later. In view of this fact, he proposes to study the various uses of corporatism, suggest an understanding for it, define two subclasses and, in the end, try to raise some hypotheses about its emergence and persistence.

Quite effectively, he conceptualizes corporatism as:

(...) a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports. (SCHMITTER, 1974, pp. 93-94)

After offering the concept, the author warns that this is an attempt to develop an ideal type, so he does not believe that there will be any representative entity that presents all its elements in a way that is perfectly identical to the concept. In any case, one usefulness of it remains evident: the opposition to the liberal individualist perspective is materialized in the incidence of strong state control over the actions of these private categories, so that, in this system, they function based on rules established by the State.

For Schmitter (1974), one of the purposes of developing the corporatist “general model”, in addition to describing some political systems that interest him, is to offer political analysts an explicit alternative to the paradigm of interest politics that had dominated North American political science until then, pluralism. The author justifies the need to offer this alternative because none of the academics had until then proposed an alternative to contrast the model of representation of association-State relations, affirming the degeneration of pluralism. This degeneration of pluralism as an analytical resource, according to the author, lies in its anachronism in relation to the need to understand and explain industrial societies and the peculiarity of their highly complex policies.

Pluralism can be seen as a response to social inequalities, with a proposal for reinterpreting the common good. Based on Schumpeter (1942), it is possible to recognize that the common good, a central substantive element of collective interest, is not something uniquely determined, whether naturally or forced by reason; on the contrary, the common good has different meanings for different people, whether due

to the heterogeneity of social composition or the asymmetry of interest or access to information among individuals, who can group themselves in multiple ways based on these types of differences (CARNOY, 1988).

In other words, pluralism, by recognizing the differences in conceptions about the world and the things that individuals profess, considers it natural to defend that different interests should be considered when defining public policies and, in this sense, accepts different forms of expression of these interests.

To better clarify the starting point of his proposition in this regard, Schmitter (1974) identifies some basic assumptions common to corporatism and pluralism, which must be recognized by any realistic model of interest politics of the time: (a) the growing importance of formal representative associations; (b) the persistence and expansion of functionally differentiated and potentially conflicting interests; (c) the flourishing role of permanent administrative teams, specialized information, technical expertise and, consequently, of entrenched oligarchists; (d) the declining importance of territorial and party representations; and (e) the secular trend towards the expansion of the scope of public policies and the interpenetration of private and public decision-making arenas.

However, even in the face of these similarities, Schmitter indicates the existence of a striking difference between corporatism and pluralism, consolidating the concept of this as:

(...) a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into an unspecified number of multiple, voluntary, competitive, nonhierarchically ordered and self-determined (as to type or scope of interest) categories which are not specially licensed, recognized, subsidized, created or otherwise controlled in leadership selection or interest articulation by the state and which do not exercise a monopoly of representational activity within their respective categories. (SCHMITTER, 1974, p. 96)

Classifying the two contrasting – but not diametrically opposed – understandings as “syndromes”, he notes that this does not in any way mean the exhaustion of possible systems of representation of interests, mentioning trade unionism as a variation of these models, indicating that this perception leads to the consideration that there are subtypes of corporatism. It indicates that the intellectual “excursion” serves to remind us that the process of capturing, organizing and articulating the demands of civil society, as well as receiving, interpreting and applying imperative coordination from the State, is only part of the political process and that it is only possible to understand its purposes and consequences when considered in relation to other political subsystems and the complete configuration of the regime (SCHMITTER, 1974).

With this, Schmitter (1974) addresses a very important issue, namely, that the system of corporatist

representation itself is a tool, a means of improving the democratic exercise of expression of will, which is a product of the increase in social complexity, which demands the recognition of varied positions in the face of different values that generate the situation indicated in item “b” of the third paragraph above.

For the purposes proposed here, Schmitter’s work (1974) still deserves two mentions: one on the role of the State – which has been discussed up to now – and another on the increase in international relations in the post-world war period.

Regarding the first, in his words:

(...) the more the modern state comes to serve as the indispensable and authoritative guarantor of capitalism by expanding its regulative and integrative tasks, the more it finds that it needs the professional expertise, specialized information, prior aggregation of opinion, contractual capability and deferred participatory legitimacy (...) (SCHMITTER, 1974, p. 111)

Regarding the second, based on Manoïlesco, Schmitter (1974) states that there was a complete change in the spectrum of political forces, given that the solidarity that began to be applied between classes in the 19th century would begin to be applied between nations in the 20th century. In this regard, judging by Resolutions No. 3,201/1974, 3,202/1974 and 3,281/1974 of the United Nations General Assembly, he was, at least on a formal level, correct. This aspect of the increase in international relations will be the subject of the next topic.

Analyzing Schmitter’s (1974) reflections on the understanding of corporatism and realizing his recognition that the changes that society was experiencing would, in turn, generate the need for new understandings, we arrive at neocorporatism (VATTA, 1998).

Neocorporatism is a derivation of corporatism resulting from changes in its classic expressions, emerging in the context of changes in the relationship between social movements and the State in the implementation of the administration of wide-ranging public policies. In these cases, the situation requires some form of delegation of responsibility from the State to social representation bodies, which ends up characterizing political co-accountability (SCHMIDT, 2001).

Having emerged as a way of explaining the relations between the State and society in a democratic environment for analyzing public policies, neocorporatism then abandons the pejorative bias of corporatism – due to its association with authoritarian political regimes – and begins to be seen in the most diverse contexts. An important clarification in this sense is that corporatism itself, when taken in itself, as Schmitter (1974) understood it, is not authoritarian; what transformed corporate relations into authoritarian ones was the context, the political regime in which they

developed, and not the *modus operandi*, that is, the content of the actions and not their instruments. Thus, it can be observed that the main difference between corporatism and neocorporatism comes down to the nature of the actors involved – class representation versus thematic representation –, the context of the dispute for power – centralized exercise versus decentralized exercise – and their internal forms of organization – rigid composition versus flexible composition (VISCARDI, 2018). Thus, it is clear that the prefix “neo” fits well with the concepts, as it is a renewal of perspective on the object, especially when discharging the effects of compulsion, without emptying its elementary nature as a tool for representing interests.

In the context of the perception of collective action in public policy arenas during the 1980s, two new modalities of neocorporatism are perceived: mesocorporatism and microcorporatism. The first is characterized by accounting for the action of collective actors not necessarily linked to class associations, therefore acting in a sectoral manner, acting directly in contact with state agencies – at an intermediate level of power – in the search for benefits for their own corporations. The second modality seeks to account for the defense of interests of an actor or a small group of them linked to a local economic dimension. Both are added to macrocorporatism, which focuses on capturing and discussing problems of a national dimension (VISCARDI, 2018). The analysis developed in this work can be clearly situated in the macrocorporatist environment, despite the difficulty for neocorporatist analyses, resulting from the constitutionalization of the singularity of union representations, exceptionally, in the Brazilian political context (MERCANTE, 2015).

Considering that the representations analyzed are not limited to a class perspective, the difficulty is overcome, since in other areas the perception of neocorporatist tendencies for Brazil during the 1990s, for example, ended up being realized in other fields (KELLER, 1995).

The impossibility of global application of this analytical perspective, however, had already been previously mentioned in the literature on European public policy analysis (MENY; THOENIG, 1989). It is important to note that this neo-corporatist perspective emerged in a context, namely the 1980s, of discourses on the limitations of the State that aimed to support a global narrative of the need for greater proximity to the private dimension of society for the joint and jointly responsible undertaking of public policies aimed at meeting the needs of the national population. The role of the State in this scenario then became the establishment of an official arena for sectoral discussion and the role of collective actors became that of ensuring sectoral management based on their position in this official arena maintained by the State (MENY; THOENIG, 1989).

Understanding this environment implies recognizing the importance of focusing on the role and attitudes of the actors and how they use their resources – relational capital, technical knowledge, budget, etc. – in the representation they exercise, within this institutional environment, to meet the expectations of results of their group, in the foreground of their actions, and of the sector, in the background of their actions.

Neocorporatist theory, in the words of Meny and Thoenig:

(...) has allowed us to rediscover the relationships between groups and the State through the complexity of their configuration. While this dimension is absent from pluralist theory and is overlooked by Marxist theory that prefers the concepts of class and capital, it is relegated to the center of research by the neocorporatist school. This reveals the profound inequality that exists within a political society between professional circles, economic sectors, and regions, and the great importance that access to and relationships with the State represent for the actors. This new interest also makes it possible, through the analysis of decision-making structures and collaboration structures, to measure their impact on the content and development of policies and to take into account the voluntarist element that led to their adoption.¹ (MENY; THOENIG, 1989, p. 105)

It is very important to realize that policies are conducted by different actors based on their own choices, which they seek to make prevail by using the resources they have available in the political process, especially the political influence they hold due to their legitimacy in taking center stage in the arenas established by the State and the specialized technical knowledge they have in their professional circles.

In view of this finding, the recognition of the intense relevance of the State is taken as a reference when analyzing its role in mediating relations between groups and individuals, precisely because of the globally projected importance of the public/collective/general interest that justifies its (State) existence, whether to deal with internal matters (national dimension) or external matters (international dimension). In this view of context guided by the sociological approach of the State, with a focus on the materiality of social relations based on the observation of the actions of individuals and groups guided by their values, it is also necessary to address a type of interaction that has received merely occasional attention up until now, that is, the interaction of actors between the national and international spheres.

IV. SECOND BASIS FOR UNDERSTANDING GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: INTERNATIONALIZATION

In view of the analyses made on the State up to this point, it is clear that the attention, from the mid-15th

century to the end of the 20th century, was essentially focused on internal problems and, consequently, on internal political relations and conduct. However, in this same period, there was a gradual but progressive change in interactions between States that deserves attention.

Since the beginning of the Modern Age, States have progressively changed their positions from a warlike misalignment to a negotiating alignment. The historical records of this change (a) begin with the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), (b) followed by the book “De iure belli ac pacis” (1625) by Hugo Grotius and (c) the Peace of Westphalia (1648) with the Treaties of Münster and Osnabrück, which led to the recognition of the need to maintain permanent diplomatic representations of States among themselves (MELLO, 2000).

This last historical moment is relevant in the sense of the analysis made so far: the decentralization of the representation of States, breaking the monopoly of the Head of State who began to (be able to) delegate to his Plenipotentiaries, made it possible to enrich discussions with the plurality of ideas that, naturally, resulted from this fact. Despite a turbulent period resulting from the disagreement between countries regarding the order of precedence in diplomatic representation, a subject that was insufficiently addressed at the Congress of Vienna (1815), diplomacy allowed the flourishing of arenas for discussion of public policies of an international dimension, bringing repercussions within States both on a global and regional scale (VEIGA; RODRIGUES, 2016).

Among the various impacts caused by the World Wars of the first half of the 20th century, one of them was the intensification of the efforts of States in their relations towards negotiating alignment, as a way of distancing themselves from bellicose misalignment. This special effort, initiated with the Bretton Woods Conferences (1944), is symbolized by the consensus established around the chronological criterion in the order of precedence in diplomatic representation and recorded in art. 16 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961.

As a result, the arenas for discussing the interests of States multiplied and evolved in their institutionalization, going on to include, in addition to “informal” forums between these State representatives, such as the Congress of Vienna itself (19th century), the League or League of Nations (first half of the 20th century), the “G8”, the “G20”, the “BRICS” (the three from the second half of the 20th century), among others, international organizations created by States through international treaties and endowed with autonomy vis-à-vis their own founding States to conduct some discussions of an international dimension.

The first international organization created in the manner mentioned in the previous paragraph was the

¹ Free translation by the author from the original in French.

United Nations, by the Treaty/Charter of San Francisco (1945). Endowed with international legal personality, its purpose is to discuss the most diverse themes, on a global scale, taking as a premise the sovereign equality of States and guided by the purpose of harmonizing relations between them (§§ of art. 2 of the San Francisco Charter).

After the establishment of the UN as a new paradigm of interstate relations, especially due to the autonomy it began to enjoy due to the fact that it had its own legal personality, other organizations in this same model were created with the most diverse purposes to act on a global or regional scale, on diverse or specific themes, such as the Organization of American States (OAS, Bogotá Treaty/Charter of 1948), the European Economic Community (EEC, Treaty of Rome of 1957), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, Paris Convention of 1961), the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI, Montevideo Treaty of 1980), the Southern Common Market (Mercosur, Treaty of Asunción of 1991), the World Trade Organization (WTO, Marrakesh Treaty of 1995), the Union of South American Nations (Unasur, Treaty of Brasilia of 2008), among others (MACEDO, 2014).

Given this proliferation in numbers, as well as the impact of these organizations on the international scene, the international community focused on studying this paradigm that removed States from the status of sole subject of international society and began discussing the issue within the scope of the UN International Law Commission as early as the 1950s (TRINDADE, 1981).

After approximately 30 years of discussion, the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties between States and International Organizations or between International Organizations of 1986 was reached, which constitutes a true legal status for International Organizations and recognizes its power to conclude international treaties (TRINDADE, 2009).

Two important records are required in this new scenario: (a) the international organizations that are the object of the aforementioned convention are not just any international organizations, but only those that are composed of States based on international treaties that provide them with relative autonomy (art. 2, § 1, "i"); and (b) these organizations are endowed with the capacity to conclude international treaties precisely in the final moments of the Soviet socialist regime, a historical period in which (b.1) from a political point of view, international relations change from a bipolar matrix to a multipolar matrix and the number of States, as in the immediate post-World War II period, increases significantly with the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; and (b.2) from an economic point of view, the discourse on the need to change the economic matrix of the State's role as a mediator of

economic interests begins to establish a narrative of the exhaustion of the interventionist State (provider) and the resulting need to establish the neoliberal State (regulator).

Recognizing and understanding this scenario is important in order to meet the objectives of this work, due to the need to analyze the repercussions of the creation of these organizations on public policies, whether from the point of view of their formulation, implementation or evaluation. This is due to the observation of some effects of the entry of these international interstate organizations on the domestic (state) scenario of the study and management of public policies. The first of these is that, in addition to new arenas, new actors are emerging on this international scene. These organizations, which present different levels of complexity in their composition, are entities with the capacity to act both on the international and national scenarios, producing effects whether in the perception of state realities or in the assessment of compliance with the most diverse commitments assumed by the States in relation to themselves. The second is the issue of equipping these organizations, which are financed by the States themselves and, although they have defined headquarters, their itinerant meetings are very often well received in the most diverse locations around the world. This is in view of the recognition by the States of the benefits of proximity to them in view of the strategic value of the information discussed on these occasions. The third is that, due to their highly relevant position in the international political organization chart and, consequently, the broad effects of their actions, these organizations are usually made up, on a permanent or temporary basis, of the most qualified professionals in each area in their States.

The fourth is the issue of the (supposed) broad legitimacy displayed by these organizations, originating from the fact that their creation and composition already derive from a prior consensus among States and that their actions are based on guidelines that have been widely discussed for years or, often, decades and finally recorded in written documents that are either exhortatory (declarations) or legal commitments (treaties and internal regulations of each organization).

The fifth is the intense articulation that characterizes international organizations from their conception and creation to the daily exercise of their activities, constituting them as an external and independent extension of the mediation role played by States to act in the international dimension. However, given that they do not have their own territory to manage, the impacts of their actions are necessarily directed at influencing national environments. The sixth is the increasingly evident and intense action of international organizations within the State sphere, in addition to their typically international activity, so that the articulation between the international guidelines brought

by these organizations and the arena in which antagonistic sectoral internal interests will incorporate these guidelines into their discussions and narratives is established, as is the case with education, including higher education.

Thus, judging by the impact of the action of the numerous specialized agencies of the United Nations (UNESCO, FAO, UNCTAD, UNICEF, etc.), the World Trade Organization, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, among others, it is clear that international organizations have important repercussions on public policies, especially in the current neo-corporatist scenario, as they accommodate the best efforts to represent the interests of groups in the field of greatest impact for their efforts, that is, the global scenario (SALLES, 2015).

In this sense, when analyzing any object that is part of a central line of action of these international organizations, it is essential to design the analysis in such a way as to contemplate the effect of these organizations. This is, for example, the case of education, which is part of one of the central lines of action of the United Nations (UN), carried out through the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and is also mentioned in the policies of funding agencies, such as the World Bank (WB), all of which are brought together under the umbrella of a development discourse led by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

There is a first intersection with the line of analysis of the previous section: these international organizations are created as extensions of States and, like the latter, are not an end in themselves nor do they have a will per se. The reason for the existence of these organizations, as well as of the State, is to serve as a means to achieve an end before the community. In this sense, the study of the actions of public authorities – whether acting in national or international environments – is confused with the study of public policies (MENY; THOENIG, 1989).

A second intersection, then, appears: the State, in order to meet its goals before the community, undertakes actions known as public policies. However, the agents that carry out these activities are not exclusively public; they are part of multiple groups that affect the formation of their perceptions and act based on their interests, in all these groups and before the State, based on their individual morals, their values, as, after all, individuals that they are. This allows us to identify two dimensions of plurality, one of which refers to the plurality of the field itself and the other to epistemic plurality (KRITSCH; VENTURA, 2017).

Furthermore, it is therefore important to establish an understanding of this relationship between

the private and state spheres, going beyond the Manichaeism of positions in favor or against the State and beyond the limitations imposed by an approach focused exclusively on the national environment.

The fact is that the State, at this historical moment, holds the status of an institution of outstanding relevance, instrumental and organic, for mediating interests, and that the scope of its structures is not limited to its own borders.

In this sense, the analysis of public policies must include the activity of state and non-state actors in order to demonstrate that the purpose of the State is to mediate the different interests that arise in the community to guarantee the particularities of certain groups, whether tempered amidst the interests of other groups and/or of the community itself as a whole. To this end, analytical tools are needed that can identify the actions of these various actors and their convergence in groups that seek to influence the actions of the State to accommodate their interests.

To properly understand this power struggle, it is necessary to understand the motivation of the actors, which is based on their worldview and, consequently, their interests, considering their influence on the state structure and taking into account that national societies are inserted in an internationalized context with their own actors who also have an interest in influencing the different state realities in favor of their interests, in a system that will be characterized below.

V. UNDERSTANDING GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC POLICIES

The first aspect necessary for this understanding is the concept of governance: a system that establishes the management of a group and the control of this management in order to promote the satisfaction of the interests of the group as a whole, hindering or preventing misconduct by the direct agents of this management process, as a response to the institutional conflicts addressed in the agency theory (JENSEN; MECKLING, 1976).

An important perspective to be observed in this context of governance is the use of the term corporate governance: it should encompass both private governance (including business organizations and civil society organizations) and public governance (including state organizations, organizations created by the State and partner organizations of the State). This is because the term “corporate” refers to “corporation”, an institution that can be either private or public; This record is important to understand that corporate governance is not synonymous with private governance, although this was the environment in which the first discussions on governance arose (VIEIRA; BARRETO, 2019).

Given that the discussion that is the object of this work focuses on the discussion of public policies, it

is in the field of public governance that the reflection developed here is set. Here is one of its concepts:

Public governance corresponds to the processes through which social actors interact to establish patterns of social coordination, responsible for the structures of social cooperation necessary to solve the complex public problems of the State.² (VIEIRA; BARRETO, 2019, p. 27)

Analyzing this concept, it is possible to see that it presupposes a neo-corporatist context, given that it contemplates a multiplicity of state and non-state actors in the public action from which the different public policies result. Thus, it is possible to clearly perceive the neo-corporatist axis in public governance.

This concept, however, does not expressly contemplate the international scale, as it refers, in its final part, to the “public problems of the State”, with the last term in the singular. It should not be overlooked, however, that States are the main actors in the global governance process (SCHMITZ; ROCHA, 2017).

In view of what was discussed in the second section, it is understood that, due to the impossibility of isolating national contexts from the international scenario, it is essential to consider that State public governance is inserted in a larger context of public governance: the so-called global governance. The expression

(...) refers to a set of relationships between different actors, gathered around non-rigidly defined, overlapping and interconnected themes, seeking to define actions, rules, institutions and procedures. The lens of global governance allows us to encompass other actors and relationships than just those traditionally analyzed – States and formal forums – and avoids assuming the political capacity of a given actor or the weight of a given action.³ (GONÇALVES; INOUE, 2017, p. 54)

Once again, the concept presented in the first part of the cited excerpt does not express the international scale of scope of the approach. The aspect to be highlighted is, therefore, the international scale on which state and non-state public action occurs, which is the second axis of global governance, intersected by the neo-corporatist axis. In view of the final part of the quote, it is important to record a reflection on a condition that precedes the structuring of global governance, so that an informed and critically oriented action of the actors is possible.

The situation mentioned so far needs to be understood in order to allow for an understanding of what is really at stake and, thus, shapes the structuring of this globalized neo-corporatist environment, in which national discussions end up being internationalized by some actors with strength in the world game under the pretext of favoring the collective global interest.

Without intending to outline an outline that goes beyond the need for reflection to understand the object of this work, it is necessary, however, to understand that, although global governance is a consequence of the world-system, the configuration of the international society in which it emerged was established as a product of a historical process. The international order created after the two great world wars that occurred in the first half of the 20th century, structured in the triad – proposed at the Bretton Woods meetings in 1944 – composed of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), coincides, chronologically, with the political independence of many African and Asian colonies established during the 19th century neocolonialist movement. This did not happen by chance.

With the content of the San Francisco Charter, which created the UN in 1945, it was no longer possible to sustain neocolonialism, but the preservation of the interests of the colonizing countries needed support. What happened, then, was the replacement of political colonization by economic colonization, in which the presence of the former metropolises would continue to be felt in a practically undifferentiated way after political independence. This permanence continues to this day through multinational companies that continue to develop their activities in the national markets of the former colonies and send foreign exchange (a softer term than profit) annually to the headquarters of these multinational companies, maintaining the transfer of wealth that occurred in the colonial period, but in a more sophisticated way. In short, the direct expropriation (by the metropolis) of the colonial period was converted into indirect expropriation (by companies of the metropolis' nationality) and legitimized by this network of commitments and international bodies, whether fully formalized or not.

With this solution, the former North American colony even changed its position, becoming part of the group of metropolises in this world system – which was only possible due to the fact that its colonization process was characterized by comparatively light expropriation. Except for this exceptional case, the positions of most of the different countries remain, despite some variations, unchanged, which allows us to see, in truth, that political colonialism has been replaced by economic colonialism.

In the next three paragraphs, the objective is to raise awareness of the importance of outlining – albeit very superficially – the scenario in which this actually occurs, from a macro perspective. Before beginning the analysis required to promote this understanding, it is essential to note something of utmost importance: just like States, international organizations are composed of agents who are inevitably members of specific groups

² Free translation by the author from the original in Portuguese.

³ Free translation by the author from the original in Portuguese.

and are influenced by their political inclinations, considering the neo-corporatist scenario already presented. Thus, it is essential not to lose sight of the fact that, often, instead of being the product of a healthy democratic consensus, this alleged collective interest is dictated by international organizations dominated by these specific groups that deliberately and intentionally bias international discussions, using as a resource the political use of the technical knowledge they build or have at their disposal, with the aim of directing national policies (GONÇALVES; INOUE, 2017).

Although this is a very delicate topic because it leads directly to the discussion of sovereignty and self-determination of peoples, it is important to make a distinction: when a State assumes an international commitment resulting from an honest and argumentative discussion, its sovereignty, on that occasion, can be seen in its entirety; when a State assumes an international commitment resulting from a political maneuver based on an artificially constructed vision with a purpose other than guaranteeing the collective global interest, this is a serious violation of its sovereignty. The self-determination of peoples implies different population identities and, added to these different natural, economic and cultural conditions, they compose distinct social realities that, for this very reason, demand distinct public policies. It is easy to understand this reflection when we take federalism as an element to make an analogy: federative public policies, at their central and local scales, as well as in their variations, are (or should be) an expression of the identity of the population group from which they arise and for which they are intended. A relevant and difficult-to-refute example of this undue international pressure is the Washington Consensus, a platform of ideas that became part of the international public debate in the second half of the 1980s. Countries that are part of the global "elite" – essentially members of the prestigious Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) – developed a recipe for the economic success of undeveloped countries that, in exchange for obtaining benevolent financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank (WB), compel these countries to assume and implement certain commitments previously unilaterally registered as "guidelines for development" or "lessons for experience" in documents from these same organizations that, in practice, have a cascade effect on their public policies.

The most interesting thing about observing this is to realize that the recipe followed by developed countries for their self-declared economic success, unlike that presented to undeveloped countries, was to promote a very well succeeded secular process of transferring wealth from one country to another that has undergone classic political colonization – colonialism and neocolonialism – and is currently undergoing

economic colonization – multinational companies sending foreign currency annually. It is believed that an important reflection is that the new political colonization, then, seems to be being attempted and, to some extent, achieved through this international platform.

Thus, it is clear that, in fact, an important part of the directions of undeveloped countries was not or is not freely decided by them, but rather the result of reactions to economic needs that compel them to focus on the end and loosen the filter on the means, which, antagonistically, universalizes solutions, in the pragmatic field, in a time of recognition of diversity, in the field of narrative.

These international organizations, then, in this internationalized environment, constitute true disguises for a small number of powerful countries to compose discussion agendas and promote the creation of documents that present public policies already formulated to be implemented in countries, especially undeveloped ones. Its assessment, in fact, occurs jointly, with international organizations and underdeveloped countries collaborating to collect data and interpret it.

The scenario in which global governance occurs, then, is based on an excessively expanded idea of universalism: this idea should not go beyond the fact of recognizing the categories of elementary needs shared by people. If it goes beyond that, reaching solutions aimed at these needs and also universalizing solutions, it ends up harming the self-determination of peoples and guaranteeing the satisfaction of the agenda of a small group that, by offering some of these solutions, seems to design the problems in such a way as to highlight them. However, from there, reducing global governance itself to a political structure designed to reinforce this structure would be a mistaken understanding.

A very interesting academic and scientific perspective on global governance, then, presents itself: that of taking it as an instrumental resource for analysis, due to its capacity to reveal that the power relations it highlights are relational in nature and occur in multiple dimensions, as well as highly dynamically. Thus, global governance does not necessarily mean, for example, the reduction of state power or the democratization of international relations, but it does reveal that consensus blunts conflicts of ideas and unequal power relations that need to be seen more clearly. Likewise, the search for guaranteeing the fulfillment of collective interests on a global scale does not necessarily mean ensuring the best for everyone. Thus, it is proposed that global governance

is not a category that describes a phenomenon that can be verified and measured by any observer, but is a term that brings together a set of observation tools that accentuate aspects of reality and allow the analysis of a given phenomenon: a set of relationships – political, economic

and social – that are established around themes, these relationships being cross-border and encompassing a diverse set of social actors that offer diverse responses to the theme.⁴ (GONÇALVES; INOUE, 2017)

The main utility of the perspective presented is, in view of this power struggle established in an international network society (CASTELLS, 2002), to allow us to see these power relations and, thus, understand that the formulations, implementations and evaluations of different public policies, which primarily impact national scenarios, can serve the purposes of specific groups and, thus, fail to contemplate what would be the best global collective interest.

In this analytical instrumental perspective of global governance, understanding its structuring over a historical evolution that led to globalized neo-corporatism is fundamentally important.

VI. CONCLUSION

The increased complexity of national societies since the 20th century has revealed an environment in which the notions of pluralism and neo-corporatism are essential for understanding the relationship between individuals and groups and the State. This is to ensure that the structures and practices in which these relationships are established are adequately revealed and, from there, to improve the accuracy of the analysis of the mutual pressures that are harbored by these channels.

This pragmatic focus of analysis is also supported by the emergence, at the same time in the 1970s and 1980s, of sociological approaches to the study of public policies that not only allowed us to see the strength of non-state actors in public policy subsystems from a new theoretical perspective, but also offered numerous new models of analysis based on this vision. Subsequently, especially after the end of global bipolarization between the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was an acceleration in the process of internationalization of international relations between individuals and groups, making this an increasingly important issue for the relations between States. An important reference for this phenomenon can be the visible influence that the United Nations or the World Trade Organization exert on the formation of public policies in several countries, from those with humanitarian purposes to those driven by primarily economic interests.

Therefore, for an adequate understanding of public policies today, based on the assumption that one of the most important functions of the State is to mediate the divergent interests of individuals and groups, it is important to recognize that this State activity is exercised in a globalized neo-corporatist scenario that

operates the internationalization of the discussion of public policies.

As a research agenda for future work, in order to overcome the main limitation of the present study – which is the absence of analysis of a specific public policy –, it is suggested that the analysis of public policy subsystems be structured considering both the elements that reveal their neo-corporatist aspects and the elements originating from international organizations (MACEDO; ARAÚJO, 2022), whether they have technical content or political pressure in a given direction, with the help of analytical models (MACEDO; ARAÚJO 2024b) developed in the theoretical environment of a sociological nature of the study of public action (MACEDO; ARAÚJO, 2024a).

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