

Multilevel governance, promotion of democracy through International Organizations and stages of democratization: a literature debate

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ABSTRACT

The issues of democracy has been associated with national governments, whose analysis of policies dynamics focused on domestic regimes. The expansion of democratic ideas and the events of the democratizing waves from 1970's produced an academic awaken, which led to the perception that democratic promotion were not confined to national states, but, international forces interfered on motivations in different regions of the world. Among these forces, the international organizations have become an important factor in diffusion of democracy due to its multilateral platform, institutional mechanisms and exercise of power in different levels. Associated with these transformative events, the transition from a state-centric governing relations to a more complex relations between other groups of actors exercising power in different levels and centers of power guided the academic discussion to the concept of governance and its different adjectives (democratic, regional, global and multilevel). This article exposes the dialogue among the ideas of promotion of democracy, the role of international organizations and the specific concept of multilevel governance (MLG). Assuming the initial concept of the multilevel governance (MLG) concept of Hooghes and Marks and the recent state of art about this concept, this article, initially, presents how the academic literature establishes the relation between the democratization stages and the role of international organizations, recognizing how the IOs' institutional mechanisms interferes in those stages. Second, it connects this initial relation with the concept of multilevel governance. The main argument is that in stages of transitions and breakdowns of democracy, the concept of multilevel governance has difficulties to fit its characteristics in comparison with the consolidation of democracy stages. This occur because the academic mainstream deals with the two extremist situation of democracy by the analytical lens of an elitist and centralized state perspective. In an opposite direction when refers to consolidation of democracy, which main argument requires a substantive activity of civil society, institutions and political elites in order to construct a plural and inclusive procedure of participation. This article use secondary data and specialized literature to achieve its main objectives proposed.

Key words: democracy promotion, multilevel governance, stages of democratization, international organization.

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INTRODUCTION

The democratization studies in political sciences has been discussed in different approaches, periods, and multiple methodological trends in social sciences. Great part of the studies embraces the discussion about the causes of democracy consolidation and its interruptions. This article, although, aim to expose the dialogue among the mainstream approach of democratization studies, the role of international organizations, and the specific concept of multilevel governance (MLG). Assuming the initial concept of the multilevel governance (MLG) of Hooghe and Marks (2010) and the recent state of art about this concept, this article, initially, presents how the academic literature establishes the mainstream about the causes of democratization stages, given attention to domestic explanations, but also, international ones. In so being, this article proposes a theoretical and conceptual connection between these two areas of studies, not constructing an empirical analysis with a case study or comparative cross-case analysis. At international level, this article discusses the role of international organizations, recognizing how the IOs' institutional mechanisms interferes in the stages of democratization.

Second, it connects this initial relation with the concept of multilevel governance. The main argument is that, in stages of transitions and breakdowns of democracy, the concept of multilevel governance has challenges to fit its characteristics in comparison with the consolidation of democracy stages. It occurs because, in these two extremist moment of democracy, the academic mainstream explanation uses the analytical lens of an elitist and centralized state perspective. In an opposite direction, when refers to consolidation of democracy, the main argument relies on substantive activity of civil society, institutions and political elites in order to construct a plural and inclusive procedure of participation. Thus, the consolidation of democracy context allows MLG features to exercise their capacities.

This section discusses, in terms of concepts and theories, the stages of democratization. At first, this article endorses a common division of democratization stages in political analysis and conceptualize the political context of each stage. Thus, discusses about the causes of democratization in each stage of democratization according to different academic approaches since 1960s, which evolves domestic and international explanation variables.

This section has two objectives. First, in discussion about domestic causes of democratization, endorses that actor-centered theories constructed by positional theory, considered the mainstream of democratization analysis. Focusing on national political elite behavior as the main source of explanations for democracy persistence, these theoretical approaches produces a limitation on multilevel governance approach in analysis of transition and breakdown of democracy cases.

Another subject of the article, due to the exercise of gathering multilevel governance concepts and democratization approaches, discusses about international variables in democratization studies, assuming

that ignoring them would turn the article's objective incomplete and without sense. Thus, the section reserve an important discussion about international actors' influence in democratization moments, in special, the role of Intergovernmental Organizations in such cases.

In the second section, it will discuss the MLG concept. Initiating with the concept of governance and going further to the multilevel adjective, some objectives will be attend. First, the section offers an initial debate about the current literature over governance and explores a specific approach discussed by Simona Piattoni (2010), defending an accurate empirical confirmation assumed by the author. Her argument is that, empirically, to differ multilevel governance from other forms of governance, it requires different levels of government involved in policy-making, multiple actors and hierarchical relationship among institutions.

The third section, discusses the connection between MLG concept and democratization stages. Thus, the argument provides some conceptual points of contact in consolidation moments of democracy with multilevel governance, otherwise, not found in transitions and breakdowns of democracy.

1. DEMOCRATIZATION STUDIES: STAGES OF DEMOCRACY

The analysis of democratization process requires a differentiation of the stages or a separation of conditions that favor democracy transition and democracy survival. This separation demonstrates that exist different actors and structures acting in different political moments in pursuit of enforcement or destruction of democracies. A simpler summarization of these stages would be in three: transition, survival and breakdown of democracy². (COPPEDGE 2012)

The transitional moment is “the interval between one political regime and another (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 6)”, which means that are delimited by the dissolution of authoritarian regime and the opening to some type of government, including the possibility of democracy. Therefore, this is “the workshop of uncertainty” in democratization study for several reasons (MONCLAIRE, 2001 CAROTHERS, 2002). The combination of non-guarantee of “rules of the game”, the unknown actors that will rise after the decline of former regime with constantly chasing short-term preferences, and resource distribution problem

² A more complex stage division can be – preparation, liberalization, transition, crisis, re-equilibration or breakdown, legitimation, consolidation, deepening, improving quality, and survival (Coppedge, 2012). This division of stages about the democratization process, although, is not an agreement among scholars. For instance, O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) called attention that before the transition moment, there is a political preparation characterized by liberalization procedure. This moment refers to the diminishing of repression and increasing of civil liberties within the authoritarian regime. In part, caused by exogenous shocks of political or economic nature, which can split a ruling coalition, provoking disagreements among them and legitimacy crisis with population. (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Pevehouse 2005).

turn the chances of an authoritarian return more plausible and the chances of democracy constantly uncertain. (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986 ; Monclaire 2001; Gel'Man et all 2003).

Empirically, Morlino (2011) argues that a truly transition period occurs when minimal implementation of procedural democracy are set up, such as, the presence of universal suffrage, competitive elections, the presence of a plural party system, different sources of information and, citizens participation of political decision. In this sense, Morlino argues that democracy can start a process of continuity, when the new and political elites dialogues toward democratic changes, or, engage in a discontinuity, the return to authoritarianism by coup d'état.

In general, the concept of democracy discussed by this literature is the procedural liberal democracy, which detection in real life of the institutional requirements as summarized by Merkel's (2015) or the requirement of a democracy³ according to Dahl (1989). In this sense, liberal democracy would be a democratic electoral regime, political rights of participation, civil rights, horizontal accountability, and effective power to govern lies in the hands of democratically elected representatives. (MERKEL 2015)

A deeper process of democracy continuity leads to the next stage of democratization, and the most common analysis in political science: the consolidation process. Differently from transition, consolidation has a deeper and more ambitious objective than transition. In this political moment, the short-terms challenges of transition process has overcame. It means that there are an acceptance of democratic institutions and an acquiescence behavior by political elite, especially when admits inclusiveness and competition among different political forces. To improve this short-term consolidation, it is necessary a power balancing between losers and winners of political struggle in transition process and coalition commitment in order to avoid a return to authoritarianism (PEVEHOUSE, 2005).

Carsten Schneider (2009) states that consolidation of democracy is a result in terms of power dispersion⁴ between the type of democracy and societal contexts in which it takes place. In so being, the democracy persistence will depend of how this combination will settle in the society. Similarly, Vanhanen (2003) argues that democratization continuity takes places in a widely distribution of power, which no group has capabilities to suppress its competitors or to maintain its hegemony. According to this argument, the level of democratization depends of the degree of resource distribution, which means:

³ According to Dahl (1989), a democratic regime for a great number of people would allow the opportunity to formulate preferences (freedom of speech, vote right, alternative sources of information), express preferences (free elections, eligibility for public office), and institutions capable to consider manifestation of preferences.

⁴ Especially, power can be dispersed in a horizontal level (national level of the political system – division of three powers) and vertical (dispersion of power between national and subnational units).

“the best strategy to strengthen the social basis of democracy and to improve social prerequisites of democracy in non-democratic countries would be to carry out social reforms intended to further the distribution of power resources among various sections of the population (VANHANEN 2003: 189).”

Additionally, democratic consolidation, assumed as a deepening and improvement of democracy quality, relates to multiple empirical measures. (Pevehouse, 2005; Poast and Urpelainen, 2015). Linz and Stepan (2016) argue that, once established a functioning state, five other conditions reinforce the continuity toward a consolidated democracy. First, a proper ambience for the action of civil society⁵. Second, an ambience for a political society, where citizens develop a relation of control with institutions of democratic political society⁶.

Associating the citizen mobilization, O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) calls attention to the resurrection of civil society. Its “death” occurs during the authoritarian regime due to the atomization provided by the former regime in order to despotize it. Once it happened, it is necessary to call back civil union, social movements, human rights organization, religious groups and political parties. Gel'man et al (2003) argues that turning the accordance between elites can, also, results in a reliance with mass politics, diffusing legitimacy to all sectors of political society, strengthening the consolidation process of democracy.

Moreover, the importance of statecraft and the enforcement of rule of law⁷ that protects individual freedoms, a state bureaucracy capable to offer basic service to citizens' demands and last, an institutionalized economic society⁸ would complete the conditions to democratic improvement. (Linz and Stepan, 1996). Diamond and Morlino cited by Geissel et al (2016) identify other dimensions, such as, vertical

⁵ By "civil society," refers to that arena of the polity where self-organizing and relatively autonomous groups, movements, and individuals attempt to articulate values, to create associations and solidarities, and to advance their interests. Civil society can include manifold social movements (e.g., women's groups, neighborhood associations, religious groupings, and intellectual organizations), as well as associations from all social strata (such as trade unions, entrepreneurial groups, and professional associations). (LINZ and STEPAN, 1996:3)

⁶ Political parties, legislatures, elections, electoral rules, political leadership, and interparty alliances. (LINZ and STEPAN, 1996)

⁷ “A state of law is particularly crucial for the consolidation of democracy. It is the most important continuous and routine way in which the elected government and the state administration are subjected to a network of laws, courts, semiautonomous review and control agencies, and civil-society norms that not only check the state's illegal tendencies but also embed it in an interconnecting web of mechanisms requiring transparency and accountability”. (LINZ and Stepan, 1996:4)

⁸ According to Linz and Stepan (1996), this institutionalization mediates the relation between state and the market. Part of the theoretical argument associates a degree of market autonomy and a diversity in the economy with an independence and liveliness of civil society, which contribute to a democracy ideals and institutions.

and horizontal accountability, political participation and competition, and last, level of equity and responsiveness⁹.

The breakdown of democracy is the critical discontinuity process, when democratic competitive regimes become dictatorships, in opposition with the continuity process found in transition and consolidation of democracy. Although great part of political science focused on continuity process of democratization, scholars developed relevant variables that explain democracy reversion. (DISKIN et al. 2005; BELL 2016).

Part of the discussion about breakdown of democracy look for societal, economic and institutional explanations (CASPER and TYSON, 2014). Mainwaring and Perez-linan (2013) state that: “(...) political regimes survive when the most powerful actors in a society integrate a coalition that accepts the existing regime. They collapse when enough actors join an opposition bloc capable of overpowering those who defend the existing regime” (id:43).

According to them, the transformation of regime occurs when there is a changing in important political actors (on establishment and/or opposition side), the distribution of power among these actors and their strategic perspectives about the regime in course, assuming similar actor-centered approach with transitional studies. Great part of this conflict occurs in interbranch crisis, consisted of threatens and acts to remove personnel of the branches of government (especially, executive power). (HELMKE 2010)

The removal of personnel democratically elected from branches of government can happen through two kinds of process: coup d'état or incumbent takeover. First one, occurs when armed or security forces removal a democratically elected government using violence, and second one, when an elected incumbent abolishing or manipulating elections (SVOLIK 2014). Pérez-linan (2007) dialogues with Slokin's typology but, always adding the role of militaries both in coup d'état and incumbent takeovers. For him, legislative coups are congressional support for a military conspiracy and self-coup is an alliance between the president in exercise and the military to dissolve Congress.

So being, this section presented and characterized three stages of democratization – transition, consolidation and breakdown - as discussed by the mainstream of literature. The next subsection will discuss the main arguments about democratization causes of domestic and international characteristics. In special, about transitions and breakdowns of democracy, this article follows the mainstream approach based in actor-centered variables to explain the limits of governance multilevel in the extreme moments of democratization stages.

⁹ However, as seen in Geissel et al. (2016), the qualification and quantification of quality of democracy and its association with consolidation requires techniques that are even more sophisticated and reflections and it is not a subject given as finished in democratization study

1.1. THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS OF DEMOCRATIZATION: DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL VARIABLES

In order to understand the process of democratization, scholars focused on causes of democratization. Attempting to summarize the literature, Coppedge (2012) shared a conventional wisdom about democratization studies, although, many analytical schools cannot be agglutinated without reservations and accuracy. However, Coppedge surveys conventional explanations about democratization under four perspective: culture and leadership, economy, the state and institutions, and international influences.

The behavioral revolution in the social sciences in the 1960s brought the culture study. In part, these studies focused on national surveys reducing the democratic culture to a number of attitudes, beliefs, norms and participation, that in the end, claimed for mass civic culture as an important factor to democratization. Moreover, the experience of democracy in states of Europe and different experiences in other regions led the discussion to associate religion with democratization process. (COPPEDGE 2010)

By 1970, the academia stressed an opposite perspective of 1960s trend, giving more emphasis on elites' behavior and values than masses and structural process. The strategic approach, which observation focus on political groups, rationally oriented, in several political dimensions is called positional school of democratization study. (THIEL, 2010) This school of thought search for regime types based in actors evolved in the political transitions according to their preferences, commonly, recognized as hardliners, softliners, moderates and radicals. Thus, this approach reduces the transition analysis to an actor-driven process, which competing groups' decisions deals with the democratization process as continuous strategic interaction.

As an actor-centered approach, positional theory has an elitist characteristic, reassuring that a coordination among main political actors are the most important factor that leads democracy to consolidation or to overthrow leaders in charge. (THIEL 2010 ; O'DONNELL and SCHMITTER 1986; MAINWARING and PERÉZ-LINAN (2013)) Using this approach, Mainwaring and Perez-Linan (2013) and Morlino (2011) analyze the extremes moments of democratization (transition and breakdown) assuming, initially, that actors (political elites) are the center of domestic analysis, which empirically are presidents, parties, unions, business associations, militaries and organized movements¹⁰. Last, dividing the political conflict between Regime (authoritarian) and Opposition, positional theory assumes that regime's fate is an outcome of rational and organized political actors' interaction in these spheres of political competition.

¹⁰ The article does not treat social classes as political elite. In accordance with Mainwaring and Perez-linan (2013) argue that social classes are a blur term and presents problems of collective action, both theoretically and empirically difficult to mobilize and act as an organized group.

Therefore, pacts are the most common results of transitions process because consist in a mutual adjustment between ruling elite and counter-elite (Gel'Man et al. 2003). According to Przeworski (1991) these pacts can exclude rights from authoritarian elites or maintain some guarantees for former ruling class, which turns the transition more costly and complicated. In opposition, non-pacts turn social revolution an intense combat between regime and counter-elites, which is capable to use force and mass mobilization. It may occurs from below, when the pressure comes from counter-elite and masses to ruling elite, or from above, when confrontation occurs between ruling elite and counter-elite without mass mobilization (GEL'MAN et al. 2003).

Besides domestic explanations, international forces, as well, can be sources of explanation for democratization process, especially after the democratization waves of 1980s, when explanations based in national variables only would be incomplete. The first explanations relied on the capacities of national states, in fact, great powers capable to expand systematically and worldly democratic values. Many studies about the US as the greater sponsor of democracy appeared in the literature, especially in the works of Cox et al, (2000), Magen et al, (2009), Thiel, 2010, Whitehead cited by Thiel (2010). After 1990's, other attempts to explain the international dimension of democratization relied on spillover, emulation and domino effects. Gleditsch and Ward (2008), Burnell and Schlumberger (2010) and Huntington (1991) called attention to the importance of regional number of democratic countries, According to them the prospect for democracy increase when, in regional base, there more democratic states, associating geographic proximity with emulation of institutions (Huntington (1991), Brinks and Coppedge (2006).

The seminal article of Keohane et al. (2009) establishes an important relation between IO and democracy defense. The article challenged a common association between the technocratic feature of IOs and democracy undermining in domestic sphere, instead, the authors argues that institutional mechanisms of international organization, including bureaucratic actions, can produce a smooth transition to democracy and even its consolidation. (KEOHANE et al. 2009; POAST and URPELAINEN 2015). Multilateral institutions could enhance the quality of domestic democracy when, at national institutions, restricts power of special interest factions, protects individual rights, and improving the quality of democracy deliberation, or a defense of a constitutional democracy¹¹.

¹¹ According to Keohane et al (2009) argue that, democracies are fundamentally, “constitutional arrangements that enhance the ability of the people to rule themselves by ensuring periodic, fair elections. Democratic deliberation and decision-making require prior agreement on settled rules to establish elections, to determine eligibility for voting and for service in office, to define the responsibilities of various elected officials, and to govern the appointment of non-elected officials”.p.5.

About membership participation in IOs, Mansfield and Pevehouse (2006) treat as an asset that would facilitate democracy transition. Following this argument, membership, as a source of monitoring, would diminish uncertainty by elevating cost of deviant behavior of leaders and political elite, consequently, reinforcing credibly committing to sustain liberal reforms. Additionally, membership would strength compromise among actors giving more legitimacy in transitions pacts when internationally, producing an international validation of brand new transitional regime and enhancing more credibility not treating the political pact as a “cheaptalk” negotiation.

Jon Pevehouse (2002a) discusses three potential causal mechanisms that can explain the influence of IOs on regime change. First, diplomatic or economic pressures in combination with internal forces against old authoritarian fashion movements. Second, associated with Keohane et al (2009), IOs can accept the liberalization of certain group in order to increase the political acquiescence of liberalization, through the socialization of domestic elites. Third, similarly with Keohane et al (2009), credible external guarantee safeguards for elites in democratization process.

About the consolidation of democracy, Pevehouse (2002b) and Poast and Urpelainen (2015), call attention for the capacity of IO to help short-term challenges and, through membership political advantages, enhance domestic institutions, reward pro-democratic and punish pro-authoritarian elite behavior. Moreover, barrier clauses of membership associated with democracy institutions is also strong prerequisite for countries to adapt itself to these institutional features. European Union requires all members to be liberal and free-market democracies, Organization of American States created Santiago Commitment to Democracy or the Resolution 108 to require democratic characteristics from the member states. (PEVEHOUSE 2005)

Poast and Urpelainen (2015) argue that IOs, first, can build standard functions of electoral competitions. It means implementation of fair and organized elections, monitoring results accountability, assistance for legislation and allow political groups to learn from older democracies experiences. Second, improve policy implementation rewarding different societal interests pro-democracy and capable to enhance governance institutions. Third, informational support and solutions to standard governance problems. Fourth, diminish the uncertainty about future policies through political scripts forged in the multilateral arena, in this sense, focal points that can converge expectations in democratizing states.

However, Poast and Uperlainen (2015) are more skeptical about the role of IOs in transitions and reversals of democracy. The lack of enforcement capacity harms the intensive and quick action in cases of transitions and breakdown of democracy. It occurs, because in these political scenarios, it is common to find conflicts, revolutions and strong military coups d'état. This strong response is not so easy to achieve in

multilateral arenas e evolve high costs of action¹² (GARTZKE and NAOI 2011). About prevention of authoritarian reversals, according to them, IOs are just political alarm that can call international community's attention, but nothing substantive in policy action.

Although the existence of these reservations, indeed, IOs have institutional instruments that can intervene in transitions and consolidation of democracy. Table 1 summarizes such mechanisms.

Table 1 – Diffusion of democracy via Intergovernmental Organizations

Diffusion of Democracy via Intergovernmental Organizations		
Institutional and political mechanisms	Democratization stage	
	Democratic Transition	Democratic consolidation
Democratic Barrier Clauses (Pevehouse ,2005; Hawkins, 2008)	Transition e Consolidation	
Economic and political punishments. (Pevehouse, 2005)	Transition	
Moral Punishment (Shamming) (Hawkins, 2008; pevehouse, 2002)	Transition e Consolidation	
Socialization process (International and domestic sphere) (Pevehouse, 2005)	Transition	
Monitoring (Hawkings, 2008; Donno, 2010)	Transition e Consolidation	
Multilateral validation of domestic regime	Transition	
Rule binding (regional effects) (Simmons et al ,2008)	Transition	
Democratic Density (Pevehouse e Russett, 2006; Donno, 2010)	Transition e Consolidation	

A strong argument relies on Regional International Organizations (RIOs) and its better capacity to promote democracy. Laurence Whitehead once stated, “The importance of such International dimensions of democratization seems much clearer at this regional level than at the world-wide level of analysis. (Pevehouse 2005:520)”. According to Pevehouse (2002a), it occurs for some reasons. First, RIOs tend to operate with smaller number of state members and larger possibilities of deeper political interactions than

¹² About this normative and not so politicized argument of Keohane et al (2009) and Pevehouse (2005) about IOs selection of elite groups inside national states in order to establish or restore democratic standards, Gartzke and Naoi (2011) presents two considerations. First, IOs are politicized and according to them, money and hard politics can influence the IOs selections of elites helping, it means, regulate political donations and disciplines to dishonest politicians. This selectivity rescue a more skeptical argument that IOs have difficulties to handle great powers and has to adapt to selective intervention.

GIGOs. Political interactions are associated with socialization of ideas and construction of binding, monitoring and enforcement policies.

Pevehouse's (2005) argument is that organizations with a higher democratic "density" are more likely to associate with both transitions and consolidation. "Democratic density" is the percentage of permanent members in the organization that have democratic regime (id, 2005). In this sense, the RIOs would set enforcement and political conditionality toward a homogenously democratic organization, resulting in policies toward democracy consolidation, such as barriers clause based in political regime and resources conditions based in members' democratic performance.

Pevehouse (2005) believes that, regional international organizations, given their tendency to overcome collective action dilemma easily, they have more political and economic leverage to pressure members to democratize. The less number of actors and deeper political interaction and shared problems and preferences enhance this leverage instruments of punishment and rewards according to a democratic behavior presented.

Hence, this section, initially, conceptualized the most common stages of democratization, which assumes transition and consolidation of democracy as continuity process and breakdown of democracy as discontinuity process. Secondly, this section presented some explanation about the causes of democratization, casting the positional theory as a mainstream approach about this political phenomenon. The positional school of transitology, as an elitist perspective, relies on actor's rational behavior and their interaction among each other as an explanation to democratic fate inside a country. Thirdly, although not so common in the democratization *cannon*, the historical period of democratic waves forced the scholars to observe international causes of democratization, in special for this article, the role of Intergovernmental Organizations as a political instrument to enhance transition and consolidation of democracy.

2. GOVERNANCE AND MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE.

The governance studies are resulting of world constantly increasing of complexity, especially, the globalization process. Keohane and Nye (2002) concept globalization as a "process by which globalism becomes increasingly thick" (id:198), thus, when the networks of interdependence becomes deeper at different points of social contact in the world. This unprecedented size and diversity of interactions claims for an effective form of management, which means, that problematize issue of political order, focusing on how to construct collective decision-making among different actors with effectiveness and legitimacy. In this context, the concept of governance forges itself as an alternative of social management (CHOTRAY and STOKER 2009).

Although the concept of governance is slippery, hard to precise and confused due to its interdisciplinary focus (CHOTRAY and STOKER 2009), many scholars constructed concepts to handle this social phenomenon. The seminal discussion of Rosenau and Czempiel (2000) offers a starting point, admitting governance as “a summarization of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private that manage their common relations (...). At the global level, governance has been seen primarily as intergovernmental relations, but should now be understood also as an involvement of non-governmental organizations, social movements, multilateral corporations and the global capital market. “(ROSENAU cited by WHITMAN, 2005:40).

Assuming this initial statement, governance differentiates from government. Government is a formal authority capable to insure, event in face of opposition forces, the implementation of constituted policies, and are have its effective reassured when produces order, consequently, its non-existence results in the chaos of anarchy. Conversely, governance, it is open up ambience, which not only incorporates governmental institutions, but also informal institutions and non-governmental mechanisms operating at domestic and international spheres, both part of a system of rules dependent of intersubjective (ROSENAU and CZEMPIEL 2000), even in an anarchic world. Although, as discussed by Vercauteren (2010), the relation between government and governance can form a binomial combination. In case of European Integration, instead of a hypothesis of governance without government, the political process challenged the states logic but not vanished it from political scene, instead, incorporated government an important actor among several other actors. In other words, these two concepts, although antithetical, share the same political space and produce more complexity in social relations.

Kooiman (2003) concepts governance as the totality of theoretical conceptions on governing, which means, the totality of interactions of different actors (public/private) acting in order to solve societal problems, attending institutions for these social interactions, and establishing activities based normatively funded. In this complexity, governance is a management form for a strategic context. It means that governance pursuits conditions for ordered rule and cooperation in the collective actions, producing transversal results in different levels, from international sphere to micro foundations of society, such as private companies and family.(KING and SCHNEIDER cited by WHITMAN 2005; CHOTRAY and STOKER 2009)

Assuming that governance occurs in several levels, the concept of multi-level governance (MLG) helped to reconnect the social science disciplines (political science, international politics, sociology and public policy) in a common research question: the conditions for an effective multi-level governance. (DEBARDELEBEN and HURRELLMANN 2007)

MLG is a non-trivial form to analyze social complexity relations, and therefore, requires a sophisticated conjunction of concepts. First, Freidrich cited by Debardeleben and Hurrellmann (2007)

associates the substance of political level with autonomy capacity. In an assertive approach, a political level is that “one level’s legitimate decision cannot be reversed by other levels without triggering a political, institutional or even a constitutional crisis. (Id:3)”. Thus, a meaningful level requires legitimacy and autonomy in order to acquire an organization identification and political leverage in negotiation procedures.

Multi-level¹³ governance would be “a set of general- purpose or functional jurisdictions that enjoy some degree of autonomy within a common governance arrangement and whose actors claim to engage in an enduring interaction in pursuit of a common good. Such a governance arrangement need not be engrained constitutionally; rather, it can be a fluid order engaged in an adaptive process.”(DEBARDELEBEN and HURRELLMANN, 2007:4) The multilevel characteristics occurs in the overlapping jurisdictions functions, in this sense, a phenomenon that takes place in the political mobilization (politics), policy-making arrangements (policy) and structure of state (polity)¹⁴.

Hooghe and Marks apud Debardeleben and Hurrelmann (2007) boldly organize two contrasting visions in type I and type II multi-level governance. Type I of multi-level governance shares functions with general-purpose jurisdiction. In addition, their membership is territorial (national, regional and local governments), defined by durable membership and a limited number of jurisdictional levels, as a common practice in intergovernmental relations. Given these features, Type I governance relates with the Westphalian state and the assumptions of federalism studies. (HOOGHE and MARKS 2010; BACHE and FLINDERS 2004)

Type II of multi-level governance presents the opposite features of Type I when memberships intersects, jurisdiction are not contemplate in few levels and in not few territorial scales, trending to be flexible to changing and preferences of the actors evolved in the political process. However, Type II multi-level jurisdiction can be embedded in Type I multi-level jurisdiction, especially when it tries to respond spillovers of any nature in the coordinative process. The advantage of Type II is that has a fluid feature and in additive of a durable Type I structure can facilitate coordination problems, that the reason tends to be predominate in governance studies. (HOOGHE and MARKS, 2010). Although it is not a theory of

¹³ Hooghe and Marks (2010) also argued that the diffusion of authority in new political forms has led to a profusion of new terms: multi- level governance, multi- tiered governance, polycentric governance, multiperspectival governance, FOCJ (functional, overlapping and competing jurisdictions), fragmentation, the post- national state, consortio, and condominio, to name but a few.

¹⁴ As a place for political mobilization, the multi-level governance goes beyond the “gatekeeper” of state, operating with a larger number of actors, either non-governmental or transnational. As a policy-making arrangement, multilevel governance open up to other functions and exercise of authority, in special, embraces other arrangements that are not necessarily formal. As a polity structuring, the multi-level governance concentrate their analysis in how the state or political structures of decision changed during this political phenomenon (PIATTONI 2010).

integration, multi-level governance¹⁵ assumes that supranational actors and transnational actors are important in integrational decisions, recognizing the increase of interdependence in different territorial levels both in vertical and horizontal dimensions of policy construction (BACHE and FLINDERS, 2004).

Piattoni (2010), worried about the empirical approach about MLG, stated some important categorization boundaries about the theme. In order to check whether a policy is a matter of MLG, she propose four important request. To distinguish from other political policies, MLG policies need to be “(1) different levels of governments are simultaneously involved in policy-making; (2) non-governmental actors are also involved, at different governmental levels; (3) the interrelationships that are thus created defy existing hierarchies and rather take the form of non-hierarchical networks”. (id :83)

Piattoni also calls an important attention to avoid confusion over MLG empirical appearances. In her argument, MLG policies should indicate only “policy-making processes that see the simultaneous or staggered involvement of more than two levels of government” p.84. In this sense, in a policy formation, national governments, which interacts with supranational institutions and transnational actors, are not sufficient to be considered a MLG policy. Consequently, “to mobilize the concept of MLG, these latter must weave together different levels. P.84” (PIATTONI 2010), in addition, “(...) the full and formal presence of regional or municipal governments in policy arrangements is, therefore, not strictly necessary in order to qualify them as genuinely multi-level.” (id:84)

Thus, the empirical gain of multilevel governance approach is to analyze interdependences between different levels of government (at least three: levels of government and civil society—the supra-, trans- or international level) connected by institutional chains and actors who cooperates in order to influence all political public cycle, such as, policy construction, implementation and evaluation of results. (PIATTONI 2010)

In this sense, this section discussed about the concept of governance and its multilevel adjectivation. For matters of this article's argument, this section conceptualized MLG and especially, agreed with Piattoni's argument when considered multilevel governance those policies that evolves several actors in different levels of political autonomy decision in a hierarchical division. Consequently, as will be deeply discussed in next section, MLG evolves directly with dispersion of power required in consolidation process in democratization.

¹⁵ Coined by Gary Marks to understand the development in European Union in its process of integration.

3. MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE MEETS DEMOCRATIZATION STAGES.

Once introduced the conceptual presentation of democratization studies and multilevel governance (MLG), this article aims to connect these two field studies of political science and international relations. The main argument is that in democratization studies, the concept of multilevel governance fits in consolidation moments of democratic stages, but not in transition and breakdown of democracy. The key issue that enables the relation between MLG and democratization stages is the dispersion of power. In cases of consolidation of democracy, there is a requirement for a substantive activity of civil society, institutions and political elites in order to construct a plural and inclusive procedure of participation. It means, in practical, a deconcentrating procedure of power, outcome constantly related to MLG institutions.

Conversely, transition and breakdown of democracy, which academic mainstream are composed by analytical lens of an elitist perspective, assumes that the most important outcomes for political system occur at central level of state and reduced to a small participation of actors, given no important spaces for other levels of authority's influence. Another important line of argumentation discussed in this section is, although MLG concept fits with consolidation process and not with transitions and breakdown of democracy, all stages of democratization can be associated with the concept of governance due to its open up perspective.

3.1. DISPERSION OF POWER: CONNECTION BETWEEN MLG CONCEPT AND DEMOCRATIZATION STUDIES.

In democratization studies, especially in consolidation of democracy, the outcomes of power dispersion creates favorable results to democracy. Robert Dahl (1989), in matters of competitive politics, argues that dispersion of power is an important aspect for formation of competitive spaces in democratization procedure. According to him, the main two forces toward polyarchies¹⁶ are the increasing of participation and contestation process, recognized as continuous form of power dispersion. In so being, the probability of a competitive regime would occur when costs of toleration are low and costs of repression are high, indeed, this scenario is plausible when power is dispersed among political actors in a plural society.

Carsten Schneider (2009) follows the same perspective about democratization and dispersion of power. In his point of view, consolidation of democracy is an outcome of power dispersion and societal context in which it is embedded. It means that, societal variables shape collective actors and disperse power in horizontal and/or vertical dimensions. The horizontal dimension relates to power dispersion at the national level, such as, division of powers in executive, legislative and judicial branches, parliamentary or

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presidential regimes and participation of political actors in central authority decisions. The vertical dimension refers to the degree of power dispersion between national organizations and subnational units, dispersion in which federalism studies or type II governance models discuss intensively. (Hooghes and Marks, 2010).

Schneider (2009), about conditions under which democracies consolidate, adds that it occurs when “specific set of democratic rules distributes power in a way that is acceptable to all relevant actors.id:17”. Thus, the author assumes the power dispersion as an important source of persistence of democratization process when it gathers the social actors’ condition inside a national state. Any disequilibrium between power dispersion and relevant political actor’s preferences can produce discontinuity in democratization path and any power concentration must be within a spectrum contained in a liberal democratic limit, if not, as Vanhanen (2003) argues, concentration of power resources can lead to autocracy, and , otherwise, distribution among many leads to democracy.

Morlino (2011) also relates consolidation of democracy with dispersion of power in another aspect of political life. Beyond the process of legitimation, considered as a set of positive societal attitudes toward democracy, the author calls attention to what he called “anchoring” process of consolidation. According to Morlino (2011), anchor is “an institution, entailing organization elements and vested interests, able to perform a hooking and binding effect on more or less organized people within a society. Anchoring refers to the emergence, shaping, and adaptation of anchors that hook and bind”.(id:113)

The process of anchoring relates to the resulting interaction between political elites and citizens. In this context, intermediary institutions are those that connect governmental institutions with the society. An empirical form to observe these anchoring procedures is in functional circuit of representation, such as, organized associations (business elites, unions, religious associations or gate-keepers of structured interests groups), non-organized organizations (intellectuals, active elites) and neo-corporatist arrangement. In this sense, the process of anchoring by intermediary institutions helps democracy consolidation when, first, increase legitimation by connecting elites and citizens as “transmission belt”, and second, when disperse power through more pluralization of political competition. (Morlino, 2011)

In the context of power dispersion, MLG institutions contributes in several ways. First, as defended by Debardeleben and Hurrelmann (2007), multilevel governance has shared decision-making competencies instead of national governments monopolization. As Enderlein et al (2010) discussed, multilevel governance is a system of nested and interconnected negotiation at several territorial tiers, passing across supranational, central and local government.

Second, Enderlein et al (2010) calls attention to the autonomy dimension of MLG institutions. As discussed before, a substantive level criterion is the concept of autonomy, which means that any legitimate decision taken by the political level cannot be ignored or reversed by other levels, unless by legitimate

institutional rules. Although, the multilevel governance presents different combination of power balancing and dispersion of competences (decentralization/centralization), the functional jurisdictions composed by several actors in overlapping levels with autonomy, contributes for power dispersion.

Third, in terms of Morlino (2011), multilevel governance institutions is a group of anchoring institutions. It means that, multilevel governance enhance and multiples institutional channels embedded of group interests, organized or non-organized, in order to pursuit a common goal. Multilevel governance, in this sense, would appear as several “transmission belts” between interests and pursuing of their achievements. Thus, much more the anchors, much more is the capacity of representation, deepening and intensify relation with institutions and dispersion of power. (Piattoni,2010)

As summarized by Peters and Pierre (2004), multilevel governance differs from traditional intergovernmental procedures in four perspectives.

“it is focused on systems of governance involving transnational, national, and subnational institutions and actors; it highlights negotiations and networks, not constitutions and other legal frameworks, as the defining feature of institutional relationships; it emphasizes the role of satellite organizations, such as NGOs and agencies, which are not formally part of the governmental framework; and, it makes no normative pre-judgements about a logical order between different institutional tiers.” (id:77)

In Peters and Pierre’s (2004) argument, MLG institutions can , first, offers more participation for different actors aside the governmental sphere. Second, establishes possibilities of formal and informal channels capable to connect different levels and actors. Third, creates new possibilities for dispersion of power.

In an opposite situation, political moments of transition and breakdown of democracy are conflicts concentrated in the central government. Following O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) and Carothers (2002) argument, those political processes are a top-down reconstruction of a new institutional structure whose projection requires a national covering, and in great part of predictions, the transition to democracy will be successful when actors evolved in this negotiation construct a pact toward democracy institutionalization .

It means, first, this decision process concentrated in national structure, frequently constitutional reconstructions, darkens other subnational levels autonomy participation. In other words, in these extreme political moments of the democracy regime, the substantive policy changing will occur in the central government, especially in the main sphere of institutional structure, enabling or including, deep modification with other subnational levels.

Second, these moments are concentrated in elite-driven process. Huntington (1991) claims that top-down regime initiated by political elites tends to be more successful. Although civil society or even the masses appear in the political scenario, they are amorphous, and somehow they need to organize themselves in elite groups, such as labor unions, political parties, and popular movements with leaders. In this sense, masses are agents of political process when elites tolerate, or not, their political actions. Following O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986), regimes changes are elite-managed and they are decided in form of top-down collective actions solutions, which political space are focalized at central government.

Assuming that transitions and breakdowns of democracy are not matters of MLG, they can be circumscribe in two-level of decision-making. First, the seminal discussion of Gourevitch (1978) named “second-image reversed” recognized that international factors could influence domestic decisions, constraining and creating opportunity, in matters of economic, military-security and democratization. Later, the two-level games of Robert Putnam (1988) argued that actors acts strategically in order to use international constraint to deal with domestic opposition or enhance bargaining power in international negotiations.

Recently, Andrew Moravcsik's (1993) created the “liberal intergovernmentalism”. Initially, assumes the rationality of state and the definition of national preference¹⁷ through the capacity of national actors in establishing their preferences in government spheres. In this sense, the theory recognizes groups' articulation and the capacity of governments to aggregate them through domestic institutions and practices of political representation. Second, the capacity of state, once constructed these national preferences, establish a relationship with international actors, for instance, cooperating and bargaining with International Organization.

Thiel (2010), analyzing democratization aspects, argues that the internal-external linkage consists of the domestic transition game, featured by conflict between political actors in regime and opposition. In this scenario, international actors composed by structural factors (diffusion effects), unilateral external actors (great power) or multilateral external actors (International Organizations) would act in this domestic game.

In so being, transitions and breakdowns of democracy would accept explanations provided by the mainstream, whose focus relies on domestic variables, or, international variables, such as international organizations. In fact, the two-level game approach does not contradict with the actor-driven mainstream explanations, because still casts political elites as the main explanation for integration and protection of

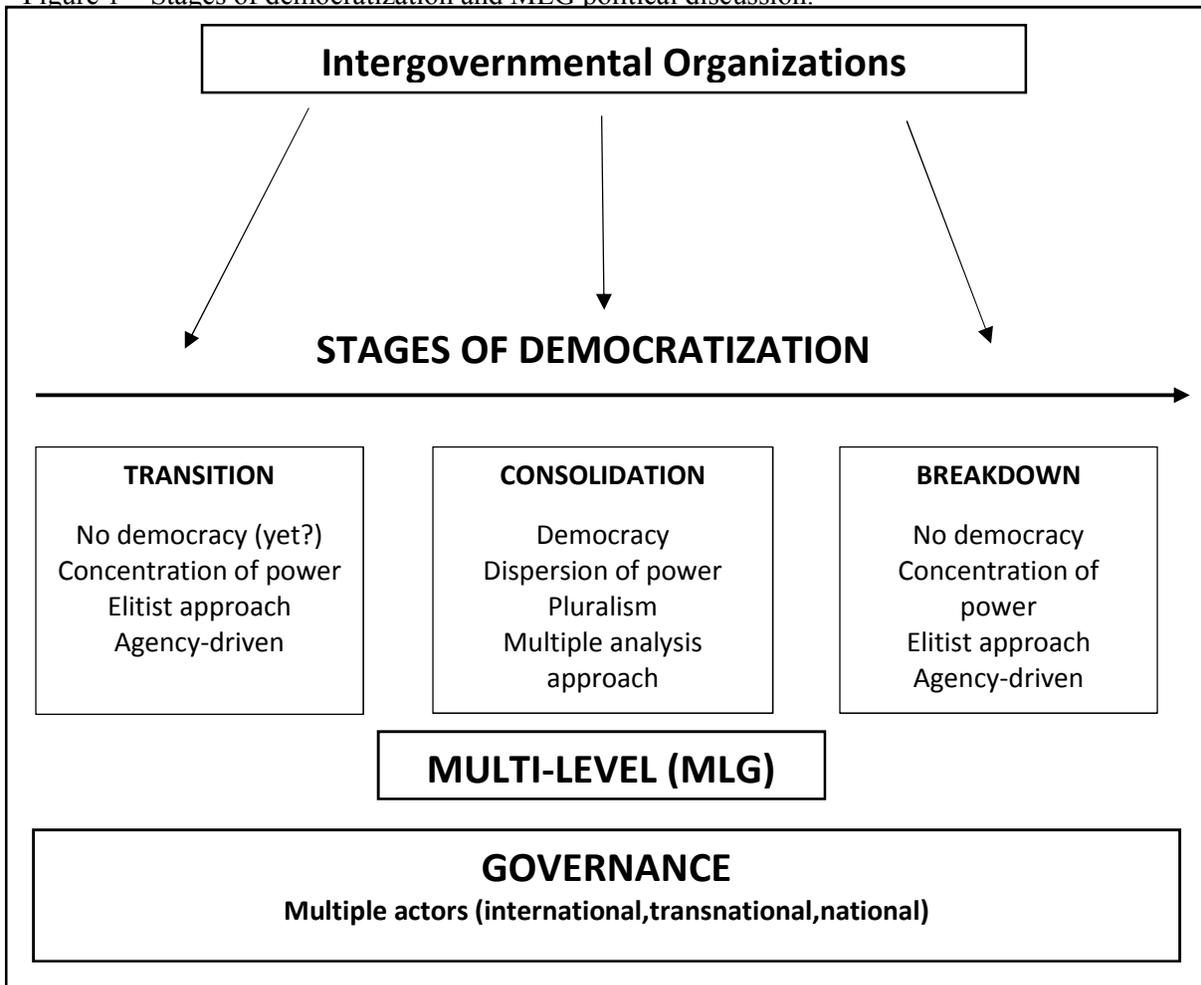
¹⁷ National interest “(...)emerge through domestic political conflict as societal groups compete for political influence, national and transnational coalitions form, and new policy alternatives are recognized by governments.(MORAVCSIK,1997:481)

democracy. On other hands, this approach does not create spaces for other levels inside the state, maintain an intergovernmental perspective about policy construction.

However, transitions and breakdown of democracy continues to be a matter of governance. It occurs because operates with national actors, such governments, corporate associations and NGOs and transnational ones, such as transnational development companies, transnational banks, cross-national donors and IOs, but, not with different levels of autonomy such as MLG approaches would do. (PIATTONI, 2010)

In this sense, the figure 1 summarizes the relation between democratization stages and MLG political discussion:

Figure 1 – Stages of democratization and MLG political discussion.



CONCLUDING REMARKS

This article discussed about the relation between stages of democratization and multilevel governance concept. As main argument, in the relation between this two fields of study, consolidation of democracy would fit with MLG institutions for several reasons. First, because MLG institutions produces dispersion of power due to the multi-tiered institutions. The dispersion of power, according to democratization mainstream, produces more competitive ambience for political interaction. It means a non-monopolization of resources, multiple possibilities of plural exercise of power, and enhancing of democratic institutions by no imposition of one group over other. Second, in terms of Morlino, MLG institutions works as a group of anchoring institutions, which capacity is connect social groups and decision-making organizations. The role of intermediary organizations enhances legitimacy and participatory sense among plural groups, avoiding great gaps between citizens' preferences and final decisions approved.

The same does not occur in moments of transition and breakdown of democracy. According to the mainstream literature, these moments center the political battle in national stances of decision-making. The centralization of political conflict produces two results. First, darkens subnational decision-making autonomy, especially in moments of constitutional reformulation and changes of political regime. Second, concentrate the power at political elites, thus, pacts and conflict between elites (main political actors) will be the main explanation about democratic continuity or discontinuity. In so being, this extreme moment of democratization stages tends to concentrate and not to disperse power, additionally, concentrate the political battles for rule changing in national level and not in a multilevel decision-making procedure.

Although, there is a different application for multilevel governance concept among stages of democratization, the governance concept discussion appears in all stages of democratization, especially, when mobilizes international, transnational, local and national actors in political game.

Indeed, a deeper analysis of democratization studies and MLG concepts needs to be better developed. First, in comparison endeavors. For instance, among different regions (FARRELL 2005 ; FAWCETT and HURRELL 1995), different stages waves of democratization (MCFAUL 2010), different forms of political administration, such as federal and unitary states (SCHARPF 2006; SCHARPF 2010; LIJPHART,1999) and last, incorporating new actors beyond elitist approaches.

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