

## Political Science, International Relations and Global Studies.

### Where are we going?

For a long time, international politics and international relations were considered without distinction. When the international relations was not yet been systematized as a discipline, the vision of interstate relations and its study were subsumed under the political interactions between political powers — sovereigns — and their foreign policies. It follows that every neoclassical analyst in the Straussian sense of the term, includes in international relations the political tradition of the West from Thucydides to Machiavelli, from Montesquieu to the contractualists, from Catholics to Protestants, which shapes the historiography of the political domain, especially called political science.

The 1970s were already running and Waltz still stated that his objective was to develop a theory of international politics (Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 1979), because he recognized that it would be interesting to extend the theory of international politics to the economy, trying at the same time to associate this international policy with the network of interactions between state and non-state units, meanwhile emerging from the world space that did not recognize a superior political power. This position will also be taken up by the authors of the English school in the recovery of the Grotian theme of international society (Hedley Bull, 1932–1985) in which that representative of the Netherlands laid the foundations of its international law (Hugo Grotius, *De Mare Liberum*, 1608), to which our Jesuit Frei Serafim de Freitas (1570–1633) will elaborate an answer on the right of sovereignty and occupation.

From this historical and political foundation, from the themes and authors that make up the universe of the political environment, and on which many today base the autonomy of the disciplinary field of international relations, it seems certain that the effective emergence takes place permanently around discord. The same will be said of war. Hence the intersection with the disciplines of strategy. Consequently, it will be necessary to wait for the two Great Wars of the 20th century to witness the growing autonomy of the disciplinary field of International Relations, which will provide it, as in all disciplines, with a scientific historiography. From now on, the analysis of international politics, founded on the so-called realist paradigm, which marks its origin, was based on positivist rationalist discourses that saw the State as a rational strategic actor, having evolved into post-positivist research agendas, which also demonstrated to produce valid arguments.

Today, the confrontation and debate between the two disciplinary discourses, political science and international relations, is carried out at the level of theories, forgetting that they are carried out through different methodologies, based on epistemologies that are sometimes radically opposed, which often impairs analysis. It so happens that politics, perceived from the point of view of political science, seems

to have lost the ability to leave the interior of the national borders of each political community, except for the honourable comparative analyses.

Thus, given that political science is a social and autonomous discipline, and we can say that it encompasses observation activities; of analysis; of description; comparison; systematization and explanation of the political and social phenomena that also encompass the general theory of the State, nevertheless remains interested in the international affiliations of today's world.

Before this debate, however, it is also important to consider that there are several ways of approaching the object of study of political science, which can be summarized mainly in three. On the one hand, it can be from the descriptive or empirical point of view: in this line, researchers opt for merely empirical analyzes of political reality. In this option of political analysis, the collection of data faithful to reality is of fundamental importance, thus distinguishing itself from normative theories. On the other hand, it can focus on comparative politics, fundamental in political science, this research approach seeks, through comparisons between different socio-historical realities, more general elements of the political reality of societies. Here, too, the mediation of empirical data with theory is necessary, but this time, through comparison, an attempt is made to arrive at generalizable elements of political reality and to question hypotheses or theories conceived about a single delimited reality. Finally, from the point of view of political theory, in this approach, researchers can start from empirical data, but articulate them with political theory itself to understand and explain reality, considering the simple description of reality as insufficient.

In this sense, in synthesis, political science studies the State and its relations with human groups. It also studies internal political agents who fight for the conquest, acquisition and exercise of power, or who, at least, aim to influence it, aiming at the satisfaction of their interests. It also studies the international political agents that influence or try to influence the behaviour of the bodies that, within the framework of a national society, exercise maximum political power. The social utility of political science is based on the existence of a discipline that manages to systematize political processes, movements and institutions, that is, political phenomena. It helps, through its analytical instruments and theories, the understanding of political systems, which will provide a better knowledge and improvement of political systems, allowing more enlightened citizens to intervene in the legitimation of power and actively participate in the political life of States.

Certain phenomena such as the proliferation of democratic systems, political parties, the expansion of the media, international organizations and the access to the international system contributed to the reinforcement of this vision of political science as an academic discipline. These facts have led to an increase in studies on these matters.

Now, all these activities described and theorized are simultaneously human and social realities, so political science can employ different types of combined methodological procedures. As a human science, the discipline's approaches may include

classical political philosophy, several modes of interpretation, structuralism, behaviourism, rationalism, pluralism, and institutionalism, among others. As one of the social sciences, political science also uses all the methods, techniques and sources that can involve both primary (historical documents, official records) and secondary sources (scientific articles, previous investigations, statistical analysis, case studies and model building).

Although the study of politics has been established in the Western tradition since Ancient Greece, political science itself was constituted late. This science, however, has a clear disciplinary matrix that precedes it, such as moral philosophy, political philosophy, economic policy and history, among other fields of knowledge whose object would be the normative determinations of what the State should be, besides the deduction of its characteristics and functions.

Having arrived at the present time, we are also in post-modernity, in this structuralism of discourse and post-positivism in which multilateralism is approached from reflective readings. To the constructivist intention of negating the theory of truth, to methodological pluralism, to the importance given to identities, to the symbolic and to the normative appropriation that characterizes the dawn of the 21st century, we think on a State that is an intentional actor, but whose rationality is debatable. In other words, in an interactive, intersubjective and communicative systemic structure (Habermas) the actors of the international scene live in a state of exception (Agamben), trapped in symbology (Lyotard) they seek through the discourse of power (Foucault), a relationship or web of powers, that needs to be revealed. This return of ideas, of history and security, as a discourse, lives on a constructivism and interpretive methodology that no one seems to want to discuss. Perhaps that is why, in political science, we return to ideas and concepts, to their interdisciplinary application and always remember the past, to try to reform and transform the future.

The *Portuguese Journal of Political Science*, which is updated with the name Political Observer, for the editorial competition of the international market, has been reflecting these paths. The editorial project lives on from those who come to it, but it also simultaneously reflects the universe to which it is addressed.

Thus, in a first part, of ideas and concepts, because the pandemic is not over yet, in a first reflection, Carolina Correia discusses the application of the concept of war on disease that confined us. The concept of strategic triangle is applied to our century, by the pen of Fábio Cláudio and Henrique Varajidás, it analyzes problematic concepts of the past while, Hazem Almassary and Eid Amel, rehearse the projection of new technologies to overcome the democratic underrepresentation of the territories of the Palestine.

In the second part, the Journal also reflects the international demand for journals in Latin languages. In Latin American similarities and differences, articles about Brazil and Uruguay, Venezuela and Brazil are revisited, by Bruno Bernardes' writing in a comparative analysis of social policies between Brazil and Uruguay, Rafael Delgado and Alberto Valera's writing about democracy in Venezuela, in an analysis that

is intended to be historical in order to advance in the understanding of recent events in the country. And, finally, Brazil is viewed through the eyes of Adriano Othon, Clara Cabral, Ana Roders and Rosana Albuquerque, who explore forms of democratic participation, both domestically and internationally.

We would say that in the second part, the perspective of political science is refined, in an incessant search for methods and analyzes that allow us to see the functioning of internal political realities. Regarding ideas and concepts, it should be noted that they are not exclusive to political science or international relations, but they probably fit well in what seems to be the future of these areas of study, which are intended to be designed as global studies.

Which is also reflected in the reviews chosen by our interns. Whether it is the book chosen by Margarida Brito Rosa, *The Return of Dictatorships* by António Costa Pinto, or the book chosen by Maria da Luz Riley, *Portugal in the Era of Strong Men*, by Bernardo Pires de Lima or, finally, the book chosen by Miguel Pereira, *Is China Capitalist?*, by Rémy Herrera and Zhiming Long, published in the years 2020 and 2021, are intended for everyone who wants to understand the contemporary world. We thank them for their enthusiasm, help and collaboration, which, under the guidance of Dr. Patrícia Tomás, carried out their internship, and to whom we also owe the administrative rigor of the Political Observatory and the assembly of the PJPS, which once again we thank and bring to the public. A word of gratitude to the reviewers and finally, to the author of our cover, a Street art photographer, who authorised the use of the image. All, together, allow us to have another issue of the *Portuguese Journal of Political Science*. Our *Political Observer*.