

The idea of dependence and its places

[*A ideia da dependência e seus lugares*

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ABSTRACT • Dependency theories have been an important contribution of Latin American social sciences. Its most recognised offshoot is the world-system theories. Less well known, but equally important, is the dialogue established between dependency theories and African economic thought in the 1960s and 1970s. Our work aims to analyse the influence of dependency theories on the formulations of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), particularly during the period when it was under the direction of the Egyptian economist Samir Amin. Our main sources are official IDEP documents and Amin's memoirs. • **KEYWORDS** • Dependency theories; development theories; African economic thought. • **RESUMO** • As teorias da dependência foram uma

importante contribuição das ciências sociais latino-americanas. Seu desdobramento mais reconhecido são as teorias do sistema-mundo, desenvolvidas por teóricos do centro do capitalismo como Fernand Braudel e Immanuel Wallerstein. Há, contudo, um importante eco das teorias da dependência no pensamento econômico africano dos anos 1960 e 1970. Nossa trabalho se propõe a analisar a influência das teorias da dependência nas formulações do Instituto Africano para o Desenvolvimento Econômico e Planejamento (IDEP), em particular do período em que esteve sob a direção do economista egípcio Samir Amin. Nossas principais fontes são documentos oficiais do IDEP e as memórias de Amin. • **PALAVRAS-CHAVE** • Teorias da dependência; teorias do desenvolvimento; pensamento econômico africano.

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In 1973, literary critic Roberto Schwarz published his famous essay “Misplaced ideas”, in which he discussed the appropriation of liberalism during the Brazilian Empire (SCHWARZ, 2020). How can we explain the fact that when it reached the periphery of capitalism, liberalism, which had played a revolutionary role in the centre, driving the defence of individual political rights, was transformed into an ideology that justified slavery? With this essay, Schwarz launched an important theoretical key to explaining the political metamorphoses that occur in the circulation of ideas. Although originally conceived to develop literary criticism on Machado de Assis, the “misplaced ideas” were used in other social and human sciences. This is the case, for example, of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who used Schwarz’s concept in his article, published in the Review of ECLAC in 1977, to discuss the diffusion of theories of economic development and the extent to which the formulations of the Economic Commission for Latin America were original (CARDOSO, 1977).

Schwarz’s reflection deals with how theories formulated in the centre spread to the periphery of capitalism. It seems possible to renew the proposal of the notable Brazilian literary critic to also understand how formulations from the periphery are appropriated in the periphery itself. This paper aims to analyse how the theories of dependency, formulated between the 1960s and 1970s, especially in Latin America, were reappropriated in Africa during the same period.

The main sources used are documents from the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) and its African counterpart (ECA) and the autobiographical accounts of two important social science theorists: the Brazilian economist Celso Furtado, an ECLA official between 1948 and 1957, and the Egyptian economist Samir Amin, an official and later director of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP). In addition to this brief introduction, the work is divided into four sections: the first analyses the transition from development theories to dependency theories in Latin America; the second analyses the African context during the national liberation struggles; Samir Amin’s work as director of IDEP and, finally, a conclusion.

LATIN AMERICA: FROM DEVELOPMENT THEORIES TO DEPENDENCY THEORIES

The reconstruction of the capitalist economy after the Second World War gave rise to reflections on “economic development”. Reflection on the persistent economic disparities between countries was not present in the theoretical framework of economists, even the most heretical ones. In his notes taken during the Bretton Woods conference, John Maynard Keynes did not hesitate to express his disagreement with the presence of delegates from countries on the periphery of capitalism, which “clearly have nothing to contribute and will merely encumber the ground” (MOGGRIDGE, 1980, p. 42). It is generally accepted that the birth of economic development theory dates back to 1943, when Paul Rosenstein-Rodan published his article “Problems of industrialisation of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe” (ROSENSTEIN-RODAN, 1943; ALACEVICH, 2021).

The United Nations system proved to be an important forum for the first discussions on economic development. During the first General Assembly of the United Nations, held in London in February 1946, the Poland’s Minister of Labor and Social Welfare Jan Stanczyk, proposed a resolution to keep the UN committed to its war-devastated member states. After months of discussions, the initial formulation took on a more precise shape with the adoption of Resolutions 36 (IV) and 37 (IV) of March 1947 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, which created the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, respectively (STINSKY, 2019, p. 95). In 1947, the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA)² was proposed, and in 1957, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

Most of the formulations of the period sought to identify what underdeveloped countries lacked in order to finally achieve development. It was therefore a reflection on “what ‘missing components’ had to be supplied in order to promote development” (MEIER, 1984, p. 13). Seen in this way, development could be seen as an “anti-politics machine” based on the objectivity of scientific-technological thinking (LORENZINI, 2019, p. 93).

By asking what components underdeveloped countries lacked, this vision of economic development, which came from the centre of capitalism, sought to escape another, more embarrassing question: why did underdevelopment exist? This other type of reflection was formulated, in particular, by economists from the periphery of capitalism.

² In 1984, the Commission’s name was changed to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. The acronym in Spanish and Portuguese ‘CEPAL’ was kept and only changed in English, ECLAC. For this paper, we have decided to use its original name and acronym.

In Latin America, the birth of developmentalism can be traced back to the 1930s³. The 1929 crisis and the Second World War opened the way for liberalism, which until then had dominated economic policy, to be progressively criticised and to give way to the defence of industrialisation and forms of economic planning as necessary instruments for generating economic progress (BIELSCHOWSKY; MUSSI, 2022, p. 159). The formulation of a robust theoretical interpretation that justified the need for industrialisation, however, only took place from the end of the 1940s, with the creation of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA).

Having followed the creation of the Economic Commissions for Europe and for Asia and the Far East, Chile's representative at ECOSOC, Hernán Santa Cruz, presented a draft resolution in July 1947 that envisaged the creation of the Economic Commission for Latin America (SANTA CRUZ, 1995, p. 25).

After a long period of discussions and negotiations, the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) was established on February 25, 1948, by Resolution 106 (VI) at the Sixth Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). ECLA played an important role for the region, as it provided a theoretical foundation to justify the industrialisation policies that some of the region's governments had to improvise in response to the 1929 crisis and the Second World War (BIELSCHOWSKY, 2016, p. 13).

ECLA's inaugural harvest began with the famous "Latin American Manifesto", "The economic development of Latin America and some of its main problems", written by Argentinian economist Raul Prebisch in 1948 (PREBISCH, 2016). In this text, the famous thesis of the "deterioration of the terms of trade" is formulated, which would be a central part of the ECLA's interpretation of the specificity of "peripheral" development, as opposed to "centric" development. ECLA's central argument was based on the consideration that "technical progress" was not evenly distributed between countries. This would explain the recurrent current account deficits in Latin American countries. The deterioration thesis was a harsh criticism of the Ricardian theory of comparative advantages. The proposed solution was a broad industrialisation of Latin American economies, carried out under economic planning.

Bearing this initial period of ECLA in mind, two considerations can be made about its development theory: firstly, it is unquestionable that ECLA's theories contributed to the formulation of economic policies which aimed to industrialise the region and overcome the contradictions of dependent capitalism through greater development of the productive forces. Secondly, even if these policies have changed the region's economic situation, it doesn't mean that those contradictions have been overcome.

At the end of the 1950s, the rapid growth experienced by some countries in the region soon turned into an acute economic crisis that required a revision of ECLA's thinking. Bielschowsky points to three elements that would mark this crisis in ECLA's first crop of ideas: macroeconomic imbalances, especially rising inflation

³ Developmentalism is the ideology that Brazil's transformation requires state-led industrialization. It rests on four key ideas: (i) full industrialization is essential to overcoming poverty and underdevelopment, (ii) market forces alone cannot achieve efficient industrialization, requiring state planning, (iii) planning should set sectoral priorities and promotion tools, and (iv) the state must direct investments, mobilizing financial resources and acting where private capital falls short (BIELSCHOWSKY; MUSSI, 2022, p. 158).

and lower import capacity; growing urbanisation, which ended up generating impoverishment and “favelisation”; and, finally, the Cuban Revolution of 1959, which would have a major impact on the US attitude towards popular movements in the region (BIELSCHOWSKY, 2016, p. 20). If the 1950s represented the peak of ECLA's original ideas, the early 1960s marked their decline.

Departing from a critical analysis of the inaugural crop of ECLA thought and policy, dependency theories emerged. Two main branches of dependency theories can be identified. On the one hand, there was the Marxist approach to dependency, influenced by the rise of third-worldism and, in the regional case, the Cuban Revolution. According to Martins, the Marxist dependency theory “set out to analyse the Latin American social formation in a creative Marxist fashion free of Communist Party dogma, and is best represented by the works of Theotonio Dos Santos, Ruy Mauro Marini, Vânia Bambirra and Orlando Caputo” (MARTINS, 2020, p. 211). On the other hand, there was the Weberian approach to dependency, whose main exponents were Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto. Still according to Martins, “whilst taking ECLA's theses as their starting point, they also aimed to subvert them. Their Weberian influenced approach gained prominence both regionally and internationally” (MARTINS, 2020, p. 211).

Taking into account the theoretical openness of dependency theories to Marxist, structuralist and institutionalist links, Oliveira and Kvandgraven propose thinking of them more as a Latin American tradition of International Political Economy or as a research programme than a formalised theory. The authors mention two aspects that distinguish the “dependentistas” tradition from the other strands of IPE: “first, its commitment to theorising from the South, and second, its commitment to a political project of social emancipation” (OLIVEIRA; KVANGRAVEN, 2023, p. 1683).

A detailed analysis of the theoretical differences and their political implications of each of the branches of dependency theory is beyond the scope of this work. However, it is possible to trace a theoretical and political core in common between the two strands. According to Hettne, there are four points in common between the two interpretations of dependency:

- The most important obstacles to development were not lack of capital or entrepreneurial skills. They were external to the underdeveloped economy - not internal.
- The international division of labour was analysed in terms of relations between regions, of which two kinds - centre and periphery - assumed particular importance.
- Due to the fact that the periphery was deprived of its surplus, development in the centre somehow implied underdevelopment in the periphery. Thus development and underdevelopment could be described as two aspects of a single global process. All regions participating in the process were capitalist, but a distinction between central and peripheral capitalism was made.
- Since the periphery was doomed to underdevelopment because of its linkage to the centre it was considered necessary for a peripheral country to disassociate itself from the world market and strive for self-reliance. (HETTNE, 1983, p. 253).

By the early 1960s, it was clear that industrialisation, the focus of ECLA's initial formulations, had not led to the overcoming of underdevelopment. While the uneven diffusion of technical progress and the secular tendency for the terms of trade to deteriorate were important elements in explaining the differences between the central and peripheral economies, they did not explain how the process of peripheral industrialisation, led by large transnational companies, brought underdevelopment up to date.

Criticism of ECLA's initial ideas does not mean, however, that the institution was relegated in the social science debate of the 1960s. The Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), created in 1962 as a training and research arm of ECLA, played an important role in disseminating dependency theories and other formulations focused on the need for reforms that could unblock industrialisation (BIELSCHOWSKY, 2016, p. 9). Free from some restrictions imposed by the Commission, but with access to the material produced by it, ILPES was responsible for the self-critical impulse of ECLA structuralism in the 1960s (FURTADO, 2014, p. 407-408). Together with the Centre for Socioeconomic Studies (CESO) at the University of Chile, these were the two institutions that embodied the first formulations of dependency theories. As we will see below, the Latin American experience in the theoretical formulation of developmentalism and later in its critique was closely followed by intellectuals and political leaders in Africa.

AFRICAN DECOLONIZATION AND THE RECEPTION OF “DEVELOPMENT” AND “DEPENDENCY” THEORIES

The struggle for national liberation was an important moment in the 20th century, which was part of the political horizon opened up by the Russian Revolution of 1917 (TRAVERSO, 2019, p. 185). As Amílcar Cabral (2022, p. 71) mentioned: “since the socialist revolution and the events of the Second World War, the face of the world has been definitely changed”.

The end of the Second World War marked a turning point in international relations, both due to the start of the Cold War and the acceleration of decolonisation. The United States, established as a major capitalist power, developed a broad national security strategy based on two aspects: military and economic. The successive administrations after the end of the Second World War consolidated the policy that the military power of the United States should be the strongest. Within a few years, a vast network of military bases was set up on every continent and various military co-operation agreements were established, the most important being the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO) in 1949. Economically, the United States defended economic liberalism as the main way to generate prosperity. Thus, decolonisation was supported by the American authorities, but as soon as the governments of the newly independent countries adopted some form of economic protectionism, they became the target of criticism (MCMAHON, 2003, p. 9).

It was the first stages of the Cold War. Although, in official US rhetoric, communism was the main enemy to be fought, in practice, even the actions of

nationalist and reformist governments inspired unease in the US government, which tended to link them to threats to its national security. Thus, the “Cold War” between the USSR and the United States was particularly heated on the periphery of capitalism. As Samir Amin states: “The true obstacle to US hegemonist strategy came from the national liberation movements in Asia and Africa, which, from 1945 on, were determined to achieve the independence of non-European nations from the colonial yoke” (AMIN, 2006, p. 47-48).

Going beyond the national aspect, decolonisation and national liberation struggles launched a kind of community of destiny: the Third World. An expression coined by the French economist Alfred Sauvy, the Third World brought together underdeveloped capitalist countries (PALIERAKI, 2023). The first major demonstration of articulation between these peoples took place in April 1955 with the Afro-Asian Conference, also known as the Bandung Conference, the city in Indonesia that hosted the event. The attention of the Third World soon turned to the theme of “development” as a response to the economic problems they were experiencing. It is no coincidence that the first sentence of the final communiqué adopted at the Bandung Conference explicitly mentioned the need to promote economic development in Asia and Africa through economic co-operation (PRASHAD, 2007, p. 44).

If the decolonisation movement attracted international attention to the political situation in Africa and Asia, there was no less interest on the part of intellectuals, particularly social scientists, who were interested in the profound political, economic and social transformations taking place. Important western thinkers formulated a significant part of their reflections during their periods of study and work in Africa. This is the case, for example, of the Italian economist Giovanni Arrighi, who was a professor at the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (ARRIGHI, 2009, p. 62).

After being expelled from Rhodesia for his political activities, Arrighi, along with other intellectuals, moved to Tanzania where he spent a period as a professor at the important University of Dar Es Salaam. There he met the American sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein, also linked to world system theory (WALLERSTEIN, 2000, p. XVI).

The University of Dar es Salaam was an important centre that brought together various African and foreign intellectuals to reflect on the national liberation movements and the challenges facing the newly independent countries (CAMPBELL, 1991). It is worth highlighting the work of Guyanese historian Walter Rodney, who taught at Dar es Salaam on two occasions: firstly in 1967 and then between 1967 and 1974. In Dar es Salaam, Rodney wrote one of his best-known books, “How Europe underdeveloped Africa”, first published in 1972 (CAMPBELL, 1980). The first chapter of the book deals with definitions of development and underdevelopment and concludes with a suggestion of some complementary texts. Rodney warns that “most of that which is available seeks to justify capitalism” (RODNEY, 1982, p. 28).

Rodney regrets that the most popular books on development on the shelves of African universities are those written by bourgeois economists from the centre of capitalism, such as Ragnar Nurkse’s “Problems of capital formation in underdeveloped countries”. Among the critical works, Rodney suggests “Development and underdevelopment”, by Celso Furtado, and “Capitalism and underdevelopment in Latin America”. The Guyanese historian describes Furtado and Frank as follows:

The first writer is from Brazil, a country with a long history of dependence on and exploitation by the metropolis of Europe and North America. Frank's book reflects the thinking of many progressive Latin American intellectuals and it has now become well entrenched as a view of Marxists inside the metropoles. (RODNEY, 1982, p. 29).

The recent publication of extracts from Celso Furtado's diaries shows how excited the Brazilian economist was about the changes taking place in Africa. Having been invited to take part in the conference on science in the new countries, held in Israel in 1960, Furtado noted in his personal diary the impression he had of the entry of these new countries into the international relations of the period.

With regard to the Economic Commission for Africa in its early days, I told them a little about our experience at ECLAC. The initial struggle to survive and forge a development ideology. Conquering the new generation. Helping governments to develop an independent policy. Some of the boys really got excited. I could see in their eyes that they were inflamed by the new faith. If I wasn't already in a battle, I wouldn't be going to Paris. I'd be joining this inflamed African youth. They are aware of the economic servitude that Europe will try to impose on them in a new form. They are wary of the European Common Market. I pointed out that they shouldn't rely too much on technical assistance from the former colonial powers. They should form their own group to think independently. Perhaps we in Brazil could give them some help. In order to form this larger group, some would have to lead the development of an ideology based on an understanding of reality from their own point of view. (FURTADO, 2019, p. 200-201 – my translation).

Conceived as a forum for international cooperation, the United Nations has remained at the centre of discussions on economic development. A quantitative analysis of the changes in the composition of the Organisation indicates the impact of the decolonisation process. Looking at table 1, it is possible to see that in the immediate post-war period, there were only 4 African countries and 9 Asian countries, totaling around 25% of the member countries. By 1980, this figure had risen to 51 African and 40 Asian countries, which corresponded to around 60% of the members.

Year	Africa	Asia	Caribbean	Latin-America	North America	Europe	Oceania	Total
1945	4	9	3	17	2	14	2	51
1950	4	16	3	17	2	16	2	60
1955	5	21	3	17	2	26	2	76
1959	10	23	3	17	2	26	2	82
1965	37	28	3	17	2	27	2	118
1970	42	30	3	17	2	27	2	127
1975	47	37	10	17	2	29	2	144
1980	51	40	13	17	2	29	2	154

Table 1 – Regional composition of the United Nations, 1945-1980.

Fonte: Edmondson (1993, p. 831)

The analysis of African economic thought on the reception of the idea of development has yet to be carried out, but it is unquestionable that the theme of economic development was at the centre of attention for African intellectuals and political leaders of the period (BARBOSA, 2021, p. 80-81). In this context, ECLA developmentalism “became the typical development ideology among the third world ruling classes of the Bandung project” (AMIN, 1994, p. 63).

In addition to the historical context, the parallel with Latin American developmentalism is also justified at the institutional level. In October 1957, a draft resolution was proposed to the United Nations General Assembly, which envisaged the creation of the Economic Commission for Africa. During the debates, the importance of the other economic commissions was repeatedly mentioned. In April 1958, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 671 (XXV), which created the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)⁴.

One of the ECA's initial challenges was to help newly independent countries organise their economies and articulate a coherent economic development policy. An important part of the Commission's work was to train economists who could work in the public administration of their countries. Once again, the eyes of UN officials turned to the ECLA experience. The importance of training economists free from the false universalism of orthodox economic theory and capable of analysing the historical reality of their countries had already been pointed out by Raúl Prebisch in the “Latin American Manifesto” (PREBISCH, 2016, p. 51).

⁴ It is important to note, however, that the first discussions on the creation of this Organisation date back to March 1947 (BANKS, 2022, p. 2-3).

Since the early 1950s, the Latin American institution had endeavoured to train new economists (KLÜGER; WANDERLEY; BARBOSA, 2022, p. 131). As we saw earlier, the creation of ILPES represented a greater structuring in the training of officials to work on issues relating to economic development. Taking the ILPES model as a reference, the ECA proposed the creation of an institute linked to the Commission that could further its research and staff training efforts. The proposal was discussed at the United Nations General Assembly in 1961 and, in March 1962, ECA created the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP). An exponent of the Institute's history was the Egyptian economist Samir Amin, who taught National Accounting in the early 1960s and was later appointed its director. In the next section, we will analyse in more detail Samir Amin's professional and intellectual career during his time at IDEP.

SAMIR AMIN AND THE SPREAD OF DEPENDENCY THEORIES IN AFRICA

In recent years, the spread of dependency theories has been the subject of various studies. Subverting the classic schema of the diffusion of ideas, in which the Global North appears as the producer pole and the Global South as a mere receiver, Clara Ruvituso demonstrates how dependency theories are the first case of a theoretical approach from "within the South" that has influenced the direction of the social sciences on a global level (RUVITUSO, 2020, p. 93). In her analysis, she looks at how the ideas of authors such as Octavio Ianni, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Enzo Faletto and Celso Furtado were published in the 1970s in the Federal Republic of Germany through the work of the Suhrkamp publishing house.

In the case of the circulation of dependency theory within the Global South, Germain Ngoie Tshibambe analyses its arrival in the Democratic Republic of Congo (TSHIBAMBE, 2018, p. 193). As part of the university reform that created the National University of Zaire, the city of Lubumbashi hosted the campus for the social sciences and humanities. The hiring of professors trained in French universities, where they had come into contact with dependency theories, and the organisation of the university libraries, which acquired works by "dependentistas", gave rise to an active counter-hegemonic current of thought and research, marked by third-worldism, within the campus (TSHIBAMBE, 2018, p. 196).

Eduardo Devés-Valdés proposes a typology of the ways in which dependency theories spread in Africa and Asia (DEVÉS-VALDÉS, 2008). The first of these is the presence of students from these continents at universities in the Global North, where there was openness to the ideas developed in Latin America and the Caribbean (DEVÉS-VALDÉS, 2008, p. 89). The author mentions, in particular, the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, run by economist Dudley Seers, a figure who, as we will see later, played an important role in structuring IDEP (DEVÉS-VALDÉS, 2008, p. 90). Among the other forms of dissemination indicated by the author, it is worth mentioning the creation of institutes dedicated to the issue of development. In the African case, the author mentions IDEP in particular, which had

its heyday during the period when it was run by Egyptian economist Samir Amin (DEVÉS-VALDÉS, 2008, p. 96).

Samir Amin did an important part of his training as an economist in Paris. He obtained his doctorate in economics in 1957 under the direction of Maurice Byé, the same professor who had directed Celso Furtado's thesis at the end of the 1940s. In the first of his memoirs, Amin mentions that "I did not have to hunt for a topic. I had long since decided to contribute to a Marxist analysis of the origins and course of 'underdevelopment'" (AMIN, 1994, p. 42)

With a few changes, the text of the doctoral thesis corresponds to the book "Accumulation on a world scale". The choice of underdevelopment as a subject of study indicates the intellectual atmosphere of the period. Common to Prebisch's formulations was a harsh critique of the theory of comparative advantages and its promise to maximise well-being between countries through international trade. Although there are several mentions of ECLA's developmentalism throughout the book, Amin classifies it as an evolutionist ideology, which does not go so far as to criticise capitalist international relations. For Amin, "a genuine development policy implied control over external relations - in other words, delinking - without which the attempt at internal structural reform was doomed to failure" (AMIN, 1994, p. 64). It is therefore not difficult to see points in common with dependency theories. In a review of the nuances between dependency theories, Gunder Frank points out that Amin is sometimes categorised as a "dependentista" (FRANK, 1992, p. 130).

In 1963, Samir Amin was invited to teach National Accounting in the courses organised by IDEP. When he arrived in Dakar, in October 1963, he soon realised the possibilities that the United Nations system offered him, but also its limits. The multinational, multi-professional team working at the Institute seemed to offer a favourable environment for promoting development, but the recurrent changes of Director and the simple transmission of technical knowledge soon discouraged Amin, who returned to Paris in October 1967 (AMIN, 2006, p. 153). In his letter of resignation sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, Amin explained why he was resigning and made suggestions on how the Institute's work could be improved.

At the end of 1969, the then Undersecretary for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, Philippe de Seynes, invited Samir Amin to become the new director of IDEP. Amin went to New York to speak directly with de Seynes about employment conditions and, in his memoirs, he recounts the episode.

I met Philippe de Seynes in New York for an interview, and found a charming man with all the qualities I described above. We were able to discuss frankly and cordially, and from that day we became good friends. I reminded him that I had certain views which I would never give up, that I would continue to express them in writing, and that this would probably not be to everyone's liking. "It doesn't matter," he said. "Someone without opinions cannot play the role expected of him in a position like that. Look at the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA): Raúl Prebisch doesn't think twice about surrounding himself with intellectuals who are in opposition to their

governments, some of them even political refugees, like the Brazilians Celso Furtado and Fernando Henrique Cardoso. ECLA's success is due to them, and to the academic freedom inside it." (AMIN, 2006, p. 198-199).

Samir Amin was director of IDEP between 1970 and 1980. During this period, he sought to transform the Institute into a centre of excellence for research on Africa, building and strengthening partnerships between the Institute and other international educational and research institutions. One of Amin's first initiatives was to appoint an academic director for the Institute, inviting important intellectuals of the period such as the Brazilian economist Celso Furtado, the director of the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), Dudley Seers, the Nigerian Onitiri, one of the longest-serving academics in Africa; Ismail Abdallah; and Charles Prou, director of the French Centre for the Study of Economic Programmes (CEPE) (AMIN, 2004, p. 201; LIPSCOMB, 1993, p. 177).

A search of the ECA digital repository reveals that Amin did not hesitate to disseminate texts produced by ECLA and authors historically linked to the Commission. Table 2 shows a survey of ECLA texts that circulated in IDEP during Amin's leadership. All of them correspond to the Commission's second phase of reflection, which began in the 1960s and was marked by the need to carry out broad reforms to unlock industrialization.⁵.

Title	Author	Year of reproduction
External dependence and economic theory/ Dépendance extérieure et théorie économique	Celso Furtado	1971
The growth and decline of import substitution in Brazil	Maria da Conceição Tavares	1974
Development, underdevelopment, dependence, marginality and special imbalances	Osvaldo Sunkel	1974
La "crise" actuelle du capitalisme	Celso Furtado	1975
La croissance et stagnation en Amérique latine	Celso Furtado	1976
L'unification de l'espace économique	Celso Furtado	1976

Table 2 – ECLAC texts available in the IDEP repository

The period in which Amin was director of IDEP represented the institution's heydays. With increased funding, greater institutional support and a comprehensive work plan that involved staff training, government advisory services and research

⁵ Although it was reproduced by IDEP before Samir Amin's administration, it seems important to mention the existence of the text "African public finances", written in 1968 by Gonzalo Martner, an ECLA specialist in public finances and economic planning. Less well known today, Martner was director of the "Oficina de Planificación" (ODEPLAN) during Salvador Allende's government.

development, the Institute established itself as an important research institution on the African continent. Among the activities promoted by Amin, it is worth highlighting the conference “Strategies of development—Africa versus Latin America” held in Dakar in 1972.

For many participants, it was the first opportunity they had had to debate the big issues facing the third world; at most, a few had caught a glimpse of one another at international gatherings not necessarily focused on their own concerns. Moreover, many of the Latin Americans and Asians were making their first trip to Africa. I will spare the reader a list of all the names, most of them well known. The Latin American dependentista school was represented by its leading figures: Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Ruy Mario Marini, Theotônio dos Santos, Pablo Gonzalez Casanova, André Gunder Frank, Aníbal Quijano, Gérard Pierre-Charles. (AMIN, 2006, p. 204).

It is possible to note that the Dakar conference brought together several intellectuals who addressed the economic situation of the periphery from a critical theoretical framework and was a landmark moment in the formulation of dependency theories. The analysis of autobiographical texts by some of the main exponents of this theory indicates the impact of the 1972 conference. In his memorial, Theotônio dos Santos described it as a moment that brought together thinkers who have since dedicated themselves to reflecting on the world system. Ruy Mauro Marini presents the Dakar conference as one of the first opportunities he had to present and debate his seminal text “Dialectics of dependency”, written in 1972, considered a landmark in the structuring of the Marxist theory of dependency (RUVITUSO, 2020, p. 100). André Gunder Frank presents the Dakar conference as an attempt by Amin to introduce dependency theory to Africa. In turn, Vânia Bambirra was invited to participate in the event, but was unable to attend because she fell ill on the eve of the trip (OLIVEIRA; KVANGRAVEN, 2023, p. 1689).

In an interesting analysis of the Dakar Conference, Oliveira and Kvangraven indicate that it embodies two structural components of the intellectual tradition of dependency theories. Firstly, it is a theorization originating from the global periphery and, therefore, contrasts with the mainstream formulations of International Political Economy, which are markedly Anglo-Saxon. Secondly, they are part of the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist political struggle (OLIVEIRA; KVANGRAVEN, 2023, p. 1688).

Since the 1972 Dakar conference, it has been possible to note a greater articulation of thinkers linked to the periphery of capitalism. In 1973, the Council for the Development of Social Science in Africa (CODESRIA) was created, whose first director was Samir Amin, and which was directly inspired by the experience of the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO) (AMIN, 2006, p. 223). Noting the need to articulate an entity that went beyond the Regional Councils, Amin proposed the creation of the Third World Forum, which would bring together intellectuals from all over the Third World and facilitate the circulation of critical analyses among them. One of the first preparatory meetings for the Forum took place in Santiago in April 1973, at the invitation of Salvador Allende, a few months before the tragic coup d'état, which had severe consequences for Chilean politics, but also for the continuity of the

formulations of dependency theories. Finally, it is possible to mention the creation of the Association of Third World Economists, which took place in Algiers in 1976, and whose directors were Samir Amin, Celso Furtado, among others (DIRECCIÓN..., 1977). It is therefore clear that, more than a one-off event, the 1972 Algiers Conference was part of an effort to bring together theoretical and political thinkers from the periphery of capitalism, and represented “an intellectual counterpart to the diplomatic efforts by then-called Third World countries to challenge the world order centered on economic institutions and international regimes dominated by so-called First World” (OLIVEIRA; KVANGRAVEN, 2023, p. 1691).

The growing organization of the Third World did not fail to generate tensions with the countries at the center of capitalism. During the Algiers Conference in 1973, the Non-Aligned Movement approved a declaration advocating the establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO). The following year, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a similar resolution, marking the zenith of the capacity of Third World countries to set the international agenda (BEST; HANHIMÄKI; MAILO; SCHULZE, 2014, p. 349). The first oil shock that occurred in 1973 indicated that the articulation of the Third World was not limited to declarations of principles, but was able to influence the actions of the countries’ governments. As Amin points out:

Third world countries were very active within the UN system throughout the Bandung period, and especially between 1960 and 1975. Who does not remember those meetings of the General Assembly in September October of every year, when leading statesmen and famous journalists used to gather in the lobby of the UN building in New York? Nowadays, the only people one sees there are minor officials and insignificant reporters. The diplomacy of the non-aligned countries and the Group of 77 used to force discussion of all the real issues of our time, from the nature of the international economic order (and the creation of UNCTAD in 1964) to the political intervention of the major powers in the affairs of the third world. I had the opportunity to attend several of these General Assembly sessions, as an adviser to some of the most active non-aligned states. I learned a lot there from well-briefed officials and experts, and I made a lot of new friends. The weight of third world diplomacy in those days helped to temper Washington’s ambitions, despite the presence of its African and other agents within the UN apparatus. (AMIN, 2006, p. 218).

The reaction of the countries at the center of capitalism was not long in coming. From an ideological point of view, the progress of discussions on the NIEO, which demanded reparations for colonialism, permanent sovereignty of countries over their natural resources and mechanisms for stabilizing the prices of raw materials, sparked a reaction from neoliberal economists. As stated by Quinn Slobodian:

Opposing the world projects of both the NIEO and the global reformists was a formative struggle for neoliberals in the 1970s. Given what they saw as the G-77 misuse of state sovereignty to unsettle world economic order, neoliberals sought ways to circumvent the authority of national governments. By the early 1980s this manifested in renewed attention to modes of investment protection and third-party arbitration alongside

the rethinking of criteria for World Bank aid and IMF assistance that would become known as the Washington Consensus. Equally important was the rise of monetarism, culminating in the so-called Volcker Shock in 1979, which dramatically raised U.S. interest rates—and thus debt service payments for Global South nations—initiating the Third World debt crisis and dealing the “death blow to the NIEO movement. (SLOBODIAN, 2018, p. 222).

The neoliberal counterrevolution directly targeted the articulation of Third World countries. The attempt at economic ascension by underdeveloped countries was intolerable for the economic order established after the Second World War. The United States government saw the Third World’s aspirations for autonomous development as a threat to the Cold War world order (ARRIGHI, 2010, p. 331). For Arrighi, the achievement of full sovereignty by the Third World constituted a latent and growing threat to North American global power, potentially much more serious than Soviet power itself (ARRIGHI, 2010, p. 332).

It should not be overlooked that an important component of neoliberalism was also the battle of ideas that it waged against critical theories, such as dependency theory. In his book on the “end of history”, the American sociologist Francis Fukuyama dedicates an entire chapter to criticizing it. For Fukuyama, the conclusion is clear: “No underdeveloped country in the Third World is disadvantaged simply because it began the growth process later than Europe, nor are the established industrial powers capable of blocking the development of a latecomer” (FUKUYAMA, 1992, p. 103). Thus, the neoliberal counterrevolution imposed a severe setback not only in terms of economic policy, but also in terms of reflection, marginalizing critical thinking formulated on the periphery of capitalism.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Dependency theories were an important theoretical paradigm formulated on the periphery of capitalism and which had important political repercussions. Once the diffusion of dependency theories has been analyzed, it is possible to return to the initial argument about “misplaced ideas”. Although they were initially formulated in Latin America, dependency theories represented a critical theoretical framework that influenced thinkers and activists in the Third World. As Oliveira and Kvangraven (2023, p. 1684) point out: “While dependency theory is often associated with Latin America, strands of dependency theory emerged across the world, including in Africa and the Caribbean”.

Based on the observation of the failure of the theory of economic development to overcome underdevelopment, the dependency theory could be seen on the African continent as a warning against the risks of uncritically adhering to the same type of economic policy. The risk that, after political independence, a deepening of economic dependence would follow, as had occurred in Latin America, was perceived by some African political leaders and intellectuals (AFRICAN UNION, 2022, p. 44).

Thus, unlike what happened with the spread of liberalism, understood as a

universal ideology that pointed to the importance of the development of capitalism, centered on the guarantee of individual rights and, above all, private property, dependency theories represent a critical reflection on what the development of the capitalist mode of production actually was. In this way, they seek to understand the functioning of the world economy, strongly conditioned by the center of capitalism, and how the periphery of capitalism fits into this economy. It was thus possible to develop a theoretical formulation that combined economics and politics, highlighting how the mediation between center and periphery occurs. In other words, dependency theories opened up space to see how “underdeveloped” countries have internal structures and classes that are also fundamental to their economic dynamics.

In this way, one can perceive the intellectual and political refinement of the “dependentistas” who combined a fine understanding of the functioning of contemporary capitalism and its connection with the situation in peripheral countries. The differences between center and periphery no longer appear as a mark of “backwardness”, but as an expression of the functioning of the economic system itself (SCHWARZ, 2001, p. 161).

Thus, once re-appropriated in the African context, dependency theories would no longer be a “second-degree” ideology, as Schwarz mentions about liberalism in Brazil in the 19th century⁶. Thus, as they originally did in Latin America, those theories also played a role in Africa, along with other perspectives already being developed on the continent, in affirming an international struggle and opening up a space for understanding the unequal and combined nature of capitalism and how to overcome it.

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6 For Schwarz, liberalism in Europe was an ideology that masked a class reality that was asserting itself with the advance of capitalism. In the case of Brazil, “ideologies do not describe reality, not even falsely, or work according to any law of their own. It is for that reason we shall label them ‘second-degree ideologies’” (SCHWARZ, 2020, p. 6).

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