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NATIONAL LEGISLATIVES AND REGIONAL BLOCS: THE CASES OF BRAZIL AND FRANCE IN NORMS PRODUCED IN MERCOSUL AND EUROPEAN UNION

1. Introduction:

The European Union (EU) and Mercosul, two regional blocs containing both States which shall be compared systematically in this paper, have institutional backgrounds and histories filled with similarities and differences. Brazil and France are also States with bureaucratic and institutional structures evenly alike or different. The general purpose of comparing the impact of parliamentary organs of both countries in regional integration with attention to democratic representation is due to an initial perception that both of them have strong, relatively centralized Executives and similarities in Foreign Policy. Their diplomatic bodies are strongly professionalized and institutionally structured, and together with a few constitutional mechanisms for the Foreign Policy, they conform the most important institutional similarities between Brazil and France that will guide this paper's composition.

The guidelines of this work had notable empirical character, since its variables were elaborated from primary sources from Brazilian and French governments, both from its executive and legislative branches. In the first part of the paper the institutional dynamics of the executive/legislative relations in both countries is reviewed, with attention to decision process' centrality and the distance of domestic public opinion in Foreign Policy's conduction. In the second part representation and democracy arise, focusing in Brazilian and French participation in their integration projects, Mercosul and EU respectively, and the enhancement of their supranational bodies. In the third part of the paper there will be elaborated a quantitative analysis of domestic institutional contexts of Brazil and France's internalization of norms generated in their regional blocs. The pursuit of this discussion is to analyze how Brazilian and French parliamentary representatives influence Foreign Policy in their national contexts.

2. Democratic parliamentary Control and the decisive centrality in the relation Executive-Legislative between Brazil and France

Parliamentarism and presidentialism are extensively compared as models that stimulate the creation of institutional designs that are, in their essence, different; what is substantially explained by the degree of centrality in public decisions. The nature of these differences seems to lie in the structure that determines the internal relation among powers. While parliamentarism was always associated with the cooperation between the Executive and the Legislative branches, and the consequent fluidity of the governability, the presidentialism was connected to the idea of the separation of powers which, even

though grounded in the democratic control, can problematize the efficiency of the decisional process (Cheibub, 2013; Shugart & Carey, 1992).

As in parliamentarian systems, the legislative chambers have the prime function of constitute/destitute governments, in a way that the Executive-Legislative relations are marked by a “mutual dependency”, reducing the tensions between the two powers (Cheibub & Limongi, 2010). That’s why partisan majorities always constituted the basic premise of functional regularity and stability of parliamentary governments, stimulating the coalition building and the inter institutional coordination of support on the decision-making.

The lack of these incentives, in the presidential systems – due to the electoral autonomy (and, consequently, to the survival) of the cabinet (Mainwaring, 1993) – discourages the formation of government with parliamentarian majority, problematizing the relations between the two powers. When the Executive Branch operates with a minority partisan’s support, the government tends to shock with the Legislative, what leads to the obstruction of the decisional process. This condition encourages the president to recur to “overlapping instruments” of the presidential power, mostly based on the manipulation of the legislative process – as the power of veto, the declaration of urgency in the appreciation of the proposals, the exclusive initiatives on certain matters and the power of decree.

José A. Cheibub and Fernando Limongi (2010) discuss the use of that strategy, affirming that the usage of these instruments at the same time - that strengthens the presidents - compromises the democratic legitimacy promoted via legislative control. Hence, due to the risk of government weakening, the political actors, in presidential systems, tend to have the same incentives as in parliamentary arrangements to promote the cooperation between both branches to sustain the term and to implement the agenda power of the political actors. In spite of the different institutional features of the two governmental systems, States like France and Brazil frequently use the partisan coalitions as a mean to promote governability.

Naturally, the coalitions do not entirely supplement the need of balancing the effects of the dissonances between the two branches. As it cannot assure the clearing of the decisional process, the uncertainty raised the importance of the use of other institutional alternatives that boosted the negotiations between the political actors of both branches. Another great facilitator of the governability is the agenda power that presidents have historically assumed (Shugart & Carey, 1992; Mainwaring & Shugart, 1997). This agenda control is manifested mainly in exclusive prerogatives of the presidents about certain matters and the disposition of specific apparatus that mobilize veto points .

A sample of this presidential domain is found in the formalization of the decision-making process in foreign policy, both in Brazil and France. In both cases, the President is the major responsible for the conduct of foreign issues, providing, not only exclusivity on a considerable number of initiatives related to international agreements, but also disposing of devices that deviate his propositions of the legislative control . Shugart e Carey (1992) explain that those devices not only allow the decision making process to become centralized but also establishes an hierarchy between powers, in which the presidential program prevails.

In short, despite the institutional differences between the Brazilian coalition presidentialism (Abranches, 1988) and the French semi-presidentialism (Duverger, 1980), both cases produce similar incentives for the establishment of a cooperating behavior among the two powers, keeping, however, the prominence of the Executive branch, with a strong President on the domain of the political decisions. These

similarities are translated on the decisional dynamic. The democratic control assumed by the Legislative, in presidential systems, will depend, mainly on his ability to influence the conception and implementation of the Executive proposals. In regarding of this, we will now analyze the general parts of the appreciative process of foreign policy's propositions in both countries and how both branches determine the final decisions on foreign affairs.

In the Brazilian case, the Executive initiates the process of domestic incorporation of international acts by sending the proposals, which firstly assume the form of a presidential message, to the Lower House, Câmara dos Deputados¹, with the reasons that motivated the refereed international agreement. On that Chamber, the Foreign Affairs Commission (Comissão de Relações Exteriores e Defesa - CREDN) rates the terms of the proposal, but this Commission does not have the power to interpose directly on it (filing the document). The proposal follows, then, to the Constitution and Justice Commission that verifies the constitutionality of its terms. After the proposal is analyzed by pertinent Commissions accordingly to its thematic substance.

After the appreciation on the Lower House, the proposal is submitted to a vote in plenary - with members of both chambers - and then sent, subsequently, for appretiation on the Senate. The senators, review again the terms of the proposal, which returns to the presidential desk once it is approved. The final stage depends on the terminative decision of the Executive, which can complete the process by authorizing and publishing it, or rejecting it ultimately.

As the Brazilian process, the French initiative on international acts is concentrated on the President. The Executive presents the proposal, in a message to the National Assembly, which is conducted to the Foreign Affairs Commission ("Commission des Affaires Étrangères" - CAE). The Commission evaluates the proposal and decides to reject, slowing down the ratification processes differently from the CREDN, or accept it. The legislative approval also does not bind the French Executive to the final ratification of the proposal. Once approved by the representatives and by the constitutionality control, the President decides to approve it or to quit the domestic incorporation process of the norm

For both countries the legislative houses present themselves as veto points, whose ratification requirement must influence the precedent phases of political decision (Putnam, 1988; Milner, 1997). The matter is that interference, characterized by the *ex post* nature and institutionally resumed to full approval/rejection, in both countries, does not reach the substance of international acts, keeping the Executive leadership on the foreign policy.

In both countries, the centralization of the decisional process of the Executive Branch in international matters was, therefore, facilitated both by the medullary role of the presidents, and the dynamics of the relation between powers. Besides that, France and Brazil share a diplomatic experience condensed in specialized agencies which holds wide prerogatives in leading their international negotiations.

The Foreign Affairs Ministry, in both cases, holds wide capacity to step in the international affairs conduction, accumulating prerogatives related to several external affairs matters and influencing the other political actors involved in the decisional process.

¹ The Brazilian House of Representatives.

Following the model of the French *École Nationale d'Administration*², the extremely competitive admission test of Itamaraty is followed by a technical expertise quite solid, providing diplomats with a wide informational domain, in which they exercise a categorical role during interstate negotiations.

Despite the similarities, Brazil presents another determining factor to the parliamentary compliance with foreign policy matters that does not happen in the French case: the historic low reactivity of the public opinion to international politics matters and the consequent absence of electoral incentives for the development of the legislative members (Faria, 2008; Carvalho, 2003; Ferreira, 2009).

Among the new institutionalist's explanations, the distributive analytical version has a great presence on the understanding of the legislative members behavior concerning foreign policy. Accordingly to it, the encouraging key to the Member of Parliament commitment with groups and thematic issues depends on the occasional potentiality of interest satisfaction on the basis that those representatives electorally answer to. When the electoral incentive is reduced, congressmen tend to not get involved (Limongi, 1994; Müller, 2005).

While some authors discuss the abdication of Brazilian parliamentarians to any determinant influence in foreign policy (Faria, 2008; Carvalho, 2010), others affirm that a progressive domestic attention occurs to the international performance of Brazil, since the first term of the President Lula, specially around 2006, even though the situation keeps the leading figure of the President and its bureaucracies and a border participation of the Legislative (Lima, 2000; Saraiva, 2002, Vigevani et al, 2008; Almeida, 2002; 2010).

The vertical relation between public opinion and French parliamentarians, in response to the international dynamic of the country, doesn't deny the similarity with the Brazilian case. Even though the European integration made it more noticeable the foreign policy decisions, France presents a low reactivity to public opinion, along with few domestic representatives involvement.

Risse-Kappen (1991) argues that the institutional French structure – with a decisional centralization on the Executive – associated with the fragmentation of the country's public opinion, made the parliamentarians to keep their distance from the foreign policy conducted by the president. Accordingly to the author, there is a considerable distance between the citizens and the decisional process specially when the policy involves other countries relations.

The author identifies a low participation of the Legislative in the decisional process of foreign policy, in both cases, and affirms that there are moments in which the congressmen decide not to keep themselves absents. There are situations where the Legislative serves its constitutional prerogatives and practices some kind of interference.

According to Lisa Martin (2000), the delegating behavior of the parliamentarians results in a political cooperative structure between the two branches. When the interests in the Executive agenda reject or don't cover the preferences that the congressmen represent, the Legislative tends to use formal and informal tactics to interfere in the decisional process, activating themselves as veto players.

Since the Fifth Republic Constitution signature, in 1958, and the approval, in 2008, of the new Intern Regiment of the *Assemblée Nationale* (AN), it was noticed a functional progressive evolution of the parliamentarians regarding the international

² It's interesting to observe that the French model of ENA guided the formation in many agencies specialized in Brazil, besides Itamaraty, it can be highlighted the ENAPE – *Escola Nacional de Administração Pública* (Santos, Pinheiro & Machado, 1995).

policy of France (Andrews, 1978; Gicqual, 2008). With the extension of the revisionists abilities of the AN, there was also an increase in the number of prerogatives of the legislators regarding the international policies – example of this narrowing is the creation of the resolutions (Artigo nº 88-6, CFF), the main form of direct influence of the french paliamentarians in the foreign policy decision making (Gicqual, 2008).

This operational developments respond to the boost that the Lisbon Treaty gave to the participation of national parliaments in the UE project, stimulating a considerable more active role of the legislative representatives members in the agenda control of foreign policy (Artigos nº 10 e nº 12, TUE).

The provisions established by the Treaty, with the constitucional prerogatives of the Legislative, stimulated the parliamentary control on foreign policy, a phenomenon called “reparlementarisation”, or “diplomatie parlementaire” (Béland & Bouvier, 2006; Beetham, 2006; Gicqual, 2008).

In Brazil, the main strategies of the Legislative interference in the decisional process, according to the literature, takes place through the ex-post influence (Carvalho, 2003) though the delegation (Pinheiro, 2008); the pressure in a bargain form with the Executive (Lima, 1998); the parliamentary indication and the herestick ³(Anastasia et al, 2012).

These institutional gaps in fact shows that there are incentives to parliamentary participation in foreign policy decisions, however, institucional obstacles remains to the balance of participation of both Branches in leading the foreign affairs, in both countries. In the third part of this paper we will then observe if the parliamentarians can acctually exerce some practical control though the decisional process in foreign policy, despite the wide Executive centralization. We chose to focus the discussion in the following analysis in the related decisional cases in the participation of France and Brazil in their respective integration projects, of Mercosul and European Union.

The construction of both projects and the leading participation of both countries in their regions allowed to be a considerable diversificacion of the political actors involved with the international political process and the increase of distributive impact of the state decisions of foreign policy. Then, we verified how the supranational organizations estimuladed the parliamentarians participation in both projects

3. Democratic deficit

A way to access relations between national legislatives and the creation and functioning of regional blocs is accompanying debates over democratic representation facing regionalization processes. Such discussion took place between the end of 1990's decade and nowadays, having as its utmost case the EU. That contributes to the discussion of this paper because de EU, besides being a great reference to other regional blocs founded since the second half of 20th century, is also one of its objects.

The argumentative line of the debate about democratic representation in the European bloc is that such a complex institutional structure, engendering a supranational juridical person that unite different national societies, would break or settle a too distant relation among citizens, politicians and bureaucrats in its interior. This situation, conceptualized by many authors as a democratic deficit, has many interpretations that shall be exposed summarily here due to its different assumptions.

³ The parliamentary indication permits the National Congress to exercise ex-ante influence, signaling its position to the Executive, that shall consider it in the negotiation to keep its credibility facing the international arena. Meanwhile, the herestick evolves manipulation in dimensions, agenda control and strategic vote (Putnam, 1988; Anastasia et al, 2012).

The debate about the democratic deficit occurrence inside EU is introduced here by referring to Majone (1998), asserting that it existed in bloc formation with important details to be mentioned. The first of them is in the deficit's characterization by the own EU, where its executive power legislates more than its legislative branch, meanwhile in the executive, its managing branch is stronger than the political one – bureaucrats decide better than political representatives. That institutional characteristic of EU had as its objective to reduce political and economic costs in decision making inside the bloc, because even if its executive and bureaucratic bodies were far from the European citizens, they would be more specialized (Idem: 14). The framework he elaborated points to the fact that governments, national political representatives and the national societies themselves do not want to integrate an unique European political platform, where, by consequence, there should be effectively developed institutional structures of democratic representation. Majone still reminds us that the concept of a democratic deficit is dependent of ideas of pure majoritarian governing forms that would be resistant to accept EU's institutional peculiarities.

Following the same argumentative line, Moravcsik (2002) affirms that the pursuit of the EU is not to create a super State, and due to that, domestic politics in its member countries should not be directed at it. According to him, debates over the constitutional design of the EU in the 1990s and the 2000s appropriately raised doubts about any possible European responsibility over social and political rights historically acquired inside many of its member countries.

Minorities' rights and the welfare State were the flagship of critiques to the European institutional character for not being considered one of its aims and also for not having direct institutional channels so as they could act on their own purpose. Although the general sense of such preoccupations was legitimate, the fact that the prevailing constitutional design was not the one based in political integration gave the EU competence over technical and macroeconomic questions exclusively. So, for what it is supposed to be, the institutional forms the EU has would guarantee transparency, accountability and decision power to the national governments, which are democratically elected.

The specific characteristics of EU that differ from the traditional State concept without bringing along with it a democratic deficit would be, in Moravcsik's perspective, i. the focus in cross-border economic activities; ii. regulatory functions; iii. decentralized and administrative characters of implementing policies and iv. clear legal and operational rules for each organ of the bloc (Moravcsik, 2002: 606-10). Briefly, for this author, the fact that the EU was created by democratically elected governments, expanded in its institutions and competences by new treaties equally reinforced by their successors and still having shared, detailed, defined and decentralized rules and procedures, makes it less relevant to political questions that affect people's daily lives.

Two fronts could be explored from what has been exposed to question the assumption that the EU does not engender deterioration of democratic representation. One of them is related to processes and another to the foundations of the institution, and this separation permits us to perceive interesting questions in the debate, such as Rubinfeld (2004), who states there is a problem with democracy in the EU – otherwise not calling it a democratic deficit. According to him, there is in EU's constitutional design a mark of the Second Great War, which would be the aversion to nationalism. Due to that, the European institution was not built to be above the State, but beyond. Furthermore, EU's constitutional foundations were built on internationalism and defined in international treaties, not in society or its forms of deliberation and political action. By doing so, Rubinfeld's critique to the democratic character of the EU is about

foundations, and not in processes and deliberation such as Moravcsik and Majone, exposed above.

The deliberated choice to focus on processes to evaluate democracy in the EU in contrast with its member countries may be justifiable in a methodological perspective, but would it have argumentative power against perspectives which give more attention to fundamental issues from the European institution? Follesdal and Hix (2006) are skeptical about the democratic character of EU. As they analyze the existence of a democratic deficit inside EU, a hall of social-democrat elements are used to enhance the discussion. For them, the creation of EU would have fostered the executive Power and decreased the legislative, once the European institution foresees a weak European Parliament without direct European elections, insufficient information and accountability channels and a too complex organization for the comprehension of the eventual European citizen. Considering all these elements as whole, it is possible for the EU to establish policies that in many cases would not be implemented by national governments, either because of national public opinion or the political system of each country (Follesdal, Hix, 2006: 534-537).

The two analytical perspectives of democracy in the EU structured on its processes or fundamentals may shock sometimes. First of all, by the fact that the analysis based on processes considers the democratic quality of the institution to be preserved by its highly specialized technical body, which would cope better with complex situations and of redistributive nature. This would be specifically true because they would be free of self-interest driven policies that might be frequent in any parliamentary decision-making process. According to Follesdal and Hix, that would not configure a problem only in negotiations which in the end there is no disadvantaged part (idem: 543). Comparing it with Moravcsik's or Majone's perspectives, for an example, the control for not having a loser part in such a negotiation would happen *ex ante*, by the Council of the European Union, as stated above.

The perspective structured in democratic fundamentals argue that they are important for maintaining some space for variety and new political outcomes in decision-making inside institutions, in opposite to what should occur in a technocratic decision-making process (idem: 548). Parliamentary structures, direct and democratically elected, with greater political power could also foment concurrent projects of efficiency and bloc cohesion due to competition among interest groups. In addition to this context, public opinion could improve and get more used to European institutions and affirm their identities inside it, and the practice of the deliberative exercise would enhance democratic quality.

As we could see, the debate on democracy in the EU exposed until this moment is polarized in two trends. Scharpf (2000) is critical of such tendency because it overshadows the *sui generis* character of the EU, once they derive from subjects that, alone, could not comprehend the observed phenomena. According to him, the subfields of International Relations (IR) and Compared Politics generally used to analyze democracy in the EU tend to oversimplify assumptions about the bloc. IR gives an intergovernmental highlight, and Compared Politics, by its turn, would give a supranational EU's characteristics (Scharpf, 2000: 05-06).

In order to clear and complement assumptions made by Scharpf above in other words, IR subfields would have limited instruments to study the EU because they frame it as an international organization, highlighting its governmental and interstate relations, interpreting its context primarily as a ground for coalition, cooperation and conflict policies. This perspective is deficient in observing supranational bodies or delegation of power by the States. Compared Politics, by its turn, would generate the idea that there

would be a democratic deficit or the structure of the EU itself being intrinsically undemocratic. As an alternative view of these assumptions, Scharpf identifies four kinds of decision-making processes inside EU having both structural and procedural elements that would better explain its nature (Scharpf, 2000: 05-09).

The first decision-making process established by Scharpf is the *mutual adjustment* by which national governments act like units and always in perspective of the others' actions, aware of interdependency bonds among them, with low-profile presence in supranational bodies or with power delegation. The second one is called intergovernmental negotiation, which compromise the creation of a body the reunite all governments in one same level where decisions are made by all, being every one of them a veto player. The third kind, hierarchical direction, is the only one that in fact there is a supranational power, like it happens with the European Commission and the Court of Justice of the EU. The final one is the *joint decision making*, whose kind of matter depends on joint action by governmental, parliamentary and supranational bodies of the bloc (idem: 11-22). The variety of decision-making processes inside EU would make it impossible a unidirectional view about its "problems of democracy".

Considering Brazil's Legislative Power concerning rules related to Mercosul, it is quite common to listen that it does not have weight in conducting the Foreign Policy due to the Executive prominence in the area (Oliveira *apud* Diniz, Ribeiro, 2008: 16). Part of it refers to the constitutional design of Foreign Policy's responsibility assignments to the powers of the Republic. Diniz and Ribeiro (2008) state that there are other manners by which legislative representatives can influence in the issue, even though their powers over foreign policies are quite restricted. The way they influence occur by clearing statements they direct to the Executive, which give them bargaining subjects to be played in domestic political arena (Diniz, Ribeiro, 2008: 34).

By doing so, this paper goes further in its analysis trying to make a quantitative approach to the discussion of the weight of legislatures in Foreign Policy with attention to regional integration. The review framework done until now shows us that in the French case, concerning EU, there are two main lines of argumentation. One of them, focused in procedures of the EU, suggest us that the results of French Foreign Policy for the EU would not suffer great action from the legislative Power as well as the other one, focused in democratic foundations of the EU, suggests that we should feel the impact. In the Brazilian case, based on what was just mentioned above, we should perceive some secondary impact of the legislative in acts related to Mercosul, especially because the means and constitutional constraints Brazilian representatives have to influence the scenario are put.

4. Empirical analysis

Having in mind the discussions made above, we pursued an empirical analysis based in primary sources from Brazilian and French legislatures. The aim of this study is to verify the impact of national legislatures in the actions made by its governments in the regional blocs they compose. The methodological strategy was to track legislative acts related to regional integration in the legislative chambers of France and Brazil, checking its origin (domestic or from the blocs' bodies), distributive matters, numbers and the commissions they are processed in. Besides that, we controlled for some features of the national executives too.

To be more specific about the data, we collected legislative acts related to the EU in the French case and related to Mercosul in the Brazilian one. Besides tracking if the act in question was generated inside national legislative chambers or inside regional

blocs' bodies, we labeled their kind: resolutions, information requests, recommendations, bills. Modifications, commission processing, rejections, approvals, proponents and authors were furthermore listed. As a subsidiary analysis and for control variables, the research collected information with respect to national executives, assuming that they might interact with the number of legislative acts and with results in decision-making in commissions and legislative chambers.

The first step was to distribute data in two matrixes (one for Brazil and one for France) so as we could not lose them and to make it more possible for us to capture eventual relations they might have. Doing so, there was made a graphic analysis of collected data to check tendencies and relations among them and making it easier to be described. Then, we elaborated variables for the use in eventual technical analysis that might provide a deeper comprehension of observed phenomena.

In order to give a better comprehension and to elucidate the nature of collected data, we shall present them. In the case of French legislative, they were collected every year, according to the official websites disposal, legislative acts and their origin. In the Senate, there were compiled (i) number of European generated texts submitted to the House per year; (ii) number of Senate propositions related to the EU per year; (iii) composition of Foreign Relations Commission, distinguishing representatives and parties, and finally, (iv) number of EU's texts submitted to the Senate due to 88-4 amendment to the Constitution without interventions from the House. In the National Assembly, there were compiled: (i) the number of European texts submitted to the Assembly per year; (ii) the number of European texts approved by the House; (iii) the number of propositions related to the EU to the Assembly per year; (iv) the composition of the Delegation for the European Union in the National Assembly, distinguishing representatives and parties, and finally, (v) the number of texts of the EU submitted to the Assembly due to the 88-4 amendment to the Constitution without intervention of the House. At the same time data from the legislative were collected, we also added data about the party color of the President, Prime-minister and cohabitation occurrence, also associated with party color when coincident.

Having in mind the comparing purposes of this paper, we tried to establish analogy in the collection of Brazilian data facing the French ones. For the Brazilian legislative, we collected (i) number of legislative acts related to the Mercosul submitted to the Senate; (ii) number of legislative acts related to the Mercosul submitted to the Chamber of the Deputies; (iii) number of legislative acts related to the Mercosul approved by the Senate; (iv) number of legislative acts related to the Mercosul approved by the Chamber of the Deputies; (v) party color of the President of the Senate and (vi) party color of the President of the Chamber of the Deputies. At the same time data from the legislative were collected, we also added data about the party color of the President of the Republic.

The aim of collecting these data was to verify if, according to domestic political contexts of Brazil and France, the number and the kinds of legislative acts related to their regional blocs covaried. Once it was confirmed in some way, the study would deepen into more complex evaluations, such as the direction of relations among party colors, legislative acts' subjects and their number.

There have been some challenges since the beginning of the work. The first of them was composing variables related to the redistributive impact of legislative acts, being them originated domestically or in the regional blocs, in quantitative terms. The translation in quantitative language of the redistributive impact for each bill or other kind of legislative act is difficult because sometimes it is not expressed clearly in the text if it has such impact. There are a few of them in which it is clearly stated, but in

most part of them it depends on the researcher to qualify the impact, what raises the time implied in elaborating the variable, not to mention the increase the risks of unwarily biasing the composition of the variable. In case of Brazilian data, official sources of the Chamber of the Deputies did not dispose all the content of the legislative acts while being processed in the official website, which also prevented this study to process this variable until the moment.

In second place, it was a challenge to compose comparing parameters between Brazil and France's foreign policy institutions in a quantitative fashion the way it happens with qualitative⁴ studies. Initially, the strategy of research was to compare all the data from Brazil and France similarly, pursuing parallelism for all variables. That happened to be a problem because of the time lapse, in first place, once Mercosul was founded in 1991. It made the first exercise of the study not to consider data of France prior to this time. Besides that, France had a change in its procedural rules about legislative acts concerning the EU in 1997, what made the study to compare data between France in Brazil only from that on. This practical choice was made because the change in French law increased drastically the comparability between the processing of rules generated in regional blocs in both countries.

Following up the research, we explored which technique could be applied to the data, proceeding first to the correlation test to check for biasing or autocorrelation among variables. In the French case, the Pearson correlation test did not reveal unexpected significant high correlations among variables, either primary or secondary ones. There were significant moderated correlations among the variables of (i) party color of the President of France, (ii) party color of the President of the Senate, (iii) number of Senate propositions related to the EU per year, (iv) number of EU's texts submitted to the Senate and (v) number of EU's texts submitted to the Senate without intervention. The moderated correlations were assumed previously because both positions relate, at least secondarily, to the processes in the House. Even though, the correlation of the variable of party color of the President of France will be considered in next steps of the study.

In the Brazilian case, the correlation test, besides showing a few significant ones, all of them were related among themselves, such as the variables "number of legislative acts related to the Mercosul submitted to the Senate" and "number of legislative acts related to the Mercosul approved by the Senate".

Conclusion

There are many more steps to be given in our greater effort to comprehend the impact of national legislatures of Brazil and France in matters of Foreign Policy, especially towards regional integration. The discussion of domestic representation facing representation in regional blocs is at the same time one of the objects to be analyzed and also a means to understand the role and how the legislatures work on the regional integration matter. There are different perspectives working on the issue, none of them univocal, as we have seen on second and third sections of this paper.

We could see that tracking our matter of interest in legislative acts is an interesting substratum for research. The challenges of framing this political context in a quantitative way pointed to the need of finding new variables to interact with the ones compiled until now. Among the ones we have, the correlation analysis did not show unexpected effects or enacted them to be used further on the study. Next steps may

⁴ A brief discussion about comparison between foreign policy institutions in Brazil and France can be found in Amorim Neto (2012: 114).

evolve the utilization of new variables toward a more consistent affirmation about the impact of French and Brazilian legislatures in their foreign policies of regional integration.

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