
**THEORETICAL BASIS OF CRISIS OF LEGITIMACY AND
IMPLICATIONS FOR LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES:
GUATEMALA AS A CASE OF STUDY**

Por: Giovanni E. Reyes¹

RESUMEN

El principal objetivo de este trabajo es presentar un conjunto de reflexiones adaptadas a las condiciones de países en desarrollo, en relación con la teoría de la crisis de legitimidad, propuesta en la Escuela de Francfort, por Jürgen Habermas. Más específicamente, el argumento de este estudio consiste en desarrollar una aplicación de la referida teoría para las condiciones sociales y políticas de los países subdesarrollados, considerando a Guatemala como caso de estudio. Tanto el objetivo como el argumento fundamental se basan en que estos postulados de Habermas han sido formulados para las condiciones de los países más desarrollados. De allí que sus fundamentos requieran de adaptaciones a las naciones menos avanzadas.

Palabras clave: legitimidad, desarrollo económico-social, condiciones políticas.

Clasificación JEL: H10, H59, O10, O29.

1. Ph.D. in Economics of Development and International Relations, University of Pittsburgh; Dr. Reyes has also graduated certificates from the universities of Pennsylvania and Harvard; former Director of the Latin American Economic System (LAEC), consultant for United Nations Organization (UNDP, IAEA and UNICEF); he has worked at the Vienna International Center in Austria, and the International Coffee Organization in London; currently Dean of the School of Economics at the Catholic University of Colombia.

SUMMARY

The main aim of this study to show reflections concerning principles of the theory of legitimacy, formulated as part of the School of Frankfurt, by Jürgen Habermas. In a more concrete way, the core argument of this paper is to develop applications of the aforementioned theory to the conditions that are main features, as social, economic and political conditions, of less developed nations. This study takes Guatemala as a case of study. The main objective and core argument this paper undertakes are based on the consideration that foundations of crisis of legitimacy were essentially formulated taking into consideration circumstances of more advanced countries; those state of affairs are not equal to the Third World nations.

Key Words: legitimacy, social and economic development, political conditions.

JEL Classification: H10, H59, O10, O29.

1. INTRODUCTION

The main argument of this study is based on the consideration that Jürgen Habermas' (1929, Düsseldorf, Germany) theory on the crisis of legitimacy is a useful social theory to explain and interpret the social reality in more developed countries. Notwithstanding, its application to the conditions that many times need to endure less developed countries is not exactly the same as that of the more powerful nations. Habermas' theory in its adaptation to the Third World permits the explanation of many aspects of the social reality of these nations².

The core objective of this essay is to show adjustments of the theoretical foundations as contents of the theory of crisis of legitimacy, to less developed nations. What I am using as the main case of study here is the set of

2. It is possible to distinguish a distinction between normative legitimacy and sociological or political legitimacy. From the first standpoint, we talk about legitimacy as a normative concept. When we use "legitimacy" in the normative sense, we are making assertions about some aspect of the rightness or wrongness of some action or institution. On the other hand, legitimacy is also a sociological concept. When we use legitimacy in the sociological sense, we are making assertions about legitimacy beliefs -about what attitudes people have. Although these two senses of legitimacy are related to one another, they are not the same. That's because an institution could be perceived as legitimate on the basis of false empirical beliefs or incorrect value premises. The opposite can also be true: for example in the case of a particular and controversial court decision (i.e. the case of presidential elections of fall 2000: Bush v. Gore, etc.) could have been perceived as illegitimate, even if it had been a legitimate decision; see more in (http://lsolum.typepad.com/legal_theory_lexicon/).

circumstances from Guatemala, especially those which have been evident especially since 1970 to 2008³.

The relative inability of the theoretical application from the crisis of legitimacy, to fully explain the reality of less developed countries can be attributed to the fact that in these nations, social conditions are different in terms of economic integration, social cohesion and political scenarios, than those in the developed countries.

To state the problem more concretely, Habermas' theory has been formulated based on the conditions which exist in the more advanced countries. These conditions are not universal. For this reason, the application of Habermas' theory to the conditions of less developed nations, can contribute to characterize social reality which exists in those areas. It then follows that the assumptions which are sustained by Habermas' theory and which are found primarily in developed countries would not be fulfilled in terms of the majority of the social sectors of less developed areas of the world.

The fundamental problem which will be studied in this document is the application of Habermas' theory, the crisis of legitimacy or legitimation, to the conditions of one country in particular: Guatemala. The essential question to be put forth will be: To what degree can Habermas' theory be applied to the social reality in Guatemala, as representative of less developed nations?

The core argument which will be supported throughout the document is: Habermas' crisis of legitimation theory only partially explains the Guatemalan reality due to the fact that not all of the theory's assumptions are applicable to this Central American country.

In particular it will be presented the analysis considering an essential assumption in Habermas' theory: social integration. The proposal is to demonstrate that this assumption is present in less developed nations, and particularly in Guatemala, but not in the same manner as in the more developed countries, namely, North America, Western Europe, and Japan⁴.

3. The principal theoretical elements which will be referred to originate from Habermas' work, *Crisis of Legitimacy* (2003) the first time this study was published was 1973, though. However, elements from other works by Jürgen Habermas such as *Autonomy and Solidarity* (1992) and *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1984), will also be utilized here, especially in the identification of concrete aspects of social integration in the economic, political and socio-cultural sense.

4. For a more complete perspective on Habermas and his work, it is important to keep in mind that Jürgen Habermas is considered one of the leading philosophers and social theorists alive. He works in the tradition of critical theory, within the main framework of the Frankfurt School. His work focuses on the foundations of social theory and epistemology, the analysis of legitimacy, as part of his studies of advanced capitalist industrial society. Other areas of his interest have been

In the latter countries, social integration occurs for the majority of the population. In other words, the majority of the population in these countries is in a situation of integration, within the three spheres specified by Habermas: economic, political and socio-cultural⁵.

In the case of Guatemala, only minority groups of the population would take part in this fundamental integration. The majority of Guatemalan society finds itself only faintly integrated, living in conditions of marginality. With the aforementioned objective, this document will have three principles parts.

The first one will refer to the elements of the theory which will be studied. Chapter two, following the introduction, will present those aspects which are considered essential to Habermas' theory of the crisis of legitimation. Chapter three will include a specific analysis of the assumption of social integration.

The second part will be dedicated to the study of the current situation in Guatemala. The fourth chapter will present conditions in Guatemala in economic, political and socio-cultural terms. The proposal here is to demonstrate the levels of integration which occur in Guatemalan society. Chapter five will contain a summary of the principal aspects of social integration in Guatemala.

The third part will present the results of the application of the crisis of legitimation theory to conditions in Guatemala. Chapter six will concentrate on the indication that Habermas' theoretical base can be applied to the social sector which is principally integrated into Guatemalan society, but not to the sectors which are marginally integrated in this society.

democracy and the rule of law in a critical social-evolutionary context, and contemporary politics, especially regarding European, US and modern society's conditions. Habermas has integrated into a comprehensive framework of social theory and philosophy the German philosophical thought of Kant, Schelling, Hegel, Dilthey, Husserl, and Gadamer, the Marxian tradition - both the theory of Marx himself as well as the critical neo-Marxian theory of the Frankfurt School, i.e. Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse- the sociological theories of Weber, Durkheim, and Mead, the linguistic philosophy and speech act theories of Wittgenstein, Austin, and Searle, the American pragmatist tradition of Peirce and Dewey, and the sociological systems theory of Parsons. See more on Habermas' contributions in: (<http://www.biographybase.com/biography/>).

5. For example one of the several theoretical movements regarding social and cultural adaptations to the conditions of more developed societies, can be seen in Mirandé, Alfredo (1985) *The Chicano Experience: An Alternative Perspective*. (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press), pps. 183-192; and Coperías, José María (Ed.) (2000) *Culture and Power: Challenging Discourses*. (Valencia, España: The British Council and Facultad de Filología de la Universidad de Valencia). Bulmer, Martín & Warwick, Donald (2005). *Social Research in Developing Countries, Surveys and Censuses in the Third World*. (Taylor & Francis Group); Tripodi, Tony & Potocky-Tripodi, Miriam (2007). *International Social Work Research: Issues and Prospects*. (New York, USA: Oxford University Press); Bernad, Russell (2000). *Social Research Methods, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. (California, USA: Sage Publications, Inc).

The seventh chapter will present final reflections on applying Habermas' theoretical base on three levels: (i) human society in general, or the global level; (ii) those sectors which are principally integrated in developed countries as well as in less developed countries; and (iii) those sectors which are marginally integrated in both groups of countries⁶.

Applying the theory of the crisis of legitimacy to conditions in Guatemala could bring together results which might be characteristic of other less developed countries. In other words, the results of this application to the case of Guatemala could be relatively extended to a certain degree to other countries of the so-called Third World, even though it is necessary to consider the specific social conditions of each nation under evaluation.

It is understood that this document should not only include the determination of the limitations of the theory when applied to less developed countries such as Guatemala, but should also present features of reflection in addition. For this reason, the last part of the document will be dedicated to the placement of Habermas' theory.

This will entail a determination of the social levels which exist at a national and an international level. These reflections will indicate certain points which could be considered useful to evaluate keeping in mind the objective of the application of the social theory, which is derived from the basis of the crisis of legitimation.

2. MAIN ASPECTS OF HABERMAS' CRISIS OF LEGITIMACY

The term "legitimacy" refers to the way a government or social system attempts to justify its existence and power. All governments need to legitimize their rule, to justify their right to power, to promote their authority as a means to gaining popular support, or at least, acquiescence, without which they are likely to collapse.

Traditional societies used myth, magic or the authority of God to legitimize their rule; modern governments claim to represent the will of the people as reflected in the results of elections and written constitutions. The

6. It is possible to find the kind of categories for social studies in general, and political considerations in particular; more conceptual basis especially for Third World areas: The Anatomy of Islamic Revival: Dekmejian, Hrair (1980). *Legitimacy Crisis, Ethnic Conflict and the Search for Islamic Alternatives*. (London: Middle East Institute); Ruiz, Carlos (1988) *Democracy and Participation*. (Toronto: University of Toronto) pps. 142-156; and Cárdenas, Jaime (1992) *Crisis de Legitimidad y Democracia Interna en los Partidos Políticos*. (México D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica) pps. 34-55, 78-83 and 105-132. Principio del formulario.

term “crisis” refers to the situation whereby the strains within society have reached such a point that the whole social system cannot cope and is in imminent danger of collapse⁷.

The aim of Habermas’ Legitimation Crisis (1973) was to try and identify the crisis points within advanced capitalist societies and how the modern state continues both to manage such crises, and maintain the legitimacy of the capitalist system. He sought to take account of contemporary developments, not the least of which was the growth in state power and the decline of class conflict and class consciousness, especially amongst the working class.

He sought to explain that although advanced capitalism seems stronger than ever, it is in fact undergoing constant crises that ultimately will threaten the legitimacy of the system, and so cause its collapse. Habermas, by emphasizing cultural and ideological factors as well, sought to update and reconstruct modern critical theory.

Habermas’ study establishes a base for evaluating how legitimation occurs in a system of opposing groups. This situation operates based on specific characteristics. One of these characteristics is the role of normative concepts. One of the objectives of this role is to permit the functioning of society within a foundation of competition, particularly between individuals and groups. This competition would be based on the belief that similar opportunities exist for everyone and that only those who adapt well will succeed. This notion is reminiscent of the positivist Social Darwinism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Habermas analyzes late capitalist societies in terms of three key sub-systems: the economic, political and socio-cultural. For society to be stable all three sub-systems must be in balance and closely interrelated. Advanced capitalism, for example, requires the state to manage the economy as a way of overcoming the instabilities and conflicts of market forces and to alleviate the inequalities created mainly by the pursuit of profit. Hence the growth of state planning and regulation of the economy and the expansion of the welfare state to combat poverty, health-care, and industrial pollution.

7. See more in Garnett, James (2001) *Handbook of Administrative Communication*. (London: SAGE Publs.) this book addresses which appear typically neglected subjects such as communicating and preconditions for social and political compromise; Myers, Robert (2004) *Religion and the State: the Struggle for Legitimacy and Power*. (London: SAGE Publications); Held, David (2005). *Political Theory and the Modern State: Essays on State, Power and Democracy*. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press); and Aronowitz, Stanley; & Bratsis, Peter (2002) *Paradigm Lost: State Theory Reconsidered*. (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press); particularly pps. 88-94, 104-123.

However, the state in turn must maintain popular support and mass loyalty. Therefore it must tax private enterprise and individuals to pay for educational and welfare services, and develop techniques. The socio-cultural system must create the correct ideological climate and social consensus to support capitalism and motivate its members into the “enterprise culture”. If any one of these sub-systems fails to function effectively in balancing the social system then a crisis will occur.

Habermas identified four possible crisis tendencies within the modern capitalist system, each of which might trigger off a chain of crises elsewhere: economic crises and crises of rationality, legitimation and motivation. The whole capitalist system is riddled with inherent contradictions created by the very nature of it being a system designed to promote inequality rather than a just distribution of wealth and power. It is in a permanent state of crisis management and is only kept in balance by one sub-system compensating for the deficiencies of another.

Legitimation in late market societies is thus primarily based on ideological control, on the ability of the state and cultural apparatus (including media) to convince the masses that the existing system is just, fair, rational, and so, legitimate.

Habermas sees the essence of modern legitimacies as rationality, the logic of reason and debate. It is through reason that modern civilization with all its benefits of mass education, mass democracy and mass prosperity has emerged.

According to Habermas, and in general the main perspective from the School of Frankfurt, ideology presents a distorted vision of the facts, hiding inefficiencies and injustices of the system. Inefficiency exists when access to employment is not available to every person, even when there is economic growth. Injustice is found when equal opportunities are not accessible to all and when elements of social, economic and cultural discrimination are in operation. Many times this perspective can be seen in the perspectives which belong to the “anti-globalization” movement⁸.

8. Current debate regarding these topics implies a remarkable degree of extremisms and polarization; i.e. in his article *The Scourge of Globalization*, Kyle Bristow writes: “Globalization poses as a threat to civilization, and in the interests of our people, it needs to be opposed. The ideology of those who promote globalization can be termed globalism, because just like Nazism, communism, socialism, libertinism, and all other utopian “isms” of the 20th century, it is unnatural and is a world-order that conflicts with human nature”, adding that “Multinational corporations promote globalization not because they exist in la-la land and are protected by tenure like the college professors, but because it is in their economic interests to do so. In order to take advantage of cheap labor in Third World countries and to sell the products manufactured there in First World

Another characteristic of legitimation which operates in capitalist nations is distortion within the processes of communication. The social communication which exists does not expose particular elements of the system, such as the aforementioned inefficiency and injustice. On the contrary, these elements are concealed by the system of social communication.

The preceding is a summary of that which is considered to constitute the principal elements of the theory of the crisis of legitimacy. This theoretical context assumes that societies are for the majority in a situation of integration. It is this aspect of social integration which will be discussed in the third part.

3. SOCIAL INTEGRATION AS AN ASSUMPTION OF HABERMAS' THEORY

The assumption of social integration within Habermas' theory would operate in three distinct spheres which are inherently complementary: the economic, the political and the socio-cultural.

In economic terms, social integration would be present in two different aspects. First is the relationship based on employment, individuals offer their labor and in general their productive resources. In exchange they receive a salary or compensation for the production factors which they contribute. Secondly is the relationship of consumption. Individuals demand goods and services of the system, while offering a portion of their economic income to effect the transaction⁹.

The assumption here, in terms of the economic system, is that there exists an integration of the society within the mechanisms of the market mainly through employment and consumption.

The political aspects would conform to the administrative system of a country and the theory indicates that different and complementary processes are in operation. On one hand, the population contributes through taxes to

countries without having to deal with what they view as international trade bureaucracy—such as tariffs and quotas—multinational corporations desire to eradicate national borders. Through campaign donations to politicians, these multinational corporations bribe politicians to betray their constituents' interests"; see Bristow, Kyle (2008) *The Scourge of Globalization*. (www.globalpolitician.com/24323-globalization).

9. As an illustration, assimilation theorists recognize that individuals who migrate to more developed societies, due to the lacking of skills necessary to compete in a modern society, need to "acculturate" themselves to the values and general culture of the dominant group within the more powerful country, which in turn is going to act as the "new home" either for short-term, or more permanent living conditions; more on this topic in Ibero-American Institute (2001) *Ibero-American Studies 2001*. (Berlin, Germany: Ibero-American Institute).

the maintenance of the administrative system and subsequently receives organizational accomplishments.

On the other hand, the population offers mass loyalty to the system, which in exchange makes political decisions which benefit the population. In the case of the administrative system, the relationships are based on political power through the payment of taxes, but consequently these relationships are solidified in terms of political decisions. The relationships are characterized by mass loyalty, and by the beneficial political decisions of the states. The assumption here is that there exists a political and social integration of the population in the general administrative system of the country.

The socio-cultural sphere covers aspects of the economic system as well as of the administrative system of a country. Related to this aspect we can find the institutional movement, as theoretical contributions from economic studies. In addition, there exist three elements which would identify the integration of society in this sphere. The first element would be the existence of an aggregate of values which are shared by the majority of the population.

The reference in this case is to elements of the prevailing culture, even though it is recognized that subalternate elements of the culture can exist outside of the majority. A second element would be that these cultural values can be communicated within the majority of society. A third aspect consists of the fact that the majority of social sectors creates and reinforces the existence of social values.

4. SOCIAL INTEGRATION WITHIN GUATEMALAN SOCIETY

Habermas' theory assumes therefore that the society is integrated within the social, economic and administrative or political systems. These assumptions, through which the interpretive model operates, can only be considered to a limited degree in the case of Guatemala.

With respect to the economic system, which affects the private sphere, in Guatemala reality reflects significant limitations within the system of economic integration in Guatemalan society. This integration would be based on the roles of employee and consumer in the population. Both variables are related and operate in a complementary sense. In Guatemala it is estimated for 2008 that 46 percent of the active economic population finds itself unemployed or underemployed. That is to say that 46 percent of the active economic population does not have permanent employment,

and therefore is engaged in economic activities within the informal sector, in conditions of marginality¹⁰.

The lack of permanent employment opportunities leads many Guatemalans to employment within the informal sector or in temporary activities. These marginal activities, which provide a different type of permanent employment, include street vending in the urban areas of the principal cities of the country. In the rural areas, it is possible to see systems of peasant economy, including the activities of making handicrafts and the sale of labor to coffee, banana and sugar cane plantations, which produce important export crops for the country.

The fact that not all portions of the population have been integrated into the economic system in terms of permanent employment, affects the income situation. The per capita Gross National Product for Guatemala is estimated at \$1250, in 1990 U.S. dollars. Additionally, it is recognized that the richest 20 percent of the population possesses 55 percent of the national income and that the poorer 20 percent possesses only 5 percent.

With respect to the economic demand of the population, there also exists a restricted level of economic integration. It is estimated that in Guatemala 64 percent of the population lives in conditions of poverty. This is to say that their incomes cover in the best of cases the consumption of basic foods. These basic foods are calculated based on the intake of an average of 2,700 calories per person per day.

Based on this data it is possible to indicate that only a limited sector has the capacity to buy the majority of the market's goods and services. About 36 percent of the population, the percentage which does not live in poverty, finds itself integrated into the economic system of the nation.

This lack of integration of the population within the economic system exemplifies one of the characteristics which differ from advanced capitalist countries to those nations which maintain a dependent capitalism. In

10. For updated social and economic data for Guatemala see Instituto Nacional de Estadística de Guatemala (<http://www.ine.gob.gt/>); Banco de Guatemala, Central Bank. (<http://www.banguat.gob.gt/inc>) Ministerio de Finanzas Públicas de Guatemala (<http://www.minfin.gob.gt/index.php?option>); in general, data for Latin American countries: Latin American Network Information Center, University of Texas (<http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/statistics/>); Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (<http://www.eclac.org/>); Pathfinder for Latin American Statistical Resources, University of North Carolina, resources one can find here, are available through the Academic Libraries of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (<http://www.lib.unc.edu/cdd/crs/>); Socio-Economic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean, Universidad de la Plata, Argentina (SEDLAC) this information has links to databases of the World Bank (<http://www.depeco.econo.unlp.edu.ar/cedlas/sedlac/>).

the case of the more developed countries, the economic integration of the population results in a situation where the majority of the population sustains a *real demand* for goods and services which translates into an *effective demand* in economic terms, since this part of the population holds the satisfactory purchasing power. In countries of dependent capitalism, the entire population possesses real demand for goods and services, but only a part of the population, many times a minority, can translate this real demand into effective demand. This last scenario occurs because not all of the population possesses the economic resources sufficient to have effective demand.

Concerning the administrative system, which affects the public sphere, Habermas' theory establishes two large groups of relationships. First is the relationship between the payment of taxes by a part of the population, and the organizational accomplishments which come from the administrative system. Secondly, the administrative system offers political decisions which benefit the population, and in exchange the population shows mass loyalty. Conditions in Guatemala do not fully represent the social and political integration that this theoretical model suggests.

In the taxes-organizational accomplishments relationship, it is possible to see that the tax rate in Guatemala is one of the lowest in the whole America continent. Guatemala's tax rate is 7.2 percent of the total GNP of the country. The average in Latin America is 18 percent, with the highest rates being those of Venezuela 26 percent, Argentina with 22 percent and Brazil with 20 percent, and the lowest case is Bolivia with 6.8 percent. In the United States, the ratio of taxes to GNP is about 34 percent. In Guatemala it is considered that 32 percent of taxes are direct taxes -taxes on income and property-. This indicates that 68 percent of taxes are indirect, which means they are paid by consumers (mainly taxes on commercial transactions, indirect taxes). It is therefore clear that the tax system in Guatemala is quite regressive, in the sense that it is not the most economically powerful sectors which pay taxes¹¹.

11. See Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (<http://www.eclac.org/>); Pathfinder for Latin American Statistical Resources, University of North Carolina, resources one can find here, are available through the Academic Libraries of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (<http://www.lib.unc.edu/cdd/crs/>); Socio-Economic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean, Universidad de la Plata, Argentina (SEDLAC) this information has links to databases of the World Bank (<http://www.depeco.econo.unlp.edu.ar/cedlas/sedlac/>). Especially from ECLAC's Publications, see *Anuario Estadístico de América Latina y el Caribe 2008*, published in 2009 (<http://www.eclac.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/7/35327/P35327.xml&xsl=/deype/tpl/p9f.xsl&base=>); *Balance Preliminar de las Economías de América Latina y el Caribe 2008* (<http://www.eclac.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/5/34845/P34845.xml&xsl=/de/tpl/p9f.xsl&base=/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>); and *Panorama Social de América Latina 2008* (<http://www.eclac.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/2/34732/P34732.xml&xsl=/dds/tpl/p9f.xsl&base=/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>)

With respect to the payment of taxes, the population is indeed seen as integrated, in relative terms, into the administrative system of the country, but it receives reduced organizational accomplishments. One of the basic reasons for this situation is that the poor sectors of society maintain weak levels of organization. The majority of organizational attempts which are made are seen as a threat to a stable internal order in the country. Usually, this threat is a remaining attribute of the Cold War system.

These elements are directly related to the political decisions which are made in the administrative system and which affect the public sphere. Evidence of the social and political problems in Guatemala is possibly most dramatic here.

The majority of the population does not receive great benefit from the political sectors, but yet is forced to carry a relatively large portion of the tax burden, with respect to its income. This situation demonstrates that socio-political integration does not exist for the majority of the Guatemalan population within its governmental system.

Instead of effecting mass loyalty on the part of the majority of the population, these social circumstances produce a struggle for vindication by those sectors which are socially and economically marginal. In addition, guerrilla groups were fighting in the country from November 1961 to December 1996. The responses to these struggles were noteworthy levels of repression, which is a very significant result provoked by the lack of economic and socio-political integration in the country.

The Guatemalan situation in terms of the socio-cultural sphere would complete the scenario offered here. With respect to the situation three theoretical elements are assumed which would operate with regard to the majority of the population: (i) existence of common cultural elements which constitute the dominant culture; (ii) communication of those elements to the culture; and (iii) creation and reinforcement of the same essentials.

In Guatemala, the common cultural aspects in the sense of the leading social group, the ruling class, are not the majority. In this country, the majority of the population, 54 percent, is indigenous and constitutes 23 different ethno-linguistic groups. This difference in languages does not operate solely within and among the indigenous culture, but also with respect to the official political language: Spanish.

The existence of an indigenous majority would exemplify that the culture that is being imposed, is not exactly that of the majority of the population. Therefore, there is no full attainment of the assumption that common

and dominant cultural values exist for the majority of the sectors of the population. Based on the existence of those 23 ethno-linguistic groups is the indication that the possibility of effective communication of the foremost culture is limited¹².

On the other hand, and in reference to the assumption that the majority of the population believes in and reinforces the existence of leading cultural values, it is possible to suggest that such a situation does not occur in Guatemala. This circumstance is due to the fact that a large part of the population maintains a culture which is distinct from the dominant culture, which is demonstrated through the medium of art, dress, celebrations, historical perspective, religion and attitudes.

In conclusion, with regard to the socio-cultural, the Guatemalan situation does not demonstrate full social integration. There exists a minority group which is dominant and is fully integrated, but a majority group which is only marginally integrated into the existing social conditions.

5. SUMMARY OF RELEVANT ASPECTS OF GUATEMALAN SOCIAL INTEGRATION

With regard to the situation of social integration in Guatemala, and with reference to the three spheres analyzed in the previous chapter - economic, political, and socio-cultural-, it is possible to indicate that:

- In terms of the economic sphere:
 - With respect to employment, Guatemalan society maintains a permanent integration of 54 percent of the economically active population. This figure is based on the recognition that 46 percent of the economically active population exists in conditions of unemployment and underemployment.
 - With regard to the role of the consumer, social integration would again be limited. It is recognized that 64 percent of the population is found in conditions of poverty; roughly 24 percent in extreme poverty and an additional 40 percent in non extreme poverty.

12. Goldin, Liliana (2003) *Procesos Globales en Guatemala*. (Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala: FLACSO); Bastos, Santiago; & Cumes, Aura (2007) *Mayanización y Vida Cotidiana*. (Guatemala City, Guatemala: Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica) Puente Alcaraz, Jesús (2005); *Descentralización y Desarrollo. Paradigma en revisión para América Latina. El caso de Guatemala*. (Canada: Trafford Publishing); Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (2005), *Alianzas Sociales en América Latina: Enseñanzas Extraídas de Colaboraciones Entre el Sector Privado y Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil*. (New York, USA: IDB Bookstore); Jones-Hendrickson, Simon (2006). *Essays on the OECDs Economies, Selected writings of a Caribbean Economist*. (USA: IUUniverse).

- Regarding the political sphere, it can be indicated that:
 - The organizations which exist as pressure groups and which could receive organizational accomplishments, are limited to laborers. The majority of powerful organizations are represented by firms.
 - The population does find itself quite integrated in terms of the payment of taxes, of which 70 percent are indirect, applying to consumers and therefore to practically the whole population. Another 32 percent of taxes apply to property and rent. In addition, the rate of tax payment with respect to the Gross National Product in Guatemala is one of the lowest in Latin America. Chiefly, the reaction from this majority is a lack of mass loyalty to the Guatemalan political system.
- Regarding the socio-cultural sphere, the indication is that:
 - Prevailing cultural values which act toward a greater level of homogeneity in the society of the country do not exist, given that 54 percent of the population is indigenous and its cultural elements do not coincide with the foremost culture.
 - The possibilities for communication of dominant values are restricted by the existence of the 23 ethno-linguistic groups in the country.
 - The dominant cultural values are not consistently reinforced in practice by the majority of the population.

6. RESULTS OF APPLYING HABERMAS' THEORY IN GUATEMALA

One of the most important results of the application of the crisis of legitimacy theory to Guatemalan conditions is to identify the existence of two main groups in terms of social integration: the prevailing group which is in minority and which is fully integrated, and the majority group which is marginally integrated.

These two different levels of integration will provide a base from which to indicate that of conditions in Guatemala, and possibly in many less developed countries, exists a structural dualism characterized by: (i) the co-existence of these two groups in the same society; (ii) an established dependence between the two groups; (iii) the difference of identity of the two groups in cultural terms; and (iv) the prevailing relations of ascendancy.

Both groups live together in the same society. This co-existence makes possible the social and economic phenomena which permits the system

to have characteristics of accumulation and exclusion of benefits. In order for the social system to function, there must be a promotion of economic growth and a concentration of capital which does not tend towards successful redistribution of opportunities.

The leading group needs the marginal sector in order to generate benefits, and this sector needs the foremost sector in order to maintain possibilities for subsistence. In general, this is a “cooptative” or “symbiotic” model. In this manner the conditions of the prevailing economic and social system are maintained. This characteristic of mutual need which establishes itself through the existence of economic structures and social mores clarifies the character of dependence which exists. All these conditions emerge in the midst of the last globalization processes¹³.

The difference in cultural terms carries a larger significance in the conditions in Guatemala due to the existence of the indigenous groups. The social relations carry not only the economic contradiction put into action by relations of production, but also the different conceptions of life which are a result of two different forms of culture.

The relations of supremacy which exist are present at the political level through inability of the oppressed groups to maintain an effective participation in the national decision making process. In fact, the political parties do not represent the majority of the population, which constitutes a feature of limitation for the present democratic system. This situation has been exacerbated by plans for economic adjustments.

In distinguishing these two levels of social integration in Guatemala, it can be indicated that the theory of the crisis of legitimacy can be applied to the most highly integrated social group and that such a concept would not be completely applicable to the group which is marginally integrated.

13. In terms of the globalization process that is taking place under current worldwide economic conditions, two main topics in international political economy are: (i) the structure of the international economic system; and (ii) how this structure has changed. They can be addressed through the application of the theory of globalization from the development perspective. This globalization approach suggests that the structure of the global system, and the roles that countries play within the international division of trade and labor, is crucial in understanding a wide array of social, political, and economic changes within particular countries. The basic claim is that international connections, roles, and relationships are important variables in any analysis which tries to explain various dimensions of development -economic growth, for example- trade, financial links and communications among countries. More on cultural values, globalization and economic integration within nations in Holden, John (2004). *Capturing Cultural Values: How Culture has become a Tool of Government Policy*. (London: Demos/Magdalen House), especially pps. 17-22, 45-66; Jowell, Thomas (2005). *Government and the Value of Culture*. (London: Department for Cultura and Media); Torre, Miguel (2002). *Assesing the Values of Cultural Heritage*. (Los Angeles, California: Gettyng Conservation Institute).

The concept of legitimacy is understood here in the sense that, with the existence of a situation of social inequality, the more prevailing groups need to justify the system of authority. This justification takes place within the most highly integrated group. The marginal groups, instead of receiving legitimacy or the justification of the system, usually have limited participation, and rejected socially in many cases. In addition, these marginal groups do not have access in several occasions to basic social services.

It should be taken into account however that groups maintaining marginal integration can also sustain certain autonomy. For example the existence of the peasant economy permits a certain autonomy to specific sectors within the prevailing social system, but at the same time these sectors find themselves in conditions of marginality for three basic reasons: (i) because they do not maintain effective economic demand, due to conditions of poverty; (ii) because socially they are prevented from forming cultural and organizational expression which would present a challenge to the social system; and (iii) because politically they are not permitted to form organizations of influence within the social structure which would represent their interest¹⁴.

For the most integrated group, the present social conditions are more similar to developed countries and for this reason the assumption of social integration is real. The characteristics of legitimacy are attained for this group and to a certain degree the components of the crisis of legitimacy operate here, as a function of the compensation for inequalities, the ideological discourse, and the influence of common cultural values.

The concept of the crisis of legitimacy is applicable to marginal groups, but in this case the concept would be expressed not in strict terms of legitimacy, or the justification of the system, but in terms of the contradiction of economic, social and political opportunities.

The most integrated groups, on the other hand, are able to exhibit higher levels of internal social cohesion in the case of Guatemala. This characteristic would be present –among other considerations- because these groups fear actions of protest by the marginal groups, and because, for their own part, these prevailing groups are obligated to confront external conditions and arrive at the establishment of connections which will serve their interests

14. For the general advantages of this structural approach, see Smith, David (1992). "Structure and dynamics of the global economy". *Social Forces*, June, 70(4) : 857-893; and Tilly, Chandra (1999). *Big structures, large processes, huge comparisons*. (New York: Russell Sage); Kaplan, Bertrand (2002). *Social Change in the Market World*. (Beverly Hills, California: SAGE); and Gough, Iván (2000). *Economía Política del Estado de Bienestar*. (Madrid, España: Blume).

with the central groups of other countries, especially in the most developed nations.

This greater union between foremost groups is part of the response to the present social scenario. Another element of the response of groups in power is to force the acceptance of given living conditions on the marginally integrated groups. In order to accomplish this latter objective, there are two separate methods.

In a first sense, the foremost groups present the living conditions of the marginal sectors as a product of their insistence on maintaining their own culture. "The indigenous and the poor live like this because they like to, because for them living better implies making an effort that they are not ready to make. They live like this because they do not think in terms of competition, as one should in a modern society. They live in a traditional manner, based on religious beliefs". "These groups have caused this country's backwardness, and for this reason Guatemala is an underdeveloped country". These are expressions which are typical of the most conservative groups.

The living conditions of marginal groups are not presented as a product of inequality but as that which they deserve. The fact that not all individuals and groups have similar opportunities for social mobility and economic benefit is ignored.

In a second sense, religious concepts are utilized. It is in this area where chiefly the neo-pentecostal groups have gained ground. These groups do not ignore the living conditions which exist, including high levels of poverty, but one way they present those living circumstances is as concrete proof that the world is living the apocalypse and it is advantageous to be poor because in this manner salvation will be obtained. The result, of course, is that—in this way—people believe in a supernatural power, and that their fate of poverty is appropriate in view of the end of the world. Individualism based on fatalism and escapism is created with respect to current living conditions. In any case, the result is that the marginal groups accept this neo-pentecostal view and reject the option of working towards a social system which is more just, or at least less unfair¹⁵.

15. One of the most important advantages of analyzing new religious movements is that they are capable of re-opening debates largely confined to the narrower scope of anthropological accounts of religion. The theme of magic is a principal consideration. Some new religions, largely syncretic in form, consistently provide the trajectory for magical practices through the re-emergence of ancient configurations, as well as through more nascent expressions. See more in: Hunt, Stephen (2002). "Magical Moments: An Intellectualist Approach to the Neo-Pentecostal Faith Ministries". *Religion Volume 28, Issue 3, July: 271-280*.

The response of the marginally integrated sectors is presented in separate components. One of them is a type of passive resistance in the face of living conditions and a retreat into elements of the popular indigenous culture. This response at least realizes the immediate goal of subsisting within current conditions. In this manner, indigenous groups have maintained their culture despite adverse conditions for more than 500 years since 1524, the year of the arrival of the Spanish on Guatemalan soil¹⁶.

On the other hand, and in a more economic sense, the marginal groups have generated forms of peasant subsistence economy in the rural arena, the consumption co-operatives, and the so-called informal economy of the country's urban centers. The insurgent groups, armed for the guerrilla movement in this country, maintain their largest social bases within those sectors which are marginally integrated into the society.

In order to summarize the results which could be produced from the application of Habermas' theory, it is necessary to consider that conditions in Guatemala are related, in a direct or indirect manner, with economic, social and political conditions of the rest of the world. This characteristic presents itself especially through relations of dependence with the United States.

In other words, in addition to the national level, where the two aforementioned levels of social integration are found, there exists an international plane. The identification of these two levels - national and international- and the subdivision of social integration within nations, offers elements for the placement of Habermas' theory in a broader context.

7. CONCLUSIONS: TOWARDS THE PLACEMENT OF HABERMAS' THEORY

Such as it is expressed by the author, the crisis of legitimacy theory makes special reference to the conditions of more developed countries. This issue, as has been indicated in this document, offers important applications to the more integrated sectors of society in less developed countries such as Guatemala.

16. It is important to keep in mind that what we know the Guatemalan territory, includes much of the old Mayan civilization, which may date back as early as 300 BC. The classical Mayan period lasted from about AD 300 to 900 and featured highly developed architecture, painting, sculpture, music, mathematics (including the use of zero), a 365-day calendar, roads, and extensive trade. This great pre-Columbian civilization seems to have collapsed around AD 900, and by the 12th century, the Mayas had disintegrated into a number of separate Amerindian groups. The Amerindians offered resistance to the Spanish expedition sent by Hernán Cortés from Mexico and led by Pedro de Alvarado during 1523-24, but by the end of that time, their subjugation to Spain was virtually complete. See Encyclopedia of Nations, Guatemala (<http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Americas/Guatemala-HISTORY.html>).

Habermas' theory can be applied more broadly to developed countries is due to the fact that these countries maintain larger portion of their population within significant levels of social integration. These nations also have marginally integrated sectors, but they are a minority. For this reason, in the advanced capitalist nations, the crisis of legitimacy can assume the features of motivation crisis and economic and rationality crisis.

On the other hand, however, advanced capitalism implies a developed pole and an undeveloped pole around the world. The thesis of Habermas refers to one of these poles, and does not include existing international relations. In this manner, it is not possible to see how at an external level the phenomena of accumulation and concentration of benefits among countries also occurs.

Recognizing therefore that an inter-relational international level exists among countries and that at the national level at least two levels of integration are present: the integrated majority groups and the marginally integrated sectors, it is possible to conclude that three general levels exist which can serve as a reference for determining the possible application of Habermas' theory.

New theories could also be generated following the acknowledgement of these levels and the recognition that in at least two of them Habermas' theory needs noteworthy degree of adaptation to be suitably applied.

- ***The international level.*** At this level the relations of the world order among nations imply, to a certain degree, some characteristics of legitimacy in existing conditions. This circumstance occurs even when a world government does not exist.

However, the world system implies, especially in the economic component, greater globalization. Additionally, international organizations act on a global level through a system of greater social communication. For example, the United Nations Organization appears to play a role of legitimation. This was the case when the Security Council offered its support to various developed countries during the Gulf War.

It should additionally be taken into account that the United Nations was formed by the nations which were victors in World War II, and that these nations -France, England, the United States and Russia-, are four of the five permanent members, possessing the right to veto on the Security Council. The fifth permanent member is the People's Republic of China.

At this level, the resulting applicability of the theoretical elements of Habermas can be studied and it is possible to generate a theory on the possibility of international legitimacy on a global level. Interesting methodological elements and conclusions on the state and projection of international relations can be identified.

- ***The national level with reference to the integrated sectors of a country.*** Here will be stated the distinction between developed countries and less developed countries.

Habermas' theory applies directly to the former, because integration is effected in broad sectors of the population. This theory applies also to less developed nations, such as Guatemala, but only at the level of those groups with the most economic and social influence.

It is at this level that Habermas' theory is most appropriate, and where it operates most fully in the manner in which it was formulated.

- ***The national level with reference to the marginally integrated sectors of a nation.*** Here, as with the international level, it is necessary to make substantial adjustments in the formulation and application of the theory of legitimacy.

In this case, it can be recognized that those sectors of marginal integration have different characteristics than those sectors which are fully integrated into the societies of specific nations. These marginally integrated sectors tend to constitute a majority in nations such as Guatemala. It should be taken into consideration that these marginally integrated sectors also exist in developed countries, but that their representation is as a minority.

This is an essential aspect to permit the creation and reinforcement of a theory on social marginalization, a conceptual framework concerning emerging or alternative groups in terms of their influence, and way of living. This theory would include dynamic elements which exist between more powerful groups and the more dependent and socially vulnerable sectors, as well as economic, social, cultural, and political components which give marginality its precise dynamic and characteristics.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ARONOWITZ, Stanley; & BRATSKIS, Peter (2002). *Paradigm Lost: State Theory Reconsidered*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- BANCO DE GUATEMALA, Central Bank. <http://www.banguat.gob.gt/inc>.
- BANCO INTERAMERICANO DE DESARROLLO (2005). *Alianzas sociales en América Latina: enseñanzas extraídas de colaboraciones entre el sector privado y organizaciones de la sociedad civil*. New York, USA: IDB Bookstore.
- BASTOS, Santiago; & CUMES, Aura (2007). *Mayanización y vida cotidiana*. Guatemala City, Guatemala. Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica.
- BERNAD, Russell (2000). *Social Research Methods, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. California, USA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- BRISTOW, Kyle (2008). *The Scourge of Globalization*. www.globalpolitician.com/24323-globalization.
- BULMER, Martín & WARWICK, Donald (2005). *Social Research in Developing Countries, Surveys and Censuses in the Third World*. Taylor & Francis Group.
- CÁRDENAS, Jaime (1992). *Crisis de legitimidad y democracia interna en los partidos políticos*. México D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- COPERÍAS, José María (Ed.) (2000) *Culture and Power: Challenging Discourses*. Valencia, España: The British Council and Facultad de Filología de la Universidad de Valencia.
- DEKMEJIAN, Hrair (1980). *Legitimacy Crisis, Ethnic Conflict and the Search for Islamic Alternatives*. London: Middle East Institute.
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). <http://www.eclac.org/>.
- GARNETT, James (2001). *Handbook of Administrative Communication*. London: SAGE Pubs.
- GOLDIN, Liliana (2003). *Procesos globales en Guatemala*. Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala: FLACSO.
- GOUGH, Iván (2000). *Economía Política del Estado de Bienestar*. Madrid, España: Blume.
- HABERMAS, Jürgen (1973). *Crisis of legitimacy*. Boston: Beacon press.
- HABERMAS, Jürgen (1989). *Theory of social communication*. Boston: Beacon press.
- HABERMAS, Jürgen (1992). *Theory of social action*. London, MacMillan Pubs.
- HABERMAS, Jürgen (1993). *The transformation of the public sphere*. Boston: Wadsworth Pubs.
- HELD, David (2005). *Political theory and the modern state: essays on state, power and democracy*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- HOLDEN, John (2004). *Capturing Cultural Values: How Culture has become a Tool of Government Policy*. London: Demos/Magdalen House.
- HUNT, Stephen (2002). "Magical Moments: An Intellectualist Approach to the Neo-Pentecostal Faith Ministries". *Religion Volume 28, Issue 3, July: 271-280*.
- Ibero-American Institute (2001). *Ibero-American Studies 2001*. Berlin, Germany: Ibero-American Institute.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística de Guatemala. <http://www.ine.gob.gt/>.

- JONES-HENDRICKSON, Simon (2006). *Essays on the OECDs Economies, Selected writings of a Caribbean Economist*. USA: IUniverse.
- JOWELL, Thomas (2005). *Government and the Value of Culture*. London: Department for Culture and Media.
- KAPLAN, Bertrand (2002). *Social Change in the Market World*. Beverly Hills, California: SAGE.
- Latin American Network Information Center, University of Texas. <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/>.
- Ministerio de Finanzas Públicas de Guatemala. <http://www.minfin.gob.gt/index.php?option>.
- MIRANDÉ, Alfredo (1985). *The Chicano Experience: An Alternative Perspective*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.
- MYERS, Robert (2004). *Religion and the State: the Struggle for Legitimacy and Power*. London: SAGE Publications.
- PUENTE ALCARAZ, Jesús (2005). *Descentralización y Desarrollo. Paradigma en revisión para América Latina. El caso de Guatemala*. Canada: Trafford Publishing.
- RUIZ, Carlos (1988). *Democracy and Participation*. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- STRANG, David (1992) Structure and dynamics of the global economy. *Social Forces*, June, 70(4): 857-893.
- TILLY, Chandra (1999). *Big structures, large processes, huge comparisons*. New York: Russell Sage.
- Torre, Miguel (2002). *Assesing the Values of Cultural Heritage*. Los Ángeles, California: Gettyng Conservation Institute.
- Tripodi, Tony & Potocky-Tripodi, Miriam (2007). *International Social Work Research: Issues and Prospects*. New York, USA: Oxford University Press.