

Main actors in the World System and new kind of geopolitical conflicts

Abstract

An international actor can be defined as a power strong enough to be respected and even feared by others. It is a being, a nation or organization, capable of establishing relations, spreading information, creating *de facto* situations or approving policies that affect entire communities and populations. Nation-states used to be the only ones that enjoyed such a category but in the modern world, new kinds of organizations have appeared. They rival with the idea of national sovereignties; however, they are not always considered as legitimate entities by official power holders. In this paper, the most outstanding international actors in the modern world will be depicted as accurately as possible in order to show how they interact with others and how far they have gone to gain recognition and acceptance by other traditional powers.

Kew words: nation-state, actors, World System, International Relations, powers, conflicts, armed conflicts.

Introduction

There are six different categories of actors in the World System that have been considered as key due to the role they play in the whole planet. They will be briefly summarised here and then more extensively described in the first part of the document. The following section will analyse the new possibilities of conflicts that have appeared in the complex web of modern International Relations where traditional powers, such as the one held by States, have become weaker due to the emergence of new influences and actors. Finally, conclusions will be drawn about whether classical conflicts between countries are still the most likely events or another kind of armed conflicts are already happening in the world, what their causes and consequences are.

The reason to talk about these actors as members of the so called World System instead of International System is just because nowadays relations flow from one country to another, from one State to another but there are also influences among new members that have come up: non-governmental organizations, media groups, transnational companies and many others. That is why relations are not only between States as they once used to be; the whole scenario has become more complicated to define, trace and define.

The first type of World System actors are the classical ones, Nation-states or countries with a regular and internationally recognized government which can have been democratically elected or inherited from totalitarian models. Beyond the system each one of them has chosen or its population has to endure, every nation's government is the only externally and officially recognized representation before other countries or international organizations.

The second type of actors are those organizations that have been created with a noble and double purpose: to avoid war and foster cooperation. They are official entities sponsored by governments in order to take care of common interests and goals. They are called International Organizations and they can be regional or worldwide. Even if they have been granted power, many times they have demonstrated to be useless or ineffective when national sovereignties (especially a world power's one) or particular security reasons are at the stake. That is exactly what happened when the U.S. decided to invade Iraq in 2003 no matter what the U.N. had to say.

Money and capitalism stand for the third kind of World System actors. As it is widely known, power lies next to money and this is particularly true for those companies and firms that have extended their businesses to many parts of the world taking advantage of cheap labor force and weak local governments. They have sometimes exploited people or resources regardless human rights or environmental damage. The American oil company, Chevron, caused severe wounds to rain forests and their populations in Ecuador several decades ago (in the seventies and eighties). However it has not repaired victims fairly as it should have done. The Ecuadorian government has been trying to get help in this case but the power of this kind of companies is large enough to avoid being compelled to pay compensations to the affected country and its people.

Civil society in all countries has the right to get involved to find solutions for many kinds of social problems. Independent groups do not need any official permission to get together even if their public action could be regulated by official ministries. These organizations act and intervene whenever States are absent or they cannot cope with so many needs and problems. Their actions could be then seen as complementary to official efforts to tackle extreme poverty or build public infrastructure. This is the role played by NGO (non-governmental organizations) in many countries. Some of these groups have grown up in such a way that their actions are visible in many places; they have become international or transnational entities. But the most important feature they have is that profit is not their main goal for acting. They are pushed to the action by their own philosophical principles or religious faith. Either way, they have earned a place as World System actors due to their commitment to improve people's lives and take care of the environment all over.

The next group that can be considered as a World System actor does not have any legal recognition but its members hold enough power to challenge political and even military powers. This actors are criminal or outlaw gangs; some of them are just interested in making easy money selling drugs, smuggling people or merchandises or laundering dirty money. Others are terrorists ready to mass murder entire communities in order to send messages to western nations or to impose their religious point of view to those who do not agree with them. They could be called as holders of the dark side of the force according to a popular science fiction movie.

Finally, worldwide media is the sixth type of actor in the World System. Even if it could have been also possible to include this group into the transnational companies section, it is better to talk about it separately because the media do not restrict itself to selling services (e.g. commercial advertisements), it also influences worldwide public opinion about a huge variety of themes. The media is too strong in the world today due to mass communication or information systems which do not only spread real-time news but also

the particular interpretation of facts according to interests or agendas previously set by each media or business corporation that control it.

The main reason to include international media as a real actor able to influence others in the world is that new communication and transportation technologies were developed precisely with the purpose of contributing to closer relations among nations and peoples. As a matter of fact, industrial revolution boosted amazing inventions such as the steam engine to move trains or the telegraph. The next century was going to witness the development and popularization of more astonishing devices such as gasoline powered cars, airplanes, radio communications, TV and the World Wide Web. All of them have created a globalization process that enabled nations and other world actors to interact with each other faster than ever in History.

1. States-nations as classical international actors

It would certainly be useful to go backwards in History for a while in order to understand the process by which modern States-nations emerged. Once religion wars¹ were over in Europe, particularly after the Westphalia peace agreement in 1648, nations grew up upon the idea of a common culture (language, religion, history, customs and so on) and a central authority, the king, who had the right to establish the religion that had to be followed by its subjects. As a consequence, the concept of a State as a power holder within national borders became stronger than the dying Roman Germanic Empire that was a kind of medieval heritage meant to disappear.

Later on, during the XIXth century, monarchies began to lose power facing the new republican trend which had been born along with the illustration ideas around a key event in modern History: the French revolution. Anyway, either under a king or a democratic government, the idea of endorsing national boundaries and a central authority outlined the birth of modern nation-states in western civilization.

On the other edge of Atlantic Ocean, new nations were born directly on democratic basis even if they were far from being flawless because of an unfair economic system where slavery and human exploitation were part of “national culture” and a usual way of living for many. However, these young nations helped to strengthen the idea that in the world states were the only valid actors, those legitimate enough to establish official relations with others and sign different kinds of agreements, such as those to declare war, to settle on peace conditions or to ensure foreign cooperation.

In the western world, as it has been known from the spread of modern liberal democracies, nations-states emerged as the first kind of worldwide actors and this category seemed to belong only to them. It remains clear though, that also those countries ruled under dictatorships or ancient imperial or royal leaders could also be considered as legitimate actors in the international system. This was the case of Asian countries such as Japan or China, whose population still regarded their rulers as super natural beings or a sort of sons of gods. Even these cultures which stayed for quite a while closed to the outer world started to weave commercial ties with other nations in the late XIXth century.

¹ Even though it has to be said that they were not only caused by religion disagreements but also by political interests closely related to religion.

Such a diversity of political regimes that rule States-nations around the world is pathetically demonstrated when U.S. presidents hold meetings with Saudi Arabian kings. They are both bound over oil issues and the power it drags behind but it has never been heard any call from the first world power to this Middle East country asking for installing there a western styled democracy. On the other hand, this kind of requests on behalf of liberal systems are commonly addressed to countries where leftist dictatorships are in charge of power (e.g. China or Cuba).

No matter what political system has been applied in a country, its government claims to have legitimacy in the international arena based on the idea of sovereignty, which is supposed to lie upon the people under democratic regimes or upon ideological basis, either religious or political. Saudi Arabia is a good example of the first case whereas North Korea epitomizes the second one.

If in the world there are nations and each one is supposed to be free, independent, and sovereign, they enjoy the right to be in contact with their peers. This mutual or multilateral relations should not only be established because of conflicts or war reasons. This assumption has been made by realism supporters, but relations among countries could also be shaped on the common interest that two or more of them pursue.

This new kind of approach may help to understand relations between neighboring countries whose populations have identical needs or face similar problems. Once war was over and a peace agreement was finally signed by both Ecuador and Peru (in Brazil, 1998), relations between them began a new era of mutual development. Even if there is still a long way to travel in order to achieve all the goals that were originally set up on this document, the sole fact of interacting not on war or disarmament issues but on mutual benefit projects demonstrate that relations among States-nations ought not to be built on conflicts pressures but their departing point should be mutual cooperation.

As a summary, relations among nations or classical actors in the worldwide arena have kept evolving and growing up. They have fortunately gone well beyond the sheer interest of war and conflict and they have addressed other issues that are certainly more useful to people and their needs. However, new and unexpected powers were ready to rise and become also significant actors in the world between the XXth and XXIth centuries. One of them is the whole set of International Organizations which will be now depicted.

2. International organizations: the liberal attempt to create a global government

Cooperation, peace and war have been factors that have usually moved countries to interact with others. In order to settle agreements they have looked for formal organizations to endorse this kind of commitments. Unfortunately, wars and armed conflicts have led by far the need of setting up new international actors, independent from national authorities and, at least in theory, neutral in the case of controversies or conflicts.

The World War I had taught a grey and sad lesson to the whole world, international alliances could be harmful in the event of a conflict and they could trigger an armed reaction devastating enough to cause thousands of casualties and suffering. Around 38 million people were directly affected, 20 of them were deaths and 18 injured. This was

the main reason that fostered the idea of implementing and organising a central organization, legitimate, powerful and capable to enforce international law and prevent such a deadly event in the future.

U.S. president Woodrow Wilson was among some of those idealistic rulers who thought it was possible to create a worldwide organization respected everywhere whose mission was going to be avoiding wars and stimulating cooperation to reduce common problems such as the lack of health and education in poor countries. This politician and diplomat, as well as other rulers founded the “League of Nations” once the World War I was over, in 1918. The main reason behind this creation was the liberal ideal that international relations could be led not only by the force of weapons but through cooperation and its related institutions.

However, the life of this organization was doomed to be short. Great powers in Europe and other continents were living in a very fragile balance which could easily get broken due to revenge desires or the greed to become world leaders. Germany, for instance, was one of those powers; it had been humiliated by England, the U.S., France and other powers that had forced it to pay huge amounts of money as war compensations. Hitler was going to take advantage of this feeling of national wounded pride to support a growing nationalistic reaction along with a big weapon accumulation. These factors as well as others, were going to ignite World War II and the young international organization that had been created to boost peace and cooperation among nations was absolutely unable to prevent states from getting engaged in a new and even worse conflict than the one that took place between 1914 and 1917.

This failure was a kind of premonition that realism is the only raw theory that really explains how the world system works: stronger powers are the only ones capable of dictating rules as they want according to their needs. Nevertheless, The United Nations inherited the well intentioned purposes that led to the foundation of the extinguished League of Nations. Once the World War II was over, the new international organization was created as a kind of guarantee that peace was really possible and cooperation was supposed to replace war as the main instrument to set up international relations. All nations were called to be part of it as members and as a matter of fact, all of them had theoretically the same power and authority within the newborn organization.

This sounded really comforting to a world that had just gone through a warlike nightmare, but this feeling revealed to be just a mirage. A “security council” had been created in the U.N.; it was integrated by those countries labeled as the winners of World War II: The U.S., France, England, The Soviet Union (Now Russia) and the Popular Republic of China². This council is currently formed by 10 other countries that temporarily play the role of its members. Resolutions need at least 9 votes out of 15 to be considered valid. As a result, this selected club of nations is the one that really decide about worldwide peace and war.

An astonishing example that world organizations, such as U.N., their affiliates and others are an instrument of world greatest powers, is the invasion to Iraq performed by the

² Only these five representatives are those who enjoy the right of veto about any resolution.

American army in 2003 which took place even if it did not count with a specific authorisation of the U.N. security council.

Moreover, modern world is not the same that emerged after World War II. Too much water has flown under the bridge since then. For example, countries that once were seen as the incarnation of evil, such as Japan and Germany are now poles of pacific development. Other nations, India, Brazil or South Africa for instance, which were marginal from the economic point of view at the end of that war, have grown in many senses and their roles as geopolitical actors have also increased. In spite of these changes and many others, the U.N. Security Council has not changed; its main members, those with real power to veto any substantial decision are still the same above mentioned.

Anyway, this kind of official organizations are widely considered as international actors because they have enough power and attributions that have been granted to them by those nations that have agreed to yield part of their own sovereignty in order to reach goals for common benefit. For instance, one of the U.N. agencies, the one charged of ensuring that all nations enjoy enough wellbeing and they overcome extreme poverty, is UNICEF. It works along with national and local governments to promote social and individual behavior changes, mobilize allies and support a wide range of actions focused to improve life conditions of especially vulnerable groups and communities within national populations.

This could be seen as a noble action because it promotes cooperation instead of war and they aim to end shameful and painful situations such as malnutrition in vast regions of the world. Other outstanding international organizations that are characterised by this humanitarian profile are the UNHCR and UNESCO. The first one work to ease those hard conditions of life that refugees have to face once they have had to flee their homeland because of war, political or religious intolerance or starvation. The second one has as a goal to help governments to spread basic education to all levels of population, especially to those groups that have traditionally been marginalised from this human basic right.

However, these relatively new actors in the international arena have not been exempted from criticism. Some point out the fact that they are not independent enough from real powers. Even good intentions and actions can be poisoned by money, power and influence. Thus, the biggest countries that act as main donors and supporters of official organizations, have virtually the right to control public policies and even governments in other nations because smaller and weaker states are voiceless due to the help they are receiving from stronger ones through this kind of institutions.

On the other hand, official international organizations have also been criticised because their high spending not in the goals they claim to pursue but in maintaining their own bureaucratic teams whose members earn much higher salaries for doing what national workers and technicians could carry out as efficiently as they do.

3. Transnational and multinational companies, the strength of capitalism.

It is not a secret that some large companies and corporations earn more money than some national states. Their budgets could even be higher than those of several poor countries combined. The difference between a transnational and a multinational company is that even if both are present and operate in different countries, the first kind has their main

headquarters in a country, usually a highly developed one. From this place it manages all the rest of its subsidiary offices around the world. The second kind are independently managed in every country where they are operating even if they keep the same symbols, policies and philosophy from the main or original company.

But obviously, beyond these subtle difference all this large corporations manage big amounts of money and deal with big businesses and trade. Some of them are backed by their correspondent states. Such is the case of the Brazilian oil company, *Petrobras*, which is partially stated owned with private investors as well.

Nobody has granted them officially any kind of title in order to consider them as actors in the world system but they actually do not need any kind of public recognition because their power lies upon the basis of money, which is strong enough to give them the capacity to deal with official states and organizations as another member of the exclusive world system. They certainly are a great source of jobs for millions worldwide and they offer the chance of getting a safe and well paid work for many professionals, technicians and workers in general.

However some of them stand for the dark side of globalized businesses as well. There are transnational and multinational corporations that have become so powerful by taking advantage of national weaknesses and the variety that actually exists among labor laws in different countries. For instance, American or European companies have moved their factories to those nations where workforce is cheap and taxes are also low. China, India, Pakistan, Guatemala and many other under developed countries are example of places around the world that have welcomed this kind of investments due to the fact that huge companies are offering jobs to the population and this is supposed to be positive from the point of view of reducing extreme poverty.

But this is just one side of the coin, the back of it is not that shiny. Long hours of intensive work under unhuman conditions as well as miserable wages are likely to be considered as a real modern slavery. Big companies benefit from unregulated work in many poor countries and increase their income thanks to this dark side of globalization where human beings are not free to travel looking for better life conditions but merchandises can be designed in the U.S., manufactured in China or Bangladesh and sold all over.

A recent example of the power held by these international world actors that exploit people regardless human rights is the case of the Spanish clothing company called Inditex, which owns brands such as “Zara” or “Bershka”. This corporation earned in 2014 € 2.37 billion (Aleteia, 2014) thanks to exploiting human workforce in countries such as the above mentioned where law does not protect people but big companies. Who knows if these harsh working conditions are allowed due to bribes given to public employees so that they do not check whether fair salaries and human conditions are ensured to workers.

4. Non-Governmental organizations (NGO), civil society beyond States.

Unlike big transnational companies whose goal is to make money, sometimes leaving aside moral and ethical considerations as it has been stated above, NGO are supposed to be inspired by principles and the willingness of getting involved in solving social and political problems. They are not endorsed by governments and eventually they may have

to face hindrances or even harassment by official representatives due to their commitment which could be seen as contrary to governmental policies.

For instance, the Afro-American community in the United States during the decade of the sixties in the past century; this group taken from the civil society was fighting for full access to civil and political rights which had been denied to them since they were slaves and even under their supposed “freedom” status. They were not allowed to vote or to enter the same universities or schools as the white Anglo-Saxon population; they were discriminated in public transportations and sanitary facilities. This situation was part of a legal and “normal” establishment, but it was deeply unfair and unhuman.

These groups had to fight against public policies that were harmful to them, they had to force the government, both the federal and the state one, to change law and social structures. They were associations formed out of civil society, churches and other independent groups not sponsored by any official institution. They finally succeeded to reach their goal even if today their fight is far from being over.

NGO may eventually grow up and branch out in other countries. Then, their actions reach international effects. Even if they have a main office or homeland, they influence many worldwide without being part of any official institution. They have been founded due to several reasons; there are organizations created to preserve nature such as WWF (Worldwide Wild Fund), others have as their main goal to raise awareness about crimes against civil population and they try to prevent this kind of actions through activism based on the principles of the International Humanitarian Law. They also perform actions aiming to relieve human sufferings under wars or armed conflicts. This is the case of several NGO such as International Amnesty, the Red Cross or Doctors Without Borders. They are independent from official powers and privately supported even if they can also carry out joint operations with governments.

Among NGO there are especial organizations that have international recognition because of their capacity to move crowds and inspire feelings. Even if they are not exactly lay NGO this is the most accurate category to classify them within the world system. They are churches and in general religious groups. Their leaders are widely respected and their messages are usually a source of inspiration for millions worldwide; for example, the Pope or Dalai Lama. Of course, they are not free from controversy when their speeches mix religion with politics or they question official attitudes or decisions that are allegedly contrary to moral values. A clear example could be the opposition that has broken out in many countries and states between conservative religious leaders and public policies that allow same-sex marriages.

It not a mystery for anyone that even if there are many churches around and religious groups all around the world, Catholic Church is the one regarded as the most powerful due to its history and influence in many places in spite of the current separation between church and state in all western countries. When the Pope travels to visit Christian communities, it is a sort of huge media event that goes beyond a simple religious gathering to pray or to listen pious and beautiful choirs. As a matter of fact, this church is the only one that enjoys the quality of being a State (The Vatican City) able to establishing diplomatic relations with others through its embassies (nunciatures). These institutions have a double role: to represent the central authority of the Catholic Church (The Pope)

before national States and local churches. That is why religions are also considered as actors in the World System; they are entities that deal with political power in many countries and they still have a big influence upon people.

Other churches have less international influence because in many cases they are national institutions born after the Protestant Reform in the XVIth century or even before, when the Orthodox Church and the Catholic one split in 1054. As a consequence, their influence is quite limited to the boundaries of the countries where they were founded. In the case of Islamic faith, which is also a common belief for millions, they are also monotheistic as well as Christianity but they do not have a central institution as the Vatican that officially represent all believers of that faith (even if not everybody agree with that function).

5. International Outlaw Groups, the dark side of the force.

When cartoons or movies (e.g. Star Wars) depict a super hero, this one usually has an enemy. The first one is admired and welcomed everywhere because he or she works hard and apply his superpowers to defeat crime and punish evildoers. However, his enemy could have the very same powers, which in this case are used to commit bad and harmful actions against society. For this reason, they are forced to act under shadows and deprived from official legitimacy. This does not mean he is less powerful than the official hero; he just has to move and use his powers concealing himself and avoiding police and army forces or facing them if he risks to be caught and sent to jail.

This metaphor may help to understand this fifth category of actors in the World System. It is full of outlaw characters who challenge openly or stealthily conventional and official powers. It is clear that there are also many NGO that do not agree with States policies and sometimes they even face governmental harassment due to their steady commitment. But NGO are not groups willing to kill people who do not agree with them. They generally look for changes through non-violent actions such as strikes, parades, demonstrations, media programs, social networks and other means.

On the other hand, outlaw groups do not care about law at all. They are willing to undertake war against official powers in order to make clear they are strong enough to challenge any government or even a world power. They usually get their funds from criminal activities: drug sales, kidnaping ransoms, smuggling operations, among others. Once they count on these dirty resources, they manage to slide them into the legal financial system through money laundering processes such as real estate purchases, bribes, and many other methods. They are so powerful that they can even corrupt politicians or infiltrate governments.

This kind of criminal organizations force governments to negotiate with them not around a dinner table but through death threats, massacres, persecutions, gunshots and other violent means. These World System actors are frequently called terrorists as well, independently from the reasons or philosophy behind their actions. There many groups

classified under this tag by international organizations or governments that exchange information with each other to fight against this kind of *Hidra*³ of the modern world.

According to ideology some groups that defend political or social achievements through violent methods have also been classified as terrorists. FARC⁴ from Colombia is one of them. This group has been fighting against the State for more than fifty years and it is in a CIA⁵ black list of extremist groups; but on the other hand, some South American countries that sympathise with socialism have repeatedly refused to tag it as terrorist.

It is clear though that such a patronizing attitude has not been applied to other organizations absolutely bound to criminal activities like Mexican drug dealers. They are one of the most outstanding examples of outlaw international actors. Similarly, Italian mafia has also been a kind of international actor daring enough to challenge conventional powers either by bullets or by corruption at high government levels. Its international links are mainly connected between its homeland, Sicily, and the United States.

But there is another source of terrorist activities. It is religious radicalism, which does not have anything to do with true religion or faith, the one that inspires good and compassion. Some several centuries ago, Christianity was a kind of ideological tool at the service of kings to enlarge their territories or to gain more subjects. As a result, crusades killed thousands of innocent people trying to recover Jerusalem from its Muslim political control; later on, another religious and pious institution, The “Holy” Inquisition, tortured and burned alive believers tagged as heretical just because the way they understood faith did not meet catholic orthodoxy, the only official religion in some European countries (e.g. Spain). Once again, a belief was used to ensure all inhabitants obeyed the king.

In more recent times, terrorism linked to religion seems to have shifted from secular Europe to Middle East theocratic and extremist groups. It would be too long to refer here all of them and trace them back in recent history. Nevertheless, it is possible to point out that terrorist groups arisen from a Muslim background do not consider religion a way to deal peacefully with other human beings or to practice solidarity towards vulnerable groups. They all use it instead to sow seeds of fear and hatred all over, as well as to subjugate those people who do not think as they do. This could be considered as a misuse of religion in order to gain political control and challenge outer powers seen as representatives of evil.

Among these groups, so called jihadists (which means fighters), some of them have been able to amazingly strike western countries; e.g., Al Qaeda collapsed Twin Towers in New York in 2001 with a couple of hijacked planes. More recently, the emergence of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has shown to the world that medieval brutality is more alive than ever; this radical Sunni group came up from the messy Iraq once the American invasion was over. They have seized large territories and forced people to accept their radical interpretation of Islam through the Sharia law; in addition they control oil dwells and kidnap western hostages to finance their terror activities.

³ In the Greek mythology, Hydra was a snake-shaped aquatic monster that had several heads. Every time that it got one of them beheaded, it was capable to regenerate it in a sort of endless process.

⁴ In Spanish: Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia

⁵ Central Intelligence Agency

However this group has gone beyond other extremists. They have not hesitated to behead their prisoners (including children), burn them alive or drown them in cages in order to post these executions on line. They have recently claimed to have blown up a civil Russian plane over Egypt and carried out mass executions in Paris against civil population as a way to reject western intervention in Syria (the first took place on October 3rd and the second one on November 13th 2015).

As a summary, any organization that uses violent means, such as mass murders, blasts or any other, to spread its ideas or reach their goals can be called a terrorist organization. Even though this is true, it is also real that some official war actions carried out by conventional armies have frequently caused casualties among civil population. For instance, the recent bombing that destroyed a hospital in Afghanistan was caused by American war planes (The Guardian, 2015). Even if the official information has stated that it was a deplorable mistake, no few voices have called this event as a State terrorism action. It is then understandable that such a concept is widely used not only to call criminal groups but also official forces when they use their force indiscriminately causing innocent casualties.

6. International Mass Media: the power to control Public Opinion

Even if the other actors that have been listed and depicted so far share a great deal of power, there is another one able to make people think what they want. The base upon which it moves world public opinion is a huge net of various media: newspapers, TV channels, radio stations and online resources.

As a matter of fact, global media is the actor that decides what events, among the millions of facts happening in the world every day, are worthy to become news. But even the ones that have been selected to be spread all over are not treated in the same way by all the different media. That will depend on what is called “Agenda Setting”, which means that big news companies and agencies have their own criteria to decide whether they broadcast events as news or not; and if they do, how this news is showed to audiences.

Peace journalism researchers have outlined four reasons that media usually use to decide what event should be transformed into news within this big industry; namely, that facts must come from “high ranking countries” and they have to be about “high ranking people”. In addition, it would be better if they involve actors (ex. gr. politicians, cinema stars, sportsmen) rather than processes or structures; and finally, it would be much better if they are negative; even though not necessarily because good news from leading people can also cause a media effect (Galtung, 2014).

In the western world, it is still prevailing a kind of “Eurocentric” matrix of thought; and according to it, there is a bigger media impact when news are about facts that involve powers and their societies; in sociological concepts, nations considered as “center states”, not those located in peripheral regions, where facts should be really negative in order to be considered as news; for instance, a massive earthquake or a massacre.

The most important effect of this uneven news treatment is a lack of objectivity when facts are broadcasted by different channels. A good recent example could be the painful and hideous terrorist attack by the extremist Islamism group Al Shahab that took place at Garissa University in Kenya (April 2015) which caused almost one hundred fifty people

dead. Just a month before, an insane German pilot had committed suicide crashing on purpose a commercial plane on the Southern French Alps and killing a similar number of innocent passengers and crew members.

Both facts were equally serious in terms of human losses and emotional impact for the victims' relatives. However, in big western media chains, the first fact was just addressed and barely spread to the public whereas the second one overfilled news programs almost completely for a whole week; the facts were described several times, their possible causes were researched with the help of experts and authorities; specialists were interviewed and every topic related to the German Wings catastrophe was exhausted. The unavoidable question here is why media groups such as CNN did not grant a similar degree of attention to the African murdered people.

As it has been showed, there are several factors that make global media a real power holder in the world system today. In addition to those that have been outlined so far, it also has to be pointed out that ideology plays here a major role. As a matter of fact, big world media respond to economic interests, they are not neutral and they present facts as news according to their sociological and political view. If they have been born in an environment where capitalism is being endorsed and supported, so their contents will certainly follow what flatter right parties which are allied to neo – liberal premises in economy. On the other hand, those media supported by governments sided with leftist proposals and practices, will have a completely different point of view about the same political and public facts.

An interesting case worthy to be mentioned is Brazil and the impeachment process that took place in 2016 to tackle Dilma Rousseff from power. CNN and other private media around the world, focused on people's annoyance related to government and the huge oil public company, *Petrobras*, which has been involved in corruption charges including bribes as reward for granting public contracts to private companies. In contrast to this, media like *Telesur*, supported by leftist governments in Latin America, emphasized the social goals that had been achieved by Lula and Rousseff and how unfair it allegedly was to leave aside the latter from power. Such situation was tagged as a *Coup d'État* by this media and others aligned with the so called XXI century socialism.

