

Technological transitions and China–Latin American relations

The rise of China as an important national economy is a mature process, crowned by the significant economic growth rates the country consistently reaches since late 20th century. China has attained solid prominence in international trade scope and is quickly narrowing or eliminating technological gaps in telecommunications, health, energy and other areas. From a geopolitical point of view, China also has been intensifying its presence in regions with high economic development potential. Latin America has been scenery to China's performance in all those aspects and has also strengthened its bonds with the country.

Producing knowledge on those processes is a huge challenge for universities and their research centers. To face the challenge, School of Economics, Business and Accounting at University of São Paulo (FEA/USP) has been invigorating ties to Fudan University through the FLAUC – Fudan Latin-American University Consortium – over the past few years. FEA/USP researchers being invited to Shanghai between 2017 and 2019 has allowed professors and scholars from both institutions to take part in important events, such as BRICS Academic Summit in December, 2019, a webinar in November, 2020, and the Triple Helix Conference in June, 2021.

As part of this set of initiatives comes up the REGE special issue: “Technological Transitions and China–Latin American Relations.” Editing this important REGE number was a shared responsibility between ourselves and Professor Shen Yi, from the School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University, China.

Our special issue gathers very interesting articles, as they thoroughly cover the proposed themes. The first article – **Technological transition and technological dependency: Latin America–China relations in a changing international order** – outlines the relationship between the technology and the global political hegemony transition processes, particularly in Latin America. Within said processes, there is an emerging prominence of China, as opposed to the role so far played by the USA.

The second article – **Digital transformation by enabling strategic capabilities: in the context of “BRICS”** – brings a relevant discussion on how companies must seek Industry 4.0 strategic capabilities as they aim for competitive advantage in the BRICS countries context. Indeed, the piece demonstrates the path to be followed by organizations as they navigate international competition, having as foundation this group of countries, increasingly important in the global scenario.

The third feature – **Suzhou Industrial Park and its role in the Belt and Road Initiative: the Great Stone Industrial Park in Belarus** – brings the relevant case of Suzhou Industrial Park Chinese experience, approaching its role in the technological upgrade and in the incentive to innovation. Moreover, the article analyses the case effect on China national economic development and – in the Belt and Road Initiative circumstances – on Belarus. Here, the focus on the cooperation with Belarus sets terrain for comparison to similar experiences in Latin America.



The fourth paper – **End-of-life electric vehicle battery pathway scenarios in China** – focuses on a sector with great strategic implications in the future: electric vehicles. The article expresses the concern brought by the destination of the batteries supplying energy to those vehicles. It is important to discuss the potential to recycle these batteries into accumulators of energy that has been generated by renewable – though intermittent – sources, such as solar and wind. The paper is, therefore, an investigation on the expansion of new energy technologies sustainability.

Fifth and sixth articles approach Chinese companies' investments in Latin America. **“Huawei in Venezuela: A Review of 2006-2019”** reports how this company has participated in the Venezuela telecommunications technological transition, based in trade between both countries. **“Chinese investment in the Northeast region of Brazil: an analysis about the renewable energy sector”** carries an analysis on Chinese companies' participation in the renewable energy sector, building on strategic partnerships laid down with the Brazilian northeast region state government consortium.

Last, but definitely not least, **“Brazil and China: Aspects for a mass and universal educational system”** delivers a discussion on which parameters would be adequate to support the adoption and functioning of a mass educational system, looking into quality of the education offered and aiming at the universalization of its reach in continental and heterogeneous countries, such as Brazil and China.

We hope that the availability and the reading of the articles will constitute another decisive step towards the in-depth understanding of the theme of digital transition and its impacts, having China and Latin America as field of operations.

Enjoy your reading!

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