Chapter 7

Strategic leadership of Saddam Hussein and George W. Bush in the context of the second Gulf War

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Abstract: This paper analyzes the strategic leadership of George W. Bush and Saddam Hussein in the framework of the so-called second Gulf War, in the light of Clausewitz's classic theory. The factors that influenced the formation of these leaders and how their leaderships were evidenced during the conflict are examined. Finally, some conclusions are proposed about the type of leadership observed, its relationship with institutionalism and how it was a fundamental element in their bets and strategies during the development of the conflict.

Keywords: Clausewitz, strategic, institutionalism, leadership, second Gulf War.

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Introduction

Much has been analyzed in the face of the phenomenon of leadership and, in particular, of strategic leadership in the military field. This   essay seeks to explore the way in which the organizational and leadership capacities of a group are developed; particularly, in the development of the second Gulf War.

For these purposes, the concept of strategic leadership and how it approached the second Gulf War will be analyzed first. Subsequently, the construction of the leadership styles of the two protagonists of the war: George W. Bush and Saddam Hussein will be examined. In this scenario, the elements and characteristics of leadership, their definitions and the corresponding schools will be taken into account.

Next, we will study the way in which the strategic leaderships of the protagonists developed within the framework of the second Gulf War, in the light of von Clausewitz's classical theory. In this way, we will continue with the study of the way in which *normative neo-institutionalism* was a founding element within these leadership schemes and the way in which Bush and Hussein agreed on the same institutional model. Finally, conclusions will be drawn.

Approach to Strategic Leadership

As Aznar (2018) refers to it, a leader is a person capable of setting goals and getting a group of people to follow him, so that leaders become subjects capable of intuiting processes of change. Reading the signs of the times and adapting to new realities by taking advantage of opportunities and service and leading the conglomerate to achieve its higher purposes.

For the purposes of this document, we start from a broad definition of leadership, following the meaning collected by the Spanish Navy. In the sense of indicating that it comprises "the personal capacity of the person who leads a human group to influence its components so that they work cohesively and enthusiastically in the achievement of objectives subordinated to a common and higher end" (Aznar, 2018, p. 42).

Thus, leadership ability does not fall under the umbrella of Manichaean visions where leadership must be oriented towards the achievement of goodness or what is socially acceptable. On the contrary, all actions that guide the achievement of ends greater than the group, whether or not they are oriented within the framework of the law or what is understood as good or right in a certain social context, also imply expressions of leadership. In this scenario, leadership is able to arise naturally being interdependent and finalist, responding to the approach that is made to the problem or the group. The way in which the person relates to the conglomerate, the responsibilities and the challenges and bearing in mind that the leader can be born or following the thesis of need. It can also be done after the group agrees on the objectives and according to the requirements of the context of place or time (Aznar, 2018).

In the particular case of military leadership, it should be borne in mind that the informal aspects of leadership are usually overcome by institutions that focus on the construction of professional and moral, as well as cognitive, affective, and psychomotor references, which usually brings them closer to formal looks at these senses of exercise (Monsalve-Castro et al., 2018). However, beyond such meanings, it is commonly recognized that military leadership is currently assumed as an art of persuasion and direction of subordinates to obtain their support and loyal collaboration from them. Thus, in the military field, it is highlighted that strategic leadership must have the capacity to predict, negotiate, understand the dynamics of the global world, reach consensus and communicate assertively (Cifuentes, 2008).

Context of Iraq under Hussein's regime

Saddam Hussein led Iraq from 1979 to 2003. During his rule, he projected himself as the most influential leader in the country and, at the same time, as a courageous modernizer and institutional reformer. However, the regime under his command stood out for carrying out an important repression of different groups in the interior of the country, which implied the death of thousands of people (Miller & Mylroie, 1990).

The borders of Iraq, as well as those of different countries in the Middle East, were defined as a product of the Sykes-Picot Agreements, as a result of the end of the Great War. The unilateral and artificial division of the different countries did not take into account the diversity of the population groups in the region. This meant that various population groups, such as Kurds, Sunnis, Shiites and Christians, were settled in Iraq. During the development of his regime, Hussein relied especially on the Sunnis, which involved marginalizing and attacking various population groups that even represented the majority of the country (Moaddel et al., 2008).

Hussein was overthrown in April 2003, in the context of the second Gulf War, an operation led by the United States. Yet nearly two decades after his death, Hussein's legacy to history continues to generate quite a bit of controversy. The instability in Iraq, produced, among other factors, as a result of the war, has meant that several Iraqis continue to yearn for the return of a repressive regime (Blinderman, 2009). For the victims, however, the Hussein era is a period that will hardly be forgotten, and that will continue to generate deep pain, given the countless losses of lives, the violation of human rights and the social and political instability generated by repression (Moaddel et al., 2008).

Approach to Hussein's Strategic Leadership and Institutional Sense

For the construction of strategic leadership it is necessary to take into account the interrelationship between symbols, meaning and beliefs, to fix the elements of culture, vision and meaning. In the framework of strategic leadership, it is necessary to keep in mind management skills, cognitive competencies, security and defense expertise, and personality and attitude elements.

However, as referred to by Macagnan (2013), Thoman Veblen highlights the importance of institutions being created by human beings through consensus. Sánchez (2013), for his part, indicates that institutions are political definitions that establish who are the holders of political rights, as well as the entities that fight for power itself. For example, the parties and elite groups, which are, ultimately, those that make up the legislative branch as part of an institution that establishes policies that affect the decision to maintain the *status quo* or to promote an institutional reorganization.

In this way, a relationship is created between leadership, institutions and incentives. The incentives that are promoted within organizations will affect the behavior of the actors. Therefore, it can be affirmed that the institutions at their origin have three elements: the *rules of the game,* the *actors* and the *incentives* that make the changes generated vary in decision-making. In terms of security and defense, there are undoubtedly actors, rules of the game and incentives (Sánchez, 2013).

At this point, it is appropriate to analyze the type of leadership developed by Hussein, under the gaze of the definitions of leadership collected by Sastre (2014). For the purposes of this document, the following definitions should be noted, which fall under the symbols, senses and beliefs:

- **Zaleznik (1977):** "Leadership inevitably requires the use of power to influence the thoughts and actions of others."
- **Burns (1978):** "Leadership over human beings is exercised when people with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources in order to awaken, encourage, and satisfy the motives of followers."
- **Yukl and van Fleet (1990):** "Leadership is seen as a process that includes influencing the objectives of the tasks and strategies of a group or organization. In people in the organization to implement the strategies and achieve the objectives. In the maintenance and identification of the group; and in the culture of the organization."
- **Caravedo (2011):** "Leadership is a type of bond between people that occurs within the framework of systems and that manifests itself in different ways".

As Jerrold (2005) notes, during his government Hussein managed to build and foster a cult of personality, to inspire the devotion of the Iraqi people. This meant that his image was widely disseminated and respected in different scenarios. Hussein's image was also deeply misrepresented in Iraq, as he depicted himself in a variety of attire, from traditional attire to modern business attire, to appeal to various strata of Iraqi society.

In 2003, during the start of the second Gulf War, a 40-foot statue of Hussein was destroyed on the grounds of Zawra Park, where the Iraqi president used to address his troops. Likewise, in the south of the country, it was possible to see how some residents helped to demolish other statues of the Iraqi leader. One of the most notorious symbols of Hussein's power corresponded to his luxurious palaces. As collected at that time, coalition troops entered these fortresses by knocking

down the doors of different palaces, which were characterized by their spacious rooms, delicate ceilings with stained glass, marble and carpentry floors and detailed panels, but without furniture.

Perhaps one of the most prominent aspects of Hussein's type of leadership was his marked repression and violation of human rights. In fact, as Zadeh and Shafiee (2017) refer, the crimes of the Ba'ath regime, of forced displacement and the murder of thousands of Kurds in the eighties, were configured in a genocide announced by the High Criminal Court of Iraq. In 1982 there was a failed assassination attempt on Saddam Husain, in Dujail, a village located 40 km from Baghdad. This meant that almost two hundred people, including children, were sentenced and hanged in retaliation. In addition, around 1,500 people from the village were tortured and sent to prison. The locals, in addition, were fined, and their houses, demolished. In addition, they were prohibited from planting, to limit their food. At the end of the eighties, what is called the most tragic operation ordered by Hussein was carried out: the Anfal campaign, against the Kurds. As Zadeh and Shafiee (2017) indicate,

> The operation was carried out from 1988 to 1989, during which more than 100,000 Kurds from Iraq (182,000 people, including 80,000 Barzani and several tens of thousands of Germiyani) were massacred by the forces of the Ba'ath regime, which received orders directly from Saddam Hussein (Naami, 2008). (p. 218)

As Weber stated, the following expressions of will can be found in leadership: the *charismatic,* which is related to devotion to holiness or heroism - that is, to the condition of serving as an example or reference -; the *traditional,* which is based on the evolution of time and the continuation of certain entities and on the legitimacy represented by their status, and the *legal,* based on the legitimacy of the laws (Aznar, 2018).

As can be seen, the leadership developed by Hussein managed to correspond to the three types of authority: a charismatic one, which sought the development of propaganda to maintain the domination of the masses. The traditional one, through the legitimacy that it represented to maintain institutionalism and repression, and the legal one, through the power obtained thanks to the fact of commanding the Armed Forces. However, following Soriano (2013), it can be said that the leadership style to which Hussein came closest was *coercive;* that is, the leadership

style based on fear and repression, in which there are no limits to the performance of the subject.

In fact, this type of leadership does not tend to last over time, to the extent that it produces inefficiencies that end up limiting the performance of subordinates, eliminating the ability to reward, limiting innovation and establishing a blow to the organization. In this sense, as Soriano (2013) points out,

> Coercive leadership is characterized by having subordinates act according to the leader's rules to avoid possible punishments that may be applied to them. Coercive leaders often set arbitrary goals and rules, limit the range of their subordinates, control information, and set guidelines and rules to follow to avoid punishment. This type of leadership usually manifests itself when leaders act under pressure or have lost their ability to reward. Thus, this leadership does not encourage motivation, one of the main weapons of the leader, although it is not ruled out when you want to give a "helm" to the situation and completely change the dynamics established in a group or organization.
>
> This type of leadership is most effective when applied to simple tasks or in crisis situations, when employees need a clear set of guidelines. On the contrary, it is not the most suitable to face complex tasks or with employees who are expected to have a high degree of initiative or autonomy. (p. 43)

Building George W. Bush's Leadership as a Brave Horseman of Faith

Some authors, such as Skowronek (2005), point to the fact that, in principle, it is reasonable to assume that the position of leadership assumed results both from strategic political calculation and an expression of an innate character. For this reason, character, as an expression of personality,

> […] may place limits on what a particular actor can credibly agree to in their own belief, but within those limits, a president's strategic leadership stance tends to be deliberately constructed with a view to leveraging its appeal within politics. (p. 817)

George W. Bush's leadership has been studied by various authors. Gergen (2003) points out how the former president, during his time as governor of the state of Texas, hung in his office the painting *"A Charge to Keep"*, which, Bush said,

represented the figure of a cowboy who, on his horse, is responsible for spreading the Methodist faith throughout the West. This symbol, which in principle would seem harmless, is not so harmless if we dive into the analysis of what is behind that decision.

According to Gergen (2003), when Bush decided to hang the painting in his office, he also sent a memorandum to his entire work team requesting that, when they entered his office, they take a look at the beautiful painting of the rider riding towards a steep summit, insofar as the message is that "we serve purposes greater than ourselves." Thus, this special identification with the painting reveals Bush's good sense of himself as a political leader, the role he played, and the core point of religious faith.

In this way, the former president also indicated about this painting, a certain rider is "on a very difficult path and at least two people follow him and perhaps thousands" (Gavaler, 2015). Thus, it can be seen that identification with painting is a sign of what he believes about himself and the way his followers see him. As a brave and intrepid leader, capable of entering unknown terrain and giving goals to unknown enemies. Until he gets them out of their hiding places and achieve, in the same sense of the picture, do the will of God (Gavaler, 2015).

The autobiography written by the former president in 1999 - that is, during the race for his first presidency - was entitled *A Charge to Keep.* Bailey (2008) points out how in this work the former president states that Jesus changed his heart during the competition for the presidency, and that the religious sense resulted in repeated rhetoric, such as, for example, during the speeches related to 9/11.

In his 2010 autobiography, Bush notes that each president decorates the Oval Office in his own style, and that he decided to hang there different paintings of Texas that included remembrances of the battle of the Alamo and the landscape of the west of the state. However, it is striking how Bush himself dedicates, in a special way, a few lines to justify his decision in front of the painting "*A Charge to Keep*" when he indicates:

> [I also brought] a painting of a rider riding on a hill by W.H.D. Koerner. The name of the piece, "A Charge to Keep", recalls Charles Weley's Methodist hymn, which we sang at my first inauguration as governor. Both the painting and the anthem reflect the importance of serving a cause greater than oneself. (Bush, 2010, n.d.)

Following Aznar (2018), it can be identified that Bush's position is in no way gratuitous. In fact, it is intertwined with what is called *military culture as a heroic culture,* where that sum of complicities, ideas and signs, associations and patterns of conduct and communication are based on honor. In this way, "A community of honor is closely linked to the power structure of society insofar as it possesses the concrete powers to impose honorary criteria" (p. 311). However, what is most striking is the way in which symbols and beliefs are also intertwined in a leader like Bush, who prides himself on being a commander of the Armed Forces. In this way, the military camp presupposes a moral code and guidelines of conduct, and here it resembles, to a large extent, the elements of religion, the same ones to which Bush referred so much through the painting:

> [...] let us remember again Calderón's description of the militia as a 'religion of honest men', although its goals are pointed out by the community they serve and, in principle, do not incorporate the specific transcendent dimension of religiosity. The military is a humanism. (Aznar, 2018, p. 319)

This special interplay between the military, political and religious powers was endorsed by Bush himself both in his appearances in the Oval Office and in the portrait that hangs in the room of former presidents of the White House where it appears right in front of the same painting. Additionally, the legacy of his presidency, collected in the book *"A Charge Kept"*, shows the importance that this symbol had for the development of his effective leadership.

The development of the second Gulf War under the gaze of Clausewitz and in the face of strategic and institutional leadership developments

General von Clausewitz lived at a crucial moment of the war, and as a child he witnessed Napoleon's wars. His work is the product of the work carried out by his wife collecting his writings, a situation that has called into question the scope of the meaning of the statements contained in *De la Guerra*, his key work (Pommerin, 2014).

Some of its essential postulates rest on the fact that war itself is nothing more than a duel of brute force, and where whoever uses violence more and with greater intensity will have an advantage. And it is at that moment that politics brings a

rationality, to the extent that when politics is used, greater benefits will be obtained. Therefore, a war without politics is meaningless; hence his acknowledged maxim that "war is a continuation of politics by other means" (Howard, 2002).

In this sense, it can be said that war is a strategic action, that war is political in nature and that there are general guidelines for its conduct. Therefore, depending on the ambitions, strategies will have to be chosen. A *policy,* which has the final objectives, and a *military* one, on how to achieve the objectives outlined by the political strategy. Military strategy is subordinated to politics, but the politician cannot harm military strategy itself. It is a dialogue and a dialectic that is by no means simple (Freedman, 2013).

In this interrelation, frictions are generated, on the occasion of the dissimilar looks of the military and the politician. In this sense, the political objective of war (its *political end,* according to Clausewitz) is a primary axis and establishes the conditions to evaluate the possibility of assuming war and the actions that constitute it (Hughes, 2020). In turn, the political driver must verify that the actions carried out during the war are measures against the affectation of the national interest. Therefore, according to Clausewitz, victory and military actions during the war must be politically acceptable, for which the subsequent purpose of the war must be calculated, which is to achieve peace. War has no end in itself, but must be linked to political considerations. Therefore, the subjection of the military level to the political level does not constitute interference, but, on the contrary, gives a rational sense to military action that reaches an equilibrium in which, mutually, both powers are necessary.

War is the continuation of politics by other means

During the course of the second Gulf War, it was evident that the Allied troops carried out a deployment of combat means that allowed them to confront the old and demoralized Iraqi troops in a very advantageous way. This meant having a sufficient number of troops that guaranteed progress in enemy territory in a matter of days, using state-of-the-art military means and devices, so that an efficient military operation could be carried out guaranteeing the least number of casualties (Wunderlich, 2003).

This Clausewitzian *concept* was presented at every opportunity by President George W. Bush, who constantly appealed in his interventions to the political sense

that legitimized military action (*The Guardian,* 2003). In this way, the developed war went from being a mere duel of brute force, to being endowed with a particular political rationality that represented greater returns: overcoming the threat in the use of weapons of mass destruction and support for terrorism by the Iraqi regime.

The Trinity

In war there are three elements that must be taken into account. The r*ational aspect,* rooted in the political component. *Uncertainty,* whose management corresponds to the military. And the *emotional component,* which develops in the people.

Therefore, war is not only a struggle of armies, but also involves involving the population, which places this element in what is currently known as *hybrid wars,* where belligerent action is not carried out for the conquest of territories, but is placed in the interest of fighting for the mind, thought, attitudes and behaviors of the population (Manolea, 2021).

The strategic leadership of the two main protagonists of the coalition - George W. Bush and Tony Blair - showed that Clausewitz's concept of the Trinitywas fully valid during the second Gulf War. In the specific case of the emotional component, the importance of the legitimacy of their peoples to make the decision to attack Iraq and, subsequently, to maintain the war during the following years was brought to mind, for which it was necessary to appeal to data and reports that later, and unfortunately, turned out not to sympathize with reality (Porter, 2019).

For the decision to go to war with Iraq, the fact was brought to mind that Saddam Hussein was a dictator who had persecuted his people and used chemical weapons. Additionally, a dictator who used weapons of mass destruction sponsored terrorists, paid the families of suicide bombers, invaded his neighbors, mistreated his people, deceived international inspectors, and refused to comply with more than a dozen United Nations (UN) standards (Thiessen, 2009). In 2003, the UN Security Council gave him one last chance to reveal and disarm, or face serious consequences. And the Iraqi leader refused to disarm. This led Bush to assemble an international coalition that began the second Gulf War in March 2003. According to Thiessen (2009),

> The overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime freed 25 million Iraqis. And it had benefits beyond the borders of Iraq. Libya's leader announced in December 2003 that he was abandoning his country's pursuit of weapons of mass

destruction. Libya's nuclear program - uranium, centrifuges, bomb-making designs, as well as key missile components - was moved to secure storage facilities in the United States. Libya pledged to destroy its chemical weapons. Today, Libya is out of the business of searching for weapons of mass destruction and off the list of state sponsors of terrorism. (p. 5)

However, the subsequent evidence that the Hussein regime did not have weapons of mass destruction led to undermining the sense of strategic leadership deployed by the West and, even, the very relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States, who did not calculate the effects of the military intervention and, therefore, could not face the subsequent guerrilla war (Porter, 2019).

Chaos

From Clausewitz's classic view, there is no one-size-fits-all formula for victory. What is generated is chaos, and the procedure serves to advance the path that leads to victory. However, in the end, decision-making is not based on the scientific field, but on the elements that the battlefield itself gives. In this scenario, the battlefields are becoming more intense, faster and with greater challenges, so the military must have the ability to understand what is happening on the battlefield to maintain the final objective of the mission.

For Fontela (2006), there were two phases in the second Gulf War. The first, corresponding to the invasion, was characterized by its speed, its effectiveness, and the low number of deaths in the coalition army. However, the second phase showed a wear and tear in strategic leadership, marked by chaos and guerrilla warfare, which meant a lack of territorial dominance, which triggered a limitation to the control of the situation and facilitated the organization of the resistance. In this sense,

Post-war urban guerrilla warfare is proving more effective, has taken the lead, produces greater attrition of coalition forces and less resistance despite its seemingly sporadic and improvised character. The latest actions demonstrate a unity of criteria in the designation of objectives (military or civilian) which demonstrates a strategic direction, which can force the main effort of the occupation forces on their own security, leaving control of the population in the hands of the resistance. (p. 7)

In this scenario, Record (2010) indicates that it was unimaginable to the main defenders of the war that some Iraqis - especially those in the Sunni Arab community, who, by the way, were close to losing power - considered an invasion and an American occupation acts of conquest worthy of being resisted by recourse to all available means. Including tried and tested methods of insurgent guerrilla warfare.

For this reason, the possibility that an invasion would bring about the collapse of the state "leaving American forces adrift in a sea of anarchy, evidently also escaped the administration's imagination despite the fact that, for all practical purposes, Saddam Hussein was the Iraqi state" (p. 83).

The above facts, added to the fact that it was possible to demonstrate the combination of false and petty assumptions about the danger and imminence of the Iraqi threat to the security of the United States. And the need to assume the costs and consequences of the war at all costs "condemned Operation Iraqi Freedom to strategic failure" (p. 83), which undermined, within the United States and throughout the world, the strategic leadership of the protagonists of the operation, such as George W. Bush and Tony Blair.

Types of Leadership Developed in the Second Gulf War

George W. Bush

Bush identifies several elements that, taken together, outline the way in which symbols, senses and beliefs constituted leadership during the second Gulf War.

There was evidence of a leader who adopted a style of command and control that managed to stand out from the figure of other presidents. Thus, Gergen (2003) indicates, he was seen as a sensible, decisive male, capable of setting his sights on the distant future and without fear of reaching it. He expects others to follow him along the way, or at least get out of his way. From his business studies he learned to focus on a few goals at a time and to take on problems as distractions:

> He actively asks questions and listens before deciding, but does not agonize, and once the decision is made, he does not tolerate internal dissent. He happily delegates details, but closely monitors his team. If they deviate abruptly from their course, it brings them back online. He is a man from West Texas, a man of God and proud of both. (Gergen, 2003)

During the development of the conflict, there was evidence of a president capable of establishing and achieving a common national agenda. On the occasion of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, he twice sent US forces on military campaigns and overthrew two regimes of power, being able to reformulate US foreign policy and moving away from multilateral commitments (Gergen, 2003). In this way, as recorded by Thiessen (2009),

> President Bush responded to the attacks by launching a broad and sustained war against terrorist networks around the world. He promised the American people "We will direct every resource at our disposal to win the war against terrorists: every means of diplomacy, every intelligence tool, every law enforcement instrument, every financial influence. We will starve terrorists of funds, pit them against each other, take them out of their safe hiding places, and bring them to justice. '(p. 3)

In this new war, Bush developed his self-proclaimed doctrine, which consisted of three elements." The first was the fact that your country would make no distinction between those who commit acts of terror and those who support them. The second was in the sense that the United States will not be attacked again and, therefore, will fight terrorists abroad, so as not to have to face them on their own soil. The third, finally, is a frontal war against terrorist ideology promoting the alternative of freedom (Thiessen, 2009).

In this way, Bush managed to trace a relationship of learning and mutual advantage between the leader and his followers, which allowed him to adjust the scale of the values, attitudes and beliefs of those who continued to motivate them to achieve actions that were not even expected at the beginning. In this case, the promise of freedom led to higher levels of satisfaction, and thus a charismatic leader was configured, capable of generating a common vision and mission for the members of the group (Avolio et al., 1995; Bass et al., 2003; Cuadrado & Molero, 2002).

Finally, it is worth highlighting the way in which Bush led as commander in chief of the United States Armed Forces, through countless appearances both on battlefields and in symbolic sites of power. For example, aircraft carriers and destroyers, where he made explicit his sense of leadership and order. This approach, as Freedman (2013) points out, is a fundamental aspect of the leader, insofar as, in battle, an army that lacks the figure of leadership could be faced with losing its discipline and its will to advance, and therefore condemning its own efforts to chaos.

Saddam Hussein

As Soriano (2013) points out, military leadership is defined by the capacity that the personnel who are part of a military force must possess to direct and lead their men and add to the development of the conglomerate, so that they can obtain the results either in war or in peace.

In the particular case of the Gulf War, one could see how Hussein's leadership collapsed in the face of coalition forces. In fact, as Fontanela (2006) notes, the "numerous and apparently powerful Iraqi Army was a colossus with feet of clay, only suitable for internal repression" (p. 2). Thus, as evidenced at the end of the war with Iran, no advantage was achieved, despite having been the aggressor country and having had in its favor the surprise factor and even the same Western support in the supply of weapons. The particular situation of the Iraqi army showed a weakened military corps as a result of the first Gulf War and the subsequent sanctions and embargoes (Fontanela, 2006).

In this sense, as Soriano (2013) refers to it, the leaders of the moment are those capable of being profoundly innovative and of handling the problems derived from the ever-increasing obsolescence. In Hussein's case, it could be evidenced that his apparent power did not go beyond just that: a mere appearance. And it failed to modernize its own instructional capacity towards modern leadership, in which the leader is able to process information and take advantage of opportunities, to intelligently interpret adversities and use tools in a modern and creative way. Perhaps, part of this internal collapse in the leadership of the Iraqi troops responded to the style of leadership based on coercion, a style that, as noted above, was the one that Hussein preferably developed, and which, by its very nature, meant limitations for the proper conduct of the war.

The normative neo-institutionalism of Hussein and Bush

Institutional theories focus on the behavioral and social bases of information and preferences in a rational choice theory. In this sense, March and Olsen (1989) constantly speak of *organizations* and *political institutions* "as systems of rules and structures of meaning" (Torres, 2015, p. 123). They also refer to *institutional structures* and r*egulatory structures,* which are assimilated as "collections of standard operating procedures… that define and defend values, norms, interests, identities and beliefs" (Torres, 2015, p. 123). Thus, political institutions begin to radiate their importance in different areas of the social sciences, from a broad perspective in the

light of the behaviors of the same individual and the aggregate individual action of the members of society.

Following Torres (2015), institutions can be considered as regulatory frameworks in a broad perspective. This scheme is composed of "rules, norms, procedures, customs, conventions, roles and rituals" (p. 123), so that institutions can be from regulations determined by the same individuals against what and who is included in decision-making to recognized practices that consist of identifiable functions, while containing norms or rules that guide the dynamics of those who hold those functions.

The institutional atmosphere in Bush's and Hussein's leadership was evident. From a sociological perspective, each of the two leaders exercised their power from a historical and sociological perspective, appealing to the structures of the institutions they led. In this way, following Ostrom (2005), institutions functioned as *prescriptions* to create an order in the face of repetitive and structured social interactions and dynamics, which radiates both to families and to businesses, neighborhoods, and government entities at all levels.

As Torres (2001) points out, the predominant idea about institutions is based on the fact that there are sets of rules or regulatory systems that control the way in which people behave individually. The rules, thus understood, are the result of the action of specific social entities that are recognized as "formal organizations", which are responsible for establishing and enforcing the rules that govern them. Thus, "the institutional phenomenon cannot be understood if entities such as the family, legislatures, armies, churches and businesses are not considered Thus, institutions should be seen as organizations that have reached a certain state or property that allows them to generate and impose patterns of behavior and that can be studied independently of the individual members that make it up (p. 128)". However, if we take into account the role that religion, symbols and beliefs had in the leaderships of Bush and Hussein, it can be seen that, from the institutional perspective, in the case of the Second Gulf War a special normative neo-institutional perspective was developed. This, since the development of human behaviors is based on the structuring of rules of behavior. In the case of Bush, in what, from his perspective and faith, corresponds to freedom from the Western vision. In the case of Hussein, from the rational understanding of the dictates of Baathism. This implied that, within the framework of the second Gulf War, the behaviors of individuals, both in the United States and in the Middle East - and also in different regions of the planet - were developed based on the influence of norms (restriction of movements, limitation of

privacy rights, immigration controls). Individuals' preferences were made based on the logic of what is appropriate, correct, or in accordance with the higher standard.

Thus, society's preferences were channeled to what was legally the right thing to do, in a kind of "inertial and collective reciprocity, unless there is strong leadership or powerful disagreement that alters stability" (Sánchez, 2013).

Conclusions

George W. Bush and Saddam Hussein are leaders who, in principle, sailed on completely different shores. The first one, attached to the fundamental values of the West. The second one, seen as a revolutionary capable of looking ahead to the traditional imperial powers; especially, that of the United States.

Bush stood out as a special president, given his leadership in the fight against terrorism, for which he appealed to the support of his people. In this way he represented traditional American politics, where the values of courage and risk are exalted. Hussein managed to subdue his people under the congregation of military and political support while maintaining great elements of unity during the three decades in which he managed to stay in power in defiance of the international community.

Both leaders stood out for the fact that they managed to influence others in their thoughts and actions. In this way, they were protagonists of the motives and purposes that mobilized them and that allowed them to remain in power.

However, in the Second Gulf War the leaderships of both protagonists had different dynamics, understood from the classical perspective of Clausewitz. In this confrontation, the military superiority of the Allies showed how the apparent Iraqi military fortress turned out to be a mere illusion.

Finally, the leadership styles of Hussein and Bush can be understood from a normative neo-institutional perspective, taking into account the role of the norm and religion, symbols and beliefs for the structuring of the due and expected behaviors of their peoples.

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