

# Attraction and retention of people for religious life in Catholic religious institutions: the importance of institutional features

ROSANGELA CENCI

UNIVERSIDADE DO OESTE DE SANTA CATARINA / MESTRADO PROFISSIONAL EM ADMINISTRAÇÃO, CHAPECÓ - SC, BRAZIL

ELIANE SALETE FILIPPIM

UNIVERSIDADE DO OESTE DE SANTA CATARINA / MESTRADO PROFISSIONAL EM ADMINISTRAÇÃO, CHAPECÓ - SC, BRAZIL

## Abstract

The challenges faced by organizations include the process of constantly adapting and updating its structures and features in order to fulfill their institutional purpose. In a context of pressure and loss of members, this study is an attempt to understand what does or doesn't motivate religious people to join, remain or leave religious institutions related to the Roman Catholic Church. Based on elements of institutional theory, the study aimed to analyze the relationship between the institutional features of religious institutions and their capacity to attract and retain people for religious life. The research method adopted a qualitative approach focusing on Catholic institutions, collecting data through documents, questionnaires responded by the institutions and a focus group with people who have left religious life in the religious institutions in the last 10 years. By analyzing the relationship between the religious institutions features and the data collected on attraction and retention of people for religious life, it was found that the systems of rules, standards, regulatory principles, beliefs, rites, symbolic universe and ideas, have a direct influence on the attraction and satisfaction or dissatisfaction of these people, depending on the degree of institutionalization and agency capacity. These elements are part of an 'institutional script' that reveals the individuals preferences based on the scenarios, characteristics and historical processes. The study also points out a tension between the perception of the individual and the institution.

**Keywords:** Religious Institutions. Attraction. Institutional Theory.

## *Atração e permanência de pessoas em instituições religiosas católicas: o peso dos contornos institucionais*

### Resumo

As organizações são desafiadas ao processo de adaptação e atualização constante de suas estruturas e de seus contornos institucionais para que possam cumprir sua finalidade institucional. Em um contexto de pressão e esvaziamento de membros, este estudo buscou compreender o que pode motivar ou desmotivar a atração, permanência ou desistência de membros em instituições de caráter religioso, especialmente aquelas ligadas à Igreja Católica. Norteado por elementos da teoria institucional, o estudo teve como objetivo central analisar a relação entre a configuração institucional das instituições religiosas (IR) e o ingresso, permanência e/ou desistência de seus membros. A estratégia de pesquisa adotada foi o estudo qualitativo, com foco nas IR católicas, pesquisa documental e egressos (desistentes nos últimos 10 anos). Os dados foram coletados por meio de estudo de documentos, questionários e entrevistas e grupo focal. Ao analisar a relação entre a configuração institucional das IR e o ingresso e permanência de seus membros, constatou-se que os sistemas de regras, normas, princípios regulatórios, crenças, ritos, universo simbólico e ideias têm influência direta em fatores de atratividade e geram satisfação ou insatisfação dos membros, dependendo do grau de institucionalização e da capacidade de agência dos atores. São os roteiros institucionais que revelam as preferências fundamentais dos indivíduos a partir dos cenários, contornos e processos históricos. O estudo aponta, ainda, uma tensão entre as percepções do indivíduo e da instituição.

**Palavras-chave:** Instituições Religiosas. Atratividade. Teoria Institucional.

## *Atracción y permanencia de personas en instituciones religiosas católicas: el peso de los contornos institucionales*

### Resumen

Las organizaciones son desafiadas al proceso de adaptación y actualización constante de sus estructuras y de sus contornos institucionales para que puedan cumplir con su finalidad institucional. En un contexto de presión y disminución de miembros, este estudio buscó comprender lo que puede motivar o desmotivar la atracción, la permanencia o el desistimiento de miembros en instituciones de carácter religioso, especialmente aquellas ligadas a la Iglesia Católica. Norteado por elementos de la teoría institucional, el estudio tuvo como objetivo central analizar la relación entre la configuración institucional de las instituciones religiosas (IR) y el ingreso, la permanencia y/o el desistimiento de sus miembros. La estrategia de investigación adoptada fue el estudio cualitativo, con foco en las IR católicas, investigación documental y egresos (desertores en los últimos 10 años). Los datos fueron recogidos por medio de estudio de documentos, cuestionarios y entrevistas y grupo focal. Al analizar la relación entre la configuración institucional de las IR y el ingreso y permanencia de sus miembros, se constató que los sistemas de reglas, normas, principios regulatorios, creencias, ritos, universo simbólico e ideas tienen influencia directa sobre factores de atractividad y generan satisfacción o insatisfacción de los miembros, dependiendo del grado de institucionalización y de la capacidad de agencia de los actores. Son los itinerarios institucionales que revelan las preferencias fundamentales de los individuos desde los escenarios, los contornos y los procesos históricos. El estudio también muestra una tensión entre las percepciones del individuo y de la institución.

**Palabras clave:** Instituciones Religiosas. Atractividad. Teoría Institucional.

Article received on April 27, 2015 and accepted on August 29, 2016.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/1679-395149075>



## INTRODUCTION

---

Attraction and retention of people seems to be a dilemma affecting numerous contemporary organizations, including religious institutions. The analysis of the intra-organizational environment of churches and similar institutions is unusual in scientific studies in Administration. However, this type of organization and the religious motivation that guides individuals, tend to influence ways of thinking and acting not only in ecclesial spaces, but also in other dimensions of human life and society. Therefore, investigating phenomena related to religious-based organizations can contribute to the field of organizational studies, as it reflects a dimension considered relevant for a significant portion of the Brazilian population. In addition to the fact that attractiveness of religious institutions (RI) in a contemporary context is an unusual subject, this study also faced the challenge of examining the issue from the perspective of the Administration, using assumptions of institutional theory applied to organizational studies.

Religious institutions are subject to internal and external pressures to adapt to the context and to attract and retain people to religious life, people who can guarantee the continuity of their institutional mission. According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) (2010), between 2000 and 2010, in a context of widespread social changes, the Catholic Church lost members. During this period, the Brazilian Catholic population declined from 73.6% to 64.6%. The decrease in the number of members indicates a decrease also in the number of people attracted to religious life, generating difficulties for the renewal of the RI. What instigated the research was the questioning of (a) what factors might attract and retain religious people nowadays?; and (b) what attributes would an RI need to have or develop in order to be able to

---

\* Source: Rosângela Cenci's personal image bank.

renew itself and accomplish the task of being a perennial organization? Far from seeking proselytes, since science is not a signatory of any church, the aim is to understand a dilemma of this type of organization. Likewise, this article does not intend to focus on the history of the Catholic Church as a whole, since the subject has been well explored in the fields of Anthropology, History and Sociology.

In this sense, this study is positioned in the context of the religious phenomenon and its relation with contemporary society. Specifically, the idea is to understand the relationship between the institutional features of RI belonging to the Catholic Church and the attraction and retention of people for religious life in the RI. Thus, the central question that guided the research was to what extent do the features of religious institutions influence the attraction, retention or withdrawal of religious people? In order to elucidate this issue, the research was based on the institutional theory and its central objective was to analyze the relationship between the institutional features of religious institutions and their capacity to attract and retain people for religious life.

The research method adopted was a qualitative approach, with a focus on religious institutions related to the Catholic Church (convents, cloisters, orders, congregations, institutes) and people who left religious life in RI in the last 10 years). Data were collected through questionnaires, a focus group and document analysis. When analyzing the relationship between the institutional features of RI and the attraction and retention of people for a religious life in RI, it was found that features such as rules, norms, regulatory principles, set of beliefs, rites, symbolic universe and ideas have a direct influence on attracting people. In addition, these features are sources of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, depending on the degree of institutionalization and agency capacity. The features are part of an 'institutional script' that reveals the individuals preferences based on the scenarios, characteristics and historical processes. Elements that attract and retain people who recognize their religious vocation were identified during the research. These elements such as missionary spirit, the inspirational life of the founders, doing good, having a cause, humanization, self-actualization, being happy, are motives that show the dispositions incorporated by each person, brake with the common sense and they show the confrontation with structures and already trained capacities. The study also indicates a latent tension between individual and organization, in the case of RI.

After this introduction, the article was organized as follows: the next section presents elements about the concept and meaning of institution and institutionalization of religious life. The third section exposes the methodological procedures and the fourth presents the data analysis, followed by the fifth and final section presenting final considerations.

## INSTITUTIONS AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

---

Addressing institution's features and associating the conceptual point of view of institutions with organizational studies does not represent novelty to the social sciences. This is because many of the important advances in organizational studies are due to interdisciplinary approaches and in the case of institutional theory, to the effort of political scientists, economists and sociologists who seek to understand the purpose and design of institutions.

The word 'institution' comes from the Latin (*institutio*), meaning founding, establishing, organizing something that exists, ordering, regulating, form, training someone, set up rules for a life according to principles. The term can contemplate the idea of work or enterprise that perpetuates itself in society and people's memory. The configuration, which is between the lines of the concept, refers to the act of what is established, organized and ordered of a life with rules and principles (PEREIRA, 2012).

For sociologist Everett Hughes (1942, p. 307), the concept of institutions has its origins in anthropology, it is a "collective enterprise carried on in somewhat established and expected way", because their permanence occurs by virtue of a set of contingent factors arising from inevitable relations between social and non-social phenomena. Thus, the author's claim proposes to reflect on the origin of an institution and its permanence in relation to contextual factors.

The establishment of institutions is a result of the need for individuals to coexist within a given society. 'Institution' would be, therefore, a set of rules that connect and organize economic, social and political interactions between individuals and social groups (ESPINO, 2001).

When examining the concept of institutions, Lourau (2004) defines the term from different interpretations. First, the author argues that institutions are norms and these include the configurations of how individuals agree or disagree to participate in these same norms. The author understands institution as how individuals relate socially from their individual historical content, their collectivities and observing the existing social norms.

Therefore, institutions are systems of rules that determine the lives of individuals, social groups and organized social forms. These systems of rules, united and acting together, form the institutional fabric of society. Institution is not a level of an organization that operates from the outside, but crosses all levels of human groups and is part of the symbolic structure of the group and the individual. The term institution may refer to political constitutions, laws, instruments and tools of control for ensuring and enforcing the law, as well as referring to prejudices, fashions and beliefs. Institutionalized is what the individual finds pre-established in society, such as norms, customs, traditions and conduct. Thus, there is a sociological relationship between institutionalized and institution (LOURAU, 2004).

On the other hand, Eisenstadt (1968, p. 409) suggests perceiving institutions as “regulative principles which organize most of the activities of individuals in a society into definite organizational patterns from the point of view of the perennial, basic problems of any society or ordered social life”. This perspective suggests the influence of a normative and previously established context. In the regulatory context, individuals are linked to already structured behaviors. This concept of institution is originated in Weber, where interaction between people and society is not random, but standardized and coherent and the intention of their actions take reference from the institutional norms (EMENDENDERER, 2006).

An institution can be understood as a social pattern that reveals a particular process of reproduction. When deviations from this pattern occur, they are neutralized through rewards and restrictions. Institutions are social standards that, when reproduced, owe their survival to the processes of society. The concept of institution refers to configurational elements, such as institutional isomorphism, a process of restriction that forces one unit of a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions. Thus, isomorphism can be coercive, normative and mimetic (DIMAGGIO and POWELL, 1991).

Coercive isomorphism occurs as formal or informal pressures are exerted on an institution by other institutions upon which it depends. There is also the movement of coercion based on cultural expectations on the part of the society where the institution operates. Mimetic isomorphism stems from symbolic uncertainty by taking other organizations as paradigmatic models. Two relevant models are disseminated in this concept: the involuntary dynamics, from which the transfer or turnover of employees comes; and the explicit dynamics surrounding commerce and industry because of the pressure on the organization to offer programs and services. As for normative isomorphism, it derives from the collective struggle of the members of a profession in order to define the conditions and methods of their work and to establish a cognitive and legitimating basis for the autonomy of their profession. The behavior and attitudes of individuals within the organization, such as dress style, vocabulary, standardized methods of speaking, joking, or addressing others, are part of normative isomorphism (DIMAGGIO and POWELL, 1991).

For Berger and Luckmann (1974) an institution, especially in its origin, is related to habits of behavior that one generation is transmitting to the other, also as a social fact. For Durkheim (1990, p. 92),

[...] a social fact is any way of acting, whether fixed or not, capable of exerting over the individual an external constraint; or which is general over the whole of a given society whilst having an existence of its own, independent of its individual manifestations.

Durkheim's (1990) social fact has three basic characteristics: 1) externalization (which can be treated as a thing: way of acting, of thinking ...), because it tends to provoke reactions and behaviors; 2) the collectivity, because it is produced and maintained by a set of a certain society and the more collective, the more social; And 3) compulsory, as it is coercive, imposes itself on a given society, such as language and cultural factors.

In a discussion around organizations, Serva (2001, p.6) presents the concept of organizational fact as: “a complex of elements and their relations to each other, resulting and conditioning the action of different people performing roles that limit and guide activities linked to associated human life”. The intention of this concept is to create greater fluidity for administrative actions in contemporary contexts. This concept of organizational fact, reflected by Serva (2001), is in line

with the thought of Guerreiro Ramos (1946), who also disagrees with Durkheim (1990) when it comes to externalization (although emphasizing a more administrative operational social fact), considering that social contexts interact in the formation of the individuals. The organizational fact is a product of collective life, comes from common life, also pointed out by Durkheim (1990), and is present in societies, political and religious groups, professional corporations and so on. As for the coercive factor, it tends to have a greater or lesser intensity, depending on the degree of imposition exerted by the organization. For Guerreiro Ramos (1946), the degree of coercion tends to condition the actions of individuals when performing roles that limit and guide human activities. According to Jacometti, Castro, Gonçalves et al. (2016), in institutional theory, the institutions shape and guide the principles of social practices and the probabilities of action. This is not to say that there is a predetermination disregarding social actors. This means that when there is an institutionalized reality, this reality guides how things should happen.

The institution tends to be formed by behaviors that have turned into habit and become institutional, while there may be personal habits that create no expectation or reciprocity. In this way, an institution occurs as a social fact only when it has some stability, especially when it goes beyond a generation. People who enter afterwards already find norms, habits, established standards and a legitimized system to which they are called to socialize.

### The socialization of individuals: processes of institutional inclusion

In organizational studies, institutions seek to understand the processes of interaction that result from human action and the social, cultural and political context, as well as seeking to understand the implicit patterns and diversity within organizations (PEREIRA, 2012). One of the first sociologists to express the concept of socialization was Durkheim (1990), who says that the individual needs to learn rules, norms, behaviors and social codes in order to become a member of a society. This learning process is called socialization.

By re-signifying the concept of Durkheim, authors such as Berger and Luckmann (1974) unfolded the concept of socialization in two modalities, the primary and the secondary. The individual experiences primary socialization (first socialization) in childhood. It includes the most direct, affective, close relationships. Secondary socialization (subsequent process) introduces an already socialized individual into new areas of the objective world of his society. There are more rational, indirect and commercial relations.

The fact of socializing members in existing institutions or established societies is worth reflection. For Guerreiro Ramos (1946), the drama of the human being's personality contains the fact that, on one hand, there is the desire to accomplish a mission, a vocation, a unique destiny, and on the other hand, the personality finds organized social styles, built in the assumption of the fundamental identity of all human beings. The author also questions that, even if institutions seek in contemporary times to adjust their members to their needs and demands of meaning and of human fulfillment, will this always remain problematic? (GUERREIRO RAMOS, 1946).

For Parsons and Bales (1955), socialization occurs in the various dimensions of individuals' lives: in the family, in relationships, and in different interest groups. Based on their motivations and interactions of their experience in a changing world, while socializing, the individual models themselves with singularity and defined boundaries. In another perspective, Guerreiro Ramos (1996) sought a Sociology that protected the concern of individual's autonomy. To do this, he combined the experience of political life and created a sociological method called sociological reduction. This method presupposes:

Reduction as a method of critical assimilation of foreign sociological production [...] reduction as par-  
enthetical attitude, as individual's cultural training, that allows them to transcend, as far as possible,  
the circumstantial conditions that work against their free and autonomous expression [...] reduction  
overcoming sociology in the way it is found in institutional and academic terms (GUERREIRO RAMOS,  
1996, p. 11).



This effect directly brings up the meaning of socialization, which is not to deny the knowledge and freedom of the human being, but instead give back to mankind their mankind and allow them to access an existence of self-consciousness. In other words, become and allow edifying knowledge (GUERREIRO RAMOS, 1996).

### *The institutional meaning*

As for the behavioral dynamics of individuals in the institutions, for Meyer and Rowan (1977), and for March and Olsen (1993), symbols, rituals, ceremonies, reports and dramatizations in political life fulfill a configurative function in contemporary society, permeated by instability and affected by social and political turmoil.

The bureaucratic society, for the institutionalists, is responsible for the transformation of social, political and economic institutions. Institutions have grown and gained power, becoming more complex and effective. This growing role of institutions thus plays a dominant role in contemporary life through formal organizations, and legal and bureaucratic institutions (CARVALHO, VIEIRA and GOULART, 2012).

It is plausible that the behavior of an individual within the institutional environment is influenced by a utilitarian calculation based on the expectations of other actors. The actors of this model establish the institution using a deductive point of view and emphasize a classification of functions in order to attribute to the institution as added value obtained by the cooperation, by the exchanges among its members (HALL and TAYLOR, 2003).

Selznick (1972, p. 5) defines organization as “a technical instrument for mobilizing human energies and directing them toward set aims. (...) it refers to an expendable tool, a rational instrument engineered to do a job”. As for ‘institution’, Selznick continues saying that it is “a natural product of social needs and pressures – a responsive, adaptive organism”. For Selznick (1972) when studying institutions, one must rescue their historical constructions and the factors influencing their constitution in the social environment. In this regard, for Carvalho, Vieira and Goulart (2012), given the institutionalization, organizations become institutions. They respond to the environmental influences in its concrete variables, such as technology, and other important variables such as values, beliefs and shared myths. In a definition that was significantly changed at the end of the 1970s, the concept of institutionalization was taken as “the processes by which social processes, obligations or actualities take on a rule like status in social thought and action” (MEYER and ROWAN, 1977, p. 341).

In this theoretical trend of thought, for Hall and Taylor (2003), institutions are expected to provide conditions for the attribution of meanings to social life and can influence the most fundamental preferences of individuals. The identity and self-image of the social actors themselves is seen as a process of construction, from the forms, images and signs offered by social life, always reinforcing the group, the convention and the institution to which they belong.

The influence and contextual transference of values, behavior of individuals, symbols, strategies and structures in the view of neoinstitutionalism imply the creation of organizational isomorphism. Organizations are rewarded for legitimacy and survive for their resources; they are pressured through coercion, mimicry and normativism, and the result is isomorphism (DIMAGGIO, 1988). The mimetic pressures come from the result of the desire to be seen as other organizations are seen, successful and legitimized by the environment, mimicking their practices, structures and results. Normative pressures are cultural and guide decision-making, and coercive pressure results from forces of external persuasion (WILLIAMS, LUEG, TAYLOR et al., 2009). For Machado-da-Silva and Coser (2004, p. 5), as actors formulate strategies and enable the creation of new institutions, they also “seek to establish and maintain social rules as a way to produce clear communication, which avoids ambiguity and the emergence of conflicts in relationships”.

The possibility of integrating strategic and cultural notions as well as beliefs, in order to analyze how the actors guide themselves in a given situation, has allowed several interpretations. In an institutional setting, actors’ behavior can be determined by the incentives that institutions can offer and by their processes of decision-making, which favor the understanding of beliefs, aligned to behavior actors attribute greater overall added value (HALL and TAYLOR, 2003). Actors need references to act and the consolidation of these references occurs through the institutions (DIMAGGIO and POWELL, 1983), such as the state, industry, associations, congregations, as well as through institutional events that review and reaffirm these references to its members.

## Catholic Church and religious institutions: institutionalism and expression

One of the institutional references of the Catholic Church, hereinafter referred to as the Church, was the Second Vatican Council. This event, which consisted of a meeting of bishops active throughout the world, was held between 1962 and 1965, and it was a milestone in the history and institutional life of the Church. At that time, the context was still influenced by the consequences of the Second World War and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The countries were experiencing the Cold War, with an insurgency of diverse crises and frequent conflicts. Internally, the Church, sometimes with medieval, sometimes with imperial approaches, presenting a central, vertical and bureaucratized authority, started to experience its organizational model coming to an end. The solution in debate was the possibility of dialoguing with a society that demanded changes (MIRANDA, 2012).

The Second Vatican Council, brought up the possibility of a new vision of the world and institutional reorganization for the Church. In the case of Brazil, the ecclesial renewal carried out by the Council's reflections and decisions provided a plan of work for the Church, implementing guidelines and lines of action with social, religious and historical dimensions aligned with the main aspects of the Brazilian reality (BEOZZO, 2003).

One of the hallmarks of the Council was the effort of the Church to adapt to the socioeconomic, cultural and political context. In this sense, the Church emphasized the ecumenical dimension of its work and its process of dialogue in the face of religious pluralism (TEIXEIRA, 2005), in view of the valorization of human rights and dignity. The council guidelines sought to overcome the assumptions of feudal and pre-modern societies, which were generally composed of the clergy, the nobility, and the servants. According to those assumptions, the social place of each person was practically determined since their birth, and religion (especially Catholic) was one fundamental force of that society. Church also played an orderly, normative and legitimating role in which the importance of tradition, with its prominent symbolism, created a sense of immutability: morals, norms, and belonging to such institutions were regarded as absolute truth.

With the modern society and the state, both the Church and other traditional forms of authority have gained less importance as a legitimizing force. The Church was also losing wealth and privileges. Many religious congregations have come to be seen as contrary to human rights and progress and, in certain countries and situations, have been confiscated and banned from admitting new members (PEREIRA, 2012). Even so, approximately one hundred congregations were created in the first half of the nineteenth century. The declared objectives for their creation were diverse, from the education of the poor and illiterate to teaching in schools and assistance to the sick. In other words, in spite of adversities and resistance, it was found that in the 19th and 20th centuries, there was more papal approval for the emergence of congregations than in all previous centuries together (PEREIRA, 2012).

In this context, the Second Vatican Council was a mark of the passage of the Church as an institution from the pre-modern to the modern society. After this council, religious institutions made numerous changes, such as: the replacing the religious habit with civilian clothing in some RI; the religious went to live in small communities in cities' periphery. In addition, some RI facilitated and encouraged so the religious could access and undertake higher education courses outside the organizations, and the end of segregation of religious women from underprivileged families and lower education (PEREIRA, 2012).

Another aspect reviewed at the Council was the traditional concept of religious life, which was based on *fuga mundi*, i.e, it was understood, prior to this council, that the religious should flee the world. They should be separated from other people so that they could be closer to God. The emphasis of religious life on spirituality changed from the Second Vatican Council and new directions emerged (CALIMAN, 2013), notably the approach regarding the social action of congregations.

At the same time, it has been observed that RI have continued their effort to adapt to the social contexts in which they are inserted. More recently, the history of the Church was marked by the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, which was followed by the election of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, named Pope Francis, who, from 2013, has instigated the Church to adopt another institutional model. It is too early to assess the impact of Pope Francis' leadership. Nevertheless, it is observed that the path of the RI keeps many of the paradigms adopted throughout the history of the Church.

Structural elements, features, limitations, as well as elements of integration, perspectives and impulses, provide contexts of continuity or discontinuity and affect in a unique way the people who chose religious life and all other members of the church. One of the appeals of the new Church leader to RI is that they are able to awaken to the demands of today's world.

In this context, it does not seem to make sense to have a path that distances religious life from life in society, even though each congregation continues to be guided by its mission or by its specific charism. This charism, understood as the unique way of being and being in the world of each congregation, has guided the RI in the construction and revision of its institutional identities and features (SOBRINO, 1982).

## METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

---

The study focused on RI in the context of the Roman Catholic Church, adopting a qualitative approach since the study prioritized reflections based on subjective data. Such subjectivity is present from the choice of the object, to the reports provided by the research participants on how they perceive their motivation towards the institutions. As recommended by Godoy (1995), multiple sources of evidence were sought, from the collection of documents and organization of the bibliography to the use of the questionnaire and focus group.

A semi-structured questionnaire (called "Institutions") was applied with RI associated with the *Conferência dos Religiosos do Brasil* (CRB). According to the CRB (2014), there are about 570 RI in the country. There are around 28,600 religious women with perpetual vows and around 3,330 with temporary profession of vows. In total, the number of women is about 31,930. There are around 3,710 religious men, of which 1,840 are priests and 1,870 are monks. In addition, the religious people linked to the RI in Brazil count on around 35,640 members. Regarding the religious institutions headquarters, about 150 have their headquarters in the country, and about 230 in other countries. This information was not available for about 30 RI.

The questionnaire was sent by e-mail to around 420 institutions associated with the CRB. The RI are congregations, communities of life, institutes and orders. A letter of agreement from the CRB for the consultation was sent with the questionnaire. In total, 41 questionnaires were responded. This low rate of return can be attributed to factors, such as: low computer skills of the respondents; mistrust because the content of the questionnaire constitutes a controversial subject among the institutions; the contacts were out of date with CRB; the advanced age of the respondents; some religious communities do not use computers; 42 institutions operate in regime of cloisters.

Out of the 41 RI that participated in the research via the questionnaire "Institutions", 11 were founded in Brazil, 2 in the 19th century (1849) and 9 in the 20th century (the majority in the 1940s and 1950s). Among the other 30, 2 were established in the 13th century, 3 in the 16th century, 4 in the 17th century, 18 in the 19th century and 3 in the 20th century. Of the 41 respondents, 17 institutions are in the South of Brazil, 16 in the Southeast, 2 in the Midwest, 6 in the Northeast. The lack of response of institutions in the North of the country is probably due to the difficulty of communication and the difficult access to computers in religious communities at the riverside or in isolated areas.

Regarding gender, 32 of the respondents are RI formed by women, 7 by men and 2 are formed by men and women. The individuals responsible for responding to the questionnaire were 15 provincial superiors and 7 general superiors. The other respondents occupy positions of secretary, administration or vocational discernment.

Another source of data collection was a focal group, with the purpose of gathering opinions and information from the participants. This event was not aimed at obtaining consensus, but an understanding and definition of the object given by the researcher as a mediator (IBÁÑEZ, 2003). The focus group was carried out with the presence of 7 former religious from RI, who responded to an invitation sent by e-mail to 10 people. The participants consisted of 2 women and 5 men.

For the focus group the researchers prepared a list of topics to be approached without specific sequence and to be put to discussion when considered appropriate. The discussion script was based on the theoretical framework and had as reference the categories of analysis described in section 4. The session started with greetings, introductions of the participants, the agreement on confidentiality, followed by the discussion. Participants authorized for the group's conversation to be recorded. The participants had not met each other previously, which helped to avoid previous relational interference in the debates.

The introduction warm-up involved each participant relating their story of life within their Religious Institution. Based on the theme and objectives of the research, the participants were encouraged to speak about their daily lives in the institutions,



highlighting the rules, rituals and other institutional marks (GUTIÉRREZ, 2008). Following the recommendation of Gutiérrez (2008) for closing the conversation, the researchers provided a synthesis of main points of the dialogue, opened space for questioning and doubts and verified with the participants if they were in agreement with the synthesis reported.

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

---

The analysis of the data collected from different research tools used the categories obtained from the literature review: institutionalization, with the describing elements – system of rules and regulatory principles; motivation, with the describing elements – attraction factor and dissatisfaction factor; socialization, with the describing elements – acculturation and legitimacy.

### Institutionalization

When debating about institutions, definitions and concepts are noticed through expressions and institutional practices applied to the day to day contexts that are present throughout history. The issue of ‘institutions’ was examined according to their descriptors (system of rules and regulatory principles). When discussing the perception of the research subjects participating in the focal group, different perspectives were observed.

The idea of the need for paradigmatic change in the RI hierarchical structures is connected to a system of rules and norms. Disagreeing or questioning the systems is a practice that may not be accepted without resistance. When in disagreement, people may express a deeper desire, not limited to the passivity of agreement with norms and systems as they are legitimated institutionally. Thus, the identification of the problem and the questioning become provocations that may indicate the necessity of updating the RI, towards a more participative management and connected to the people. In face of the institutional structure, one of the participants of the focus group regarding the structure:

*[...] What was a burden was the overwhelming amount of work for the younger ones. This brought dissatisfaction for our juniorate [younger sisters] and what was overwhelming was exactly things that could be taken on by the retired sisters and they did not take it. It was very hard. (Participant 1 of the focus group)*

Aligned with the focus group participant 1, the managers designated as ‘superiors’ at the religious institutions connected to CRB (2014) decided by assembly that the search for ‘lightness’ and greater institutional agility is a transversal line of action, in order to achieve the mission of each RI. Here the agility is related to Ambrose’s (2014) concept, whose perception is that the institutional importance suffocates the will of the religious life to open itself to the signs of the times and to what it understands to be the calls of God. According to Ambrose (2014: 434): “It is not the heavy works that take up our thoughts, we are not agile people ourselves, with heavy forms of exercising the leadership and the government of institutions, we are incapable of believing in the novelty that youth can bring in”.

The statement leads to the understanding that ‘lightness’ is a style of consecration in modern times, unlike the past, when one of the marks of consecration was the effort of an ascetic life and the capacity to make personal sacrifices. The differences of perception linked to generational aspects also act in this context generating conflicts and questions about the features of the RI. According to participant 2 of the focus group, the institution and its features were decisive elements for the participant’s decision to leave the RI:

*For me, in fact, three essential elements led to this personal decision: the large physical and institutional structure, the issue of authority; the issue of relocation; and the fact that a business model took place. The problem is that in religious life, some are there exclusively giving orders and others exclusively following them.*

This testimony shows that current practices of RI had great influence in the participant’s decision, such as the focus on the imposing buildings, the centralized management, the determination for relocation according to the will and decision of those

in charge. Another aspect this participant mentioned and was also a concern of other participants in the focus group was the issue of the “business model”. This aspect seems consistent with what DiMaggio and Powell (1991) discussed, referring to coercive isomorphism in which informal and formal pressures are exerted by society or other institutions on a particular institution, in this case the business model applied to RI. These isomorphic and coercive pressures exert in the actors adjusting moves in a context of acculturation. Acculturation of new members includes, according to Hamers and Blanc (2000), a behavioral adjustment of prior culture to a new one, combination and acquisition of competences with the adoption of culturally defined rules and attitudes. From the pressures exerted by the context, by the adjustment movements, the person tends to accept this new culture by adopting new attitudes of combination with the behavior of the institution, somehow being part of the “obeying” group or adopting a critical position within the RI own culture. According to participant 3 of the focus group, his journey through an RI left marks. Some institutional features did not always make sense to him:

*Some norms, in my point of view, make no sense. I asked myself, why like this? It is a matter of discipline! They [the institution] use discipline as an excuse for not allowing questioning. They request obedience to a norm just because it is a norm. This needs to be questioned! It is a sacrifice. [...] I agree with the discipline, because it has a positive side. See, I arrived at the seminary and we were 200 people from 12 to 17 years old. I was in São Paulo, and there were 120 of us at the seminary. In Rome, there were 400 of us studying Philosophy. (Participant 3 of the focus group)*

The reference of this participant when talking about the institution goes back to one of the concepts of *habitus*, portrayed by Wacquant (2007). According to the author, the concept refers to the intermediary notion that helps to break with the duality of common sense, how society becomes deposited in people in the form of durable perspectives or trained capacities and structured trend of thoughts. *Habitus*, in this sense, as a mediating force, is beyond established institutional discipline and goes beyond the trained capacity of the individual, who sees no sense in the discipline as an end in itself. The questioning the participant refers to seeks to capture the “interiorization of exteriority and the exteriorization of interiority” (WACQUANT, 2007, 66).

In the view of this participant, the attraction of a large number of members in the RI he has been part of, is due to the discipline. However, the very factor that attracts, given the inaccurate perception of those from outside the RI (use of habit and rigid, almost militarized discipline), when one is within the institution this factor seems unmeasured. For DiMaggio and Powell (1991), the behavior and attitudes of individuals within an organization, such as dress style, vocabulary, standardized methods of discourse, or address to others, are part of normative isomorphism.

In the institutionalization category, it is possible to see that individuals feel pressured by the regulatory guidelines of RI in controlled and controlling environments. There is significant influence of the system of restrictions and punishments – when it is imposed – seen in a negative and neutralizing way by the research subjects. The RI members demand greater participation in the decisions on what features the should institutions present.

## Motivation

In the view of the religious institutions – expressed in the responses of their managers to the questionnaire – the motivation that most attracted people to religious life in the last ten years was the desire to follow Jesus and his project, and giving their life in favor of the others and of the missionary life. These elements, although similar, present agreements and disagreements in terms of identity when in relation to specific charism of each RI. The understanding that a young man was attracted to a missionary life in an RI with a missionary identity and presence across borders may be a different understanding about the missionary life for a young man and for an RI whose mission is carried out in a college or hospital. Thus, it is crucial to refer to Immergut (1996), when he considers the initial motivation of the young people and their historical process as the starting point of an institutional roadmap, which collaborates to evaluate their real preferences and individual desires. Nonetheless, institutions tend to ignore individuals’ personal motivations and preferences in situations of lack of members, and sometimes generate serious dissatisfaction with the individual and the collective, leading to the decision to leave the RI.

The same features that attract people to enter RI may influence significantly in the decision to leave. Some members are attracted by propaganda, moved by the show of strategic and exciting media, others by symbol systems, others by experiences and social practices (DeBord, 2003).

In the data collected from the RI points highlighted as elements of attraction included: the spiritual dimension (32 mentions), the testimony of the members (32 mentions) and being happy (32 mentions). Another element, mentioned by 30 institutions was the pursuit of self-actualization and 03 institutions mentioned that young people are motivated to join the RI due to the possibility of studying.

The search for self-actualization is in line with what Guerreiro Ramos (1946) points out when he expresses that, however institutions try to adjust their members to their needs, this will always be a source of tension. On one hand, there are organized, structured, instituted social styles. On the other hand, the desire of the individual. It is appropriate to reflect whether the motivations are based on the individual's preferences and projects of life or whether they are based on institutional alienation.

In this context of attraction, there is an alignment between what has been reported as an element of attraction by RI and by members: the role of the testimony of members in RI. In this issue of the necessity of the testimony (example), however, there was no alignment on who should bear the responsibility of providing such testimony. The data collected indicate a transfer of responsibilities: the younger former members tend to demand changes in the behavior of the elders. The elders propose that young people need to change their behavior; The middle-aged former members said that the problem lies in the excessive activism that falls on them, due to the other members complacency. The former members who participated in the focus group also pointed out aspects that motivated them to leave the RI including the loss of focus and the gentrification, which denominated RI mercantilism, specially a kind of search for results that uses the same strategy as a secular business. According to Oro (2013), in the face of enrichment, institutions need a critical sense, because they are more for a production of result than a lifestyle.

Regarding the motivation to start a religious life in an RI, it was observed, through the analysis of the collected data, that there is a strong influence of the belief system and values in individuals' decision-making process. It was also observed that the fundamental preferences of individuals tend to be built from an institutional script, that is, the adopted behavior is affective to the analysis of the scenario and the historical process.

Another aspect observed in the research is that there is questioning about the lack of openness to different juvenile aesthetics, which can contribute to generate the loss of motivation to join or remain a member in an RI. Oliveira (2007) reflects that the youth cultures, in their different aesthetics, compose a scenario of agreements and disagreements marked by images and bodies that sensitize and, at the same time, are appropriated by a symbolic universe of struggles and disputes. In the RI, the different aesthetics of tattooed young people, with piercings, identified aesthetically in groups that do not have the legitimized profile of religious life, although there are attempts to approach these young people, there are still difficulties of acceptance. In order to understand the complexity and experiences of youth, Mota (2011) proposes listening to these young people as an attempt to avoid reproducing criticism of the established social context. This may be a problem of closure and possible institutional standardization aimed at inhibiting institutional dispersion, disqualifying and eliminating new members who think differently from the established order. Aspects that concern RI, as captured by the questionnaire, are the narcissism and non-acceptance of diversity, present in the behavior of the new generations, according to the leaders of RI.

As for the motives that lead people to leave religious life, the responses to the questionnaire in 28 RI showed that people realized their vocation is not the consecrated religious life. Other motives that the RI mentioned involved issues related to affectivity and sexuality (26 mentions).

According to Lourau (2004), a system of rules or norms determines the life of the individuals, and they agree or disagree to participate in institutions with these already existing features. According to the respondent RI, the reason that causes more dropouts is when the member realizes they have no vocation. This perception is not in agreement with what the focus group participants reported. At the focus group, participants said that dropouts happen much more due to disagreement with RI rules, norms and lifestyles than due to personal reasons.

Other reasons that led members to leave RI mentioned by the institutions were: aspects related to generational conflicts (25); loss of the motivation shown at the beginning (25); difficulty in adapting to norms (23); and emphasis on professional life instead on spiritual life (23). If, on one hand, the RI responsible for the questionnaire understood the possibility of professionalization in several areas of knowledge as a way to better serve the institutional mission, in turn, the former members who participate in the focus group presented another perception. The latter were critical to RI and showed some concern about what they called 'loss of focus', 'deviation from the essentials', 'activism', and 'work overload' – all of which, according to them, cause severe conflicts within the RI. Other reasons mentioned with less emphasis in the questionnaire were: difficulty in living the option for the poor (19); unbalance between prayer and institution (18); and, lastly (17 mentions), the lack of testimony of the religious. Perhaps the RI analyze their scenarios starting from a positive image of their rites, symbols and ceremonies, in short, of their institutional features. In the vision captured from their answers, who arrives is the one that needs to adapt, understand and join the institutional rite. The turbulent context sometimes generated by questioning would only be a matter of adaptation and possible submission of new members. However, scenarios permeated by instability and differences in the meaning attributed can lead to insecurity and loss of members. Chart 1 synthetizes the information on the elements that motivate the attraction and dissatisfaction of the members in the RI.

Chart 1

Elements of attraction and dissatisfaction

Motivational elements to attract and retain people in a religious institution	Motivational factors causing dissatisfaction and resulting in leaving a religious institution
Missionary experiences, missionary religious institutions	Overload of activities. Emphasis on professional life. Lack of participation in decision making processes.
Charisma and inspirational life of founders. The testimony of people already consecrated	Difficulty of living the option for the poor. Members gentrification
Humanization of community coexistence	Aspects related to affection and sexuality
Search for self-actualization and for the sacred, to be happy	Distance from the sacred. Loss of joy and sense of consecration
Doing good. Believe in a cause. Jesus Christ's project	Fragile fraternal relations, coexistence and generational conflicts.
Clothing (habit/ cassock) and the disciplined way of life	Deviation of the focus of the essential mission of RI. Difficulties to adapt to the structures

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

### Socialization

The human being, in his search for self-actualization, can confront different conditions of adaptability in institutional environments. RI have an organizational culture in which members do not always adapt easily to what is already legitimized. The perception about the adaptation of the members in the RI, according to the vision of the participant 3 of the focus group, has the following characteristics:

*[...] I will be generous considering that 20% of the people in religious life who I met and with whom I lived together in my congregation are indeed sacred, live accordingly. The other 80% some fail and were covered up, they are then relocated. The other part lives repressed and unhappy.*

According to Hamers and Blanc (2000), acculturation attempts to combine the acquisition of skills and the adoption of rules and attitudes that make a culturally relevant behavior. According to Grosjean (1972), not all individuals adapt to the culture they have chosen or to which they are exposed for two reasons: either because they are rejected by the group

or because they feel rejected by it. RIs members are people who go through processes of adaptability. It is possible that there is not always a compatibility between the desire that motivated them to join and the combination of rules and the adoption of necessary attitudes for a member to become institutionally acculturated. On the other hand, there may be no effort by the member to allow acculturation. It is also possible that there is what Grosjean (1972) clarifies as a super-adjustment of culture when one denies native elements to be accepted into the new culture. This can be one way of interpreting the expression of the testimony above, both because of the marked expression of a possible state of perfection of some members, and because of the view of a super-adjustment of the members to the institution. This (super) adjustment of the individual to the institution passes through the process of formation at the RIs. Regarding the formative process of the RIs, the focus group participant 4 says:

*The issue of formation needs rethinking. A more open education is needed. I think that the style is long outdated; it comes from another culture, from a time that currently makes no sense. The religious institutions still keep working in this way, thinking they are educating and training someone in particular and that is how it has to be.*

In the formative aspect of the subjects in the RIs, the institution's posture of reference becomes a foundation. It is an institutional reference from the provisions incorporated by individuals. As Bourdieu (2002) argues, the formation will probably be more successful when it is based on the experiences of the subjects, who act as a matrix of dispositions and provide frameworks of perceptions and daily interventions to the processes of socialization. The perception of focus group participant 4, regarding the formative process, suggests a rethinking of factors considered outdated. It is possible that the previous experiences of the members, as well as the appreciation of their participation in the construction of the formative process, can offer new alternatives of institutional reference.

The incorporation of the institution's way of being and its references is also perceptible the moment a new member of an RI is becoming habitual and the behavior collectively legitimized is assimilated and internalized by them. In relation to this aspect, participant 5 of the focus group gave her testimony:

*My congregation had 400 sisters maximum. It comes from Europe and was established here in Santa Catarina, in a region colonized by Germans. The local cultural element influenced them. It was all very rigorous, very controlled. We were educated – since the beginning – to control ourselves and the others, to control ourselves. So, I can see this influence very strongly in the way we were educated. [...] we cannot fail, no mistakes. We have to know and follow our goals.*

There are many difficulties of acculturation or to enter into the culture of an organization. These difficulties can be observed with the arrival of the Europeans to America or the Portuguese and missionaries to Brazil, through the colonizing position that they adopted in relation to those previously resident, or as it tends to occur with the missionaries who work in Africa. The imposition of one culture on the other has often been observed in the so-called catechization processes undertaken by different religious denominations, not for the exclusive use of Catholic RI.

The means of controlling subjects' wills in the RI environment allows to dominate the members. These mechanisms reveal an authoritarian and punitive method, which tends to curb the adverse reaction. In such an environment, it may be very difficult to mobilize joint forces to legitimize new forms, conditions and differentiated formative methods, although it is recognized that the process of domination is possible only through the consent, unconscious or otherwise, of the dominated (SILVA, DIAS and SILVA, 2015).

Guerreiro Ramos (1946) questions that even if institutions, in contemporary times, seek to adjust their members to their needs and demands of meaning and human fulfillment, this will always be a question mark because on one side are the institutional needs and on the other is the drama of the individual who dreams of accomplishing a mission. In this paradox the search for a median (THERET, 2003) between dynamic contexts, individuals and their deep realizations and institutions with emerging needs. Participant 6 of the focus group warns RI about young people's search for meaning in life:



*The young person seeks a new meaning for life, something different, something trustworthy. So, this 'plus' is the true fraternal life, true happiness, this greater contact with God. The quest for the supernatural, for God, is big nowadays as never before. But for this, charism is necessary. With the religious overwhelmed, unhappy, tired, nobody will be attracted. You need happy people. This is the point of pressure of religious life.*

In the same context, participant 7 of the focus group stated that she does not regret leaving religious life, and indicates that RI need change. However, she would not return even with the changes she considers necessary. She says she now can live what she dreamed when she was young, reconciling professional life to commitments to the church better than when she was in a religious institution. As a proposition for RI, participant 2 of the focus group, from her experience, suggested:

*[...] human coexistence and find time to rest, because it is too much work. Coexistence and humanization. Recognize people as human beings, not as work.*

Participant 3 of the focus group suggested that RI should reconsider some elements:

*[...] the issue of spirituality; our coexistence is too fragile and our work is overloaded with administrative matters.*

It is suggested for religious life, something that is already in its nature; participant 4 of the focus group says:

*[...] it is its identity; rescue something that I call prophetic testimony*

The socialization category, through the perception of the research subjects, shows that there are favorable institutional features, such as the life project, the dynamic formation, the conviviality. However, the research subjects also pointed out the need to decentralize the RI activities to focus more on the specific mission of each institution, favoring the acculturation of the members. In the formative process, it was verified the need for RI to be updated, considering the incorporated dispositions of the subjects and the formation conducted by interdisciplinary teams. The decision of permanence or evasion of the members of a RI can be based on desires of the individual that are confused with the idealized and projected in the institutional structure. It is necessary to consider the dilemma that arises for the RI: on one hand, in order to obtain internal and external legitimation, they must adopt an apparatus of rules and symbols that provide distinction. On the other hand, by reinforcing the features there is the risk they crystallize and stiffen, becoming, in fact, a burden, or, as Weber (1992) puts it, the iron cage of bureaucratized and excessively rationalized structures.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

---

The objective of this study was to analyze the relationship between the institutional features of religious institutions and their capacity to attract and retain people for religious life. According to the results, with regard to the context of RI in Brazil, it was possible to verify that they face a crisis and present significant numbers of member withdrawal in the last 30 years, with the female population losing about 5 thousand members.

One of the relevant aspects of this study is the revelation that institutional discipline, trained capacities, structured propensities to think and exteriorization of interiority through the style of clothing and standardized vocabulary, tend to be institutional features that, in addition to being pointed out by literature as homogenizers of organizational practices, have influence on the attraction of numerous members to the RI. The study is proven relevant when observing in organizational life the tendency to make the *habitus* a fixed identity, instead of the permeability of organizational features that are mutable and adaptable to the dictations of the diversity and plurality of the contemporary world.

Although the study finds that in the field of practice this change is not yet consolidated, in terms of future vision the change is already approaching. This can be observed when analyzing the elements of attraction, from the perspective of RI considered in the study, which attempted to align the institutions with the preferences of the individuals. This consonance is close to the mediating notion, pointed out in the literature, which seeks to overcome ruptures between subject and institution.

In the analysis about attraction, it has been found that it is influenced by systems of beliefs and values and by the meaning members find expressed in the sense of sacred, in rituals, and in symbols. In addition, considerable and relevant elements are the habits, the construction of thoughts and convictions and the decision making from the crystallization of the matrix of perception of each member, who adopts as reference the institutional features.

Although, according to the perceptions captured, the institutional features exercise training power over individuals, there is always room for disagreement. In this sense, the study found the dissatisfaction of the people who left religious lives in RI, related to what they called 'loss of focus' of the RI, institutional gentrification and activism of the members. They attribute to what they called RI mercantilism the deviation from the focus (mission) of these institutions and a kind of search for negotiable results.

As for the institutional features that take out members' motivation, according to the researched subjects, there is an impression that there is an imposition of rules, lack of trust, deviation of the focus of the RI and lack of participation in decision-making processes. When joining RI, often the set of rules and regulatory principles is already established. Individuals feel pressured by the regulatory and normative guidelines of the context and, disagreeing with what is established they are able to express their desires, and exit the passive limits of what is already in practice. However this disagreement generates conflicts and often results in abandonment of religious life.

At this point another aspect of the relevance of this study arises, highlighting these conflicts and questions so they are treated by the RI in order to represent an update of structures and the adaptation to new social contexts. This capacity for change depends on the degree of institutionalization and to the availability and propensities of the actors considering their thoughts, feelings and acting guided by creative responses to the demands of their time.

The research contributes to the organizational studies by giving visibility to the particular universe of RI, a social group that is little explored as an object of research in the field of Administration. Studying these institutions, sometimes stigmatized by science and thrown into the common grave of obscurity, as the medieval Catholic Church's action is commonly seen, new challenges for the field of organizational studies are emerging. Although the tendency of organizations to produce constraints on individual's actions is often examined in the literature on institutions, the visibility provided by this study to this phenomenon in the context of RI leads to reflection and even deeper questions. It also leads to the point of recommending future studies on possibilities and limits of an institution with such features presenting sustainability in the contemporary world. To examine the meaning of religious life itself in such plural societies, and apparently unrelated to its existence, is an opportunity for investigation.

Finally, every study captures a part of the phenomenon researched, due to the obvious limitations of human rationality, as well as the beliefs and assumptions inherent to each researcher. Thus, this study has the limitation of having observed the empirical phenomenon, exclusively from the group that participated in the research. At the same time that the findings may be loaded with personal meanings from this group, they may also raise important points of reflection for the organizational studies regarding the deeper understanding of what attracts members to choose to live in organizations with highly structured features and rules, while wanting to change them. The study also contributes to the management of RI by suggesting the improvement of its recruitment and development processes.

It is suggested, for future studies, to deepen the issue of the essential preferences of the individuals, understood in perspective with the institutional 'scripts' related to the meaning religious institutions can assume in contemporary contexts.

## REFERENCES

- AMBROSIO, M. **Assembleia dos Religiosos do Brasil**. CONFERÊNCIA DOS RELIGIOSOS DO BRASIL – CRB. Instituições associadas. Available at: <<http://www.crbnacional.org.br/site/index.php/instituicoes-as-sociadas>>. Accessed on: 12 jan. 2014.
- BEOZZO, J. O. A recepção do Vaticano II na igreja do Brasil. In: INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE PASTORAL – INP (Org.). **Presença pública da igreja no Brasil: jubileu de ouro da CNBB (1952-2002)**. São Paulo: Paulinas, 2003. 425 p.
- BERGER, P. L.; LUCKMANN, T. **A construção social da realidade**. 2. ed. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 1974.
- BOURDIEU, P. **Esboço de uma teoria da prática**: precedido de três estudos de etnologia Kabila. Oeiras: Celtas, 2002.
- CALIMAN, C. A renovação da vida religiosa no Concílio Vaticano II. **Convergência**, v. 48, n. 464, p. 509-526, 2013.
- CARVALHO, C. A.; VIEIRA, M. F.; GOULART, S. A trajetória conservadora da teoria institucional. **Revista Eletrônica de Gestão Organizacional**, v. 10, p. 469-496, 2012.
- CONFERÊNCIA DOS RELIGIOSOS DO BRASIL – CRB. Instituições associadas. Available at: <<http://www.crbnacional.org.br/site/index.php/instituicoes-associadas>>. Accessed on: 12 jan. 2014.
- DEBORD, G. A sociedade do espetáculo (1931-1994), 2003. Available at: <<http://www.ebooksbrasil.org/eLibris/socespetaculo.html>>. Accessed on: 14 dec. 2013.
- DIMAGGIO, P. J. Interest and agency in institutional theory. In: ZUCKER, L. G. **Institutional patterns and organizations**. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1988.
- DIMAGGIO, P. J.; POWELL, W. W. The iron cage revisited: institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. **American Sociological Review**, v. 48, n. 2, p. 147-169, 1983.
- DIMAGGIO, P. J.; POWELL, W. W. Introduction. In: POWELL, W. W.; DIMAGGIO, P. J. (Eds.). **The new institutionalism in organizational analysis**. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991. 1-38 p.
- DURKHEIM, E. **As regras do método sociológico**. 14. ed. São Paulo: Nacional, 1990.
- EISENSTADT, S. Social institutions. In: SILLS, D. L. (Ed.). **International encyclopedia of the social sciences**. New York: Macmillan, 1968. v. 14. 409-429 p.
- EMMENDOERFER, M. L. Análise das instituições no contexto da modernidade: reflexões e contribuições da ciência política sobre o neo-institucionalismo para os estudos organizacionais. In: ENCONTRO DE ESTUDOS ORGANIZACIONAIS, 4., 2006, Porto Alegre. **Anais...** Porto Alegre: Anpad, 2006. Available at: <[http://www.anpad.org.br/diversos/trabalhos/EnEO/eneo\\_2006/2006\\_ENEO618.pdf](http://www.anpad.org.br/diversos/trabalhos/EnEO/eneo_2006/2006_ENEO618.pdf)>. Accessed on: 11 dec. 2013.
- ESPINO, J. A. Instituciones y economía: una introducción al neoinstitucionalismo económico. **Région y Sociedad**, v. 13, n. 22, p. 194-197, 2001.
- GODOY, A. S. Introdução à pesquisa qualitativa e suas possibilidades. **Revista de Administração de Empresas**, v. 35, n. 2, p. 57-63, 1995.
- GROSJEAN, F. **Life with two languages: an introduction to bilingualism**. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972.
- GUERREIRO RAMOS, A. Reflexões sobre o homem dormindo. **A Manhã**, 24 mar. 1946.
- GUERREIRO RAMOS, A. **A redução sociológica**. 3. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. UFRJ, 1996.
- GUTIÉRREZ, J. **Dinámica del grupo de discusión**. Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2008.
- HALL, P. A.; TAYLOR, R. C. R. The three versions of neo-institutionalism. **Lua Nova**, n. 58, p. 193-223, 2003.
- HARMERS, J.; BLANC, M. **Bilinguality and Bilingualism**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- HUGHES, E. C. The study of institutions. **Social Forces**, v. 20, n. 3, p. 307-310, 1942.
- IBÁÑEZ, J. **Más allá de la sociología**. El grupo de discusión: teoría y crítica. 5. ed. Madrid: Sieglo Veintiuno, 2003.
- IMMERGUT, E. The normative roots of the new institutionalism: historical-institutionalism and comparative policy studies. In: BENZ, A.; SEIBEL, W. (Org.). **Beiträge zur Theorieentwicklung in der Politik und Verwaltungswissenschaft**. Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 1996. 325-355 p.
- INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE GEOGRAFIA E ESTATÍSTICA – IBGE. Censo 2010. Available at: <[http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/censo2010/caracteristicas\\_religiao\\_deficiencia/default\\_caracteristicas\\_religiao\\_deficiencia.shtm](http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/censo2010/caracteristicas_religiao_deficiencia/default_caracteristicas_religiao_deficiencia.shtm)>. Accessed on: 4 jan. 2014.
- JACOMETTI, M. et al. Análise de efetividade das políticas públicas de arranjo produtivo local para o desenvolvimento local a partir da teoria institucional. **Rev. Adm. Pública**, v. 50, n. 3, p. 425-454, 2016.
- LOURAU, R. Objeto e método da análise institucional. In: DALTOÉ, S. (Org.). **Analista institucional em tempo integral**. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2004. 66-86 p.
- MACHADO-DA-SILVA, C.; COSER, C. Organização Focal e Relações de Poder em um Campo Organizacional. Available at: <[http://www.anpad.org.br/diversos/trabalhos/EnANPAD/enanpad\\_2004/TEO/2004\\_TEO2932.pdf](http://www.anpad.org.br/diversos/trabalhos/EnANPAD/enanpad_2004/TEO/2004_TEO2932.pdf)>. Accessed on: 4 jan. 2014.
- MARCH, J. G.; OLSEN, J. P. El nuevo institucionalismo: factores organizativos de la vida política. **Zona Abierta**, n. 63/64, p. 1-43, 1993.
- MEYER, J. W.; ROWAN, B. Institutionalized organizations: formal structure as myths and a ceremony. **American Journal of Sociology**, v. 83, n. 2, p. 340-363, 1977.
- MIRANDA, M. F. Uma igreja em processo de renovação. Vaticano II: o legado e a tarefa. **Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira**, v. 72, n. 286, p. 366-395, 2012.
- MOTA, R. N. **Juventudes: o exercício de aproximação**. 2. ed. Brasília, DF: Ed. CRB, 2011.

- OLIVEIRA, R. C. A. Estéticas juvenis: intervenção nos corpos e na metrópole. **Comunicação, Mídia e consumo**, v. 4, n. 9, p. 63-86, 2007.
- ORO, I. P. **O fenômeno religioso**: como entender. São Paulo: Paulinas, 2013.
- PARSONS, T.; BALES, R. F. **Family, socialisation and interaction process**. London: Routledge, 1955.
- PEREIRA, W. C. C. (Org.). **Análise institucional na vida religiosa consagrada**. 2. ed. Belo Horizonte: CRB, 2012.
- SELZNICK, P. **A liderança na administração**: uma interpretação sociológica. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. FGV, 1972.
- SERVA, M. O fato organizacional como fato social total. **Rev. Adm. Pública**, v. 35, n. 3, p. 131-152, 2001.
- SILVA, L. P.; DIAS, L. C. F.; SILVA, J. S. Ensino Superior, mobilidade social e dominação: uma análise à luz dos conceitos de Bourdieu e da teoria institucional. **RACE: Revista de Administração, Contabilidade e Economia**, v. 14, n. 3, p. 1145-1174, 2015.
- SOBRINO, J. **Ressurreição da verdadeira igreja**. São Paulo: Loyola, 1982.
- TEIXEIRA, F. Pluralismo religioso. **Horizonte**, v. 3, n. 6, p. 27-32, 2005.
- THÉRET, B. As instituições entre as estruturas e as ações. **Lua Nova**, n. 58, p. 225-255, 2003.
- WACQUANT, L. Esclarecer o habitus. **Educação e Linguagem**, v. 10, n. 16, p. 63-71, 2007.
- WEBER, M. **A Ética protestante e o espírito do capitalismo**. 7. ed. São Paulo: Pioneira, 1992.
- WILLIAMS, Z. et al. Why all the changes? An institutional theory approach to exploring the drivers of supply chain security. **International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management**, v. 39, n. 7, p. 595-618, 2009.

Rosangela Cenci

PhD student in Sociology at Universidade Beira do Interior de Covilhã, Portugal; Masters in Administration from Unoesc; Member of the managing board of Instituição Religiosa Franciscana Missionária de Maria Auxiliadora. Brasil. E-mail: fraternura@hotmail.com

Eliane Salete Filippim

Post doctorate in Public Administration and Government from EAESP/FGV/SP; PhD in Production and Systems Engineering from Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina; Professor at Unoesc, Professional Masters in Administration. E-mail: eliane.filippim@unoesc.edu.br