

Tradition: where MacIntyre meets Hayek to Ground Ethical Governance

Tradición: donde MacIntyre se encuentra con Hayek para fundamentar la gobernanza ética

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Abstract: This article explores the concept of tradition as the broader ethical dimension in governance networks. We comprehensively address the notions of traditions from the work of the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre and the economist Friedrich Hayek. Unlike the standard view, MacIntyre and Hayek offer some common understanding regarding the role of tradition in society. Both authors find support in the natural law tradition through different paths. Based on a review of their works, we point to preliminary directions for considering the dynamic of traditions in governance networks. Traditions involve spontaneous and organized means, the sharing of accumulated wisdom, and the ground to define the common good. Network governance represents a context where different traditions meet.

Keywords: Tradition, Network Governance, Alasdair MacIntyre, Friedrich Hayek, Natural Law

Resumen: Este artículo explora el concepto de tradición como dimensión ética más amplia en las redes de gobernanza. Abordamos de forma comprensiva las nociones de tradición a partir de la obra del filósofo Alasdair MacIntyre y del economista Friedrich Hayek. A diferencia de la visión estándar, MacIntyre y Hayek ofrecen un entendimiento común sobre el papel de la tradición en la sociedad. Ambos autores encuentran apoyo en la tradición de la ley natural por caminos diferentes. Basándonos en una revisión de sus obras, señalamos algunas direcciones preliminares para considerar la dinámica de las tradiciones en las redes de gobernanza. Las tradiciones implican medios espontáneos y organizados, el intercambio de la sabiduría acumulada y el fundamento para definir el bien común. La gobernanza en red representa un contexto en el que confluyen distintas tradiciones.

Palabras clave: Tradición, Gobernanza de Redes, Alasdair MacIntyre, Friedrich Hayek, Derecho natural.

I. INTRODUCTION

“Tradition is not the worship of ashes, but the preservation of fire”

Gustav Mahler

Effective governance hinges on leaders’ profound grasp of an organization’s historical, cultural, and ethical backdrop. The understanding extends beyond internal confines to encompass the intricate network contexts where diverse sector agents operate, and different traditions thrive. Governance networks are pivotal for collective action to achieve the common good. The process involves the active involvement of various public, private, and civil society stakeholders to attain the goods of a given community (Ansell & Torfing, 2022). These networks encounter traditions entailing distinct values, beliefs, practices, and narratives to the extent that communities are organized around these common practices. However, “no practices can survive for any length of time unsustained by institutions. Indeed, so intimate is the relationship of practices to institutions—and consequently of the goods external to the goods internal to the practices in question—that institutions and practices characteristically form a single causal order” (MacIntyre, 2007: 194).

Governance, specifically governance in networks, has emerged as a rapidly expanding field of investigation, partially in response to traditional public management models (Painter & Peters, 2010). In contrast to prior frameworks that placed significant emphasis on the State’s role, network governance understands political processes as pluricentric, wherein the State’s function is primarily that of an activator rather than a provider (Kissler & Heidemann, 2006; Salm & Menegasso, 2009). However, examining the ethical (or normative) aspect of governance is still in its incipient stages, with few frameworks addressing aspects such as the relationship between tradition and governance. Although issues such as transparency, accountability, or values are discussed, there is limited understanding regarding traditions’ impact on governance within networks. This article points to a foundation for exploring the role of tradition in governance, starting from the notions conceived by authors from different backgrounds: the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre (1988; 1990; 2007) and the economist Friedrich Hayek (1991; 2011; 2020).

The current investigation aims to achieve two goals. The first step entails comprehending the different notions of tradition, considering both authors and their interlocutors (e.g., Lutz, 2004; Porter, 2003; Angner, 2007). To this end, we outline the most significant aspects of MacIntyre and Hayek, along with the treatment given to the concept of tradition; after that, we con-

sider the authors' adherence to a tradition of Natural Law. This discussion seeks to contribute to a better understanding of their dynamic perspectives on society and tradition. The second objective is to answer the question: can MacIntyre's and Hayek's notions of tradition provide a common ground for the ethical dimension of network governance? Network governance is "a form of organizational alliance in which relevant policy actors are linked together as co-producers where they are more likely to identify and share common interests" (Kim, 2006: 21).

Understanding the traditions in governance networks is vital because the tradition-based backgrounds of a society influence the collaborative search for the common good. Ethical and religious beliefs in civil society organizations, for example, influence the network of governance on children's rights (Jacinto, Ames, Serafim, & Zappellini, 2023) or in the social care sector (Mion, Vigolo, Bonfanti, & Tessari, 2023). Furthermore, agents with different preferences and experiences operate in governance networks. This is reflected in deliberative processes within a network, in which values are considered, and solutions are suggested and evaluated, thanks to relationships, learning, and knowledge sharing. Finally, we justify articulating concepts from such authors based on MacIntyre's suggestion, which recommends considering insights from different traditions, as they must be incorporated into any ethics and politics that can reckon with contemporary realities (MacIntyre, 2006).

Both MacIntyre and Hayek contemplate tradition in their works. This study points out how their concepts coincide or diverge and how both adhere to the tradition of Natural Law via distinct trajectories. On this foundation, we propose preliminary orientations for the ethical aspect of tradition-based governance, where formal and spontaneous governance processes coexist.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS

Scholars commonly describe both MacIntyre and Hayek as having a systemic approach to various topics and areas. To understand each of them, a deep study is commonly recommended since each one has a wide enough corpus. As we subsequently illustrate, such authors' perspectives on the notion of tradition are evident throughout their primary works and related to other concepts. Next, we outline the fundamental contexts, concepts, and notions of tradition, followed by a section on each author's relation to the Natural Law tradition.

2.1 MacIntyre: context, work, and his notion of tradition

Alasdair MacIntyre is a British philosopher born and raised in Glasgow, Scotland. His professional involvement spans from the United Kingdom to North America, where he has been active since 1970. This background exposes how MacIntyre experienced two distinct cultural contexts: the old oral Gaelic, marked by storytelling and narratives, and the modern liberal rationalism, which he perceives as antagonistic belief systems (Lutz, 2004). Ethics in Gaelic culture is based upon the many responsibilities undertaken by individuals within a community, drawn from the life experiences of the Scottish and Irish people. In contrast, the rationalist culture is not based on a particular social group's ethics but on universal rationality inherent in all humanity. Rationalism brought ideas from the Enlightenment, the world of concepts and theories (Lutz, 2004).

MacIntyre's seminal work, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (AV), was published in 1981, and it is the cornerstone of his ethical and political project, which he develops throughout his subsequent books. In this work, Aristotelian moral philosophy is extensively explored. Then, in the book *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (WJWR), (MacIntyre, 1988) examines the modern and contemporary moral inquiry traditions that led to his defense and restoration of Thomism. His subsequent major works, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry* (TRV) (MacIntyre, 1990) and *Ethics in the Conflict of Modernity* (MacIntyre, 2016), examine moral investigation traditions in greater depth. MacIntyre's career is divided into distinct phases, each driven by his quest for answers regarding the traditions of moral philosophy (Lutz, 2004).

Initially, his career is characterized by the impact of Marxist ideology and his criticism of individualistic liberalism within philosophical and economic frameworks. In addition to this critique, he also cautions against the Enlightenment-influenced belief that reason would supplant tradition and authority (Lutz, 2004; MacIntyre, 1988: 6). The classical, modern, and postmodern philosophies are explored in greater depth; in this process, he further embraces Aristotelian-Thomism as the philosophical framework, renouncing some assumptions he had during his earlier stage of life (MacIntyre, 2006). The issues surrounding emotivism and the absence of a unified framework for moral discourse are explored in AV (Lutz, 2004; Porter, 2003). His reaction to the current moral philosophy issue manifests as a shift in his philosophical beliefs (Lutz, 2004). He considered Nietzsche's nihilism and Aristotle's virtue ethics to decide for the latter as the approach to reestablishing coherence and

rationality within the prevailing moral disagreements observed in modern culture (MacIntyre, 2007). Given the fragmentation of moral language, he relies on a historical-hermeneutic interpretation based on tradition. According to the tradition's approach, actions are understood from the belief system in which they are carried out, which includes desires and intentions (Ramis-Barceló, 2013: 192).

Tradition, for MacIntyre, is the broader dimension of his conception of virtue (MacIntyre, 2007: 216-220), which consists of three stages or dimensions: (1) practice, (2) the narrative unity of human life, and (3) tradition (Akgün, Keskin, & Fidan, 2021). The first corresponds to a social practice MacIntyre claims to develop virtues or internal goods (Beadle, 2017). In his sociological view, practices are distinct from institutions (or organizations), the latter responsible for achieving external goods (Moore, 2012). A practice is:

“Any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity is realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended (MacIntyre, 2007: 187)”.

The second element is narrative or unity of life (Akgün et al., 2021). A personal narrative has a teleological and unpredictable character “of a narrative embodied in a single life” (MacIntyre, 2007: 219). The third dimension is tradition. MacIntyre (2007: 222) describes tradition as a “historically extended, socially embodied argument,” including a range of goods that constitute tradition. The philosopher recognizes that a community's pursuit of the good extends beyond the confines of individual life. It is the historical character of the search for good that places life within a tradition. MacIntyre stated that he - in himself - was contained within a story and that this could be interpreted as one of the pillars of the tradition (MacIntyre, 2007).

Virtues are acquired human qualities that enable us to achieve goods internal to a practice (MacIntyre, 2007: 191). Their respective tradition sustains societies' relationships with the past, present, and future. From the philosopher's perspective, virtues derive significance and intention from perpetuating traditions, which provide historical context to the practices and life. In this sense, this notion of virtues is much more than preserving the necessary relationships to achieve the various internal goods of the practice, and it is more

than the continuity of the way of individual life in which each one seeks good for life (MacIntyre, 2007). This MacIntyrean sociological framework of good-practices-virtues-institutions receives great attention in business ethics (Ferrero & Sison, 2014; Akgün et al., 2021), an area interested in governance (e.g., Mion et al., 2023; Moore, 2012).

In addition to the ideas exposed in AV, the books WJWR and TRV represent an evolution of the tradition's concept; throughout them, MacIntyre synthesizes two main notions of traditions, although he did not establish a definitive concept (Porter, 2003). The first presents a broad notion of tradition as a moral and social orientation rooted in historical and social attributes. MacIntyre first considers tradition to understand the concept of virtue. The second concept turns to tradition within the scope of scientific or moral inquiry. In this sense, tradition becomes an epistemic and language concept that explains the meaning of truth and rationality (Porter, 2003; Ramis-Barceló, 2013). Collectively, these notions suggest tradition as a practical moral life and intellectual moral inquiry.

A "living" tradition pertains to the goods that constitute such a tradition. MacIntyre recognizes the open nature of tradition and underscores the necessity of engaging in discussion to sustain it (Porter, 2003: 42). He also addresses the transmission of knowledge on pursuing these goods across successive generations (MacIntyre, 2007). MacIntyre recognizes that the good life and the patterns and practices conducive to the good life can only be known and developed through the accumulated wisdom inherent in a tradition (Lutz, 2004). Goods are achieved through practices that enable the acquisition of internal goods, commonly called virtues. Due to its dynamic characteristic, which means "it embodies continuities of conflict" (MacIntyre, 2007: 222), susceptible to external criticism and internal revisions (Moore, 2012), a tradition is subject to changes and may decline or even disappear. The exercise of vices or virtues influences the disintegration or endurance. MacIntyre emphasizes the ethical dimension in strengthening internally the traditions, denoting a sense of cohesion (MacIntyre, 2007).

Given the problems from encyclopedists and genealogists¹, the tradition of Saint Augustine and Thomas Aquinas is the alternative to MacIntyre's moral inquiry since they best articulate Aristotelianism to the Christian tradition

1 This debate exceeds the scope of this paper. For now, we summarize that encyclopedists refer primarily to the philosophical works of Descartes, Kant, and Mill, whereas genealogists refer to the ideas of Nietzsche.

(Lutz, 2004; MacIntyre, 1990). These conclusions are illustrated in WJWR and TRV (Porter, 2003; Lutz, 2004). The tradition he adopted, the Aristotelian-Thomistic, rejects both a purely rational approach and a once-and-for-all relativistic perspective. It is an alternative to the issues posed by relativism and perspectivism emphasized by the Enlightenment period (Lutz, 2004).

The rationality concept of MacIntyre enables the delineation of the processes of tradition and its role. Rationality is his term for the resources by which a person or community estimates whether a philosophical allegation is true or false. In MacIntyre, rationality is both constituted by tradition and constitutes tradition itself (Lutz, 2004). In WJWR, MacIntyre describes that a tradition represents both a notion of justice (or rational justifications) and a practical rationality. These elements are resources in a tradition's philosophical academic inquiry or organizational communities of shared beliefs. In the life of this kind of group, distinctive professions inform their notions of justice and practical rationality (MacIntyre, 1988: 5).

The tradition-constituted rationality assumes a formative function. Principles and beliefs established within traditional communities inherited by those formed within these communities influence the development of rationality (Lutz, 2004). Rationality is inseparable from the tradition in which it was achieved (Lutz, 2004). Such rationality is passed down within a tradition from master to disciple through its practices. The authority of masters eases the transmission and renewal of *telos* in a specific practice. Grounded on Aquinas, MacIntyre asserts that a close connection exists between theoretical and practical inquiry; this is also how he understands the relationship between a moral tradition of research and the moral tradition of the community that supports it (MacIntyre, 1990).

MacIntyre explains how we participate in one tradition and argue from one or more traditions (MacIntyre, 1988: 164-168). Hence, moral investigations are guided by an adherence to tradition rather than adopting a neutral stance as a third observer (Lutz, 2004). In WJWR, MacIntyre addresses four traditions and their notions of justice and rationality. He explains two phases in the confrontation between two traditions: (1) each characterizes the other in its terms, and (2) its protagonist seeks to resolve internal impasses by asking whether other translations provide resources. Faced with a controversy between traditions, however, it would demand from his participants a rare attitude of empathy and intellectual insight (MacIntyre, 1988: 167). MacIntyre finds the answer to understanding different traditions in the study of Thomas Aquinas when articulating Aristotle with Christian theology. Thomas Aquinas

nas understood traditions from within (MacIntyre, 1988: 168), accessing each tradition's practical rationality and justice (350). A critic of a tradition, likewise, would be better if started from within it. These insights regarding tradition have potential implications for comprehending traditions in actual contexts among practitioners from different institutions and backgrounds.

In the epistemic understanding, MacIntyre proposes a concept of tradition that is open to interpretation and evolution/involution. Resolving any inherent tension in a tradition is imperative to ensure its continuity. This perspective suggests that it may experience stages of development, adaptation, stability, and epistemological crises (Lutz, 2004). Another discussion emerges on the incommensurability among traditions, wherein one moral inquiry tradition cannot be effectively translated into the language and framework of another without resulting in significant distortions (MacIntyre, 1990). Despite the incommensurability and difficulties in understanding traditions, MacIntyre does not dismiss the potential for rational engagement between competing traditions, as evidenced in his work (MacIntyre, 1990).

Concerning politics, the defining characteristics of MacIntyre's work are the emphasis on communities, the extent of the local sphere, and the concept of the common good. At the same time, the treatment of the State's role is undervalued (Bernacchio & Knight, 2020). The author delineates a community founded upon practices within which virtues can be exercised. Some examples are the shared fishing practices in Thorupstrand, Denmark, or the educational civil society association Monte Azul, in a Brazilian favela, presented in *Ethics in the Conflict of Modernity* (MacIntyre, 2016: 176-183). Their political manifestations encompass communal management, deliberative discourse, active engagement, and resource distribution, all evolving within the network governance framework (Ansell & Torfing, 2022). Moreover, it is founded upon the concept of political community, which resembles Aristotle's notion but should not be misunderstood as the idea of the State (Bernacchio & Knight, 2020; Knight, 2005).

Although MacIntyre does not describe himself as a communitarian, his notion of the common good suggests some similarity with the perspective of some ideas of this field regarding its non-reduction to the individual good of each person (Knight, 2005). Still, the common good is the goal of politics (Bernacchio & Knight, 2020), something that cannot be exclusively realized via the State. It is comprehensible why MacIntyre would object to the concept of a bureaucratic, centralized, provisioning, and morally neutral state. Such constraints were also highlighted in the public sphere and contributed

to the emergence of new forms of governance (Painters & Peters, 2010; Salm & Menegasso, 2009).

MacIntyre (2007: 195) calls politics the practice of institutionally sustaining practice-based communities, according to which the common good is not specifically to the local community; it is also connected to broader political interactions and agents (Bernacchio & Knight, 2020). This discussion allows us to suggest that MacIntyre's emphasis on common good policy considers the role of civil society organizations and institutions such as the family and associative groups, among others. Together, these arguments suggest an interaction in networks -organizations from the public, private sector, and civil society, among other agents, working together towards a public good. To discuss that, first, we propose examining Hayek's conception of tradition, which is comparable to MacIntyre's initial definition, as a social and moral context in which communities search for their goods, and, in our following section on governance, we suggest them as counterparts.

2.2 Hayek: context, work, and his notion of tradition

The economist Friedrich A. Hayek was born in Austria in 1899 and died in Germany in 1992. He has been increasingly recognized as a preeminent social philosopher. During the 20th century, Hayek advocated for the endorsement of economic and political liberalism as the ideal method for organizing the economy and political society. A Catholic heritage characterized Hayek's upbringing during his formative years. While pursuing his legal education in Vienna, he engaged in Canon Law and Natural Law. He knew Austrian economists C. Menger, F. von Wieser, and L. von Mises in the economic circle. His intellectual foundation also covers prominent British moral thinkers from the 18th century, such as B. Mandeville, D. Hume, A. Smith, A. Ferguson, and J. Bentham (Angner, 2007).

In his long career, Hayek studied economic concepts such as currency, capital, prices, and competition, then moved to a critique of socialism, in which he looked at classical liberalism in-depth and, finally, epistemology and knowledge (Angeli, 2017). Hayek's thought is intertwined with philosophical, economic, sociological, and political aspects, requiring scholars to pay close attention to all his writings to comprehend his ideas fully. His concepts are presented throughout several works and discussed in books that deal with different subjects. For example, tradition appears both in books on politics and in those, focused on law and knowledge. The concept of tradition is essential

to understanding Hayek's second and third phases of thought, particularly when one considers that the idea of order permeates economic, social, and political community organization issues.

The notion of order is broader in scope than that of tradition. Hayek defines it as both the rational organization of society and the spontaneous and natural organization that results from evolution (Hayek, 2013). For Hayek (2013), order is necessary to understand complex phenomena, while the law must be used for the simpler, less complex phenomena. Hayek attributes great complexity to social phenomena (Hayek, 2013). He describes social order as a set of rules in which laws and commands promote individual liberty. According to Hayek, individuals' specific norms of conduct are distinct from the "social order of actions" derived from a system of rules (Gaus, 2006).

In social order, the individual's behavior results from three interrelated factors: instincts (genetically inherited results of human evolution), reason, and norms of conduct, mediated by space, time, history, and personal experiences (Angeli, 2017). Instincts are insufficient to establish a social order as social groups become increasingly complex, demanding social norms that permit agreement on society's goals and the means to achieve them (Hayek, 1988). However, it should not be interpreted as a straightforward, uncritical adherence to these norms, nor as irrationality. Consistently, rules of conduct play an essential role in Hayek's theory of society, as they are not merely regulatory rules of behavior but constitutive rules that define a wide range of interactional possibilities, thereby providing actors with the means to achieve social coordination (Galeotti, 1987). From this, one can infer that Hayek viewed norms of conduct as the "bricks" with which a social order can be constructed.

Hayek (2013) describes two types of order, named after the Greek words *taxis* and *cosmos*. The first type of order comprises "organizations", those considered rationally planned, and the second one is spontaneous and based on a group's evolution, in which norms, customs, and behaviors are adopted because they permit better human adaptation to environmental challenges. *Cosmos* or spontaneous orders aim to achieve common goals (Barry, 1982; Ebens-tein, 2003; Hayek, 2013). Spontaneous orders contribute to common goals because the traditions of a community function as a social dimension that moderates the pursuit of each individual's plans. Some examples of spontaneous orders include common law (Skoble, 2006), the market order understood as a product of Adam Smith's invisible hand (as pointed out, among others, by Scruton, 2006), and language (Boudreaux, 2017). In contrast, positive law, bu-

reaucratic organizations, and planned economies are examples of *taxis* (Hayek, 2013).

Cosmos refers to emerging spontaneous orders from a process of adaptation by humans, who formulate norms or adopt behaviors (Hayek, 2013; Barry, 1982). Hayek viewed *cosmos*-type orders as lacking a hierarchical common purpose, with individuals pursuing compatible goals through general principles or *nomos*. For him, norms that govern human social behavior are transmitted genetically and culturally (Barry, 1982); there is an argument for constructing an order without the need for advanced planning.

Hayek (1988) argues that humans' cultural and biological evolution gave rise to a social order based on extended cooperation between humans, i.e., cooperation between people who do not know each other and are not connected by ties of kinship or affinity. This social order, which the author identifies with what is commonly referred to as "capitalism" (understood precisely as free market order), is spontaneous insofar as it was not the result of conscious decisions based on prior planning. Instead, it obeys traditional and, above all, moral precepts, which may successfully construct a society with a growing population. Hayek (1988) contrasts this spontaneous order with the socialist concept of a planned society, supported by some arguments borrowed from economists from the Natural Law tradition (Angner, 2007).

According to Hayek (2011), laws are more abstract and general and do not depend on a person explicitly. *Theses* and *nomos* are both types of laws (Barry, 1982). However, laws can be stated as rules or commands. Primitive societies rely more on commands than rules, unlike more advanced societies (Barry, 1982). What would initially be defined as a custom becomes a law. The law itself becomes more and more general. The law, observes Ebenstein (2003), is predictable, as it creates a known environment of social activity. Therefore, it is essential for a free society: predictable and known law replaces the ruler's discretion.

As noted, the social order evolves. However, according to Hayek, evolution must follow an organic rather than a predetermined pattern. The use of knowledge by people in society must occur according to their designs and not in a predetermined manner. Knowledge is diffuse, tacit, and subjective and cannot be obtained and organized by a central body; the best social order is the one that enables people to articulate this fragmented and diffuse knowledge in society (Angeli, 2017). Following Michael Polanyi's footsteps, Hayek (2018) adopts the concept of tacit knowledge that each person accumula-

tes and uses in their actions, knowledge that cannot always be apprehended by others or used without the participation or permission of those who possess it.

Traditions are central to Hayek's conception of society. Boettke (2018) states that tradition became essential to the Austrian economist due to the influence of his former mentor, L. von Mises; Hayek would have sought this foundation in tradition to comprehend how society manages to base itself on the division of labor. According to Kilpatrick Jr. (2001), not only the division of labor but also the division of knowledge is essential to understanding the functionality of society from Hayek's perspective.

Tradition naturally evolves in society; only human practices that effectively enhance people's lives and assist them in overcoming the challenges of social life can become traditions over time. Therefore, nothing is a tradition due to forethought, planning, or any other special operation of reason. According to Hayek (1988), tradition is a concept between instinct and reason. It does not originate from a rational observation of reality but from responses to its challenges that become habits. Reaction rather than anticipation is the foundation of tradition. The community progressively creates traditions over time through a selection process in which what functions well is preserved and what does not is left aside; nonetheless, it is always something that has been tested empirically, according to Hayek (2018). People can suggest "if we do this" in every circumstance, but action will not be taken until it proves effective. According to the author, it enabled humans to cease being savages and establish civilization.

According to Hayek (1988), tradition provides norms of conduct for people, bolstering their eminently moral character. The pace of rule changes is sluggish but occurs as needed (Galeotti, 1987). It enables the perpetuation of society (Hayek, 1988); civilization and culture are not inherently determined but are learned through tradition. This conclusion is consistent with Hayek's view of a continuous (albeit slow) process of evolution in a social group, in which the rules of conduct define what is acceptable in terms of behavior and allow you to differentiate it from other groups. In this respect, traditions foster a person's sense of belonging to a larger group. Traditions can, therefore, be understood as mechanisms for transmitting knowledge between people at a given moment in time and, more importantly, between different generations (Hayek, 2011); this means that, currently, people benefit from a set of knowledge that is useful and necessary for their lives, which is transmitted over

time and is eminently practical in terms of life. Something that contributes nothing to existence will not be transmitted.

Hayek defends the superiority of a spontaneous order, which is based on traditions that were built over time and passed on to future generations due to its ability to provide a means to “face the unknown” (Hayek, 1988) concerning a rational order, created, and developed by human beings based on a design or plan. The political implication of Hayek’s notion of tradition is sharp: a high degree of social cohesion makes the minimal State possible (Galeotti, 1987) generated by people’s adherence to a set of traditions they recognize as their own.

Regarding the common good, as a thinker associated with the liberal tradition, Hayek seems to be an odd choice, to say the least, for a discussion of this concept. In a superficial analysis, it would be easier to relate Hayek to a notion of the common good constructed as the good of the individuals that compose a community and not as an idea transcendent to the simple sum of individual “goods”. However, the idea is not distant to Hayek insofar as a significant part of his work discusses a society capable of producing two fundamental objectives, described by Ebenstein (2003) as the improvement of the material conditions of existence and the provision of primary requirements for the development of human potential. This debate resembles, to some extent, the modern apprehension of natural law, according to which the individual is understood as *a priori* from society (Prados, 2021).

Hayek expresses considerable skepticism in *Law, Legislation, and Liberty* regarding the potential contributions of government and its agencies to achieving good (Hayek, 2013). However, one should not conclude that he is a staunch opponent of the government. Hayek critiques the government’s attempt to establish a monopoly on actions that can benefit everyone without allowing individual actors to pursue the common good through their actions. Raeder (1998) notes that few liberals deny that the government can use its coercive power to promote the common good; Hayek does not appear to be among them, but he prefers to limit such use.

Whereas agents can accomplish their goals through the market, this does not imply that the government has no role to play. Raeder (1998) notes that the common good in an advanced liberal society consists of a fundamental value, namely the preservation of the social order as a whole; the market, if it manages to function correctly, will coordinate human activities, and the government must maintain the institutional and legal apparatus that enables this functioning by promoting rules of fair conduct.

As Spicer (1993) reminds us, public administration collides with the limits of reason to produce goods for the public; all things considered, it is unlikely that the government's political and administrative apparatus can generate goods and services that benefit society (common goods). Hayek observed that demands from individuals or specific groups artificially interfere with allocating scarce resources in society and impose changes for the benefit of a few, ultimately harming the common interest.

Even in the case of an absolutely democratic government decision-making process, Hayek (2013) is skeptical, considering that such a process does not inherently ensure the common good. For Hayek (2013), it is better to seek agreement on what means should be employed to attain the common good than what it is. This intentionally vague treatment of the concept of the common good is perfectly consistent with the author's system of thought, particularly when one bears in mind his defense that human reason does not have the capacity that many defend.

Believing that human civilization was a complete product of human reason or a design betrays excessive confidence in the powers of that reason. Raeder (1998) considered that, regardless of the focus of the individual, for Hayek, each human being acts within a web of social relations that he considers a given; that is, he could locate the common good in individual actions, but he knew that these take place in a community. For Peterson (2014), by following Hume's footsteps, the Austrian acknowledges the moral sense shared by people in a community directly linked to their culture.

According to Peterson (2014), a flaw in Hayek's reasoning is his lack of an answer to questions such as why morality evolves. This issue, however, leaves aside important aspects of Hayek's work: firstly, as shown earlier, the individual good is not detached from the common good; on the contrary, only by maintaining the conditions that allow the pursuit of the personal good can one speak of the common good, which resides precisely in these conditions. Second, the evolution of morals does not follow a plan; as Raeder (1998) noted, Hayek believes in the process of "trial and error" regarding which institutions to retain and which ones to drop.

His conception of community, freedom, and the individual good have as reference or point of ponderation the own community. A rational person living in a community united by traditions would abstain from seeking individual good if doing so would inflict harm upon others. Alternatively stated, the

good of others who share the same traditions in the community accommodates the individual good.

2.3 *The Natural Law in MacIntyre and Hayek?*

Studies on MacIntyre (Lutz, 2004; Ramis-Barceló, 2013) and Hayek (Angner, 2007) suggest that both adhere to a doctrine of Natural Law (NL), albeit they do so in distinct ways and depart from different considerations. The debate regarding tradition in this section corresponds to the encounter between MacIntyre and Hayek in the NL tradition. On the one hand, MacIntyre examines this tradition from the perspectives of moral and epistemological philosophies, either as moral inquiry or practice (Lutz, 2004). Conversely, Hayek contributes to this tradition through his intellectual background and central arguments as an economist (Angner, 2007). MacIntyre follows the assumption of Aristotelian-Thomism, but Hayek, avoiding misinterpretation of his work, does not explicitly assume a natural law approach. Nonetheless, we argue that both authors' work converges in comprehending tradition via the lens of NL.

Although Thomas Aquinas is a central author in the discussion on NL, the doctrine of natural law has earlier origins in classical philosophy, in its modern apprehension, and in contemporary reinterpretations. The term "natural" is polysemic and can refer to either a metaphysical or a cosmological account of nature (Contreras, 2013: v-xv). Moreover, some approaches assume a vision without links to the divine, while Thomas Aquinas derives human law from divine law (Prados, 2021). Last, the modern apprehension of natural law assumes an abstract individual as *a priori* from a community and its shared good (Prados, 2021).

MacIntyre sustains a teleological or flourishing inclination of human beings (metaphysical) (Contreras, 2013: viii). He stresses the accessibility of NL to "plain people" and the indispensability of a communitarian context for moral education. (Contreras, 2013: xiv). He understands reasons for action as a basis of NL, founded on anthropological inclinations and practices of human beings (Ramis-Barceló, 2013). According to MacIntyre, "natural law appears in the resolution of moral disagreements if people pursue the goods internal to practices and adopt an attitude of rational debate in which persons seek the truth" (Ramis-Barceló, 2013: 207).

Faced with criticism of his adherence to Thomism due to theological premises, MacIntyre (2009) seems to respond that one can develop a philo-

sophy independently of theological premises, considering the philosophy of Boethius (MacIntyre, 2009: 33-42) and Thomas Aquinas (MacIntyre, 2009: 73-77). He adheres to the general principles of NL (Lutz, 2004) as outlined in Aquinas: good is to be done, evil is to be avoided, and one should not do to another what one would not want to be done to oneself (MacIntyre, 2006; Ramis-Barceló, 2013: 201), among other precepts. Such precepts refer to the goods for each community member, whether in a family, a group, or a political community (MacIntyre, 2006).

Regarding Hayek, Angner (2007) sustains that the economist participates in the intellectual tradition of NL by arguing that society's spontaneous or natural order is superior to an artificial order. The NL is explicit in Hayek's work in terms of order, information, coordination, and cultural evolution. Angner (2007) explains that the origins of NL in Hayek's philosophy are multifaceted. To begin with, he was exposed to a culture where this doctrine was pervasive in universities, cultures, politics, and society. Additionally, Hayek was influenced by seminal economists, adherents to NL, such as J. Schumpeter, A. Smith, and C. Menger.

Furthermore, to provide an alternative to the socialism of his time, Hayek appropriated NL-based arguments from these predecessors (Angner, 2007). In addition to concepts, Angner (2007) explains the reasons for "Hayek's transformation", such as the criticism of socialism and its background in the NL tradition. This shift refers to the direction toward broader questions of politics, philosophy, and society. Angner (2007) is not the first to suggest Hayek's adherence to the NL; however, this understanding is far from standard. Specifically, Hayek does not conceive a notion of good above the individual, a superior good (Peterson, 2014).

Angner (2007) considers that Hayek's NL is potential, as in Aristotle's idea of order (it emerges through a spontaneous process, not from human design), not inexorable, and, finally, its source is not divine. Hayek's adoption of the theory of cultural evolution at the level of groups is, in part, an effort to explain how there can be orders without a design elaborated by a human or divine consciousness (Angner, 2007). This characteristic of the NL source highlights a divergence between MacIntyre and Hayek.

Hayek tries to reclaim the notion of spontaneous order, even ascribed to morality, in the sense that it evolves naturally and that, if restricted by artificial means, it can trigger adverse effects (Angner, 2007). Hayek (1978) noted that the concept of NL undergoes a gradual adaptation in its understand-

ding from an attribute of the “nature of things” to a feature of the natural reason of human beings (Angner, 2007).

The NL assumes a central role in Hayek’s system of thought in his mature phase but can also be evident in his earlier writings. Angner (2007) presents some NL roots from economics, but one should also consider diverse NL roots from the early scholastic studies from the School of Salamanca (Goñi & Sison, 2023; Grice-Hutchinson, 1975; Schumpeter, 1954).

In summary, MacIntyre assumes a NL with an Aristotelian-Thomist basis (classical approach), while Hayek relies on the premises of natural law (modern understanding of NL). This observation implies that Hayek has indirect access to the NL while MacIntyre has direct access.

III. DISCUSSION AND PRELIMINARY DIRECTIONS FOR TRADITION IN GOVERNANCE

Traditions are intrinsic to society and serve as a foundational element in the participation of agents toward achieving the common good. They play a role in maintaining connections among individuals within a social framework by providing moral, cultural, and social conditions; in essence, they comprise the collective knowledge that both forms and is formed within a community (MacIntyre, 2006). As MacIntyre and Hayek posit, tradition is a living and dynamic entity, and its reinforcement mechanisms enable agents to learn of and pass it down. Diverse traditions can coexist when communities jointly define the human ideal and devise means to attain it. This approach holds significant importance in determining what is considered acceptable for a given community, primarily due to the ethical “baggage” of its members. The same happens in governance networks, where actors from different sectors - government, private sector, and civil society - meet to achieve the goods assumed from a particular background. Diverse notions of good and interests converge during this process, and the orders or deliberations that result from such networks occur through both ordered and planned processes, as well as through spontaneous and discretionary processes.

When compared, MacIntyre and Hayek suggest a similar diagnosis about the State and government as sole providers, as being limited in promoting the goods necessary for life in society. While there are similarities in their diagnosis, the answer to this limitation is different: MacIntyre turns to local practice-based (MacIntyre, 2016: 167) or civil society organizations, while Hayek

turns to solutions promoted by market agents. For network governance, we argue that both are correct: the participation of civil society and the private sector contributes to achieving the common good. Many governance networks have this pluricentric characteristic. What is little explored is tradition as its broader ethical dimension. Table 1 presents a comparative analysis between the authors and implications for governance.

Table 1 A comparative analysis of MacIntyre and Hayek's notions related to tradition

Theoretical background	MacIntyre's	Hayek's
Main concepts related to society	Practice and internal goods (virtues), institutions and external goods, tradition, community of practices, common good.	Order (cosmos and taxis), rules (theses and nomos), tradition, social good, and purposes.
Tradition	Two main descriptions of tradition: (1) as the broader socio-moral background of a community, which represents shared beliefs and practices (with their virtues), and (2) as philosophical moral inquiries from a given community. Traditions may change gradually or radically.	Human practices that effectively enhance people's lives and assist them in overcoming the challenges of social life can become traditions over time. Traditions are not static; they may gradually change.
Natural Law (NL)	Thomism articulated with Aristotelian biology and psychology. He avoids relying on a theological basis. Closer to a classical understanding of NL.	Concepts based on NL from Aristotelian root through a modern apprehension, articulated with evolutionary theory (groups). There is no theological basis. Closer to a modern understanding of NL.
Common good	They are goods achieved by individuals only as members of a community (MacIntyre, 2009: 88).	Preservation of society as a whole. Search for means to achieve the common good, not for its content. He locates the common good in individual actions that follow particular purposes, but he recognizes that these occur in a community.
Tradition's implications for governance	He criticizes a bureaucratic or neutral State in which there is no space for political communities. Practice-based communities are important agents of governance. Traditions consist of practices, their respective virtues, and their accumulated wisdom. Main implication: traditions have a role in governance and may be changed by governance processes.	Alone, the State has a limited role/power in pursuing the common good. The government's function is to maintain the institutional and legal apparatus. Traditions contribute to greater social cohesion, which allows for a smaller state. Main implication: The role of multiple agents, including agents from the market, is emphasized.

Source: elaborated by the authors.

MacIntyre adheres to a concept of political community at the local level and of a collaborative character that differs from the view that the State is the primary political agent. He argues that a community's standards of excellence are organically derived from the practices of the institutions (organizations) that comprise that community, which are learned and transmitted by traditions.

Hayek acknowledges the role of market agents in producing external goods through their actions, thereby supporting the notion that formal and spontaneous orders, in addition to laws and rules, coexist and contribute to forming certain traditions. It encompasses both the emergence of spontaneous ordering and the development of groups; human actions are not invariably predetermined or exclusively rational. Some orders are formal, while others arise spontaneously from individual and societal actions.

It is noteworthy that MacIntyre and Hayek share certain junctures that define their intellectual trajectories. Both authors distance themselves from socialism and Marxism but with the former keeping some Marxist critics of market and Capitalism throughout his work (e.g., Blackledge, 2009; MacIntyre, 2016: 124-129) and the latter defending free market and criticizing socialism emphatically (e.g., Hayek, 1988). Despite their different perspectives, both are valid for the reality of a governance network, as agents from different sectors participate in the co-production of a specific area's common good, such as education, health, or transport.

The authors seem to agree with the following: they assume a dynamic view of society and the complexities of its phenomena, within which learning and knowledge are shared in a tradition; moreover, they agree that tradition is the socio-historical context for accommodating what is moral and what is sought by society. Furthermore, MacIntyre believes that tradition facilitates wisdom sharing, whereas Hayek refers to tacit knowledge. Regarding their concepts, there are some similarities between the MacIntyrean concept of practices and the Hayekian concept of rules of conduct, both linked to tradition. There are parallels between MacIntyre's conception of rationality and Hayek's definition of tradition. We propose that these concepts should be considered more carefully in future research concerning tradition.

Despite their shared characteristics, specific differences are well-founded. Besides their antagonistic positions on liberalism, they do not assume the same understanding of the common good concept. Even more significantly, they differ on whether the State should take a substantive notion of the com-

mon good. Hayek prefers that everyone define their preferences but recognizes that this does not happen outside of tradition. The implication for governance is that the network participants must deliberate on the content and means of achieving the common good because they bear different notions of rationality and justice.

The difficulties in bringing together authors from different traditions of moral inquiry by analogy represent practical difficulties in bringing together agents from other traditions, who must collaborate and deliberate on achieving the good of a community. Although it involves conflicts, advances, and setbacks, collective deliberation, as part of political life, makes it possible to articulate the wisdom accumulated in traditions and thus find ways to organize and live well in the community. Agents from various sectors integrate governance networks about a specific policy area or sector (Ansell & Torfing, 2022; Painter & Peters, 2010). Tradition-based network governance would recognize the influence of traditions with different practices, narratives, rules, and purposes.

The various traditions of public management demonstrate that they correspond to distinct administrative structures of governance (Painters & Peters, 2010). Its leading schools or traditions emerge as alternatives to the vision of the centralizing, neutral, impersonal, bureaucratic State. These proposals result in new interaction arrangements. Currently, such models coexist and complement each other - bureaucratic organizations, network governance, partnerships between public and private sectors, and multi-level governance, among other formats (Salm & Menegasso, 2009). Therefore, we suggest governance as an open arrangement for traditions in which formal and spontaneous orders are articulated (Hayek, 2013). Recognizing the role of traditions, we could access the possible processes of tradition-constituted and tradition-constitutive governance in future studies.

Traditions-based governance arrangements are better prepared to understand intangible aspects that connect agents, such as their ethical and beliefs backgrounds, and to recognize the virtues of those involved. Traditions-based governance would consider agents' different demands concerning the common good from a broader ethical understanding of a community. One of the implications is that collective deliberations within a network must consider how they sustain or modify traditions. Furthermore, network governance processes suggest connections between agents, bringing together people, practices, and institutions from different traditions (Mion et al., 2023). However, an adequate understanding of traditions as a moral background should not as-

sume they can be manipulated or managed. Therefore, the discussion between traditions is relevant because it allows us to define the common good better and how to pursue it. Finally, the discussion between traditions is itself a part of the common good of a political community.

When considering the emergence of governance networks, Hayek allows us to suggest that they begin with spontaneous and diffuse orders and tend towards organization as the exchange of information and interactions between actors intensify. Traditions enable us to contemplate the ethical dimensions inherent in networks. Over time, rules can be formalized, representative institutions can support practices, and networks increase their organizational and power processes for the public good in which they seek to act. Participant resources and capabilities are required for this.

A network of actors involved in different practices with different preferences forms the governance. However, they concentrate on developing solutions for a particular policy area when participating in a governance network. Capabilities in traditions, such as judgment, deliberation, and dialogue, will be fundamental.

IV. CONCLUSION

MacIntyre and Hayek defined tradition by examining its historical-social aspect and moral inquiry dimension. We aimed to present the significance of tradition for network governance through the analysis of the concepts as presented in the author's work. Through different paths and with different premises, MacIntyre and Hayek participate in the NL tradition, as demonstrated by the research of their interlocutors (Porter, 2003; Lutz, 2004; Angner, 2007). Their conclusions suggest, in addition to public institutions, the participation of civil society and market agents in governance networks.

It is possible to propose that tradition constitutes an essential ethical dimension of network governance. Governance involves agents committed to different traditions. Beyond conflict, it accommodates communication, deliberation, and action to consider the achievement of preferences and the common good.

Furthermore, the encounter between traditions may occur in the micro-scope of a political community, but it also connects with politics at a more extensive scope and with elementary principles. Traditions are dynamic; they constitute and are constituted by rationality but also by other human dimen-

sions (instincts, principles). They provide the normative context and experiences transmitted and learned among its members.

Future studies could investigate whether MacIntyre's and Hayek's engagement with NL makes them ethically compatible or not. Moreover, they could explore how traditions, practices, and virtues together are presented in a governance network. Both authors' perspectives could also be combined to understand better how market and civil society agents contribute to the common good as participants in a governance network.

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