

Les BRICS, un espace ignoré

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The emergence of the BRICS can be seen as a groundbreaking adventure in political communication. In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, Brazil, Russia, India and China - then South Africa in 2011 - came together to voice a common demand for a more equitable world order. Drawing on the spirit of Bandung and the non-aligned nations movement, these five "developing" countries have just over 40% of the world's population and cover 25% of the world's land mass over four continents. In 2030, they will account for 40% of the world's wealth. How have such very different countries - in their history, language, religion, politics and geography - been driving a common idea forward?

For this issue, a panel of specialists in communication, sociology, economics and international relations investigate a process that emerged less than ten years ago, with five countries launching a sustained threefold effort, driven by a clear political will, to achieve recognition, transformation and the construction of common spheres of interest. Interaction and communication gathered pace, based initially on economic relations, then seeking to forge social and political links with a view to reforming international institutions.

The authors address the topic from two perspectives that cut across the entire issue:

- 1) descriptions of initiatives, political discourse and emerging identity;
- 2) the BRICS as a political block whose essence derives from being in competition with other regional groupings, including the European Union.

While the idea of the BRICS as an entity is by no means unanimously approved by the population at large in the five countries, it is gaining ground among those in power. This issue analyses what has already been accomplished, the resulting changes to the world order and the political and cultural ambitions that have emerged. Ultimately, the BRICS represent an unprecedented political experiment that paradoxically rests on forms of un-communication.