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The Brazilian Engagement with Peace Operations: a Critical Analysis

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Abstract

It is clear that Brazil seeks to enhance its international standing through an increasing engagement with peace operations. This paper argues that the more Brazil seeks to increase its engagement in the manner in which it is currently pursuing it – essentially by deploying troops – the more Brazil actively constructs its own subalternity with regards to international peace. In order to develop this argument, this paper initially delineates the Brazilian historical engagement within peace missions. Then, it critically problematizes such engagement by analysing it in light of the particular role that peace operations play within international politics.

Keywords: Post-conflict reconstruction, peace operations, united nations, brazilian foreign policy.

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Introduction

A very brief, though attentive, observation of the international reality is sufficient to notice that violence¹ recently has been on the rise. This can be clearly perceived within two dimensions: (1) the recent increasing trend in the number of deaths related to organized violence² from 2010 until now, and (2) the rising number of violent conflicts since 2012 (Melander et al. 2016, 728-729). In fact, since the end of the Cold War, 2014 was the second-deadliest year, with more than 1300.000 people killed. Even 2015, which saw fewer fatalities related to organized violence than 2014, reached the high number of 118.000 deaths (Melander et al. 2016, 728). Both years are only behind 1994 and the Rwandan genocide, when the number of deaths related to organized violence is estimated at 500.000 people

¹ For more regarding direct and structural violence, see Galtung(1969, 1990).

² For the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'organized violence' aggregates three different categories: (1) state-based armed conflict, (2) non-state conflict, and (3) one-sided violence (Melander et al. 2016, 727). For more regarding these categories, see (Melander et al. 2016, 727-728).

(Melander et al. 2016, 728). In an international scenario such as the present, it becomes evident that overcoming violent conflicts worldwide is a major element of international relations.³ Hence, peace operations⁴ can indeed be considered a fundamental pillar of international politics.⁵

Therefore, it is not unreasonable to pursue a more relevant insertion within the international scene by increasing the participation in peace operations, especially those led by the United Nations (UN). Particularly countries from the Global South have pursued this course of action.⁶ This is also the case for Brazil. Observing the Brazilian insertion within the international scenario, it becomes quite clear that the sphere of the construction of international peace, especially through contribution to peace operations, is an important pillar anchoring the international projection of the country. Consequently, it is not unusual, for instance, to associate this kind of commitment with a realist explanation of why states engage in peace operations' activities.⁷ Under this rationale, the "explanation of state participation in UN peacekeeping [sic] is that states do whatever they can, given their power resources, to protect and preserve their national interests" (Neack 1995, 184).⁸

Unsurprisingly, observing studies regarding the Brazilian engagement with peace operations, it is not uncommon to notice precisely that "a number of analyses of Brazilian foreign policy also adopt the realist perspective to explain the country's participation in UN peacekeeping" (Cavalcante 2010, 145). Consequently, it is not unusual to encounter analysts emphasizing the "instrumentalist" character of the Brazilian contribution to peace operations (Kenkel 2013b, 335). Under this rationale, such engagement is connected to; (1) the increase of the Brazilian influence in UN decision-making structures, (2) the provision of a training opportunity for its armed forces, (3) the monetary compensation of the UN, or (4) the positioning of the country as an emerging or a rising power⁹ on the international scene (Call and Abdenur 2017, 1; Kenkel 2010; 2013b; Kenkel and Cunliffe 2016; Sánchez Nieto 2013; Uziel 2015, 110-111).¹⁰ More precisely, an association is often made between the Brazilian contribution to peace operations and the country's quest for a permanent seat at the

3 Acknowledging the erosion of the division 'inside/outside' (Walker, 1993) when talking about international politics nowadays, but following a non-written convention in the discipline, the lower-case, on the one hand, is used in reference to the dynamics that take place majorly in the 'international' scenario and that also involves actors that are external to a particular state, whereas, on the other hand, the capital letters are used to designate the academic discipline (International Relations).

4 Following the UN terminology, this paper understand 'peace operations' to mean "[f]ield operations deployed to prevent, manage, and/or resolve violent conflicts or reduce the risk of their recurrence" (United Nations 2008, 98). Hence, the term encompasses, in line with the UN understanding of the term, the key instruments used by the UN to address violent conflicts throughout the globe, ranging from peace prevention to peacebuilding and state-building efforts.

5 The delineation of the several modifications that peace operations went through throughout the time is far from the scope of this paper. For more in this regards, see for example (Blanco, 2014, 2015; Daniel et al. 2008; Kemer et al 2016; Kenkel, 2013a; Newman et al. 2009).

6 For an account about the engagement of some rising powers' engagement with peace operations, see for example (Amar 2012; 2013; Coning and Prakash 2016; Kenkel 2016; Sotomayor 2009; 2010; 2014). For a critical analysis, see for instance (Cunliffe 2013).

7 For more regarding how different theoretical approaches of the discipline of International Relations perceive and understand peace, see (Richmond 2008), and for different reasons regarding why states engage in peace operations, see (Neack, 1995).

8 For a comprehensive analysis about why democratizing countries, which is the case of Brazil, engage in peace operations, see (Sotomayor 2014, Chapter 1).

9 The discussion about the notions of emerging, rising or middle power is far beyond the scope of this paper. For more about it, see for instance (Holbraad 1984; Jordaan 2003).

10 For a more detailed account of the Brazilian motives to contribute to peace operations, see for instance (Kenkel 2013b; Sánchez Nieto 2013; Uziel 2015, 110-126).

UN Security Council (Cavalcante 2010, 145-146). In fact, this kind of association is not only drawn by scholars, but also in public statements made by Brazilian Presidents and Ambassadors (Rezende 2012, 25-27). However, on a different note, it is also argued that such enterprise has “been marked by some degree of inconsistency over time”, which is “a consequence of the lack of a clear definition of both the parameters and the expected goals of that participation, and may affect the Brazilian quest for a more active profile in international peace and security matters” (Cavalcante 2010, 146).

Notwithstanding, although such analyses certainly clarify part of the process, a more critical examination of the Brazilian engagement illuminates other features of this enterprise. Here lies the essential focus of this paper: it critically problematizes the manner in which Brazil engages with peace operations, in light of the role that they play in international politics. Under this framework, it stands out that the country’s engagement with peace operations is myopic and subaltern. The paper argues that the more Brazil seeks to increase its engagement in the manner in which it is currently pursuing such operations – by essentially contributing with troops¹¹ – contrary to what might appear at a first sight, the more the country actively constructs its own subalternity and peripheral role in the sphere of international peace.

In order to develop its analysis, and explore such paradox, the paper departs from a qualitative methodological approach, based essentially on a critical reading of both primary and secondary sources with regards to peace operations and the Brazilian engagement with this international practice. In order to advance its argument, the paper is structured in two sections. Firstly, the paper delineates the manner in which Brazil engages with peace operations, evincing that such engagement is not uniform throughout time. More precisely, the section clarifies that, the distinct degrees of engagement that the country has with these operations, means that such engagement can be divided into four different phases. Then, in its second section, the paper explores the aforementioned paradox with regards to the Brazilian engagement with peace operations. More precisely, the section discusses the Brazilian engagement with this fundamental international practice arguing that, considering the role that such instrument occupies internationally, such engagement is myopic and subaltern.

The Brazilian Contribution to Peace Operations

The sphere of international peace is a natural dimension for Brazil to structure its international projection. The reasons are many: (1) the last war in which Brazil engaged, although modestly, was the Second World War, (2) the country has a stable and definitive border with its surrounding region, (3) Brazil has a peaceful relationship with all its neighbors. The last war with massive troop mobilization and fought against a neighboring country, Paraguay, dates back to the nineteenth century, and (4) although it is often forgotten, the country is a founding member of the United

11 In this paper, unless otherwise stated, when it is mentioned the Brazilian contribution to peace operations or the country’s troop contribution, the notion encompasses the number of the military, police and military observers deployed to a peace operation.

Nations, an international organization that has, as its very ontology, the construction of a peaceful and secure international order - to name just a few.¹²

Not by coincidence, Brazil contributes to peace operations, which might be understood as the fundamental international public policy directed towards building peace internationally. It is true that it was only recently that Brazilian support to peace operations became more visible. In fact, Brazil's engagement turned out to be noticeable to a more widespread public with its noteworthy presence in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (in French, *Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en Haïti* – MINUSTAH). However, the country has a long commitment to the UN peace operations. In fact, Brazil has contributed to peace operations since their first deployment in 1948.¹³ It is true that, in almost all of the cases, the Brazilian contribution might fall on what Coleman (2013) understands as a 'token contribution'. Nonetheless, it is important to notice that Brazil contributed, - though in most cases with a small number of troops, - to a high percentage of UN peace operations. Out of the 71 missions ever authorized by the organization's Security Council, Brazil was present in 50 of them. This implies a participation rate of almost 70% (Coning and Prakash 2016, 11), which undoubtedly indicates a high commitment to UN peace operations. With regards to troop deployment, the country deployed almost 50,000 uniformed personnel to UN operations in about 30 countries (Hamann 2015, 1-3).¹⁴

Notwithstanding its long duration, the Brazilian engagement with peace operations, naturally, is not uniform. Indeed, one can notice different degrees of engagement throughout time. There have been periods, for instance, when the country had a marginal engagement, no engagement at all with such operations, or when the country's engagement was significantly increased. In fact, in general terms, it can be argued that the Brazilian engagement with peace operations can be summarized in four distinct phases:¹⁵ (1) from 1957 to 1967, (2) from 1968 to 1988, (3) from 1989 to 2004, and (4) from 2004 onwards.

The first and the second phases of the Brazilian engagement with peace operations occurred during the Cold War. This term is characterized by, (1) on the one hand, a period when the country's engagement was related to traditional peace operations¹⁶ and its contribution was very marginal, and (2) on the other hand, a period when Brazil had no engagement at all with peace operations. During the first phase of the Brazilian engagement, a period ranging from 1948 to 1967, the country contributed with a small number of troops to places such as the Republic of the Congo, Cyprus, and the border between India and Pakistan. The exception was the operation in the Suez, during the second half of the 1950's – the First United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I). This was the mission in which Brazil had its most significant contribution during the Cold War (Hamann 2015, 8).

12 For an account regarding the Brazilian perceptions of security risks and threats in its region, see (Malamud and Alcañiz 2017, 2-5).

13 Established in May 1948 in the Middle East, UNTSO (United Nations Truce Supervision Organization) is the first peace operation and is still operative.

14 Other Brazilian engagements with the construction of peace at the international scenario include, for instance, political missions organized by the Organization of American States (OAS) or the Mission of Military Observers Equator-Peru (MOMEP) created by the Garante Group (Aguilar 2015, 115).

15 These phases are an update of the chronology presented Hirst and Nasser (2014, 2) and by Fontoura (2005).

16 For more about traditional peace operations see, for instance (Bellamy et al. 2010, Chapter 7; Blanco 2014, 268-270).

Notwithstanding, most of the time during the Cold War, the country was under a military dictatorship (1964-1985) (Santos and Cravo 2014, 2), which coincides with the second phase of the Brazilian engagement with peace operations. Covering a period ranging from 1968 to 1988, this second phase is characterized by the disengagement of the country with peace operations.¹⁷ This is a period when Brazil deployed a very marginal number of troops to UN peace operations. This disengagement was in line with the thought of Araújo Castro,¹⁸ who was an important influence for the Brazilian diplomacy from 1968's onwards (Cavalcante 2010, 147), and understood the UN as an instrument for freezing the power structures at the international scenario (Castro 1972).¹⁹ Consequently, Brazil distanced itself from multilateral organizations. This had some important consequences, meaning that the country: (1) ceased its contribution to peace operations, which during this period prevented Brazil's participation at the United Nations Emergency Forces II (UNEF II), the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), (2) did not assume a non-permanent seat at the Security Council after 1968. In fact, after its 1967-1968 mandate, the country only assumed a non-permanent seat at the Security Council in 1988, after the re-democratization process, and (3) in 1977 abandoned the UN Special Committee on Peace operations (Cavalcante 2010, 148; Santos and Cravo 2014, 2).

During the third and fourth phases, the country once again started to contribute to peace operations. In fact, an increase of the Brazilian contribution during this period can be observed. Both the return of the Brazilian contribution, and its increasing extent, were consequences of the end of the Cold War, - internationally, - and the end of the Brazilian military dictatorship, - domestically. The third phase starts right after the country's re-democratization process. Ranging from 1989 to 2004, this period is characterized by Brazil's engagements with second-generation peace operations.²⁰ Therefore, during this period, the country contributed with troops to peace operations in countries such as Mozambique and El Salvador. During this period, the Brazilian contribution to the United Nations Angola Verification Mission III (UNAVEM III) in Angola in the second half of the 1990's stands out. This is Brazil's third largest contribution to peace operations, with more than 4,000 troops deployed (Hamann 2015, 8).²¹

Indeed, from the 1990's and onwards, the country's contribution to peace operations was significantly increased. Not by coincidence, considering Brazil's troop deployments throughout time, the overwhelming majority of it (87%) happened in the last 25 years (Cezne and Hamann 2016, 2; Rezende 2012, Chapter 4). Attentively observing, this was very much in line with the increase of peace operations deployed to conflict scenarios after the end of the Cold War. For instance, the number of operations in the decade ranging from 1989 to 1999 was more than the double the number in the previous four decades together (Blanco 2014, 272; Paris 2004, 16-17).

17 For a more comprehensive account of this period, see for instance (Uziel and Vargas 2015).

18 João Augusto Araújo Castro was a Brazilian diplomat and, from 1968 to 1971, he was the Brazilian ambassador to the UN.

19 For a detailed account of his view, see (Castro 1972).

20 For more about the second generation of peace operations, see for instance (Bellamy et al. 2010, Chapter 4; Blanco 2014, 274-284). For more about different generations of peace operations, see for example (Kenkel, 2013a).

21 For more regarding the Brazilian peace initiatives in Africa, see for instance (Kenkel 2013c).

However, notwithstanding its rising trajectory in the 1990's, the real turning point with regards to the Brazilian engagement with peace operations only started during the 2000's. More precisely, the turning point was 2004 with the Brazilian contribution to MINUSTAH, the peace operations sent to Haiti, which marks the fourth phase of Brazil's engagement with such operations. This phase continues until today. During this period, particularly with MINUSTAH, the country significantly increased its peace operations engagement and definitely placed itself as a fundamental contributor to this international practice. This is perceptible in two dimensions: (1) the number of troops deployed to post-conflict scenarios, and (2) the unprecedented degree of responsibilities undertaken in the sphere of international peacebuilding.

With regards to the first dimension - the number of troops, - MINUSTAH was the peace operations to which Brazil contributed with most troops. It corresponds to almost 80% of the country's contribution to the operations during the period from November 1990 to December 2015, followed by those deployed to Lusophone countries²² (14%) and to UNIFIL in Lebanon (6%)²³ (Cezne and Hamann 2016, 2). Consequently, and not by coincidence, in 2004 Brazil reached the 14th position in UN troop contribution globally (United Nations 2004).²⁴ This was an outstanding increase with regards to the country's contribution, since in the previous year, 2003, Brazil occupied the 51st position (United Nations 2003). The Brazilian contribution to peace operations remained high and reached its peak after the earthquake that hit Haiti. The country went from the 13th position in 2010 (United Nations 2010) to the 11th one in 2012 (United Nations 2012).

Concerning the aforementioned second dimension, with MINUSTAH, Brazil started to assume a degree of responsibilities in relation to peace operations that was simply unprecedented for the country. From the very beginning of MINUSTAH, Brazil headed what is perhaps the most expressive sphere of the operation in question - its military axis, - by appointing its Force Commander. This was certainly a pivotal milestone for the country as a contributor to such missions. In fact, in a very unusual practice for the UN, Brazil has been successively performing the position of the Force Commander of the MINUSTAH.²⁵ In addition, Brazil obtained other high-level positions within the sphere of international peace and security. Worth of mentioning are, (1) the position of Director for Peacekeeping Strategic Partnership at the UN Departments of Peace operations and Field Support,²⁶ or (2) having a member at the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, appointed by the Secretary-General, to perform a thorough review of the UN peace operations and propose improvements.²⁷ In addition, Brazil headed the military axis of the operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the United Nations Organization

22 The countries were Angola, Mozambique, Timor-Leste and, in a lesser degree, Guinea Bissau.

23 For a longer period of time in regards to the distribution of the Brazilian contribution to peace operations and for a more detailed account of this contribution, see for instance (Hamann 2015, 8; Rezende 2012, Chapter 4 and Annexes A to R).

24 Unless otherwise stated, the positions mentioned in the paper are related to the date of 31st of December of the respective year.

25 The position is currently performed by Lieutenant General Ajax Porto Pinheiro.

26 The position is currently performed by Lieutenant General Paul Cruz, who was the Force Commander of the MINUSTAH from 2010 to 2011.

27 The position was filled by Lieutenant Floriano Peixoto Vieira Neto, who was the Force Commander of the MINUSTAH from 2009 to 2010.

Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo (in French, *Mission de L'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en RD Congo* – MONUSCO), until December 2016,²⁸ and has since 2011, been in charge of the Maritime Task Force of UNIFIL in Lebanon.²⁹ The former is the largest active peace operations and the latter is the first and only mission to have a Maritime Task Force. Undoubtedly, the performance of such high-level positions is revealing of both the strong commitment that Brazil started to show in relation to peace operations and certainly the convincing degree of acceptance, by its peers, of the country's position.

The myopia of the Brazilian insertion

At first sight, the aforementioned scenario seems very positive for Brazil. When observing the significant intensification characterizing, on the one hand, the Brazilian troop contribution to peace operations and, on the other hand, the responsibilities that are being performed by the country in this sphere, one might get the impression of standing before a quite exciting picture. Moreover, with this picture in mind, one might even argue, quite persuasively indeed, that Brazil is marked by highly qualified and structuring insertion into the sphere of the construction of international peace.

However, this kind of reading of the facts is definitely misleading and myopic. A problematization of such engagement that, on the one hand, leads towards a more attentive and critical observation and, on the other hand, is mindful of the role that peace operations occupy internationally, calls attention to a different, and perhaps somewhat perverse, side of this reality. Indeed, contrary to what might be the first impression of this situation and as paradoxical as it may appear, the more Brazil anchors its insertion into the affairs peace operations essentially through the contribution of troops – which is fundamentally what it currently does – the country actively contributes to the construction of its own subalternity and peripheral position in the field of international peace. In order to properly comprehend such apparent paradox, to overcome such myopic understanding and, most importantly, to start building a more qualified Brazilian insertion in that sphere, it is necessary to look beneath the surface and apprehend, above all, the structuring element of the international environment in which peace operations are operationalized and the fundamental consequences associated with them.

From the very beginning, it is important to understand that the overcoming of violent conflicts throughout the globe and the construction of international peace are pursued in an international scenario that is far from being ideologically empty. On the contrary, this ideological character is embedded in the current international environment, although most of the time in a veiled manner, structuring and shaping the practices that are performed in it. With the end of the Cold War, the international scene experienced what might be called a liberal triumphalism. This was perhaps best

28 The Force Commander is was Lieutenant General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz and remained two and a half years in the position.

29 The current Commander is the Rear Admiral FlavioMacedoBrasil.

epitomized by the ‘end-of-history’ argument advanced by Fukuyama (1989, 1992). Since then, certainly in greater and lesser degrees depending of the moments, (neo)liberalism has been the structuring force of the international scenario.³⁰ Consequently, the current international *zeitgeist* is pervaded by the understanding – which is anchored in the thoughts of thinkers such as Kant (1905), Schumpeter (1966) and Montesquieu (2002) – that the liberalism has a pacifying effect over the political entities (Doyle 1986; 2004; Doyle and Recchia 2011).³¹ This understanding, with regards to peace and security, culminates in the notion of ‘liberal peace’,³² which became, and still is, the underpinning ideological framework of peace operations. Under this rationale, since liberalism is equated with peace and prosperity, the construction of international peace is pursued through the liberalization of the political, economic, and social spheres of post-conflict states and their populations around the globe (Paris 2004; Richmond and Franks 2007, 27-31).³³ Precisely because peace operations are executed under this liberal ideological framework, it is important to notice two fundamental consequences of such structuring feature of the international environment. They are: (1) peace operations have a specific role in current international politics; and (2) there is a clear international division of labor in relation to the construction of international peace.

With regards to the former, in order to comprehend this role, it is necessary to problematize peace operations departing from a different standpoint. Usually, in a rather uncritical posture, peace operations are understood as a mere technical international instrument deployed to post-conflict scenarios in order to overcome direct and structural violence.³⁴ Within this approach, the discussion about such international practice, not rarely, revolves around the discussions about the elements leading to a successful/failed peace operations.³⁵ This kind of discussion can certainly be included in what Cox (1981) characterized as a ‘problem solving’ approach towards international relations. Unfortunately, it is under this kind of rationale that the Brazilian engagement often is problematized. Taking a more critical standpoint, it may be observed that peace operations are, not a mere technical instrument but, an international practice that seeks to shape and structure each and every dimension of post-conflict states and their populations,³⁶ towards a very particular end. In the end, since liberal peace is their underpinning ideological framework, peace operations seek to liberalize post-conflict states and populations (Paris 2002; 2004; Richmond and Franks 2009).

Consequently, an attentive observer perceives that peace operations are far from being simply an apolitical process seeking to build peace in war-torn areas, as they are often portrayed internationally.

30 or a comprehensive account of the Brazilian positioning, in different spheres, within this liberal international order, see for instance (Stuenkel and Taylor 2015).

31 For an account in regards to the rationing behind such argument, see for instance (Blanco, 2014: 280-283).

32 For more in this regard, see for instance (Duffield 2001; Heathershaw 2008; Paris 2004; Richmond 2006; 2007; 2008, 89-95.) For a detailed account of the different aspects and nuances of the liberal peace, see for example (Heathershaw 2008; Richmond 2006; 2007).

33 The delineation of the critiques of this character of peace operations is certainly beyond the scope of this paper. For a critical account of it, see for instance (Blanco 2017; Chandler 2010; Paris 2002; Pugh 2005; Richmond 2010; 2014; 2016; Taylor 2010).

34 See footnote 2.

35 For this kind of discussion, see for instance (Lijn 2009; Pushkina 2006).

36 Timor-Leste is perhaps the most emblematic case. See, for instance (Blanco 2015).

On the contrary, peace operations play a rather different role in current international politics. Under the ideological character structuring the current international scenario, such operations function as an international normalizing dispositif³⁷ that, due to its liberal social-reengineering character,³⁸ is fundamental for the maintenance and fostering of a particular order in the international society³⁹ – a (neo)liberal one.⁴⁰ More precisely, peace operations function in the international society as a normalizing dispositif that seeks to govern post-conflict states and population internationally.⁴¹ Hence, peace operations seek to conduct their conducts, to structure the field of their possible actions, which is the very essence of governing,⁴² in order to reproduce what is constructed and understood as a ‘normal’ behavior for a state, and its population, internationally (Blanco 2017, 94-102). In the current international society, this means to liberalize their every sphere, such as the economic, political and the social ones. This conduct of conducts is pursued within two dimensions: (1) at the international level, seeking to discipline the post-conflict state as an individual political entity in the international society, and (2) at the domestic level, through the constant exercise of a biopolitical power over life-supporting processes of its population⁴³ (Blanco 2017, 94-102).

Furthermore, a critical understanding in relation to such international practice allows the analyst to further problematize a second fundamental consequence of the ideological structuring feature of the international scenario. It permits the detection of an even more perverse side of the practice of international peacebuilding – the fact that there are different responsibilities depending on where the country is positioned within the international political structure. Attentively observing, one can clearly perceive that there is an entrenched power relation with regards to the construction of international peace. More precisely, although operating in a veiled manner, there is a structured international division of labor between those engaged in the practice of international peacebuilding. In this international peacebuilding labor-division, on the one hand, the Global North is responsible for the fundamental part of this structure: the delineation of both the ontology of peace and the methodology of building it internationally. Therefore, the Global North has the power of not only defining what peace is, and what it means, but also how it should be pursued and its construction operationalized throughout the globe. On the other hand, the Global South is responsible for building the kind of peace that reflects the characterization defined by the former. The Global South is the wo/manpower of such international division of labor of peacebuilding.

37 For the purpose of this paper, it suffices to understand this notion, developed by the French philosopher Michel Foucault, as a heterogeneous assemblage of actors, concepts, institutions and practices, which might even not be related at all, but do form a comprehensive whole. For more about this notion, see for instance (Agamben 2009; Blanco 2017; Deleuze 2007; Foucault 1980).

38 For more about it, see for instance (Paris 2004; Richmond 2011; Richmond and Franks 2009).

39 The development of the concept of ‘international society’ is definitely beyond the purpose of this paper. For more about it, see for instance (Bull, 1977; 1992; Buzan 1993, 2014; Dunne 1998; Linklater 2005; Linklater and Suganami 2006; Onuf 1994; Watson 1992).

40 This argument is comprehensively developed somewhere else. See (Blanco 2017).

41 This paper has a Foucauldian understand of the word ‘government’ as the ‘conduct of conducts’ (Gordon, 1991). For a comprehensive account of it, see (Foucault 1991; 2014; Larner and Walters 2004; Li 2007; Merlingen 2003; Rose et al. 2006; Walters 2012).

42 See (Foucault 2000, 341).

43 Roughly, ‘discipline’ and ‘biopolitics’ are Foucauldian concepts that seek to capture the exercise power seeking to conduct conducts, respectively, of individuals and populations. For a comprehensive account of the concepts, see for instance (Foucault 2003, Chapter 11).

Therefore, there is no coincidence in the fact that: (1) on the one hand, the construction of peace in the international scenario is – rather than a genuine effort of overcoming different types of violence and severe privations that the populations in post-conflict settings suffer – a pursuit, widely unsuccessful in fact, of the mere indiscriminate institutionalization of (neo)liberal democracies in post-conflict situations, and (2), on the other hand, the countries of the Global South are those who mostly contribute with troops to peace operations. In order to perceive this, it suffices to notice the top-ten troop contributors to UN peace operations during recent years. They are:⁴⁴ (A) in 2009, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nigeria, Egypt, Nepal, Jordan, Rwanda, Ghana, and Uruguay (United Nations2009a), (B) in 2010, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nigeria, Egypt, Nepal, Jordan, Rwanda, Ghana, and Uruguay (United Nations2010), (C) in 2011, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Egypt, Jordan, Rwanda, Nepal, and Ghana (United Nations2011a), (D) in 2012, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Nepal, Egypt, Jordan, and Ghana (United Nations2012), (E) in 2013, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Nepal, Jordan, Ghana, and Senegal (United Nations2013), in 2014, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Nepal, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Egypt (United Nations2014), (F) in 2015, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Rwanda, Nepal, Senegal, Ghana, China, and Nigeria (United Nations2015), and (G) in 2016, Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Rwanda, Nepal, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Egypt (United Nations2016).

Consequently, with all that in mind, it is not hard to see that peace operations end up being a dispositif with a twofold objective. Firstly, on the one hand, it is a dispositif that seeks to transpose the structuring logics of fundamental spheres – such as political, economic, and social structures – from the core to the periphery of the international society.⁴⁵ Therefore, peace operations turn out to possibly be one of the most refined instruments of global governance. Secondly, on the other hand, it has the objective of pacifying, - which is quite different from building peace, - areas and populations of the international society, most of all located in the Global South, understood, and most of the times constructed as, turbulent. All of this – and here resides not only the most perverse side of the structure, but also where it is most evident how refined this governing instrument really is – being implemented by the states of the Global South themselves;⁴⁶ Brazil proudly self-satisfied included.

Therefore, having a clear understanding of the role that peace operations play in international politics, it may be realized that there is nothing paradoxical in the aforementioned assertion that the more Brazil inserts itself as the way it does – majorly through troops – the more the country actively constructs its own subalternity in the field of international peacebuilding. Moreover, projecting itself in this sphere mainly through the contribution of troops, as Brazil does, denotes the obvious; a very limited understanding of peace, even if not consciously, as the mere inverse of war. Consequently, under this rationale, acting on the construction of international peace,

⁴⁴ The lists are organized in descending order.

⁴⁵ For more regarding the understanding of core-periphery relations at the international scenario, see for instance (Wallerstein 1996; 2004).

⁴⁶ Cunliffe (2013), for example, argues that this kind of international arrangement belongs to a historic tradition of imperial security and is quite similar, for instance, with the Legions of the past when the metropolitan states used the peripheral ones to police the empire.

unfortunately, is nothing more than merely sending troops to war-torn areas. Therefore, it is not by chance that who leads and shapes the Brazilian debate in relation to such discussion is, above all, the Ministry of Defense. This kind of limited understanding of peace prevents, from the very beginning, a more relevant and structuring insertion in the field of international peacebuilding.

In order to pursue a more structuring insertion in the sphere of international peacebuilding, the country needs to start intensely engaging itself with a more profound dispute – the international dispute in relation to the conception of the global imaginaries⁴⁷ of international peace. Therefore, the country needs to start inserting itself in the global discussion about the definition of peace, what international peace means, how it should be pursued, and how it should be operationalized in post-conflict scenarios. It is true that the country timidly tried something in this direction recently, when Brazil proposed the notion of ‘Responsibility while Protecting’ at the UN in 2011⁴⁸ (United Nations 2011b) as an enhancement and an upgrade of the ‘Responsibility to Protect’⁴⁹ norm. However, in addition to being theoretically empty, the proposed notion, precisely because it does not question the aforementioned structure with regards to the construction of international peace – and in fact reproduces it, – the proposal only reinforces the peripheral position of Brazil in the field of international peacebuilding.

Unsurprisingly, the peripheral position of Brazil in this field, which is a consequence of not disputing the delineations and definitions of the global imaginaries of peace, can only be overcome if the country starts pursuing a more profound, and more introspective path – enhancing its own understanding of peace. This certainly does not mean that the Brazil should abdicate from contributing with troops to peace operations. However, a more qualified insertion of the country requires the agglutination of different kinds of actors and institutions in an integrated and coordinated manner in its engagement with peace operations. Furthermore, beyond overcoming direct and observable violence,⁵⁰ something that the deployment of troops to post-conflict countries can mitigate, Brazil needs to direct its fundamental focus to overcoming more structural types of violence in these places, which are constituted by unfair political, economic, and social conditions. In fact, these are the very root causes of violent conflicts throughout the globe.⁵¹

Therefore, if the country wants to occupy a prominent role with regards to the construction of international peace, it is urgent that Brazil enlarges its own understanding of peace towards a perspective that is more related to development and that reaches different dimensions of the individuals’ lives in post-conflict scenarios. Consequently, rather than contributing to peace operations merely with the deployment of troops, it makes more sense to have a more multidimensional understanding and approach towards peace. This should be operationalized in line with the local populations of post-conflict scenarios and their own understandings about the reconstruction effort,

47 For more regarding this notion, see for instance (Steger 2009; Taylor 2003).

48 For more in this regards, see for instance (Almeida 2013; Saliba et al. 2015; Stuenkel and Tourinho 2014; Tourinho et al. 2016).

49 For more about the UN understands this notion, see for instance (United Nations 2005, Paragraphs 138-140; 2009b).

50 See footnote 2.

51 For more discussions about the origins of violent conflicts, see for instance (Azar 1990, Chapter 1; Burton 1990; Demmers 2012; Durch and Berkman 2006; Gardner 2002).

and covering areas such as security, but also politics, economy, education, health, infrastructure, human development, among others. Otherwise, Brazil will remain actively building, quite proudly indeed, its own marginality and subalternity in the field of international peace and security.

Conclusion

This paper discussed the Brazilian engagement with peace operations. More precisely, the paper advanced the argument that, as paradoxical as it may sound, the more Brazil engages with peace operations in the way it currently does – mainly through the contribution of troops – the more the country actively produces its own subalternity and peripheral position within this sphere. In order to advance this argument, the paper initially delineated the Brazilian engagement with peace operations throughout time. It evinced that this engagement is far from linear and uniform, and can be structured around four different phases. They are: (1) from 1957 to 1967, when the country was engaged within traditional peace operations, contributing with a small number of troops. The exception was UNEF I sent to the Suez, during the second half of the 1950's, (2) from 1968 to 1988, a period when the country did not engage with peace operations. This was a consequence of the military dictatorship (1964-1985) that Brazil was experiencing, (3) from 1989 to 2004, when the country engaged mainly with second-generation peace operations. During this period, the major Brazilian contribution to peace operations was directed towards Angola (UNAVEM III) in the second half of the 1990's, and (4) from 2004 onwards, when Brazil's contribution to peace operations peaked. The major Brazilian commitment during this period is MINUSTAH in Haiti, from 2004-, which also represents the largest Brazilian contribution to peace operations ever.

The paper discussed myopic Brazilian engagement with peace operations. It was argued that although the country is increasing its troop contributions and responsibilities with regards to peace operations, reading these developments as a qualified insertion of Brazil in the sphere of international peace is definitely misleading. In order to highlight the apparent paradox in relation to such engagement, the paper argued that it must be problematized with the role that peace operations play within international politics in mind. Therefore, it becomes necessary to understand that such processes do not occur in an ideological vacuum. Under the ideological framework structuring the current international scenario, it is the notion of liberal peace that is the ideological glue underpinning peace operations. Furthermore, the paper evinced the perverse side of such international practice – the fact that, although operating in a veiled manner, there is a structured international division of labor between those engaged in the practice of international peacebuilding. In this international division of labor of building peace, on the one hand, the Global North is responsible for defining what peace is and how it should be operationalized worldwide and, on the other hand, the Global South is responsible for implementing such understanding of peace in post-conflict scenarios. Consequently, rather than being a mere technical instrument directed at overcoming violent conflicts in war-torn areas throughout the globe, the paper argued

that peace operations function as an international normalizing dispositif that, due to its liberal social-reengineering character, is fundamental for the maintenance and fostering of a particular order in the international society – a (neo)liberal one. Ultimately, precisely because of this, unless Brazil starts enhancing its own understanding of peace and structurally modifies the way it engages with such international practice, the country will remain voluntarily building its own subalternity and peripheral position regarding the construction of international peace.

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