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THE POLITICS OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the politics of humanitarian interventions from a solidaristic stance. We present arguments based on the evolution of peacekeeping operations and the changes in contemporary armed conflicts. Our analysis focuses on interventions conducted under the aegis of the UN to prevent and solve humanitarian crisis. We highlight how the politics on international interventions, especially in the decision-making process, may affect humanitarian crises. To facilitate the deployment of international efforts, we suggest the concept of complex emergencies may help to identify whether an international intervention is necessary, as well as to offer objective criteria to evaluate the success of the intervention. We conclude by proposing that these elements and conditions may also help to overcome uncertainties that may impact on international interventions, contributing to the concept of Responsibility to Protect to overcome gray areas when deciding to intervene.

Keywords: Humanitarian Interventions. Humanitarianism. Complex emergencies. Solidarism. United Nations (UN).

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INTRODUCTION

International interventions under the banner of humanitarianism have been an important part of international policy agendas since the 1990s. The expression "humanitarian intervention" has become recurrent in political documents and speeches, as well as a constant presence in the media. The end of Cold War and the disruption of the bipolar order are considered to be the hallmark of a greater engagement of the international community in the prevention of armed conflicts and humanitarian crises.

However, the practice of humanitarian interventions is still surrounded by uncertainties. For different reasons that pervade the economic, social and political spheres, there is no consensus on the motivations, conditions, and imperatives of when and why to intervene. The absence of an objective definition of humanitarian intervention that involves verifiable criteria of action affects its political and normative structure, which are both politicized. Motivation to intervene loses strength in the face of political interests that affect the limits and operation of international action. Equally, strategies to ensure their success after the departure of international forces are also compromised in the face of the political and economic costs of intervening. Even so, interventions are still considered the most efficient tool for the prevention of humanitarian crises by the international community.

This article aims to analyze the humanitarian interventions carried out under the aegis of the United Nations ("UN"). We seek to explore humanitarian interventions from their historical origin as a tool for the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts, to discuss their contemporary role, as well as their imperatives and challenges. From an admittedly solidaristic perspective, we present our argument in three stages.

In the first section, we present the concept of humanitarian intervention, its purposes and guiding principles. We also explore its historical development, to propose an operational definition, considering this solidaristic bias.

The second section explores the politicization of humanitarian interventions and its constraints at two different times. The first, at the moment of the decision-making process that leads to its authorization and, the second, in the ways of verifying its success. While recognizing this politicization is inevitable, we bring questions about its impacts on

international society that aim to highlight the problems generated by it. From an idiographic logic (Levy 2008, 4), we offer historical examples to support the argument.

We conclude the paper by presenting the concept of complex emergencies and its contribution to Responsibility to Protect ("R2P"). Without dismissing the existence of proposals already under debate, we indicate there is an expertise in humanitarian practice that allows the definition of clearer criteria to intervene and verify the success of interventions, and complex emergencies would help in this process.

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE EVOLUTION OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS

International interventions are the most visible part of the international community's efforts to prevent and resolve humanitarian crises. As instrumental part of the field of conflict resolution, transformation and prevention, humanitarian interventions have reinvented themselves throughout the 20th and 21st centuries to remain coherent and relevant to their object of analysis (Greitens and Farrell 2013, 300). Demands placed on interventions have led to the development not only of strategies to limit violence from the use of force and its consequences, but also to address the causes of armed conflict.

Despite the long historical tradition that evidences international action in humanitarian crises at different levels (Knudsen 2009), the discussion on interventions is still politically controversial. This is largely because interventions directly touch the principle of non-intervention, fundamental in the international order, thus compromising the sovereignty of the suffering state (Bellamy

subjected to human rights, highlighting the respect, to some degree or another, paid to individuals by the states. In this sense, it is understood that justice must prevail in international politics. Solidarity is opposed to pluralism, which defends order as predominant and favors sovereignty and non-intervention over human rights.

2004, 28; Lechner 2010, 437; Verhoeven, de Oliveira, and Jaganathan 2015). Thus, any discussion of international interventions should define its guiding bases, given the motivations that guide such action.

Conceptually, intervention is a broad term, "for the world is both

descriptive and normative" (Nye 2007, 161). It is used by both academics and international policy makers to indicate any form of coercive interaction between a state and actors outside it - especially other states and international organizations - for the purpose of bringing about change (Nye 2007, 162). The term "intervention" has therefore ambiguous application, encompassing a wide range of distinct actions and initiatives, from the use of military force and economic sanctions to political support, albeit rhetorical (Paquin and Saideman 2010).

One can see this inclusive and comprehensive definition enables different interpretations. By not offering action criteria or limits, a broad definition of intervention makes its execution problematic, both politically and operationally. With the strengthening and intensification of relations between states, what would constitute an intervention and what would be part of the ordinary interactions of international politics?

To guide the discussion proposed here, this article deals only with international interventions conducted under the aegis of the UN. This option is compatible with the assumptions of state sovereignty that guide major international documents, and differentiates humanitarian interventions from initiatives such as humanitarian assistance. This choice is also analytically compatible with the growing conceptual convergence between humanitarian interventions and complex peace operations as multilateral tools for solving humanitarian crises and massive violations of human rights.

However, before moving forward in answering the question posed here, it is important to establish parameters of the solidaristic viewpoint and its opposing, pluralist stances. Both represent two sides of the same coin and indicate a preference for justice or order as a means of maintaining international order (Wheeler 1992; de Almeida 2003; Bain 2010).

The pluralist stance understands that order is the predominant value that guides international society. International diversity would be guaranteed from the territorialization of national-based politics and identities. Therefore, the maintenance of principles such as sovereignty and non-intervention would allow each state to be responsible for conducting its domestic affairs, based on its own ethical assumptions. Other states could only assist a state in crisis if requested, even if the absence of such a request would imply violence and human rights violations on its territory (Williams 2005).

Solidarity, on the other hand, understands that the principles of non-intervention and sovereignty are subject to human rights. These would constitute a universal ethical basis that all states should respect and, upon failing to do so, would make room for the international community to act (Williams 2005). Sovereignty could not serve as a cover to allow for arbitrary state violence, nor the inaction of other community members (Bain 2010; Buzan 2014).

While pluralism sees the possibility of intervention as an element of instability in the international order, the solidaristic stance recognizes intervention as a possible guarantor of international justice. Thus, the solidaristic position taken here allows the debate on humanitarian interventions to be conducted from a universal ethical dimension that comprises humanitarian-based intervention as guarantor of international justice (Valença 2009a, 326).

Having said that, we start from the concept proposed by R. J. Vincent (Vincent 1974, 13), author of solidaristic inclination (Williams 2005, 6), to structure the basis of our discussion. Vincent explains that interventions are clearly time-bound actions, with a definite beginning and end, involving a set of activities performed by states, groups, or international organizations within another state, to guarantee basic rights to the population of that territory. Vincent rejects the idea of intervention as mere rhetorical political support, working with evidence of a de facto interference by a political actor in a state, which coercively affects the domestic affairs of that state. This becomes necessary for the restoration of basic conditions and legitimate political authority. It is therefore an extraordinary and clearly discernible event in time and space.

Considering the pluralism vs. solidarism debate in the light of the international scenario, we have that the pluralist stance prevailed during the Cold War. In name of the international order stability, as well as in an attempt to prevent conflicts between the two superpowers, interventions respected the principle of state sovereignty, albeit relatively. Categorized as traditional peace operations, interventions were rare and had limited scope and dimensions.

By the very logic of the bipolar dispute, humanitarian assumptions were no legitimate justification for intervening in a state, except for specific regional issues (Howorth 2013, 290). The concern at the time was with the stability of the international order, not with human rights violations. Articles 2 (4) and 2 (7) of the UN Charter, which enshrine the principle of

non-intervention in domestic affairs, were the main normative obstacle to international intervention (Bellamy 2010, 506), which did not amount to its complete ineffectiveness.

Traditional peace operations were tools of the international community to secure a ceasefire while conducting peace agreements. Composed of lightly armed or unarmed forces, traditional peacekeeping operations essentially served as a bulwark between belligerents (Diehl 1994; Greitens and Farrell 2013), preventing the return of violence. Their employment was linked to the observance of three principles: consent, impartiality, and non-violence (Diehl, 1994, p. 11). At the time, interstate conflicts dominated the international agenda (Gleditsch et al. 2002; Eriksson 2004) and international presence was the result of a conciliation of US and Soviet interests to ensure order.

With the end of the Cold War, greater international engagement in international security issues is apparent. Politically, relations between states have changed significantly. International engagement since the 1990s, with greater involvement of states and the UN in conflict resolution (Greitens and Farrell 2013, 288-289), has made the political environment more supportive of the solidarity stance, including the production of a series of documents that reflected this new view. Despite showing difficulties in international action, these documents provided the normative basis for a new stance, including how to think about collective security (Van Baarda and Van Iersel 2002; Peou 2002; Fortna and Howard 2008; Abdenur and Hamann 2017). Factors such as greater cooperation among the major powers, the new international context in face of humanitarian crises (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall 2011), and the quantitative and qualitative changes in the now largely internal armed conflicts (Mundy 2013) were central to these changes.

As a result, multilateral efforts were made to prevent humanitarian crises. There was also the appeal created by the CNN effect (Jakobsen 2000, 131-132; Greitens and Farrell 2013, 293), which contributed to public opinion getting involved in the decision-making process by fostering support for interventions. Faced with massive human rights violations, there was a demand for new ways of intervening.

A solidaristic reading indicates the interventionist stance provided new opportunities to maintain a fair international order. Without US-USSR rivalry to limit UN action and with the "discovery" of new forms of armed conflict (Kaldor 2012, 1), it was realized that traditional peace

operations were no longer suited to contemporary conflicts. They assumed new aspects in the face of challenges posed by these new conflicts.

Armed conflicts at the end of the twentieth century were eminently internal and involved groups defined and organized by collective identities different from the state, fleeing the model historically perceived by international relations. Dispute between these groups eroded state institutions (Dannreuther 2007, 124; Kaldor 2012), causing the state to collapse. International intervention in these conflicts was necessary not only to end violence, but also to restore political normality and contain its consequences. These mainly affected civilians and caused population displacement due to the violence generated by ethnic cleansing and the violation of human rights. International forces could not merely act as a shield between the belligerents, because it was necessary to promote changes in the very political and social structure of the state to guarantee the coexistence between parties at the end of the intervention.

This has led peace operations to take on new, broader and more complex structures than traditional operations. Characterized as multidimensional, the new peace operations involved components that would go beyond the military dimension, covering areas as diverse as economic, social, and institutional reforms. The promotion of integration policies and incentives for nonviolent politics was understood to be central to establishing a culture of peace. The multidimensional nature of post-Cold War humanitarian interventions reflects the wide range of initiatives developed by international forces, of a political and humanitarian nature, as well as the military dimension.

A landmark of this change is the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group ("UNTAG"), an intervention held in Namibia in the 1980s and 1990s and considered the first UN multidimensional peacekeeping operation. At the time, the states, under the coordination of the UN, were keen to resolve the armed dispute and also to promote the necessary conditions for overcoming the causes of the conflict. With this, the development of programs to overcome the causes and consequences of conflict become an important part of the intervention process. The broader scope and reach of multidimensional operations were believed to provide broader responses to problems in the political and humanitarian areas.

International engagement can also be reflected quantitatively, in addition to qualitative changes. According to UN data, between 1991 and October 2016, for example, 54 peacekeeping operations were carried out,

with 22 still underway in 2018 (UN, 2014; 2016; 2018). In 1988, there were 9,950 soldiers operating in 5 peace operations. In January 2008, the number was 90,883 soldiers and military police in 16 operations (UN, 2018). In June 2014, this number totaled 98,635 and, in June 2018, 91,699, in a total of 14 missions (UN, 2018).

More importantly, and compatible with a solidaristic reading of international politics, humanitarianism has become part of international rhetoric. Humanitarianism has even been explicitly mentioned in the mandates of these new peace operations, such as in the cases of UNPROFOR, in former Yugoslavia, and UNOSOM, in Somalia. Therefore, we suggest these multidimensional peacekeeping operations reflect the same assumptions as Vincent's structured interventions, echoing the humanitarian issue in their motivation. Thus, the terms "multidimensional peace operation" and "humanitarian intervention" could be used interchangeably. This terminological convergence was also facilitated by the premise that functional states would form the basis for a stable international order (Valença, 2011, p. 637) and that both would be tools to aid the reconstruction of these states.

These new peace operations would be discrete events - i.e., the interveners are not involved in the causes of the humanitarian crisis - and would operate by coercive means, characterizing them as interventions. This is not explicit but reinforces its military dimension (Bellamy 2003, 329-330), as does "coercive assistance". However, we must emphasize that this type of intervention highlights two specific purposes inherent to the humanitarian issue and that differentiates it from other forms of intervention. The first is the explicit focus on the protection of fundamental human rights and the second is the provision of emergency assistance (Greitens and Farrell 2013, 287). Contrary to what happened during the Cold War, international interventions began to present as a motivation the humanitarian issue and the protection of individuals against unfairly directed violence (Lechner, 2010; Pugh, 1997).

Such change in motivation was made possible by expanding the mandates of humanitarian interventions, which are defined by the Security Council. Interpretation of the legal provisions and scope of Chapters VI and VII has been broadened to deal with humanitarian crises and internal armed conflicts and their consequences, allowing international forces to operate more actively. Similarly, the involvement of other UN agencies and non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") became more common,

affecting the operational dimension of interventions and the political rhetoric that underpinned them.

It should be noted that, while the guiding principles are the same as those of traditional peace operations - consent, impartiality and nonviolence -, there is a change in the way they operate. They were relaxed in the post-Cold War, making international action less dependent on hosting state cooperation and definitely highlighting the coercive character of intervention (Jakobsen, 2000b; Fortna and Howards, 2008, p. 289-290; Williams, 2010; Ramsbothan et al., 2011, p. 161; Kenkel, 2013, p. 127).

The principle of consent is the most affected by such flexibilization. Because these were no longer interstate conflicts and due to the very difficulty in defining and legitimizing political authorities, interventions no longer considered the consent of the parties as a precondition for action. Consent, however, is still recommended. However, its absence no longer serves as a hindrance to international action, given the need to act to end violence.

Impartiality has been converted to neutrality. International forces still do not take sides on either side, but are careful to ensure that international standards of protection are respected. It is not about supporting one side over the other, but about ensuring decent conditions and respect for the human rights of all involved, especially noncombatants.

In short, the principle of non-use of violence reflects the use of force to the extent necessary to fulfill the mandate and guarantee sustainable peace. In multidimensional peacekeeping operations, international troops are armed and can use force if necessary.

These principles affect the definition and interpretation of humanitarian interventions insofar as they place the imperative of human rights protection as an element superior to the sovereignty of the state itself. Humanitarian intervention is guided by an ethical motivation, which consists in the interest in protecting the human rights of a population that suffers unjustified violence. It is not a set of ethical principles and values that universally guide states, but the preservation of human rights as a common humanitarian standard that unites peoples.

Based on political and normative changes, as well as from the conceptual discussion presented, we will work with the concept of humanitarian intervention as the use of military and political resources by external actors with the motivation to end genocide or massive human rights violations in the hosting state.

This definition highlights three important aspects for the argument presented here. First, it highlights the international dimension of humanitarian intervention, as well as its political-military aspects. This is a state action that actually interferes with the domestic dimension of the hosting state to overcome an existing crisis situation. Second, by highlighting its coercive elements, the definition points to stricter conceptual boundaries, differentiating intervention from humanitarian assistance. The latter is fundamental in the process of humanitarian intervention, but the two initiatives cannot be confused. Finally, the proposed operational definition deals with motivations rather than objectives, emphasizing the ethical dimension of humanitarian interventions, which allows one to ambition reaching the conditions that characterize a solidaristic imperative to intervene.

THE POLITICS OF HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS

The optimism that engulfed the international community in the early 1990s was not able to break with the political constraints on the decision-making process involving humanitarian interventions. Despite the impressive number of post-Cold War humanitarian interventions, asymmetric responses to humanitarian crises in different parts of the globe have highlighted the selectivity of the international community. Even with the flexibility of action principles, the absence of objective bases for intervention highlights the politicization of the theme, placing the debate on humanitarian interventions in a gray zone.

The decision-making process to authorize the deployment of humanitarian intervention to a region in crisis is the responsibility of the UNSC. Roughly speaking, interventions are authorized with the favorable vote of at least 3/5 of its members, without the opposition - veto - of any of the five permanent members. It is also the responsibility of the UNSC to establish the mandate, to authorize any renewals and to request contributions - economic, logistical and personnel - from the Member States.

This is the same as traditional peacekeeping. Therefore, one can see that these peace operations and humanitarian interventions share the same legal bases. Their legal protection lies in chapters VI and VII of the UN Charter, in titles dealing with the peaceful settlement of disputes and international actions directed at threats to peace and aggression.

With the normative and political changes that have taken place since the end of the Cold War, situations of humanitarian crisis and intrastate armed conflicts have come to be understood as cases of threat to peace that would go beyond the state's borders and affect the international plane. Until then, sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention hindered humanitarian concern and only - or mostly - cases of aggression were addressed in this area. Even though with restricted legal interpretation and subject to political criteria (Morris 2013).

Rhetoric and political practice highlight humanitarian interventions as the appropriate tools to resolve and prevent international instability. The solidaristic reading advocates that the legitimacy of humanitarian action lies in the responsibility of states to ensure respect for the human rights of their citizens and the co-responsibility of the international community to respond when these assumptions are not met (Evans and Newnham 1998, 231). These principles should serve as a guide for humanitarian interventions, underpinning the ethical dimension of such action.

However, the tension between protection of human rights and respect for sovereignty makes the debate on humanitarian interventions take on a robust political burden. On the one hand, in addition to human rights being a reality that states cannot ignore, there is a growing realization that sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention are not a shell for massive violations of these rights (Godoy Jr, 2013, p. 42; Jentleson, 2012, pp. 405-407). On the other hand, interests and costs arising from humanitarian action affect the interventionist stance, generating a perception of political selectivity that makes some responses to crises politically more urgent than others, even if the size of the crisis does not reflect, in humanitarian terms, the political option made (Greitens and Farrell, 2013, p. 293). As a consequence, the decision-making process to authorize humanitarian intervention is highly politicized and subject to non-objective criteria in its deliberation.

This tension highlights the political constraints on humanitarian interventions. No matter how formally the deliberation on the desire to intervene or not between the fifteen members of the Security Council, decision-making power is restricted to the hands of its permanent members, the so-called P5 - the USA, England, France, Russia and China. In case of disagreement, for whatever reason and without the need for justification, a P5 can veto the discussion and the topic goes out of business.

The P5's veto prerogative made the Security Council inert during the Cold War. Fearing that their zone of influence would be affected by their rivals, the US and USSR were openly opposed to international intervention in their domains. With the end of the Cold War, this scenario was expected to change and, in fact, in the early years there was a change in the posture of the agency. However, particular interests of the permanent members or their allies soon became obstacles to approving new interventions. Four problems highlight the politicized character of decisions on humanitarian interventions (Greitens and Farrell, 2013, p. 293).

The first concerns the problem of particular interests in dispute, albeit indirectly. In this case, P5s can identify which interests, of their own or of their allies, are at risk if an intervention is authorized and openly use the threat of veto to prevent displeasing actions. This problem can be compared analogously with what happened in the Cold War, now with the involvement of the other three P5. The most recurring example to illustrate this is the case of Kosovo in 1998. At the time, Russia threatened to veto international intervention if the topic were brought up for discussion at the UNSC. Eventually, a humanitarian intervention was carried out under the auspices of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization ("NATO") based on a supposed moral imperative. Such an initiative has been questioned and discussed ever since (Dannreuther, 2007, p. 142; Egan, 2001; Wheeler, 2004, p. 197).

A second problem of the politicization of the decision-making process involves the actions of other P5s to ensure the postponement of deliberation on humanitarian interventions in anticipation of receiving authorization for their own actions. Greitens and Farrell (2013, p. 293) characterize this situation as a logrolling problem and exemplify it by citing the Sino-Russian collaboration to delay intervention in Haiti during the 1990s, while the agency did not allow Russia to intervene in Georgia.

The third problem concerns rhetorical support for humanitarian postures, but without actually providing the basis for a solution to the crisis. This would be an example of building a collaborative image to mitigate the crisis, but without due commitment from the states involved. The case of Darfur, where a humanitarian crisis exposed the genocide of a significant portion of the population, was obstructed by China, which threatened to veto intervention if not done in the manner desired by local government, its ally, is an example (Jentleson, 2007, pp. 286-290). Once the requirements were met, UNAMID could be started.

Finally, there is the question of the lack of coordination between states on who should bear the costs and risks of participating in and leading humanitarian intervention, which threatens the success or actual implementation of interventions. Domestic political costs are sensitive to the leaders of countries involved in the intervention, which may eventually shape international responses. Thus, and considering that humanitarian interventions are treated by some as "wars of choice" rather than "wars of necessity" (Wheeler and Bellamy, 2005), political leaders believe that a negative reputation arising from participation in humanitarian action can generate bad publicity. Thus, the push-and-pull game between leaders and countries aims to shift responsibility for an intervention with questionable success rates.

The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina showed the incompatibility of desires and responsibility for intervention between the US and Europe, resolved only years later when the task was split (Valença, 2006, p. 65). The same is true of US action in Kosovo, which has abandoned the deployment of ground forces and promoted humanitarian intervention from bombing and air-mailing humanitarian aid (Allen and Vincent, 2011; Egan, 2001; Greitens and Farrell, 2013, pp. 293-294).

From these problems it can be inferred that, even pointing to the existence of a moral imperative to act, intervention for humanitarian purposes is, in practice, conditioned on a political and convenience calculation on the part of states, which seems to have more relevance than the gravity of humanitarian crisis the intervention should address. That ethical value shared by states is set aside in the policy of humanitarian interventions even when the obligation to prevent - or react under the Responsibility to Protect ("R2P") - is laid down in international documents.

The post-Cold War experience indicates that the characterization of a situation of humanitarian crisis and/or internal armed conflict does not necessarily imply authorization for the intervention of the international community. In other words, the right to intervene is not bound by the obligation to intervene (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2012, p. 111), although sometimes intervention has been motivated by moral and humanitarian imperatives - as in the case of Kosovo. "Preventing all deaths is unrealistic. But preventing more than we have done in the past is not so" (Jentleson, 2007, p. 290).

This disconnect between right and obligation to intervene is one of the main obstacles to humanitarian intervention, which ultimately

depends on the convenience and availability of interests of the parties involved. The motivation to intervene, which we assume as one of the central aspects in the characterization and definition of a humanitarian intervention, is subject to political and convenience criteria of the actors involved. Even the debate about R2P, which rescues principles of international law and intensifies from the mid-2000s, is affected by this selectivity and convenience (Lucas Jr, 2013), hampering its verification of results.

Although based on altruistic motivations, R2P-based interventions were marked as self-interest actions (Paris, 2014), with Libya being the most cited case (Scheid, 2013, p. 19-20). Thus, the legitimacy of international action is ultimately questioned. Moreover, countries of the Global South, such as Brazil, Russia, and China question the motivations behind R2P principles, which they associate as neo-imperialism and a pretext for intervening and altering political regimes. Thus, the verification of results mentioned above is undermined by what Roland Paris calls the counterfactual problem, that is, it is impossible to prove whether international action has limited the incidence of violence or caused further damage. In the case of Libya, Syria and Iraq, for example, the incidence of violence has caused more damage. In the case of Libya, Syria and Iraq, for example, the doubt is even stronger.

Similar political constraints can be pointed out in verifying the success of humanitarian interventions. The success or failure criteria are dependent on the UN's political assessment in the light of the mandate of intervention and whether or not it fulfills its intended tasks. The complicating element in this equation is that the same body - the UNSC - determines the obligations and competencies of the international intervention, updates the mandate as the operation progresses, and evaluates its results at the end of the intervention.

In this analysis, objective elements are lacking to provide an impartial evaluation related to the humanitarian purposes the intervention seeks to solve. The asymmetry between reality and political discourse reinforces the gray area and politicization of humanitarian interventions, undermining their credibility and repeatedly frustrating the expectations of public opinion and the international community.

We identified two problems with this type of success and failure check. The first is the possibility of manipulating intervention success simply by reducing mandate expectations and tasks. When authorized,

humanitarian intervention is given an original mandate designating its composition, competencies and expectations. This mandate is periodically reviewed and revised, if necessary. This means the role of international intervention forces can be reduced and the mission considered successful without the crisis being resolved, but simply because the UNSC has lowered its ambitions.

The second problem relates to the attribution of responsibility for the failure or difficulties faced by international forces during humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian interventions involve, as the term itself characterizes, humanitarian action in different dimensions, roughly divided into military and non-military. In the non-military dimension, the presence of international NGOs and agencies, as well as humanitarian workers, is not necessarily linked or under UN coordination. The performance of these actors is independent of other state actors, which can lead to problems of coordination and/or provision of humanitarian assistance. These agents acting outside the "standards expected" by the UN-authorized and sent international forces may affect the intervention, compromising it. However, in the face of signs of failure, these actors can be held responsible for a failure, even if this is not their competence and/or responsibility. Scapegoating would exempt the UN and intervention forces from their own inability (Downs and Stedman, 2002, p. 45-47).

In either case, taking as its sole criterion the interpretation and political judgment of the Security Council means taking the risk of overvaluing an initiative that may not have been successfully enacted and would merely contain a political crisis. The politics of humanitarian interventions affects, as shown, both their authorization and operation as well as the verifying elements of their effectiveness and success. Results obtained over the past three decades show success and failure, and public demand for more transparent measures can mitigate the problems raised here. Nonetheless, a critical analysis is important to understand the challenges and possibilities to be explored in the area of humanitarian intervention.

THINKING HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS CRITICALLY: COMPLEX EMERGENCIES AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

In this section, and with reference to the development, expansion, and changes suffered by humanitarian interventions since the end of the Cold War, we explore, as a conclusion, two alternatives to the political

constraints of humanitarian interventions presented in the previous section.

The first addresses the decision-making process and the possibility of determining a moral imperative to intervene. From the concept of complex emergency, we point out criteria that stimulate the interventionist posture, in order to highlight the urgency of response to humanitarian crises.

The second alternative addresses the criteria for verifying the success of humanitarian interventions, by proposing objective and less politicized elements of analysis. Given a history of self-declared results in recent decades that alternate successes and failures (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2012; Greitens and Farrell, 2013), the specialized literature suggests two objective criteria for verifying, in the short, medium and long term, the success of humanitarian interventions and the effectiveness of their strategies to overcome crisis situations.

The definition we use in this article points out that humanitarian intervention is the employment of military and political resources by external actors with the motivation to end genocide or massive human rights violations in the hosting state. Our choice is to understand that this concept (i) highlights the multidimensional and international nature of interventions, (ii) with emphasis on their coercive aspects, and (iii) indicates that humanitarian motivation is compatible with ethical precepts that distinguish this form of intervention from others without the same nature, suggesting the possibility of thinking of moral imperatives to intervene.

However, the political constraints on the decision-making process to authorize humanitarian intervention break with such ethical expectations and point to selectivity and convenience that operate in accordance with the interests and priorities of states, especially the P5. Given the politicization of this process, Roland Dannreuther's (2007, p. 143) statement highlights the pragmatism that marks the pessimistic view of intervention: "The central problem with the concept of humanitarian intervention is that it promotes an essentially false dichotomy between a political, amoral world and an apolitical, humanitarian world".

If, on the one hand, one must develop objective bases that serve as criteria to characterize the humanitarian crisis, on the other hand there is a set of good practices and expertise already available in humanitarian practice. These bases and criteria can be sought in the action of non-

state humanitarian actors such as NGOs and development agencies. The characterization of humanitarian crisis as a complex emergency provides the objective conditions for overcoming - or at least mitigating - the policy of humanitarian interventions and promoting greater credibility during the process.

Complex emergencies are not simple to define (Macias, 2013, p. 1). They are characterized by socio-political situations arising from deliberate violence against groups of individuals, which highlight the humanitarian issue and motivate the interventionist stance (Valença, 2009b, p. 345-346; Macias, 2013, p. 1-2). The term complex indicates that violence is not localized in only one source (Väyrynem, 1999, p. 175). Best practices of humanitarian aid point out that complex emergencies highlight humanitarian crises connected with large-scale violent conflict - such as civil wars, genocide and ethnic cleansing (Keen, 2008, p. 1; WHO, 2002; IFRCRCS, 2016; Väyrynem, 1999, p. 175). These include, but are not limited to, situations of internal armed conflict, mass displacement, large-scale hunger or food shortages, and situations of bankruptcy and/or collapse of political, economic and social institutions, whether or not aggravated by natural disasters. Lea Macias (2013, p. 3-5), corroborating the above position, identifies in this process four forms of instability: political, economic, environmental and demographic.

Verification of complex emergencies is not based on quantitative criteria. It is characterized by the absence of life-saving alternatives other than through international intervention (Wheeler, 2000, p. 34). Given their severity and urgency, complex emergencies are considered in the practice of humanitarian aid as immediate and justifiable causes for action.

Thus, the shared ethics that the solidaristic reading of humanitarian intervention suggests assumes an operable dimension, making room for thinking of moral imperatives to intervene (Väyrynem, 1999, p. 173), corroborating and bringing moral arguments to the debates on R2P. Taking the complex emergency as a moral imperative, therefore, brings the humanitarian dimension to international politics and helps to mitigate the political constraints on the decision-making process to authorize intervention.

First, the selectivity perceived in this decision-making process can be reduced or eliminated. We do not intend to suggest that the interventionist outcry of the international community will diminish, but to think of humanitarian interventions motivated solely by the

characterization of complex emergencies allows us to distinguish these ordinary events from daily human rights violations, but which do not require extraordinary action (Wheeler, 2000, p. 34). Thus, humanitarian interventions would be employed in cases where the need is most urgent.

Second, establishing imperatives for intervention would help move policy away from humanitarian intervention. Whereas humanitarian assumptions are not a duty but expectations arising from the state's belonging to the international community (Evans and Newnham, 1998, p. 231; Pattison, 2013, p. 13; Tesón, 2013), the characterization of the right to intervene would be bound by the obligation to intervene.

Finally, the determination of a moral imperative to intervene provides criteria for international action. Since the end of World War II, the most widely used criterion for humanitarian intervention has been genocide - which refers to acts and attitudes "committed with the intent to destruct all or part of ethnic, racial or religious groups" (Pape, 2012, p. 41). However, as recent experience illustrates, recognizing the occurrence of genocide is still essentially a political choice.

Nevertheless, post-Cold War interventions show trends in humanitarian interventions. They indicate motivations to intervene based on a scenario of humanitarian crisis caused mainly by (i) massive state abuse of human rights, (ii) state failure, and (iii) state illegitimacy (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2012, p. 104). These motivations highlight the tendency, but not the obligation, to intervene in cases where there is no functioning state - such as Haiti and Somalia - or when genocide occurs, which seems to somehow facilitate the decision to intervene, given that violations of the fundamental principles of international relations would be less disturbing in such cases.

The use of complex emergencies as a moral imperative to intervene also affects the criteria used to verify the success or failure of humanitarian interventions. Literature on conflict resolution suggests that humanitarian action serves two purposes: (i) the protection of fundamental human rights and (ii) the provision of emergency assistance, building a scenario of positive peace.

Both purposes are compatible with complex emergency conceptualization and operationalization and could indicate success verification criteria. The first is the protection of individuals and the reduction of humanitarian impacts of armed conflict. The second is through the development of conditions that lead to stable and lasting

peace (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2012, p. 108; Downs and Stedman, 2002, p. 50-51).

However, while the verifiers can be dealt with separately, little can be done to contain the complex emergency situation without overcoming the causes of the conflict. The optimal outcome for assessing success consists of a humanitarian intervention that overcomes the conditions that gave rise to a complex emergency while stimulating the development of political, economic and social institutions, ensuring a return to political normalcy (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2012, p. 108).

Through these two criteria and the multidimensional nature of interventions, one can more reliably assess the success or failure of the mission at different stages. In the short term, one can evaluate the strategies of international forces for the protection of human rights in the scenario of violence and armed conflict. Despite the changes in post-Cold War conflicts, observation of UN-led interventions shows that the organization has gradually learned to deal with belligerents other than the state.

In the medium term, there is the promotion and offer of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs, economic stimulus and the strengthening of the political foundations of society. In the long run, criteria for success can be realized in the peaceful succession of power through elections or other mechanisms of political participation, overcoming inter-group tensions, and the population's confidence levels in political institutions.

Also in the long run, but in a collective learning process, the promotion of objective and verifiable criteria of socioeconomic opportunities by the forces involved in the intervention would reinforce standards of preservation of human rights and signal belligerent parties and suffering political communities that international efforts will seek to meet the necessary conditions for the promotion of human dignity (Bercovitch and Jackson, 2012, p. 110). Thus, the termination of humanitarian intervention would not depend on the characterization of its success, but on the fulfillment of the tasks and competencies established in the mandate. Conditions may also help to overcome the uncertainties that may impact on international interventions, contributing to the concept of Responsibility to Protect to overcome gray areas when deciding to intervene.

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