

HUMAN SECURITY – A RESPONSE TO GLOBALIZED INSECURITIES

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Abstract: This article analyses the genesis of the human security paradigm as a response to globalized insecurities, understood in terms of “world risk society”. Globalization enhances the transnational interconnections and determines the ubiquity of risks, which affect the individuals worldwide. The human security doctrine is a response to the negative effects of globalization, encompassed in the risks and threats to the individual. Using qualitative research methods, the article identifies the change in approaching security, from state centred security to the individual as the referent of security. This mutation is a reply to the negative externalities of globalization after the end of the Cold War.

Keywords: *globalization, human security, insecurity, security studies, world risk society*

1. Introduction

The international system is in a time of “bewildering connectivity and advancing political complexity” (Crocker, Hampson and Aall 2011, 39), a fact which increases risk and insecurity. The proposed research model stands on the premise that the human security paradigm represents a response to the world affected by increased and multi-layered threats to security induced by globalization. The theoretical dimension, represented by the world risk society thesis, summarizes the threats and risks generated by globalization. Thus, the aim of this article is not to make a diagnosis of the negative effects of globalization. The current analysis contextualizes the change in the security studies from state security towards an individual centered conception of security within the risks embedded by the process of globalization.

The article is organized in three parts and conclusions. In the first section the literature review on the subject is presented. The second part represents a short diagnosis of the international context after the end of the Cold War and the effects of globalization. The last section defines human security, analyses its genesis as a response to the effects of globalization and the implementation and operationalizing of the paradigm. The sections are followed by conclusions.

I. Literature review

The theoretical framework that contextualizes the new security approach after the end of the Cold War is encompassed in the world risk society thesis. The most important literature on risk society is Ulrich Beck’s (1992, 1994, 1998, 2009) theorizing of this concept. The theory, completed by Anthony Giddens and John Adams, describes that the development of society became, in the new realities, “a theme and a problem on itself” (Beck 1992, 8). The world risk society description of reality is debatable in the “liquid modernity thesis” developed by Zigmunt Bauman.

Human security is a broadly approached subject in the international relations literature. The present literature review focuses on the most important authors who were

relevant for the study I conducted. Mary Kaldor (2005, 2007, 2009, 2012) is one of the most preeminent scholars that analyses, defends and promotes in literature the concept of human security. Her studies illustrate the possibility of ensuring human security as an international community variable, and the necessity of the world to move away from nationalist thinking towards a concept of human security. Other important theoreticians of human security are Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy (2007), who place the security of the individual on the same place as the security of the state. They investigate and describe the human security paradigm, establishing its connections with conflict prevention, human development and human rights. In addition, Hayden (2004) observes that the old approach to security cannot encompass the security of the individual, a fact that generates, as Ştefanachi (2011) mentions, the normative judgements of security. Myhten and Waklate, in the book *Beyond The Risk Society: Critical Reflections On Risk And Human Security* (2006) make a comprehensive discussion of risk and its place in contemporary discourse concerning the human security paradigm. The current research reiterates and completes the results of this study.

While the globalization phenomenon was widely approached in international relations and political science literature, the relation between human security and globalization was also analysed, as McGrew and Poku's analysis (2006) and Battersy and Siracusa's book *Globalization and human security* (2009) show.

II. The international context after the end of the Cold War – effects of globalization

II.1. The end of the Cold War – new security environment

The end of the Cold War represents a temporal threshold for understanding the changes within the international system, the dynamics of globalization and the leverages that led to a reshaped understanding of security. The new international context, animated by globalization, emphasized the network of threats, vulnerabilities and interdependence that affected the system, the state and the individuals. Apart of traditional sources of threats, other forms of organized violence, such as militias, gang violence, organized violent ethnic groups, local resource-related violence and violence linked to trafficking, and violence animated by global ideological struggles affect the security environment (World Bank 2015, 211). The World Bank emphasizes that these forms of violence are self-replicating and endemic, unless are tackled in a systematic manner.

Moreover, the end of the Cold War demonstrated the demise of the unidimensional approach of the complementarity of nationalism and internationalism in terms of security, because the state proved to be in some cases the agent of humanitarian catastrophes (Mazower 2012, 379). As Mazower observes, the international community after the end of the bipolar world changed its structural focus, from warfare coalitions, to an “unprecedented expansion of the UN's responsibilities and powers in the humanitarian realm” (Mazower 2012, 379). This fact can be explained through the decrease in the number of inter-state conflicts and the increase in intra-state conflicts.

II.1. Approaches and effects of globalization

Globalization has no unique accepted definition. In large terms, it is understood as the increasing worldwide interconnectivity between society, institutions, cultures and individuals (Patman 2006, 4). Nonetheless, globalization is a highly debated phenomenon, with maximalist (hyperglobalist) and minimalist (skeptical) conceptions. The position adopted in this paper is moderate-hyperglobalist and transformationalist, because we accept that the state diminishes its prevalence on ensuring security, but in the same time we consider that it maintains an important role on the security equation, in ensuring the security of the individual.

Scott observes that globalization is perceived as a negative phenomenon, because it is criticized for being “an unstoppable historical force in the face of which politics is helpless” (Scott 1997, 2). This fact reveals an increasing insecurity climate and the demand for a revision of political approach in order to protect society against negative externalities of globalization. Among the negative effects of globalization, which are induced by economic disparities, one can mention: increasing poverty, political refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants. In the same time, as Basch observes, education, health care and environment are also affected by privatization and open markets (Basch 2004, 6). Thus, taking into consideration the fact that globalization is irreversible, multidimensional and complex, in this paper it is not demonized as the origin of risks and threats, but rather it is analyzed as a *de facto* phenomenon, whose negative externalities should be tackled.

Globalization is correlated with the decrease of state sovereignty and with the change in the security environment. Through the multitude of risks implied, it determines the mitigation of the demarcation line between international and national security, and it reveals the current increased interdependence between all security levels. Therefore, the individual cannot be neglected from the equation of security.

II.2. Globalization of risks – the world risk society

The world risk society theoretical framework helps in contextualizing the realities of globalization, which determined a paradigm shift in approaching security and the new conjunctures of international cooperation. According to Beck, the world risk society is a consequence of modernization, derived from irreversible threats (Beck 1992, 13). The concept of risk, which is inextricably related to reflexive modernization, is defined as a systemic manner of approaching the hazards and the insecurities encompassed in the process of modernization (Beck 1992, 21).

Concerning the relation between globalization and modernity, Giddens affirms that “modernity is inherently globalizing” (Giddens 1990, 33). Further theorizing risk, authors name contemporary society “second modernity” (Beck, 1992) or “society of fluid modernity” (Bauman 2000, 23). Therefore, in the post-Cold War period, the proliferation of risk rose “fundamental concerns about the relationship between individuals, institutions and society” (Mythen 2004, 4). Bauman highlights that, in this context, there is a duty and a necessity to approach individualized risks, because their origins are socially produced (Bauman 2000, 34). Furthermore, Bauman states that, in the liquid modernity era, the state should renounce on or delegate its role as the main provider of security (Bauman 2000, 184).

III. Human security – reflection of the globalized world

The perception of risk in the dynamics of post modernity represented a challenge for the ontological security and for the national state (Beck and Levy 2013, 9). The change in Security Studies after the end of the Cold War started with the increasing importance awarded to the multi-layered concept of security proposed by the Copenhagen School. The Copenhagen School suggested a five pillars concept of security, based on the military dimension and also implying economic, political, social and environmental aspects (Buzan 1991). The model had its limits, because it perceived the state as the main security referent. Therefore, a further approach to security was necessary. Referring to security outside the state-centric approach, the opportunity for normative judgements of security emerged (Ştefanachi 2011, 410). The post-Cold-War realities demonstrated that it was practically impossible “to protect and enhance human freedom and well-being exclusively through the traditional paradigm of national security” (Hayden 2004, 35). This concern constituted the ground on which the requirement of focusing on the individual as the referent of security was initially put forward. The human security concept emerged in this conjuncture of practical-theoretical vantage, which was legitimated by the realities of globalization, encompassed in the world risk society theory.

The human security paradigm was initially enunciated as an international conducting line in the UNDP *Human Development Report* of 1994. The Report argued that “human security is not a concern with weapons—it is a concern with human life and dignity” (UNDP 1994, 22).

The human security paradigm, as described in the 1994 Report, has four fundamental characteristics: (1) human security is a universal challenge and concern; (2) its components are interdependent; (3) it can be sooner accomplished using prevention than subsequent intervention; (4) human security is centred on the individual (UNDP 1994, 22-3). The paradigm values the individual as the referent of security and is in strong correlation with the human development agenda. It focuses on the empowerment of the individual, aiming to “allow individuals the pursuit of life, liberty, and both happiness and justice” (Liotta and Owen 2006, 40). These objectives are encompassed in the formula *freedom from fear and freedom from want*, as it was fostered by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP 1994, 24).

The core argumentation for the emergence of the human security doctrine was developed taking into consideration the “breathtaking globalization of prosperity side by side with a depressing globalization of poverty” (UNDP 1994, 1). The UNDP 1994 Report emphasizes the *raison d’être* of the universal people-centered concept of security: bringing “humanity together through a more equitable sharing of global economic opportunities and responsibilities” (UNDP 1994, 3) in the context of the globalization of threats. Among these threats, which transcend the national borders, the Report mentions: famines, ethnic conflicts, social disintegration, global poverty and environmental problems, drugs, AIDS, terrorism, pollution, nuclear proliferation (UNDP 1994, 2).

The threats to human security are classified in the 1994 Report, non-exhaustively and without mutually exclusion, in: economic, food, health, environment, personal, community,

and political threats (King and Murray 2002, 589). This multi-layered concept of security represents a quasi-holistic approach to the risks and threats implied by the globalization process. Therefore, the broad human security perspective is, as Martin and Owen mention, “useful in mandating a role in global security governance in the face of a blizzard of simultaneous threats” (Martin and Owen 2010, 220).

The human security paradigm creates at least two fundamental changes in understanding international relations. Firstly, the individual security replaces the territorial security and secondly, the human-centred security takes the place of the obsolete security as understood in the narrow terms of military (UNDP 1994, 24). Based on these changes, the human security paradigm induces an “upwardly extension”, from the nation to the international system; a horizontal extension, as presented above, from the military issues to a wide range of domains; and “creates a politic responsibility to ensure security from states to international institutions, subnational authorities, nongovernmental organizations, public opinion or markets” (Ştefanachi 2011, 419).

Through this change of paradigm, the individual and the interest of humanity as a collective became the main focus of security, aiming at freedom, peace, safety and empowerment (Ştefanachi 2013, 14). In addition, Mazower identifies that an erosion of sovereignty was correlated with this emphasis of the old rhetoric of universal ethics (Mazower 2012, 380). The enhancement of human-centered doctrines which appeal morality and a common responsibility for the international community is identified in the principle of responsibility to protect, built on the human security rhetoric.

Within the world risk society, and on the fundamentals of the human security and humanitarian intervention approach, the R2P doctrine was, as Luck observes, simultaneously the product and the catalyst in changing international attitudes and priorities (Luck 2010, 355).

In analyzing the correlation between risks induced by globalization and the human security paradigm, Battersby and Siracusa’s (2009, 24) view on a “polymorphous” understanding of risks is essential. The authors highlight that people and communities face ubiquitous risk, generated by food shortages, economic hardship, crime, disease and human rights abuses (Battersby and Siracusa 2009, 24), which the human security paradigm tries to tackle. Thus, human security focuses on early warning of conflicts and risks, trying to diminish the incidence of situations that affect the individual’s security (Battersby and Siracusa 2009, 29).

Despite the diminishing in the importance of place in the context of globalization, due to the fact that “global economic relations transcend time and space” (Battersby and Siracusa 2009, 30), human security acknowledges that place, identity and nation remain important features for ensuring freedom from fear and freedom from want for the individual. Therefore, although the paradigm is universal in aim and principles, it is context specific and can respond to a high diversity of particular situations that endanger individuals worldwide.

III.1 Effects and operationalizing of human security

Since its emergence, the human security concept became a conducting organizing concept in economics, public health and development of security communities (King and

Murray 2002, 589). It also became an issue for foreign and international agenda. For instance, the Group of Eight (G8) foreign ministers declared in June of 1999 that they were “determined to fight the underlying causes of multiple threats to human security” (King and Murray 2002, 585). The Commission on Human Security was created in 2001 for developing a human security operational tool addressing the global security threats. Moreover, it became one of the conducting principles for the Organization of African Union, which included human security in its Constitutive Act. The European Union proposed in 2004 the report *A human security for Europe*, which raised the inspiration to create a Human Security Rapid Response Force, and in 2007, the document *A European Way of Security*, also based on human security principles. ASEAN emphasized the human security in the document *ASEAN Vision 2020* and in the ASEAN Charter, while the Pacific Island Forum was one of the first organizations that adopted human security as a code of conduct. According to the social construction of reality constructivist thesis, through these mechanisms and institutionalizations, the human security paradigm was reified and started to socially transform reality.

The last two and a half decades after the end of the Cold War registered a decrease of violent acts, as counted in the number of interstate wars, civil wars and the number of the deaths from civil wars (World Bank 2015, 208). Moreover, the implementation of regulations for pursuing perpetrators determined a slight improvement for respecting human rights. As the World Bank statistics present, since 1990, 67 former heads of states have been prosecuted for mass human rights violations.

Although the human security paradigm represented a critical juncture in the international discourse on security, its practical implications had little effect on ensuring security in situation of crisis when masses of people found themselves in imminent threats. The postmodern period of the international system was often characterized by the “clumsy handling of the delicate and complex issues” of the NATO politicians (Bauman 2000, 191) and of the international community, in general. The principle of responsibility to protect ensures that the sovereign states have the responsibility “to protect their own citizens from avoidable catastrophe – from mass murder and rape, from starvation”. On the other hand, it also reflects the responsibility of the international community: “when they (states) are unwilling or unable to do so, that responsibility must be borne by the broader community of the states” (ICISS 2001, viii). The ICISS Report internalizes the human security paradigm as one of the “virtues” of R2P, because “it focuses attention where it should be most concentrated, on the human needs of those seeking protection or assistance” (ICISS 2001, 15). Therefore, the international community receives the compulsory duty to intervene for protecting endangered individuals, as a response to the risks and threats induced by globalization. Thus, the implementation of this principle is a shortcoming and the subject of large debates at the international level.

Conclusions

This article analyzed non-exhaustively the relation between globalization and human security. The main highlights of this qualitative research emphasize that the human security doctrine emerged as a response to globalization. Nonetheless, human security represents in

itself a driver that interconnects worldwide actors. Globalization enhances the transnational interconnections and increases the possibility of international shocks and security risks (Battersby and Siracusa 2009, 37). Therefore, there is a need for a new governing approach for these challenges. The human security paradigm could represent a solution for tackling these challenges. Thus, the reality of its implementation leaves space for discussions on the capability of the human security strategy to encompass and to respond to all the risks implied by globalization.

Further research should analyze the commitment of international actors to the human security strategy. Moreover, further analyses could approach the evolution and the results of actions taken under the human security doctrine in order to address the risks embedded by globalization.

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