Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations
e-ISSN 2238-6912 | v.13, n.26, Jul./Dec. 2024 | p.159-182

SECURITY SECTOR REFORM AND PEACEBUILDING: ANALYZING YEMENI CIVIL CONFLICT DEADLOCKS

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Introduction

In recently democratized countries, their current intelligence and internal security bodies are often heirs or mere continuations of those that operated during dictatorships, formed closely linked to the imperatives of political repression and the contingencies of the Cold War; on the contrary, in more traditional democracies, their intelligence and public security services developed primarily under the strong influence of diplomacy and war (Cepik, 2003).

Thus, the amalgam between public security and national security, as well as between external and internal enemies, permeated the initial steps of institutionalizing intelligence services and maintaining internal order in most recently democratized countries, often with deleterious effects on civil liberties.

In the post-Cold War international context, UN *peacekeeping* operations moved from a phase focused strictly on containing conflicting parties in a relatively impartial manner to promoting structural reforms seen as necessary both to undermine the recurrence of internal conflict and to enable the transition to a situation of peace and stability. In these new *peacebuilding* operations, state reconstruction processes now deal with crucial issues that involve the formation or transformation of the so-called security sector.

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The great powers and the main international organizations began to resort to Security Sector Reform (SSR) as a set of policies that aim to readjust the structures and actors that deal with the exercise of violence in these contexts.

We seek to answer, therefore, to what extent the current Yemeni regime tries to resolve these dilemmas and tensions between security and freedom? What is the degree of democratic political control over intelligence and security organizations? What is the contradiction present in the skeleton of the ongoing Yemeni civil conflict and the current tribal role? How has structural violence, especially the cultural violence that legitimizes the latter, been perpetuated in recent years in the Republic of Yemen?

Our main hypothesis is that the main explanatory variables for the configuration and recent evolution of intelligence and security systems in the country are: the characteristics of dictatorships, the mode of political transition, the initial institutional design of these bodies, the interaction between the various actors involved, especially political elites, and their strategic choices, as well as relations between civil and military. In addition to these strictly domestic variables, external variables such as the regional political situation in the Arabian Peninsula, transnational threats (terrorism, etc.) and pressure from other countries and various multilateral bodies influence the topic.

Therefore, the efforts of this work will focus on two fronts. The Security Sector Reform (RSS) processes will be analyzed with regard to (i) the contexts immediately preceding the proposal of the reforms, seeking to identify the main political actors; (ii) proposed reform policies; (iii) observable results; (iv) the external actors (donors) involved. At the same time, the security environment must be analyzed at the time of proposal and implementation.

Furthermore, this study will seek to suggest that there is a contradiction in the ongoing civil conflict in Yemen, and in order to transcend it, we will propose overcoming the incompatibility - between two coalitions formed by state and non-state actors, with the objectives of establishing power of influence in the Arabian peninsula - using as a device the theory of development and integration (Galtung, 2000) achieving them through the deepest possible form of approach in the name of peace in the context of violent conflicts: peacebuilding (Galtung, 1976, 1996; Dudouet, 2008, 2015), that is, to look more deeply at the sources of structural violence and seek to overcome them through the construction of positive peace.

We will suggest studying the methods and concepts of transforming conflict through non-violent and creative actions (Sharp, 1973, 2013, 2014; Nepstad, 2015) with the aim of instrumentalizing a peace structure and an associative mechanism capable of transforming the contradiction that lies at the foundation of the conflict, in accordance with the concept of local

appropriation (Keane, 2012) delimited by the scope of the Security Sector Reform processes.

In addition, we will analyze how through Galtungian concepts we can direct the conflict towards a positive peace, so that the literature on the processes of Security Sector Reform can also be applied after overcoming the contradiction present in the framework of the Yemeni conflict.

Securing states and societies through Security Sector Reform

The concept of Security Sector Reform (SSR) that we will use emerged in 1999, after being used in a speech by the British Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short[3]. This concept, relatively ambiguous, normative, but quite ambitious, concerns the reform of public sector institutions responsible for providing internal and external security, in a context of intended democratic governance.

Thus, Security Sector Reform innovates by proposing a holistic approach, in which peace and security are seen as public goods, so that its objective is to reduce not only security deficits, resulting from inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the sector's action, but possible deficits in the democratic governance model, if the sector lacks supervision and transparency and if it acts not for the well-being of the population, but for its own benefit or that of the regime.

In this way, Security Sector Reform integrates several partial reforms, in the Armed Forces, in the Police, in the control bodies, with national appropriation of the projects being a precondition. Although external donors (external donors are third countries, not included in the immediate context of the RSS, which provide resources to promote reforms, establish their own criteria for granting resources. In general, these are developed countries, with great prominence for the United States, although they are important actors, their direct engagement is rare, their action – at times – appears inadequately ambitious and their assessments inaccurate regarding the political realities of the partners (Hänggi, 2004; Hill, 2010; Wulf, 2004).

According to Keane (2012), it is important to point out that the

3 SHORT, Clare. Security Sector Reform and the Elimination of Poverty (Discurso). Londres: Centre For Defence Studies, King's College, 1999. See: <http://www.clareshort.co.uk/speeches/DFID/9 March 1999.pdf>

international community must be careful not to be drawn into a situation where equipment and training support are provided only with a vague, long-term promise of better governance.

The balance between the two must be sequenced to produce tangible improvements in security and access to justice at the local level, in the case of Yemen. In essence, support for security sector capacity must be linked to support for oversight and accountability. Efforts focused on building state institutions and structures, without paying sufficient attention to developing relations between the state and its people, as in the Yemeni case, will not, it is argued (Gordon, 2014), benefit long-term peacebuilding.

Limiting involvement in RSS decisions to external and responsive actors, local security and political elites can have serious consequences for the responsiveness, legitimacy and accountability of security sector institutions and weakens the principle of democratic governance that underpins the RSS (Caparini, 2010). Exclusive focus on political elites and state authorities can undermine RSS processes that are largely locally controlled (assuming power is rarely voluntarily relinquished).

It can thus impede the improvement of security and justice at the community level, public support and trust in state security institutions and, consequently, the success or otherwise of RSS programs, and broader peacebuilding efforts. (Cubitt, 2013; Donais, 2009; Hendrickson, 2010; Oosterveld and Galand, 2012; Samuels, 2010; Scheye, 2008). These are some consequences of preventing the inclusion of local actors, thus aiming for greater integration and cooperation, to participate in the RSS process.

This is particularly the case in places where RSS programs are being implemented, where governments may not be broadly representative of the people they represent (Martin and Wilson, 2008). This is the case of Yemen, according to some interviewed in a report carried out by the Open Society Foundations and led by Marta Mendes (2021), to listen to Yemenis and the respective social problems they face, from the perspective of transitional justice and the construction of sustainable peace in the Arab country.

Almost all suggestions made by interviewees pointed to the need to make peace talks more inclusive, as well as awareness of possible transitional justice and respect for human rights. For several interviewees, supporting Yemeni civil society to articulate its vision of justice and accountability was an essential first step in ensuring that justice gained more ground in Yemen's political landscape, including in peace negotiations.

For example, for eleven respondents, the work led by the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen (OSESGY), headed by Hans

Grundberg, should be more inclusive with regards to accountability and other forms of transitional justice. Some proposed measures were: the victims must be reflected in the discussions held at the negotiating table between the parties to the conflict; human rights, the rule of law and democracy must be part of the peace agreement; and transitional justice must be part of a peace agreement. One interviewee suggested "putting responsibility on the table so that the parties can discuss it" (Mendes, 2021, p. 42).

In other words, victims must play a central role in designing and establishing future accountability and reparation mechanisms for Yemen. Peace and justice should not be sequenced as one result that temporally follows another, but rather as two objectives to be pursued simultaneously. As one interviewee said: "Peace and justice. Not peace or justice" (Mendes, 2021, p. 41).

As one interviewee observed (Mendes, 2021, p. 20), "society needs to be prepared for transitional justice and, for that, we need public support. Much of this support will be achieved through learning about transitional justice". There is a need to create an atmosphere of popular awareness about what transitional justice is and to achieve this, the concepts of Security Sector Reform must be applied in a progressive manner.

The agenda for a policy of overcoming incompatibility through dialogue and debate, and not through bellicose means or the threat of sanctions, is important as we consider the transformation of the conflict with an emphasis on the core of its contradictory basis. Pointing out where this contradiction lies is crucial for policies to implement peacebuilding concepts. Furthermore, through inclusive methods, from a democracy that leads dialogues to pragmatic results and integrative policies between conflicting parties (from the inside out), the path to achieving positive peace – absence of structural violence – (Galtung, 1969) and, therefore, drastically reducing social injustice arising from the conflict, becomes tangible.

Conflict transformation restores peace by achieving empathy, nonviolence, and creativity (Fischer, 2013). The main path to peace is conflict transformation, where conflict is uprooted along with contradicting goals and the triangle of conflict - attitude, behavior and contradiction. Peace dwells in social formations based on positive sanctions, violence in formations based on negative sanctions; and violence deprives people of basic needs due to elite politics (Fischer, 2013). Therefore, peace policy is about promoting creativity and reducing violence.

It is important to conceive the world and encompass the understanding of the differences between actors with regard to interpersonal harmony, heterogeneous nation, different and similar cultural-structural nations,

minimum and maximum interdependence, polarized, depolarized and mixed nations, class division, balance of power and monopoly, arms control and disarmament, negative and positive non-violence, treaty and convention, negative and positive sanctions, NGO and IGO, supranational thinking about peace and superstate and state, in order to be able to construct an associative narrative to in order to transfigure the course of the conflict in question, making it possible to build structural peace.

Galtung defines peace as a relationship between two or more parties, and the parties are within or between people, groups, states or nations, and regions or civilizations. And the relationship is challenging in negative and disharmonious, indifferent and positive and harmonious dimensions. The relationship further focuses on negative peace which is the absence of violence, like a ceasefire, like keeping them apart, no longer negative but indifferent relationships and positive peace depends on the presence of harmony, intended or not (Fischer, 2013). And this is where the association that is characterized by structural peace, encompassing equity, reciprocity and integration, must be established.

Understanding the term "*peacebuilding*" and developing nonviolent ways of addressing violence

The conflict resolution approach is as essential as it is problematic. "Ideally, the general world level of conflict awareness should be raised through a better distribution of perceptions about conflict, above all through the autonomous creation of perceptions through active participation in the conflict" (Galtung, 1976, p 296).

But its use must be above all in horizontal conflict. This is not only because their role may bias them, with or against their will, in favor of the stronger party, but because active participation in conflict is one of the most important ways in which a dominated periphery can become autonomous (Galtung, 1976). That is, taking active conflict participation away from participants in a horizontal conflict can only lead to a new and weak dominance structure with the "third party" at the top. And taking conflict participation away from participants in a vertical conflict may be a way of maintaining underlying dominance, in effect a new technique of dominance.

The search for the method of transcending and transforming conflict requires much more than simply the search for the reduction of direct violence, what Galtung (1969) calls negative peace. More than a palliative resource, the path must be to overcome the incompatibility and contradiction

that is the basis of the conflict. This requires an associative rather than a dissociative approach. Knowing how to live with opposing ideals within a given society once we think about a future aggregation between two conflicting parties (or more) is fundamental to differentiating the concepts of enemies and adversaries, once we consider Hobbesian thinking about conflicts being inherent to individuals.

The concept of *peacebuilding* is defined by association and dialogue. This associative approach aims to bring the parties together within a peace structure that replaces the structure of violence that is the basis of the conflict.

And through resolving the incompatibility, the goal is to transcend the contradiction that led to the conflict in question. In this sense, *peacebuilding* requires that the structure that produces violence be identified and replaced by an alternative structure of peace, more egalitarian, fair and free from domination, repression and exploitation - which leads to a more radical concern with social development measures (Galtung, 1976).

Going beyond the dissociative approach offered by *peacekeeping* and *ad hoc* diplomatic efforts to try to end the superficial manifestations of the conflict that characterize *peacemaking*, the concept in question will involve a social structure that is less vertical and more horizontal, therefore less hierarchical, where disparities in development among individuals, classes, groups, nations and regions is reduced. In the case of the Yemeni civil conflict, ethnological differences also apply.

In this way, the circumstances for positive peace (absence of structural violence or social justice) can be achieved. "Just as a healthy body can produce its own antibodies without the need for ad hoc administration of medications" (Galtung, 1976, p. 297). A "healthy global body" is capable of producing its own "antibodies" against violence. "It is necessary to find structures that remove the causes of war and offer alternatives to wars in situations where they may arise" (Ibid., p. 297-298).

The theoretical basis that derives from development theory (Galtung, 1996) is association. War and conflicts become an obsession capable of leading man to block his creative thinking and take him in other directions. "Equity, entropy and symbiosis are simply the denial of the anti-human conditions of exploitation, elitism and isolation" (Ibid., 1976, p. 299-300).

Therefore, it must be stated that only the structural transformations and social justice promoted by *peacebuilding* are capable of producing "antibodies" against the violence arising from the ongoing civil conflict in Yemen. It is interesting to note that such reflections would only be incorporated into the international lexicon more than a decade later, after the end of the Cold War,

with the revitalization of the UN's role in building a more peaceful world order.

The concept, which suggests an idea of self-sustainable peace, is the theoretical basis on which this work will be based. Such a contribution is capable of changing institutional and individual attitudes, belief systems, psychological understandings and lifestyle behaviors through the application of the transcendent technique of conflict transformation.

Peace transformation also presupposes a peaceful context provided by peace education, continuation of work after violence, and readiness to reopen peace agreements. Peace dwells in social formations based on positive sanctions, violence in formations based on negative sanctions; and violence deprives people of basic needs due to elite politics. Therefore, peace policy is about promoting creativity and reducing violence.

Conflict transformation, in principle, occurs at all levels of conflict: global, regional, national, social, interpersonal and intra-personal. Peace transformation also presupposes a peaceful context, as provided by peace education, peace journalism, and human security studies that are achieved through work during and after violence in different dialogues for peaceful solutions. Transformation, in general, changes attitude, behavior and contradictions creatively.

Peace studies aim to understand violence and its denial through the transformation of conflict (negative peace), and the construction of peace through cooperation and harmony (positive peace). To achieve such an objective, transforming the conflict through non-violent means becomes a resource capable of totalizing the entire effort of not postponing or allowing the status quo ante. For instance, a common assumption in psychology is that achieving "peace equals healing from trauma".

The implications of conflict cycles in the Yemeni context

Since the outbreak of the Houthi insurgent movement[4] in 2004 and after the rise of the Arab Spring, Yemen has been facing strong political instability in the country, leading to the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, according to the UN[5].

4 Houthi (formerly "Shabab al Moumineen") is the most common denomination of the political-religious movement Ansar Allah, mostly Shiite Zaidites from northwestern Yemen. It is a separatist group that has been waging an insurgency against the Yemeni government since 2004.

5 United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner's Report on Yemen. See:

Currently, the country is experiencing an escalation of internal conflicts and tensions, led by two coalitions in order to establish strategic power and influence in the Arabian peninsula.

The first has as its main figure Saudi Arabia and five other Arab countries that are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)[6], with support from the United States of America, France and the United Kingdom, in addition to the Yemeni government itself, with the aim of reestablishing the Hadi government, president of Yemen democratically elected in 2012, who was later deposed as a result of popular uprisings in 2011. The antagonistic group is made up of Iran, with support for the Zaidite Shiite political-religious movement Ansar Allah, the Houthis.

The civil conflict in Yemen has its roots in the 2011 Arab Spring, when a popular uprising forced the president at the time, Ali Abdullah Salleh, to leave power in the hands of his deputy, Abd-Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, who would be deposed from power shortly after due to the Houthis' territorial advance. Strategically, Yemen is important for its location in the Bab Al-Mandab Strait, which connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden, through which most of the world's oil tankers pass.

In the wake of the conflict, the supply and transfer of weapons and cyber intelligence to both groups of coalitions by supporting countries has been seen as devastating for Yemen. At the heart of the Yemen reports is the involvement of countries such as the UK and the US in inadvertently causing a percentage of the bloodshed through the supply of weapons and technology to Saudi Arabia (Musa, 2017).

On the antagonist side of the conflict, in turn, there is evidence that Iran has provided financial and military aid to the Houthis, although in small amounts. However, several experts suggest that Iranian support for the Houthis is limited to rhetorical support and claims about Iranian military support for Houthi forces are exaggerated and unfounded (Karakir, 2018). For example, Cockburn (2017) suggests that there is little evidence that the Houthis receive more than rhetorical support from Iran and that it is primarily Saudi propaganda that is shaping the view that the Houthis are supported by Iran.

For Shavana Musa (2017), it seems that the context in Yemen points

https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/07/1069161

6 Also known as the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Gulf), it is an economic integration organization that brings together six states in the Persian Gulf: Oman, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait. It is worth noting that not all countries surrounding the Persian Gulf are members of the council, specifically Iran and Iraq.

to the existence of a non-international armed conflict (NIAC) due to the organizational capacity maintained by the Houthi forces and, consequently, the ability to observe international law, as well as the nature of the conflict between countries (Musa, 2017). However, Saudi authorities regularly blame Iran for the protracted Yemeni conflict, pointing to Iran's broad support for the Houthis (Sharp, 2018).

The Saudi-led coalition, the Hadi government, and the US have also condemned Iran for violating the UN arms embargo on the Houthis, but Iran has continually denied this accusation (Broder, 2017). In an interview, the president of an independent Yemeni human rights group called Mwatana for Human Rights, recognized by international awards such as Human Rights First, told CNN and the New York Times that the US had a legal and moral responsibility for the sale of arms to the Saudi-led coalition, worsening the situation in Yemen[7].

Based on the assumption that current tensions between the Yemeni government and the Houthis are the result of political divisions, lack of integration and cooperation on both sides over recent years, Irem Karakir (2018) says that it would be misleading to call the crisis current situation in Yemen as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. In recent years, more precisely after the Arab Spring and the political clashes between the Yemeni government and the Houthis, there has been a tendency to explain the ongoing conflict from the perspective of a religious struggle between Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shiite Iran, in order for both countries to reinforce their control over the Arabian peninsula.

For the author, the tension did not emerge as a result of the clash of interests of these two countries. It would be fair to suggest that the involvement of Saudi Arabia and Iran in Yemen's civil war has triggered and further complicated already existing tensions in the country (Karakir 2018). However, it would be a mistake to vehemently assert Saudi Arabia's lack of interest in the intranational conflict in Yemen. Saudi leaders have always drawn special attention to Yemen, and if their national interests required it, they intervened in Yemen directly or indirectly.

The Yemeni conflict reflects the failure of the Yemeni government to meet the common needs of its citizens, the uprising of the politically marginalized Houthis, and the corrupt state leading the country into civil war. There is evidence of how structural violence, through its mechanism of inequality and social injustice, ended up contributing to direct violence,

7 "How the war in Yemen became a bloody stalemate" See: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/10/31/magazine/yemen-war-saudi-arabia.html?smid=tw-nytimes&smtyp=cur.

both of which are legitimized by cultural violence (Galtung, 1990; 1996), that is, aspects of Yemeni culture such as religion and ideology have greatly contributed to the continuation of the conflict.

As Dresch (2000) identifies, Yemeni society is very multidimensional and there is also a sectarian dimension that played an important role in the conflict. Karakir (2018) takes a deeper look by stating that although religious differences play a role in the expansion of the conflict, the underlying causes of the crisis in Yemen are deeper than those of Sunni-Shia sectarian tension. The involvement of external actors in the Yemen crisis, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, has only further complicated an already multifaceted crisis. On the contrary, the conflict did not simply arise from religious sectarianism (Karakir, 2018).

Yemen is described as a failed state, with its weak state institutions, economic decay, poor infrastructure and high levels of drug addiction. Now in its ninth year, the war in Yemen shows no signs of abating. The war has killed thousands of Yemenis, including civilians and combatants, and significantly damaged the country's infrastructure.

In an attempt to explain the efforts of the Yemeni government in the face of the demands of the insurgent movement Ansar Allah (Houthi), Salmoni, Loidolt and Wells (2010) classify the imbroglio in Yemen into four dimensions, trying analytically to explain the clash that follows: in more than five Years of combat operations, the Yemeni government has failed in its efforts to eradicate the Houthi opposition.

This is because the Houthi family emerges from a much richer and evolving socio-cultural fabric than the government appears to have appreciated. It is this complex fabric that provides the multiple dimensions in which the Houthi regime's conflict can be fully understood. The first dimension is that of context - the dual context of the regime's governance techniques and local conditions in a geographic, socioeconomic, political and ideological periphery.

The second dimension involves the roots of discord, visible as early as the 1970s, but fully emerging in the late 1990s. The post-September 11, 2001 conjuncture provides the third dimension. At this stage, the regime's calculations and Houthi actions resulted in mutual provocation, providing the immediate causes of the armed conflict north of Sanaa.

In attempting to subdue the Houthis, however, the Yemeni government has undertaken measures that have an effect far beyond Houthi strongholds, thus prolonging a growing resistance that shares many characteristics with the insurgency and over time may evolve into one. An insurgency-provoking Yemeni government campaign, therefore, is the fourth dimension that

illuminates the enduring nature of the Houthi issue in Yemen (Salmoni; Loidolt; Wells, 2010).

Thoroughly analyzing the four dimensions described by Salmoni, Loidolt and Wells (2010) from a Galtungian perspective, we can infer that what actually sustains the confrontation that circumscribes present-day Yemen is what Galtung (1996) defines as conflict formations. Not only conflict as a creator, but as a destroyer of possible reductions or suppression of levels of violence. More than the conflict that is rooted at the base of the entire dissociative structure, the life cycles of conflict are essential for understanding every contradiction in which they are present. "Deep at the bottom of every conflict there is a contradiction, something that stands in the way of something else" (Galtung, 1996, p. 70).

Illustrating the Yemeni civil conflict between the government and the separatist Houthi movement, two directions are placed in opposition and have different objectives between the two state and non-state actors. The first Galtung (1996) defines it as a dispute, that is, two people, or actors, pursuing the same scarce objective; and the second he calls a dilemma or "a person, or actor, pursuing two incompatible goals" (Ibid., p.70).

Conceiving conflict as an intrinsic part of the human being is not something new. Conflict satisfies so many needs that a social system poor in some conflicts will have to introduce others to stay alive. And the same seems to apply to internal conflicts within any human being. A state of conflict lessness is essentially a state of death: only death brings a complete consonance between need and satisfaction.

It seems that some frustration is necessary for individuals to mature. Hobbes (1651) says that man, due to his competitive, controlling (and even utilitarian) stance, tends to come into conflict with other individuals, which generates a constant war between humanity. The war of all against all is where the main debate that underlies Hobbes' work begins.

From "*Bellum omnium contra omnes*"[8] to "*Lupus est homo homini lupus*"[9], the conflict is present with the "state of human nature" being put into practice (intra) and internationally within the scope of politics at a global level.

The Yemeni government, instead of dialogue and negotiation towards peace, opted for non-integration and an attempt to eradicate its own people, the Houthis, fearing a non-stop insurrection due to the group's respective

8 "The war of all against all". Free translation..

9 "Man is a wolf to man". Expression created by Plautus (254-184 BC) in his work Asinaria, later being popularized by Thomas Hobbes, an English philosopher of the 17th century, in his work "On the Citizen"..

religious and ideological ideals, which in fact occurred, as Salmoni, Loidolt and Wells (2010) point out. There was also the most refined and democratic way of isolation - allowing the Houthis to organize themselves as a political party[10], but at the same time relegating it to a constant minority position, so that it is culturally eliminated by being outvoted.

Political marginalization in the face of the Houthis also led the movement to no longer want to engage in dialogue and led to the entire revolt. Feeling betrayed, the movement opted for direct violence, the result of all the structural and cultural violence in the region.

The Houthis are a marginalized section in Yemeni politics, not getting adequate help from the government and also feeling the fear of "Sunnization" in their Shia Zaydi heartland, which is why they declared revolution in Yemen under the support of Iran (Ahmed, 2019). Insurgency is one of the main causes of the civil war in Yemen. The Shia group has been marginalized in Yemeni politics and society since it lost the Imamate system of government in 1970[11]. The current civil war in Yemen is "the continuation of a long-standing conflict between the Yemeni government and politically marginalized groups" (Orkaby, 2017).

There are intra-party aspects to most inter-party conflicts (Galtung, 1996). To summarize this conflicting cycle inherent to social relations, as Foucault (1979) also referred to when saying that every social relationship is a relationship of power, Galtung (1969) conceives the introduction to the debate about structural violence and the articulation of the concepts of peace positive and negative peace.

Established as an indirect form of violence, whose roots are in the unequal distribution of power and resources within societies or between societies, structural violence draws attention to a type of violence that is almost always latent, invisible or disguised that results from social inequalities, injustice, poverty, exploitation and oppression. Thus, if the concept of negative peace is defined by the absence of direct (physical) violence, the concept of

10 Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi was the political leader and fundamental figure for the emergence of the Houthi in Yemen's political environment. He was a former member of the Yemeni parliament for the Islamic party Al-Haqq between 1993 and 1997. Al-Houthi was a rising political aspirant in Yemen and had broad religious and tribal support in the mountainous regions of northern Yemen. He was also a key figure in the Houthi insurgency against the Yemeni government, which began in 2004. The movement took its name after his death in September 2004 by Yemeni army forces.

11 The Imams of Yemen, and later the Kings of Yemen, were religiously established leaders belonging to the Zaidiyyah branch of Shia Islam. They established a mixture of religious and secular government in parts of Yemen from 897 onwards. Their imamah held out under various circumstances until the republican revolution in 1962.

positive peace becomes defined as the absence of structural violence and is articulated by Galtung through the notion of social justice.

Conflict resolution should not only be seen as a means of avoiding wars, but also a means for the progress of humanity to transcend incompatibilities or contradictions that stifle progress and channel attention away from the achievement of the world's fundamental goals (Galtung, 1976). For instance, even if the conflict is resolved, or to be resolved, there may still be war – out of hatred or as a projection of conflict.

Contributions to the consolidation of peace in Yemen from the perspective of the Security Sector Reform processes and Peace Studies

We will begin to think about building peace in the Republic of Yemen from the perspective of *statebuilding*. Through the transformation of the conflict through non-violent and creative means, using cooperation, integration and social justice to overcome the incongruity present in the axes of dissent, this is where the argument will be based.

Several questions arise here: who are the real parties to the conflict? What are your goals? Where and how do these goals collide? And what are the proposals for solutions, from people at all levels of the social system, based on diverse experiences both within the conflict situation and outside it? Many are convinced that "economic and social development will lead to peace".

If development includes capacity building for non-violent conflict transformation, then peace will be a result. However, if development only intensifies the desire for more wealth and material resources, then the consequence may be more war than peace.

This is the case of the conflict in Yemen, where through a *proxy war* it has been dictating a true massacre in the social, economic, political spheres, etc., at alarming levels. Véronique Dudouet (2008) suggests through pacifist approaches the need to investigate opportunities and favorable conditions for combining non-violent action with other traditional forms of intervention in asymmetric and prolonged conflicts. The researcher considers non-violent resistance to be a necessary component for transforming conflicts in situations where asymmetrical power relations are observed, especially in the initial phases of latent conflicts rooted in structural violence.

Galtung (1969) lists his theories of symmetrical and egalitarian organization in general, considering the expanding theory of vertical

development (as a negative point), participation, decentralization, co-decision, while proposing to resolve these gaps of inequality seeking the equal distribution of power and resources.

One of several approaches is made possible through arms control and disarmament issues. The trafficking of weapons and intelligence mechanisms provided by countries belonging to the military coalition led by Saudi Arabia, such as the USA and the United Kingdom, which creates great tension vis-à-vis the military forces of Iran – which in turn supports the Houthis – and causes A major crisis and social upheaval directly attacking human rights in Yemen could be gradually ended through stricter regulation of arms transfer and trade. Arms transfer has been on the States' agenda for a long time.

However, while they remain objects of defense, security, and economic affection, the spiraling consequences of poorly regulated arms transfers can be devastating. Indeed, the lack of a rigorously enforced legal framework can not only lead to illicit arms trafficking, but can also have more serious humanitarian and developmental consequences (Musa, 2017). Nothing can mean what is meant by devastating, like the conflict situation in Yemen.

Consequently, there is also an indirect socioeconomic impact affected by armed conflicts and international crimes – fueled by poorly regulated weapons – including famine, family segregation, disease, lack of education, refugee levels and even a decline in foreign investment (Musa, 2017).

As a result, even British national courts have been brought into the equation to assess UK practices on arms transfers, according to a judicial review case brought by the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) against the UK government. The Saudi-Yemen case strikes at the core of the effects that poorly regulated and law-abiding state practices on arms transfers can have on innocent populations (Musa, 2017).

The use of UK weapons in the Yemen war is not a rumour. A cruise missile in the United Kingdom was found under the wreckage of a civilian factory targeted by air strikes, for example[12]. A UN report also stated that the coalition had carried out airstrikes against civilians and civilian objects in violation of international humanitarian law, including camps for internally displaced people and refugees; civil gatherings, including weddings; civil vehicles, including buses; civil residential areas; medical facilities; schools; mosques; markets, factories and food warehouses; and other essential civil infrastructure such as Sanaa airport, Hudaydah port and domestic transit

12 Human Rights Watch, 'Bombing Businesses: Saudi Coalition Airstrikes on Yemen's Civilian Economic Structures' 10 July 2016, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2016/07/10/bombing-businesses/saudi-coalition-airstrikes-yemens-civilian-economic-structures>.

routes[13].

Although the United Kingdom was not directly participating in hostilities, it was providing technical assistance as well as authorizing arms transfers to Saudi Arabia. Weapons transferred by the UK and US to Saudi Arabia were later used by the Saudi-led Coalition in Yemen (Musa, 2017).

It should also be noted that the United Kingdom was not the only country found to supply weapons to the Saudi-led coalition. Investigators from organizations including Human Rights Watch also found a US bomb delivered to Saudi Arabia during the war, as well as remains of weapons supplied by the US in 23 illegal coalition airstrikes. Human Rights Watch proved that about 12 attacks involved American cluster munitions[14].

Despite the financing of these resources by the USA and the United Kingdom towards Saudi Arabia in the face of the bombing in Yemen, a new actor, at least unusual to say the least, emerged in the field of conflict. Houthis captured a batch of weapons coming from São Paulo, Brazil[15]. The Brazilian arms industry is trying to return to international markets, after decades of lack of resources and contracts.

Avibrás Indústria Aeroespacial S.A. produces cluster bombs used by the Saudis in the conflict. In this batch, found in an abandoned Saudi post in Yemen, there were containers with parts for Astros SS-30 multiple rocket launchers, produced by Avibrás in Brazil. This reinforces Brazil's supply to Saudi Arabia. The attack, targeting the al-Dhubat neighborhood in Saada's Old City[16], killed two civilians and injured at least six, including a child.

It is a fact that cluster bombs are weapons, like others, that should be eradicated due to the high damage they can inflict on civilians, as is the case in Yemen. Furthermore, Brazil must commit to ending the production and export of these ammunition. In terms of using non-violent or pacifist means to overcome the conflict and the political, economic and, above all, social instability that it entails, the channels of dialogue between the main parties to the conflict must return to functioning through negotiation. Appealing to actors outside the preambular conflict does not seem like a good option,

13 The Guardian, 'UN Report into Saudi-led Strikes in Yemen Raises Questions over UK Role', 27 January 2016 https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/27/unreport-into-saudi-led-strikes-in-yemen-raises-questions-over-uk-role4.

14 Human Rights Watch, 'Yemen: US-Made Bombs Used in Unlawful Airstrikes, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/12/08/yemen-us-made-bombs-used-unlawful-air Strikes>.

15 Human Rights Watch, Yemen: Brazil-Made Cluster Munitions Harm Civilians. https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/12/23/yemen-brazil-made-cluster-munitions-harm-civilians..

16 Province of Yemen, located in the north of the country, on the border with Saudi Arabia..

and can escalate the antagonisms until they become more aggravating, as a possible unwanted layer of tension.

Considering the capacity of non-violent action to transform power relations and transform identities through persuasion, Dudouet (2008) suggests a combination of principles and pragmatic concerns that can make non-violent action an important tool of political action capable of act through a double process of dialogue and resistance: dialogue with the more powerful opponent (with the aim of persuading him about the justice and legitimacy of the causes defended by the weaker parties) and resistance to unjust structures of power (with the aim to press for social and political changes).

Sharp (2005) classifies non-violent action as a technique that can be applied through a set of protest, non-cooperation and intervention methods. Cady (2010) believes that the pragmatic concern for nonviolent action is one pole of the pacifist spectrum that offers valuable guidance for pacifist activism when it loses something: a clear vision of peace. Atack (2012) observes that non-violent action acts as a collective political action led by ordinary citizens and organized directly through civil society groups or social movements.

From this perspective, non-violent action is characterized as occurring outside the conventional political organizations and structures of the state (Randle, 1994), as nonmilitary or nonviolent in character, and as centered on civil society in the coordination and conduct of actions (Stephan and Chenoweth, 2008; Roberts and Ash, 2009).

Howes (2013), when trying to punctuate the debate about non-violence and pacifism (which are different in terms of action), presents a similar argument that considers the current success of the debate on non-violence rather than breaking with pacifism, offering an important way of reformulating the pragmatic aspects of pacifism in a way that takes into account a realistic understanding of the historical record of cases of violent non-action as an alternative to the use of military force and war.

Atack (2012), when exploring non-violence in political theory, points out that the main icons of pacifism in the 20th century, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, conducted their non-violent campaigns through pragmatic choices, even though they were strongly influenced by their spiritual and ethical traditions. McCarthy and Sharp (2010) state that the most traditional and institutionalized conflict resolution techniques, such as negotiation, mediation, third-party intervention, as well as the methods that contribute to the effective functioning of these techniques, tend to avoid confrontations, sanctions, pressures and direct action that characterize the activism of non-violent action, ultimately in line with what Galtung (1976) points out about the three approaches to intervention in the name of peace.

The repression of non-violent movements through the use of force often backfires because it leads to the loss of popular support, as well as internal and external condemnation of those who resort to violence. This repression leads to changes in power relations, as it increases internal support and solidarity for the cause of non-violent actors, creates dissension against violent opponents and increases external support for non-violent actors, as indeed happened in the Arab Spring from 2010.

And it has been continuously occurring in Yemen, due to various sanctions[17], such as economic embargoes, which are being imposed on Yemen due to Houthi control, causing an unparalleled crisis in Yemeni society. Based on comprehensive historical analysis Sharp (2005) notes that this technique of non-violent methods is not limited to internal conflicts and democratic contexts, and that its effectiveness does not depend on the "kindness" or "moderation" of opponents, who have already been widely used against powerful governments, despotic regimes, foreign occupations, empires, dictatorships and totalitarian regimes.

The agenda for a policy of overcoming incompatibility through dialogue and debate, and not through bellicose means or the threat of sanctions, is important as we consider the transformation of the conflict with an emphasis on the core of its contradictory basis. Pointing out where this contradiction lies is crucial for policies to implement *peacebuilding* concepts.

Furthermore, through inclusive methods, from a democracy that leads dialogues to pragmatic results and integrative policies between conflicting parties (from the inside out), the path to achieving "positive peace" (absence of structural violence) and, therefore, drastically reducing social injustice arising from the conflict, becomes tangible.

Conflict transformation restores peace by achieving empathy, non-violence and creativity (Galtung, 2013). The main path to peace is conflict transformation, where conflict is uprooted along with contradicting goals and the triangle of conflict - attitude, behavior and contradiction. Peace dwells in social formations based on positive sanctions, violence in formations based on negative sanctions; and violence deprives people of basic needs due to elite politics.

Galtung (2013) defines peace as a relationship between two or more parties, and the parties are within or between people, groups, states or nations, and regions or civilizations. And the relationship is challenging in negative

17 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TEASURY. Yemen-related Sanctions. https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/financial-sanctions/sanctions-programs-and-country-information/yemen-related-sanctions>.

and disharmonious, indifferent and positive and harmonious dimensions.

The relationship further focuses on negative peace which is the absence of violence, like a ceasefire, like keeping them apart, no longer negative but indifferent relationships and positive peace depends on the presence of harmony, intended or not. And this is where the association that is characterized by structural peace, encompassing equity, reciprocity and integration, must be established.

Conclusion

Since its existence as a unified state in the early 1990s, Yemen has seen tensions, crises, clashes and civil wars, which have been exacerbated by the involvement of external powers. Approximately 27 million Yemenis belonging to various ethnic groups competed for limited resources in the country, according to Karakir (2018).

In addition to socioeconomic grievances, resentment over the ruling regime's corrupt policies led Yemenis to fill the streets chanting anti-regime slogans in early 2011. It took another four years for these grievances and fragmentation to escalate into violent civil war in the country.

Nine years have passed since the most recent civil war began in Yemen in 2015, leading to a serious humanitarian crisis. Divergent internal and external actors became involved in the war with their own interests and agendas, contributing to the complexity of violence in the country.

In academic circles, there has been a tendency to describe the ongoing conflict in Yemen as a consequence of the Sunni-Shia rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, as the Saudis have engaged in an operation against the Houthis, who are allegedly supported by Iran. Similarly, there has been much speculation about whether a proxy war is taking place between Riyadh and Tehran in Yemen.

However, these assumptions still fail to understand the origins of the war and why Saudi Arabia intervened. The conflict in Yemen is primarily a complicated local struggle over access to power, which is further complicated by the involvement of external actors. Although the conflict in Yemen has been a priority issue for Saudi Arabia's ruling elites, Saudi intervention in Yemen has largely occurred to secure its southern borders. On the other hand, the Yemeni conflict has not been a prioritized issue for Iran, which prefers to focus its attention on Syria, Lebanon and Iraq.

The Houthis, another component of the complex equation, are not

mere Iran's lackeys to pursue its policies without question. Therefore, Iran's influence in Yemen remains limited compared to that of Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia, Houthis and Iran are not the only actors involved in the ongoing conflict in Yemen. President Hadi's bloc, President Saleh's former supporters, AQAP, the GCC states and the US are other actors involved in the conflict.

Overall, Yemen is going through a very critical time. The civil war in Yemen seems unlikely to end unless a combination of trust-building and nation-building occurs between the different local sides involved in the conflict. The stalemate in the Yemeni civil war only serves the interests of radical terrorist organizations in the country, offering fertile ground for jihadism. Meanwhile, the Yemeni people continue to suffer the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

Yemen's transition is fragile and therefore vulnerable to renewed violence through multiple pathways. The Yemeni uprising exemplifies the need to pay attention to pre-existing patterns of distribution of political power if we are to understand what is happening.

Yemen is unlikely to succeed in breaking this decades-long cycle of violence until there is a national consensus on the need to establish the structures that enable the implementation of agreed reforms: capable local government institutions, equal access to basic social services, including health and education and an end to extractive political and economic systems that have allowed a small northern tribal elite to dominate the country, exploit its resources for their own narrow interests, and block access to the political and economic arena for the vast majority of Yemeni citizens.

The central focus of this work was to develop reflections and solutions regarding the conflict between the Yemeni government and the Houthis through this discipline and area of academic research that incorporates the clearest and most explicit commitment to non-violence and the peaceful organization of social relations in the local, national, regional and international levels.

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ABSTRACT

The roots of the ongoing civil conflict in Yemen lie in the inability of Yemeni society to address and resolve the frustration arising from political marginalization, economic deprivation and the effects of an extractive, corrupt and rent-seeking state. By definition, such systems are characterized by the concentration of power in the hands of a restricted elite and impose few restrictions on their exercise of power. This systemic failure has produced a cycle of violence, political upheaval, and institutional collapse since the creation of the modern Yemeni state in the 1960s, of which the current conflict appears to be only the latest eruption. We propose, as a way of accessing potential possible results for resolving the contradiction, a proposal based on the combination of policies based on Peace Studies, understanding that the mechanisms of the Security Sector Reform processes and transitional justice are crucial for the construction and peacebuilding in the Republic of Yemen. This work analyzes how structural violence has perpetuated in recent years in Yemen and how we can direct the conflict towards positive peace.

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Security Sector Reform. Peace Studies. Conflict Resolution. Violence. Republic of Yemen.

Received on March 18, 2024
Accepted on November 26, 2024