

BRAZIL, AN AFRICAN POWER? A NEO-GRAMSCIAN ANALYSIS OF THE FRAMEWORK PROPOSED BY BRAZIL FOR SANITARY POLICIES ADAPTED TO DEVELOPING ECONOMIES.

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Abstract

In September 2023, the African Union was admitted to the G20 with the support of Brazil.

The African Union is composed by 55 African countries. It promotes integration between them in many different aspects such as peace, rule of law, democracy and economic concerns, among others. The bloc was founded in 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and launched in 2002 in Durban, South Africa.

The relations between Brazil and the African Union are mainly diplomatic ones and are developed in different fields. They are not restricted to the commercial and economic field, but also encompass historical and cultural ties, since both entities suffered from European imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. This axis of relations was expanded between 2003 and 2016. Thus, while the cultural and historical links between this Latin American country and the African continent are regularly reaffirmed by President Lula, the thematic issues that unite them today are less clearly outlined.

Poverty is an issue with multiple consequences and it seems, today, to be ineradicable. Thus, one of the objectives of the SDGs is to eradicate poverty, a global plague with multi-sectoral consequences. The emergence of COVID-19 marked a turning point, reversing this progress as the number of people living in extreme poverty increased, for the first time in a generation, by almost 90 million compared to previous forecasts.

If current trends continue, an estimated 7%, or around 575 million people, of the world's population could still find themselves trapped in the bonds of extreme poverty by 2030, with a significant concentration in sub-Saharan Africa.

The African continent therefore seems to be a target : the increase in global poverty will have direct and drastic consequences in this region of the world, which is already in peril.

The concern for global social policies are therefore becoming a key factor in forging links between the African continent and this Portuguese-speaking Latin American country. But behind the consideration of social policies lie both economic and sanitary concerns. As a corollary to these links, inequalities in access to healthcare persist, which raise questions about the implementation of a social security system.

Social security is a universal Human Right, and in theory the world has sufficient resources to make it real. Yet 80% of the world's population has no access to adequate social protection. Universal access to health and universal health coverage imply that all people and communities have access, without any form of discrimination, to comprehensive, appropriate and timely health services of good quality, determined at national level according to needs, as well as to safe, effective and affordable medicines of good quality, while ensuring that the use of these services does not expose users to financial hardship, particularly groups in conditions of vulnerability. Since the COVID pandemic, in various international forums, Brazil has gradually established itself as an advocate of a universal social security system, with health issues at the heart of its foreign policy. Besides, after the COVID pandemic, data from the International Labor Organization (ILO) show that Africa has the lowest social protection coverage in the world: 17% of the total population, compared with a global average of 47%.

This raises the question of the extent to which cooperation in terms of health policies (particularly within the Brazil-Africa framework) can nurture a fruitful alternative to the Bretton Woods system and, more broadly, envisage a new path for international cooperation. That main problematic would therefore allow us to discuss a second point : could this have an impact on Brazil's image in Africa?

In a society increasingly critical of the Bretton Woods institutions, certain *fora* and States have positioned themselves as a force for proposal: Brazil is part of this dynamic.

Focusing on a positivist study of the legal texts of the BRICS, G20, the ILO Convention 102 and UNITAID; and from a neo-Gramscian perspective, I propose to discuss Brazil's social policy proposals in these two cooperation fora.

The first part of my reflection will outline the social policy promoted by Brazil within the framework of the G20. The aim of this section will be to highlight Brazil's progressiveness from a political point of view: by demonstrating the degree of innovation of its healthcare system, and by proposing an international framework inspired by its national scheme.

The second part will focus on that of the BRICS. Within this group, Brazil has played a pioneering role in proposing health policies. As the group expands, Brazil's ambitions and proposals are becoming increasingly influential. In this regard, the strategic stakes and possible benefits for the African continent (and South Africa in particular) will be highlighted.

The third part will study the health sector groupings in which Brazil plays a major role. This is the case of UNITAID. Under this program, the project plans to carry out clinical trials to validate simplified diagnostic algorithms, with the aim of reducing the time between screening, diagnosis and completion of treatment.

Keywords: States Coalitions; World Governance; Social Policies; Social Inequalities; Neo- gramscianism.