
GLOBALIZATION AND ITS EFFECTS: A DISCUSSION ON BRAZIL AND ITS CULTURAL/POLITICAL GRAVITATION TOWARDS THE US

GLOBALIZAÇÃO E SEUS EFEITOS: UMA DISCUSSÃO SOBRE O BRASIL E
SUA GRAVITAÇÃO CULTURAL / POLÍTICA EM RELAÇÃO AOS EUA

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Abstract

This paper discusses Globalization as a phenomenon, its effects, understandings, developments and main criticisms by international analysts, arising from the observation of its most problematic characteristics in our current times. Subsequently, following the interpretation by which Globalization acts as a phenomenon led (mainly) by the United States, we proceed to scrutinize the Brazilian position vis-à-vis Globalization, especially in terms of the country's relationship with its North American counterpart. In this plan, we care to observe three main points of contact: tourism, the attraction exerted by Hollywood productions on Brazilian audiences and, finally, on the political sphere, the inclinations of the current President Jair Bolsonaro towards the US and Trump in particular. We posit that the importance of the American Soft Power is a fundamental element regarding the links between Brazil and the United States, at a time when the so-called Globalist discourse (one of Globalization's ideological aspects) is threatened by the emergence of governments with a more nationalistic tone and rhetoric, as represented by the case of today's Brazil, among many other countries. In this context, President Bolsonaro's attempts to strengthen ties with its American counterpart may reinforce the attention given by Brazilians to the United States and its cultural productions, potentially increasing the number of tourists to the US, and bringing the South American country closer to the main center of Globalization at a time when, curiously, Brazilian government voices an anti-globalist rhetoric.

Keywords: Globalization; American Soft Power; Brazilian Foreign Policy.

Resumo

Este artigo procura discutir a Globalização enquanto fenômeno, assim como suas consequências, entendimentos, desdobramentos e as principais críticas por parte de analistas, surgidas da observação de suas características mais problemáticas em nossos tempos. Posteriormente, partindo da interpretação desse como fenômeno liderado (principalmente) pelos Estados Unidos, refletimos sobre a posição do Brasil em relação à Globalização, especialmente no que concerne as relações do país com sua contraparte norte-americana. Nesse sentido, destacamos três pontos principais de contato: o turismo, a atração que as produções Hollywoodianas exercem sobre o público brasileiro e, finalmente, dentro da esfera política, as inclinações do atual presidente Jair Bolsonaro para com os Estados Unidos e, em particular, para com seu atual governante [Donald] Trump. Postula-se que a importância do Soft Power americano é fator fundamental na relação entre Brasil e Estados Unidos, num momento em que o chamado discurso Globalista (um dos aspectos ideológicos visíveis da

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Globalização) encontra-se ameaçado pelo surgimento de governos com tom e retórica mais nacionalistas, como o apresentado pelo governo brasileiro atual, entre muitos outros exemplos. Nesse contexto, os esforços do presidente Bolsonaro no sentido de estreitar laços com o presidente americano [Trump] podem concentrar ainda mais a atenção dada pelos brasileiros aos Estados Unidos e a suas produções culturais, aumentando potencialmente [por exemplo] o número de turistas àquele país e aproximando o Brasil daquele que pode ser considerada o centro difusor da Globalização numa época em que, curiosamente, o governo brasileiro expressa-se em termos de uma retórica anti-globalista.

Palavras-Chave: Globalização; Soft Power americano; Política Externa Brasileira.

1. INTRODUCTION: GLOBALIZATION AS A PHENOMENON

Globalization as a political, economic and social phenomenon has been widely analyzed by various branches of social sciences. Nevertheless, there is no widely accepted definition for the term yet. Most of the media and the general population tend to favor the economist view of the process, interpreting Globalization as fundamentally an extension and deepening of economic integration between countries (STIGLITZ, 2003). Indeed, the economy is at the heart of the Globalization process and one of its most visible parts. More evidently “over the last twenty years, globalization has been gaining breadth and depth. More countries are making goods, communications technology has been leveling the playing field, capital has been free to move across the world” (KOVALEVSKAYA, 2014).

However, the economy is one of many other aspects within the broad international process called Globalization, which touches on other areas as well, such as environment, politics, culture, social relations, etc. In a broader sense, Globalization may be considered as the process in which traditional barriers among national states blur, as a result of technological advancements, which enables the intense exchange of information between people around the world. Or, as some would argue “boundaries cannot hold Globalization back, it touches upon everyone” (ZAKARYA, 2008, p.12). Globalization, moreover, also means the “end of the dictatorship of distance”, for people now can communicate instantaneously through different message apps and social networks, as well as move more rapidly from country to country due to the decreasing prices of air tickets.

Historically, on the other hand, some consider Globalization, expressed as the rise of interdependence between political entities, to be virtually as old as human history, the novelty being that now networks are denser and more complex, while at the same time including more regions and economic classes (NYE, 2003). It is, for instance, acknowledged that in the beginning of the 20th century, more specifically during the interwar period (1919-1939), an incipient (by then) process of Globalization has not brought people together, but rather led to extreme fragmentation (also as a consequence of the 1929 Financial Crisis), provoking the outbreak of nationalism in many European states.

More recently, in the 1990s, this process was characterized by rapid technological changes, the global allocation of production by multinationals and the large flow of international capital. What also helped Globalization during that period was the imperative “to integrate countries all around the world into the open economic order that the United States and its allies built during the Cold War” (MEARSHEIMER, 2018, p.11), giving “a crucial impetus to internationally accepted rules of behavior in trade, finance, taxation, and many other areas” (TKECHENKO, 2017). Alternatively, some believe that “globalization and its primary constituents – economization, informatization and democratization of international relations, alongside with the transformation of international relations into world politics, are offering unprecedented opportunities for development” (ZAKARYA, 2008, p.69).

Globalization, in fact, has transcended traditional distinctions between local, national and global politics, for domestic events can now rapidly become international due to the Internet and evolving news networks that provide almost real-time updates of what is happening in virtually any country in the world. The era of Globalization is also driving the recognition of the so-called “universal” values such as Human Rights, and common concerns for the whole international community such as those related to environmental issues. The UN Charter itself in the 1940s endeavored to affirm values believed to be inherent to the whole of international society, for instance recognizing the dignity of the human person. In regard to environmental protection – which emerges as a necessity out of technological advances and poor business management of resources and disposable materials – states’ ignorance over this topic may lead to increased pollution and deforestation provoking transboundary damage accelerating the effects of the global warming.

Finally, Globalization has also been closely related to a similar term known as Globalism, loosely defined as evolving networks of interdependence between states, linked by international flows of capital, goods, information, people, and ideas. In such a complex and intertwined context, the ties that define social life within national boundaries are weakened, with national cultures melting into a cosmopolitan whole. Ultimately, as specialists argue “globalization processes have led to erosion of State sovereignty” (GOLUBEV, 2017, p.106).

1.1. CRITICISMS OVER GLOBALIZATION

The process of Globalization is considered by some scholars as a largely “American-centric” phenomenon, for a considerable part of global trends originates in the United States (NYE, 2003), seen as a disguise for expansionist ideologies, having the spread of American standards of culture as one of its main features (TSVETKOVA, 2017). Moreover, according to specialists, “the United States, *even when it ceases to be the largest economy in the world, will maintain a great cultural influence.*”

Contrary to what many expected in 2016, US soft power – that is, its attractiveness to outside observers – remains in many ways unchanged” (STUENKEL, 2018; our emphasis)².

The term Soft Power, by its turn, was originally coined by the political scientist Joseph S. Nye Jr. in the early 1990s to name the ideological, moral and/or cultural resources that allow a state to influence others without using coercion or its Hard Power (meaning its economic and military might). Moreover “that role, as the country that will define universal ideals, remains one that only America can play” (ZAKARIA, 2008, pp.234-235). Judging for example by the box office numbers of Hollywood movies around the world, observations concerning the seemingly effective American Soft Power seem to be justified. In fact, most of Hollywood’s top films don’t feature elements of political contention or American foreign policy that are viewed negatively in most countries of the world. Essentially, the majority of those movies are derivative of the fruitful imagination of American directors, screenwriters, storytellers and so on, drawing the attention of large audiences around the world due to somewhat “universally recognizable themes” such as the eternal conflict between good and evil, impossible romances, the hero’s journey, etc.

Essentially, if one links Globalization to the effectiveness of American Soft Power, what is then happening nowadays is a process of “homogenization of thinking and values”, induced by the universalization of English as the international language of communication and the expansion of films and music as disseminators of the “American way of life”, sold to different audiences and cultures worldwide³. As a reaction to this phenomenon (mainly the over-popularization of American culture together with controversial Washington’s foreign policies around the world), an international resentment among populations and countries ranging from Latin America to the Middle East towards the US power and influence has increased. According to Pew Research Center (2017) “the share of the global public that voices a favorable view of America is on the decline” with many opposing “the spread of American ideas and customs around the world” (*ibidem*). As an example, more than 50% of people in countries such as Canada, France, Sweden, Greece, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Russia, Lebanon, Tunisia, Turkey, Jordan, and Mexico hold an unfavorable view about the US (*ibidem*). This attitude towards the US, in turn, could potentially end up provoking negative sentiments towards Globalization as a whole, if taken as an American-led process. Accordingly, because of this homogenizing force of Globalization (led by the US), a counter-movement of cultural parochialism has come to the fore as well, as local movements and governments seek to reaffirm their traditional identities against the external threat of Globalism.

² Original in Portuguese: *Os Estados Unidos, mesmo quando deixarem de ser a maior economia do mundo, manterão uma grande influência cultural. Ao contrário do que muitos esperavam em 2016, o Soft Power estadunidense – ou seja, sua atratividade para observadores externos – permanece, em muitos aspectos, inalterado.*

³ According to Fareed Zakaria (2008, p.79) “Today, almost one-fourth of the planet’s population, 1.5 billion people, can speak some English. And the rate of English’s spread is increasing almost everywhere, from Europe to Asia to Latin America”.

Thus, in today's world "the push of globalization will increasingly be joined by the pull of nationalism - a tension that is likely to define the next decades" (ZAKARIA, 2008)

As some specialists put it

Countries do have collective histories, traditions, and narratives that tend to endow them with some degree of *shared national identity*. Indeed, *the reaffirmation of these identities is a major priority of many governments today*, partly because so many people see their *national or community identity as under assault from globalizing and homogenizing forces* (MAZARR et al, 2018, p.15; our emphasis).

For others "it may seem paradoxical that Globalization and economic modernization are breeding political nationalism, but that is so only if we view nationalism as a backward ideology, certain to be erased by the onward march of progress" (ZAKARIA, 2008, p. 33), so instead of perplexing, this process is supposed to represent a somewhat understandable trend in world politics.

On the economic front, by its turn, "hyper-globalization may have led to impressive growth at the global level, but it also caused major problems that the liberal international order is incapable of fixing" (MEARSHEIMER, 2018, p.24). The hyper-globalization mentioned by the Neorealist Mearsheimer, for instance, began in the late 1980s and accelerated after the Cold War. As such, hyper-globalization was designed to reduce regulation of global markets by removing controls on capital flows and privileging services and financial speculation in detriment of real jobs or investments in production by big companies, causing problems that include: job losses in non-dynamic sectors of the economy, low-paid jobs, uncertainty about the future, environmental mismanagement, successive financial crises⁴ and etc., leading "to widespread dissatisfaction [...] and growing sentiment for governments to adopt protectionist economic policies" (MEARSHEIMER, 2018, p.24).

FIGURE 1 – OCCUPY WALL STREET MOVEMENT (PROTESTERS TAKE TO THE STREETS TO MANIFEST AGAINST WEALTHY INEQUALITY IN THE US)



SOURCE: Opeu.org

⁴ E.g. the Asian Crisis of 1997-1998, which came dangerously close to spread across the entire globe, and the 2008 Financial Crisis, the most severe one since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

With the rise of inequality, the “discontented” (or the losers of Globalization) started to appear and vocalize their concerns in different countries, as demonstrated by the famous “battle of Seattle” in 1999 (at the sidelines of a WTO meeting in that city), when protesters claimed the inaptitude of national governments to manage international economic governance or within the movement Occupy Wall Street more recently, both happening in the US. In this context, for many Globalization is to be considered responsible for the worsening in wealth inequality around the world, benefiting a small economic elite in developed countries in detriment of all the rest. As some experts put it “Global growth produces many good things but also many problems—and the world is not yet equipped to tackle them” (ZAKARYA, 2008).

Finally, politically and economically, Globalization has diminished the importance of national states as decision-makers, even in relation to matters traditionally under their domestic jurisdiction. Matters such as terrorism, environmental degradation, epidemics, global warming and the interconnectedness of financial markets force states all around the world to change their political approach to those problems, once they no longer pertain exclusively to the confines of territorially defined entities. However, it is important to note that one principle introduced by the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 (considered the origin of the modern international state system), the principle of Sovereignty, still remains the basis of international relations. Nevertheless, due to Globalization, states alone are incapable in most cases of planning, controlling and implementing adequate solutions to complex issues of economic, social and environmental consequences, as demonstrated by their unpreparedness in face of the Financial Crisis of 2008, the current migrant crisis in Europe and the further implementation of the Paris Agreements aimed to slow down the advancements of global warming. By the end of the day, the Globalizing character of today’s world put states in a difficult position when it comes to exercise their rights of Sovereignty enshrined centuries ago by Westphalia, once they are no longer able to contain the influence of outside factors into their previously territorially confined spaces.

2. EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION IN BRAZIL

2.1. BRAZIL AS A CONSUMER OF AMERICAN ‘SOFT POWER’ THROUGH CINEMA

On a cultural level, Globalization, as understood as an American-centric phenomenon driven by pop culture, music, and movies, had a significant impact on Brazilian audiences. For instance, regarding the influence of American cinema abroad, Brazil is one of the top foreign markets for Hollywood films according to the Motion Picture Association of America (MAPS OF THE WORLD, 2019, see Table 1 below).

TABLE 1 – TOP 15 COUNTRIES WHERE HOLLYWOOD HAD THE HIGHEST GROSSING IN 2018

RANK	COUNTRY	BOX OFFICE MARKETS – ALL FILMS (US\$ BILLIONS)
1	China	\$9.0
2	Japan	\$2.0
3	United Kingdom	\$1.7
4	South Korea	\$1.6
5	France	\$1.6
6	India	\$1.5
7	Germany	\$1.0
8	Australia	\$0.9
9	Mexico	\$0.9
10	Russia	\$0.9
11	Spain	\$0.7
12	Brazil	\$0.7
13	Italy	\$0.7
14	Netherlands	\$0.4
15	Indonesia	\$0.4

SOURCE: MPAA, 2019

Apart from being the 12th overall biggest market for American movies, Brazil's share in Hollywood's overseas gross profit is also specially highlighted when it comes to the consumption of the more recent wave of Super-Hero movies (see Table 2 below), spearheaded mostly by Marvel Studios, now part of Disney. It is important to note that most of Hollywood's gross profits are made overseas, as shown in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2 – ALL TIME WORLDWIDE BOX OFFICE (AS OF 2019)

Rank	Title	Worldwide	Domestic %	Overseas %	Year	Brazil (Market Place)
1	Avengers: Endgame	\$2,797.8	30.6%	69.4%	2019	4°
2	Avatar	\$2,788.0	27.3%	72.7%	2009	11°
3	Titanic	\$2,187.5	30.1%	69.9%	1997	5°
4	Star Wars: The Force Awakens	\$2,068.2	45.3%	54.7%	2015	9°
5	Avengers: Infinity War	\$2,048.4	33.1%	66.9%	2018	4°
6	Jurassic World	\$1,671.7	39.0%	61.0%	2015	9°
7	The Lion King	\$1,656.3	32.8 %	67.2 %	2019	5°
8	Marvel's The Avengers	\$1,518.8	41.0%	59.0%	2012	3°
9	Furious 7	\$1,516.0	23.3%	76.7%	2015	4°
10	Avengers: Age of Ultron	\$1,405.4	32.7%	67.3%	2015	5°

SOURCE: (BOX OFFICE MOJO, 2019)

Looking at the data shown above, one instantly realizes that foreign markets account for most of Hollywood's profits, which *per se*, is one of the reasons (among others) that explain why American Soft Power continues to hold sway upon many audiences, with Brazil being one of the biggest markets and consumers of Hollywood's productions. Nine out of the 10 biggest Box Offices in Brazil from 2013 till 2018 came from Hollywood, a remarkable number that tends to demonstrate the preferences of Brazilian audiences for American productions. Movies done in Hollywood, in fact, have general appeal not only due to the quality-wise aspect of the final product (way beyond what most national movie industries can achieve due to their budgetary constraints), but also because they pretend to advocate "universal" values.

Back some decades ago, the so-called "Art Diplomacy" of the United States regarding cinema became an important tool used by the American government in order to gain the support of Brazil during World War II. More specifically, by the time war was raging in Europe in the early 1940s, Brazilian president Getulio Vargas was somewhat sympathetic to Hitler's regime, his government also being authoritarian and centered on the figure of the leader. During that period, with the Allied forces preparing their plans to counterattack Nazi Germany, Walt Disney played a role in attracting Brazilian public support and sympathy towards America, a move that came in the form of an addition of a Brazilian character (José "Zé" Carioca) in one of Disney's productions of that time, around 1942 in a cartoon called *Saludos Amigos* (something like Greeting, Friends).

In recent years, Hollywood has also tried to attract more attention and sympathy from Brazilian audiences to its productions (and to the US in a sense) by having important movie scenes filmed in Brazil. Films that had scenes filmed in the country include *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018), *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn – Part 1* (2011), *Fast 5* (2011), *The Incredible Hulk* (2008), *The Expendables* (2010) just to cite a few. Brazilian directors also had their time to shine in Hollywood, being responsible for movies such as *Robocop* (2014) by Jose Padilha, the animations *Ice Age 1* (2002), *2* (2006) and *3* (2009) directed by Carlos Saldanha, *On the Road* (2012) and *Dark Water* (2005) by Walter Salles and *The Constant Gardener* (2005), *Blindness* (2008) by Fernando Meirelles (OBSERVATÓRIO DO CINEMA, 2018). Additionally, famous Brazilian actors had small or significant participations in Hollywood movies including Rodrigo Santoro (*Charlie's Angels*, *300*, *Focus*, *Ben-Hur*, *300 Rise of an Empire*), Wagner Moura (*Elysium*), Alice Braga (*Elysium*, *I am Legend*, *Predators*, *The Shack*, *Blindness*, *On the Road*) and others. If indeed Globalization can be equated to American Soft Power, Brazil is then a prominent consumer of globalization in a cultural sense.

2.2. TOURISM TIES

America's Soft Power depends much on the attractiveness of its culture (ACHARYA, 2017) and as discussed in the last session concerning Brazil as a consumer of Hollywood movie

productions, one is not surprised to find out that the US is the main destiny for Brazilians living abroad, accounting for approximately 23,8% of all Brazilian immigrants (IBGE, 2010). The United States has always been considered a welcoming place for Brazilians who decided to travel or live abroad, being their favorite international destination, according to data collected by the World Tourism Organization and the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism (BRAZIL, 2015). In 2008, the number of Brazilians visiting the US amounted to 770.000 people; in 2013 (one year prior to an economic crisis that hit the country), more than 2 million Brazilian tourists landed in the United States. In 2016, according to information released by the US State Department, Brazil was among the Top-10 overseas states (a category that does not include US's neighbors Canada and Mexico) source of visitors to America. On this note, it is important to mention that "overseas visitations account for half of all international visitations to the United States, with the other half originating from Canada and Mexico" (US TRAVEL, 2017)⁵.

According to US travel department

Most overseas travel to the U.S. originates in relatively few markets. *In fact, the top 10 overseas source markets account for 59 percent of all overseas visitors.* Though the composition has changed over the years, this high concentration has remained fairly constant and is projected to continue. (US TRAVEL, 2017; our emphasis).

FIGURE 2 – INTERNATIONAL VISITATION TO THE US

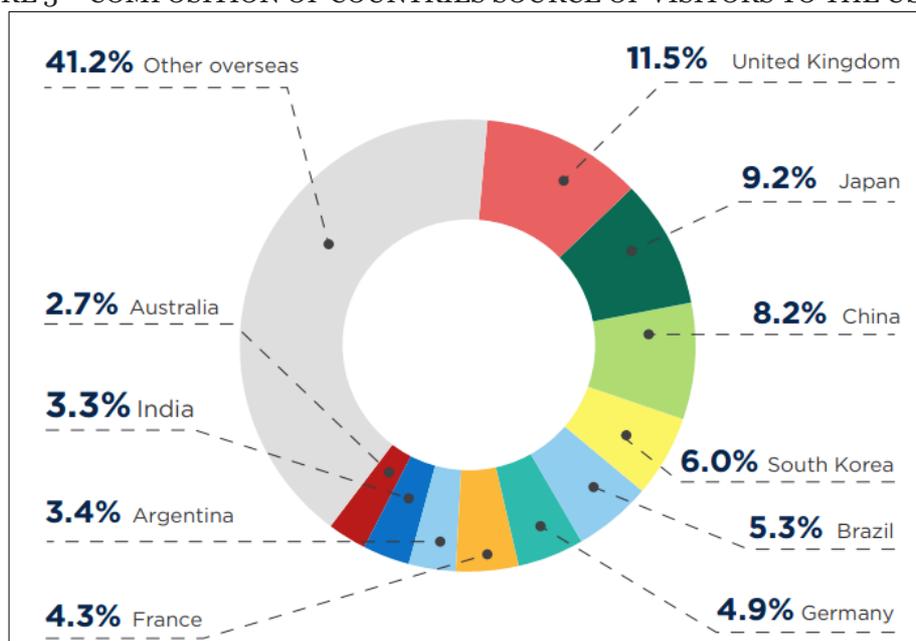


SOURCE: US Travel, 2017

In 2017, Brazil became the 5th overseas country source of visitors to the US, as seen on the graph below.

⁵ In a broader sense "the United States remains the single largest destination for global long-haul travel and the third-largest destination for overall global travel" (US TRAVEL, 2017). Long-haul travel includes travel between countries located in separate geographical regions (i.e. U.S. and Russia) and excludes travel within regions (such as intra-European travel or travel between the U.S. and Canada/Mexico). In 2016, the US accounted for 5,8% of total international travel worldwide (down from 6.5 percent in 2015), falling from second to third place behind France (6.6%) and Spain (6.2%) (US TRAVEL, 2017).

FIGURE 3 – COMPOSITION OF COUNTRIES SOURCE OF VISITORS TO THE US (2017)



SOURCE: US Travel, 2017

One year later, in 2018, visitors coming from Brazil to the US amounted to 1.6 million people (albeit lower than the number of tourists registered in 2013, this figure shows a recovering trend after an acute economic crisis affecting Brazil from 2014 onwards). That number elevated Brazil to 4th place among the overseas countries source of visitors to the US, behind the United Kingdom, Japan and China (JORNAL DE TURISMO, 2018). Following this tendency, some independent organizations predict that the number of Brazilian tourists to visit the US in 2022 is expected to reach 1.84 million people. Regarding destinations inside the US, the state of Florida was favored by 55% of Brazilians who have visited America in 2018 (PANROTAS, 2018). Located in that state, the cities of Orlando and Miami are traditionally attractive for Brazilians due to several big shopping centers and theme parks – such as Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, Sea World, Wet’ n’ Wild, among others, as well as the similar climate. Moreover, the great presence of a Latin American community in those places – including thousands of Brazilians – transform Miami and Orlando into welcoming cities for tourism. Other American cities favored by Brazilians are Las Vegas, known for its casinos, Los Angeles and San Francisco, both in the coastal state of California (PANROTAS, 2018)

Recently, more Brazilians expected the United States to facilitate their entry as tourists into the country, once the newly elected Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro decided to end bureaucratic VISA procedures/requirements for Americans willing to visit Brazil. Starting in June 2019, the influx of tourists coming from Australia, Canada, Japan, and the United States into Brazil will no longer require VISAS; the decision taken by a Presidential decree from Bolsonaro (and endorsed by the

Ministry of Tourism) intends to reinforce international arrivals in Brazil⁶. According to Bolsonaro (2019) himself “the Brazilian government, as a sign of goodwill, has granted whole visa exemption to U.S. nationals, with a view to further encouraging tourism and business travels”, but also strengthening ties between the two countries. This exemption is expected to contribute to Brazil achieving the goal of receiving 12 million foreigners per year, as set in the National Tourism Plan of 2018-2022, vis-a-vis the current number of 6.6 million (MINISTRY OF TOURISM, 2019). Although Bolsonaro’s gesture was not equally reciprocated by US authorities, according to some sources the US government is considering the inclusion of Brazil in the Global Entry program, which allows frequent travelers from certain countries to enter the US without going through immigration lines⁷ (CATRACA LIVRE, 2019).

In short, with ties being strengthened between Brazil and the US, both in culture and in tourism, it is highly unlikely that an overall sentiment of Anti-Americanism (which translates sometimes to anti-Globalism or anti-Globalization sentiments) will take root within the population as a whole (more on this point in our final comments).

3. BOLSONARO’S GOVERNMENT: AN ANTI-GLOBALIST AND PRO-(TRUMP)AMERICANIST PRESIDENT

Brazil’s reputation, some argue, lies in its constructive role in supporting international rules and norms that are crucial for addressing acute global challenges (STUENKEL, 2018). Accordingly, Brazil is an active member of important political groups such as the G20, the WTO, and BRICS, “highlighting the country’s interest and involvement in global affairs” (BEZERRA, 2019, p. 172). At the beginning of the 2000s, Brazil reinforced its role as a responsible regional power, sharing and expanding the values of the international community in the age of globalization (PECEQUILO, 2008)

Nowadays, however, the current government of Jair Bolsonaro tends to reorient Brazil’s foreign policy towards contestation of the international system and of Globalism itself. As an example, recent European criticisms regarding Amazon fires are ascribed by a coterie of closely allied ministers and Bolsonaro’s advisers as “a globally coordinated campaign to weaken Brazil’s territorial

⁶ The period of stay of these visitors released from VISA obligations may be up to 90 days, extendable for an equal period if it does not exceed 180 days, every 12 months. The change applies to holders of a passport valid for travel and leisure, artistic or sporting activities or in exceptional situations of national interest, as well as for tourists in transit (MINISTRY OF TOURISM, 2019).

⁷ Participation in the program does not exempt the person from VISA obtainment procedures. Instead, it speeds up entry into some American airports. To be eligible for Global Entry access, the traveler must go through an interview and prove that he has no criminal record, among other requirements. Currently, citizens from 11 countries have this facility: Argentina, India, Colombia, United Kingdom, Germany, Panama, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan and Mexico (CATRACA LIVRE, 2019)

integrity and keep it from developing economically” (STUENKEL, 2019). In the most recent speech at the UN General Assembly, Bolsonaro asserted the following

Problems, any country has them. However, the sensationalist attacks we have suffered from a large portion of the international media due to the fires in the Amazon have awakened our patriotic feeling. It is a fallacy to say that the Amazon is the heritage of humanity and a misconception, as scientists say, to say our forest is the lungs of the world. Availing themselves of such fallacies, one or another country, instead of assisting, fell in with the press’s lies and behaved disrespectfully, *with a colonialist spirit*. They questioned that which is most sacred to us: *our sovereignty!* (BOLSONARO, 2019a, our emphasis).

According to some critics “masked as a defense of Brazilian sovereignty, the antiglobalist struggle is nothing more than a narrative trick to define, in a radical and irresponsible way, who are the nation’s friends and enemies”⁸ (CASARQUES, 2019). Bolsonaro, some argue, sees himself not limited by the long traditions of Brazilian foreign policy (historically supporting multilateralism and international rules and norms), quite the contrary, his political identity is built on the narrative of radical change (STUENKEL, 2018). On this note, a few months before the last electoral run for the Brazilian presidency post, when questioned by BBC “what would be the impact on Brazil’s international relations if Jair Bolsonaro becomes president?” Aloysio Nunes (2018), a former Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs, demonstrated concern about Bolsonaro’s controversial instances, which, according to him, could harm Brazil’s interests and reputation in the international arena.

Arguably, some actions taken by Bolsonaro’s government seem to be pointing in the direction of disengagement from internationalism (or Globalism as some would have it). For instance, in a recent statement to diplomats, the Bolsonaro administration confirmed Brazil’s withdrawal from the UN migration pact (G1, 2019), an important document that deals with countries’ responsibility in face of migration crises around the world. The issue of migration, on the other hand, is of special importance to Brazil, once the country borders Venezuela, which since 2015 has been facing an economic, political and humanitarian crisis that caused more than 4 million people to leave the country as refugees.

Notwithstanding, Ernesto Araújo, current Minister of Foreign Affairs, had suggested in a published article that Brazil should question the utility of BRICS, focusing instead on the creation of a “nationalist group of countries”, including the US, Brazil, Italy, Russia and others, an anti-globalist coalition without China (GAZETA ONLINE, 2018). In fact, more than 10 years earlier, Latin American specialists already observed that the political map and economic scenario in the continent were undergoing profound changes due to the emergence of social movements and new leaderships

⁸ Original in Portuguese: *Mascarada como defesa da soberania brasileira, a luta antiglobalista nada mais é do que um truque narrativo para definir, de maneira radical e irresponsável, quem são os amigos e inimigos da nação.*

that had brought to the fore a resurgent nationalist and anti-globalization movement (BARBOSA, 2008).

The given situation seems to confirm the observation of some analysts when affirming that “nationalism is the most powerful political ideology” in today’s world (MEARSHEIMER, 2018, p. 20), with Brazil becoming only the newest example of this trend, a country that now vocally opposes Globalism. Moreover, in the country’s new ideological agenda resides an affirmation of Brazil as a protagonist in the “alleged regeneration of Western civilization” through fighting against globalizing trends (CASAROES, 2019a).

On the other hand, the Brazilian President has called himself “a friend of the United States” and his travels to (as well as admiration towards) America have a symbolic effect on his electoral basis, which holds a certain fascination for the United States (CASAROES, 2019a). Bolsonaro’s rhetoric, during and after his elections, has even provoked media around the world to label him “The Trump of the Tropics”. When visiting the USA for bilateral negotiations in March Bolsonaro (BOLSONARO, 2019) claimed: “I have always admired the United States of America. And this sense of admiration has just increased” after Trump took office, complementing afterward

It is time to overcome old resistance and explore the very best potential that is there between Brazil and the United States. After all, it is fair to say that, today, Brazil does have a President who is not anti-American, which is really unprecedented in the past few decades (BOLSONARO, 2019, our emphasis).

FIGURE 4 – BOLSONARO AND TRUMP SHAKING HANDS AT THE WHITE HOUSE



SOURCE: C-SPAN

Bolsonaro's attempts at trying to build friendly relations with the US President, however, does not seem (at this point) to be achieving concrete results for Brazil (such as the country's acceptance into the OECD group or a possible partnership with NATO), once the South American country for a long time has not been at the top of the agenda for the United States. According to specialists "relations between Brazil and the United States have changed throughout history but have always maintained their strategic priority" (PECEQUILO, 2008, p.86)⁹. Traditionally, they "oscillate between the axes of alignment and autonomy, strategic choices between North and South, hemispheric and global, bi and multilateral" (*ibidem*)¹⁰. Nowadays, however, relations from the Brazilian side seem to have taken the route of automatic alignment with its Northern neighbor, due to Bolsonaro's personal preferences and views.

After all the above-mentioned, an important question then remains. What the politically (as well as ideologically) like-minded positions of Bolsonaro and Trump might hold regarding Globalization? First of all, with slogans such as "America First" constantly voiced by Trump during his presidential campaign and "Brazil above everything, God above everyone" voiced by Bolsonaro during the last presidential race in Brazil, both presidents seem to demonstrate their antagonism towards internationalism or Globalist trends and values propagated by media which are, according to them, fed by a great number of fake news directed against their governments as well as by international organizations that supposedly act in detriment of other country's sovereignty and rights to deal of their own internal affairs.

In such a scenario, and with a growing tendency of leaders with a similar view being elected worldwide, Globalization may be indeed under attack (the fiercest one during the last decades), representing a challenge to today's current state of affairs and a possible source of instability for the years ahead.

4. CONCLUSION

Globalization has brought about some advantages in today's day and age. One such example is the fact that nowadays people move more rapidly from country to country due to the decreasing prices of air tickets and of transportation in general. In this particular, Brazil and the US have become closely related, especially because the United States is the most favored country when it comes to Brazilians traveling abroad for tourism. This fact is important because in Globalization terms, even though not deliberately connected, tourism does help promote US Soft Power due to the contact

⁹ Original in Portuguese: *As relações entre o Brasil e os Estados Unidos foram mudando ao longo da história, mas sempre mantiveram sua prioridade estratégica.*

¹⁰ Original in Portuguese: *Tradicionalmente, as relações bilaterais Brasil-Estados Unidos oscilam entre os eixos do alinhamento e da autonomia, das escolhas estratégicas entre o Norte e o Sul, o hemisférico e o global, o bi e o multilateral.*

visitors have with the so-called “American way of life”. Moreover, Brazilian audiences are prone to the consumption of American movies, pop culture, songs and other intellectual productions that help turn the eyes of many to standardized patterns of behaviors, values, and worldviews originated mainly in US soil. Thus, if one is to understand Globalization as an ‘American-centric’ phenomenon, indeed, when it comes to tourism and culture, Brazil is significantly embroiled in it, due to its clear ties with the US mentioned above.

On the other hand, in the political sphere, when it comes to Globalism, a term frequently related to outside forces that tend to undermine the values and traditions of national communities propelled by an international free-flow of ideas, Brazil, due to its new president Jair Bolsonaro and his political rhetoric, is now one among many countries that feel somewhat threatened by an “obscure cosmopolitan agenda”, thus positioning itself as a bulwark of the Westphalian concept of Sovereignty in world affairs. However, at the same time, in a somewhat curious fashion, the new Brazilian president is also an open sympathizer of Donald Trump and constantly praises America for its values and role in the world (the same America that leads the process of Globalization in the first place according to many). It is though a complex endeavor trying to determine what clearly constitutes (or will constitute) Brazil’s point of view when it comes to the country’s position vis-à-vis Globalization (in all its manifestations), once we now witness contradictory signs that, depending on the sphere being analyzed (be it cultural, social or political) may provide evidence to completely different conclusions.

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