Brazilian international identity and foreign policy: Past, present, and future

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"Brazil has always been conscious of its size and has been governed by a prophetic sentiment with regard to its future."

-Joaquin Nabuco, 1908 1

TODAY'S INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM is Characterized by an intense interaction between two conflicting forces: the struggle for the preservation of national identities and the overwhelming impact of globalization.

Jose Ortega y Gasset observed that perspective is one of the components of reality. It does not deform it, but rather organizes it.2 Ortega's general epistemological evaluation is extremely appropriate for analyzing foreign policy, which is clearly an expression of a country's view of the world and its functioning, or, in other words, of its capacity to preserve and enhance its national identity while at the same time fully participating in and taking advantage of global trends and events.

This perspective can have, as in the case of Brazil, a measure of continuity, which can be explained on the basis of how certain persistent factors impact the way the country interacts in the international arena. From among them, we can highlight the South American geographical factor; the relationship with many different neighbors; the use of a single language; the remoteness since independence, in 1822, from points of tension at the core of the international scene; the question of world stratification; and the challenge of development.

These persistent factors help to explain important traits of Brazil's international identity—that is, the set of circumstances and predicates that differentiate the country's vision and interests as an actor in the world system from those of others.

In the following pages, I will try to point out some of the traits of Brazilian identity and to explain how they shaped the country's foreign policy in the past, how they affect it at present, and how they will most likely influence it in the years to come.

THE RELEVANCE OF HISTORICAL ORIGINS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF BRAZILIAN INTERNATIONAL IDENTITY

At the outset of the new millennium, Brazil has a unique identity in the international system. It is; because of its size, a continental country, such as the United States, Russia, China, and India, which were described by George F. Kennan as "monster countries." This designation takes into account not only geographic and demographic data, but also economic and political data and the magnitude of the problems and challenges encountered by these countries.3 Indeed, given the size of its territory (8,547,000 square kilometers-the world's fifth largest country); its population (160 million

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inhabitants); and its GDP of over U.S. $700 billion (the world's seventh largest economy at the end of 1998), Brazil is naturally involved in the shaping of the international order.

Brazil is, of course, very different from China and India, which have cultural heritages that go back thousands of years, as well as from Russia, which lies midway between Asia and Europe and has a relevant and centuries-old presence in the culture and politics of Europe and the United States. Furthermore, located in South America, Brazil is not in the front line of international tensions. If its continental scale is one of the elements of Brazilian international identity, and if national territory and its definition constitute an important aspect of any state's foreign policy, the question that naturally follows is: how did Brazil attain such a continental scale?

Brazil has its origins in Portuguese overseas expansion, one of the constituent elements that ushered in the modern age. Portuguese exploration and its consequences transformed the country from a small independent Iberian kingdom to an empire. Camoes's Lusiadas, the only great epic poem of the modern age, drawing from the great navigations that shaped Brazil, expresses the identity and purposes of Portugal: to spread faith and empire, and to promote trade, including that of pau-brash, so designated by that author, which constituted the new country's first export-oriented economic activity. These were done while holding in one hand the sword (representing conquest) and in the other the pen (representing culture).4

Having been simultaneously a poet, navigator, and warrior, Camoes incorporated knowledge acquired from accomplished experience into the Lusiadas. The poet's knowledge was such that, in line with Portuguese tradition, it gave him, as suggested by Gilberto Freyre, an anthropological point of view that made him aware of differences in culture, flora, and fauna, as well as making him susceptible to the attraction of non-European women.5 Miscegenation, which was to constitute one essential trait of the Brazilian people, is in part the result, on a collective scale, of the existence of such an attraction, just as Portuguese openmindedness was essential for the occupation of the territory that was to become Brazil.

In effect, as Sergio Buarque de Hollanda has shown, in order to tread the paths—the invitation to movement and the search for riches—that inspired the Sao Paulo bandeirantes to lead the process that widened the Portuguese presence in South America, it was necessary to deal with the geographic reality of a then unknown and mostly tropical continent. Colonization was achieved by continuously adapting to the environment and displaying the necessary flexibility to incorporate "primitive" indigenous standards. Lifestyles brought over from Europe were established only later, and gradually.6

During the period when Brazil was a colony, as well as afterwards, diplomats complemented the work of navigators and bandeirantes in the establishment of national boundaries.7 From 1580 to 1640, during the reign of Felipe II, Felipe III, and Felipe IV of Spain, territorial expansion was politically facilitated by the union of the two Iberian powers in a dual monarchy—the Felipean era for Brazil—during which time there were no diplomatic differences to instigate difficulties between Portuguese and Spanish possessions. It is worth mentioning the Portuguese-Dutch negotiations that took place between 1641 and 1699. By means of such negotiations, Portugal reestablished diplomatically the monolithic character of its dominion in South America, which for a quarter of a century had been broken by the Dutch presence in Pernambuco. This foreign policy development had great importance for preserving what was to become the future of Brazilian territorial unity.8

The Treaty of Madrid, signed in 1750 by the Portuguese and Spanish Crowns, established for the first time the boundaries of Portuguese and Spanish possessions in America. This treaty corresponded to
the renunciation of imaginary lines of demarcation—a point made in 1894 by Baron Rio Branco when discussing the question of boundaries related to a territorial dispute between Brazil and Argentina, which was successfully submitted to the arbitration of U.S. President Grover Cleveland. It stipulated that “boundaries should be determined by the most notable and best known rivers and mountains, and that each of the Contracting Parties should remain in the possession of what it held at that date, excepting those mutual cessions that might be made.”9 In enshrining the principle of uti possidetis as the title for acquisition of territory in South America, Luso-Brazilian diplomacy legitimized and allowed for the legalization, at the international level, of the occupation of the territory that is now Brazil. This Portuguese heritage provided a continuous link with the past that Brazilian diplomacy would successfully explore.

Territory is one of the components of the nation-state at the international level; government is another. The creation of a sovereign government in Brazil after independence in 1822, in what was the first wave of decolonization, allowed for a continuity that differentiates Brazil from all other countries in the Americas. Indeed, the fracture that expresses the wider political and economic process of disaggregation of the colonial system occurs while retaining important elements of continuity with regard to Portugal, thus making Brazil's entry into the concert of nations unique. In 1808, the Portuguese court responded, with British support, to the expansionism of Napoleonic troops in the Iberian peninsula by transplanting itself to Brazil, a contingency plan that was not new in Portugal. The presence, up to 1821, of Dom João in Brazil transformed the colony into the metropolis. In 1815, by suggestion of the Congress of Vienna, which Portugal attended, Brazil was elevated to the category of a united kingdom alongside Portugal and Algarve. In 1822, Dom Pedro, the son of Dom João VI, who was now king of Portugal, proclaimed Brazilian independence. Dom Pedro, who was the heir to the Portuguese throne, had stayed behind in Brazil as regent. Recognition of the new empire was obtained, with British support, with the Treaty of 1825, celebrated between father and son.10

The constitutional monarchy, which extended until 1889, managed to keep Brazil united within its vast territory, as had been one of the aims of its builders. Monarchy was the basis for the specificity of Brazilian international identity in the nineteenth century within the Americas: an empire amidst republics; a great Portuguese-speaking territorial mass that remained united while the Hispanic world fragmented and, in the northern hemisphere, the United States expanded its territory. That is why, in the nineteenth century, in view of our position in South America, to be Brazilian meant not to be Hispanic. In this respect, Brazil recreates, on a continental scale, the sociologic and linguistic uniqueness that have historically characterized Portugal in the Iberian peninsula and in Europe. The perception that to be Brazilian also means to be Latin American comes later, during the Republic, as pointed out by Euclides da Cunha.11 Only when the U.S. Manifest Destiny doctrine increasingly asserted itself internationally did prominent diplomats and thinkers emphasize what we had in common with "nuestra America."12

Territory and government only have meaning in a nation-state as an expression of their people. Jose Bonifacio—the "Patriarch of Independence"—coined the original metaphor: the Brazilian people, he wrote, should result from a new alloy that would amalgamate, in a solid and political body, the heterogeneous metals represented by whites, Indians, people of mixed race, freed blacks, and slaves, all of whom were part of the Brazilian population at the beginning of the nineteenth century. As an enlightened reformist, he saw the legislator as a wise and prudent sculptor who makes statues out of pieces of rock. That is why he proposed the integration of the Indian, the abolition of slavery and of slave traffic, and land-tenure reform.13

As we enter the twenty-first century we are far from having resolved the question of social exclusion, which had been part and parcel of Jose Bonifacio's political project. This is partly the result of the fact
that the maritime slave traffic from Africa to Brazil was discontinued only in 1850. Similarly, the abolition of slavery, which had been proposed by Jose Bonifacio in his 1823 plan to the General Constitutional Assembly, was achieved only in 1888. As Great Britain dedicated itself through naval power to repressing the traffic, in what constituted a sort of nineteenth-century precedent for "humanitarian intervention," it collided with the Brazilian empire, creating difficulties in the bilateral relations of the two countries.14 But while social exclusion remains a pending and recurrent problem in the Brazilian agenda, the racial amalgam conceived by Jose Bonifacio in his project for Brazil did, in fact, occur.

As Darcy Ribeiro observed, Brazil is a confluence of various racial matrices and distinct cultural traditions that, in South America and under the Portuguese, gave rise to a new people. This new people is not quite a transplanted people that reconstructs Europe in other lands, nor is it like the witness-people of Mexico and of the Andean highlands—the heirs of the great pre-Columbian civilizations—who today live in a dual culture, facing the problem of integration to Western culture. This new people is unique, with its own characteristics, yet it is unequivocally tied to the Portuguese matrix, in view of the single language unifying the vast national territory.15

The new people expresses itself through the Brazilian culture that was "Europeanized" in the decisive moments that led to the creation of a Brazilian literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As Antonio Candido points out, such literature corresponds to an interactive system between the authors, the public, and the works themselves to become a national process of mutual references.16 This process was consolidated in time and permeated society through codes of language, beliefs, and behavior. Portuguese Western heritage was enriched and modulated by the historical non-European elements of Brazil: the Indians and the Africans. As a result of the migratory flows of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, other Europeans (for example, Italians, Spaniards, Germans, and Slavs) as well as non-Europeans (Arabs and Japanese) were aggregated into this cultural and demographic matrix. This resulted in a linguistically and culturally homogeneous country in this pluralism of its continental scope, despite the persistent dilemma of social exclusion. That is why, to borrow an expression from Jose Gulherme Merquior, Brazil is "Another West" a poorer, more enigmatic, more problematic West, but no less the West.17

These aspects of the Brazilian condition are projected outside the country and constitute elements of the Brazilian international identity. The new people that resulted from the first wave of decolonization brought affinities that led Brazil to sustain the liquidation of colonialism. This was done at the United Nations beginning in 1953, occurred with more precision in 1960, and proceeded with unequivocal assertiveness in 1962 and 1963. In 1961, Brazilian Foreign Minister Afonso Arinos stated to the UN General Assembly that "the liberation movement of the old colonial peoples will not turn back. Brazil, an ex-colony, is constructing a new civilization, in a mostly tropical territory, with people from all races. Its destiny therefore conferred upon it a firmly anti-colonialist and anti-racist conduct."18 In 1963, Foreign Minister Araujo Castro, in his "Three D's" speech at the United Nations (decolonization, development, and disarmament) added economic arguments in making the case for the eradication of the historical and sociological archaism represented by colonialism.19

The economic dimension of anticolonialism mentioned by Araujo Castro is an integral part of the concept of a Third World. As we know, this concept acquired more density with decolonization as well as political consistency when the NorthSouth cleavage expanded in spite of U.S.-Soviet Union bipolarity, which by then already showed the breaches imposed on it by an increasingly complex world. In the Third World, however, it should be pointed out that Brazil expressed the uniqueness of its position through the "Another West" component of its identity. That is why Brazil was and is part of the Group of 77 (G-77), which expresses the impact of poverty in the economies of the Third
World, yet always remained, even at the height of "Third Worldism," an observer of the nonaligned movement.20

The continental dimension of Brazilian international identity started to be built in the nineteenth century as Brazil emerged in the concert of nations. In that century, Brazil found itself distant from international tensions and could dedicate itself to what Luiz Felipe de Seixas Correa calls the search for the "consolidation of national space."21 This search was the first guiding line for Brazilian foreign policy. The basic goal was effective occupation of territory and its defense, especially of the River Plate Basin where the Paraguay War took place. This period culminated in the political figure of Rio Branco, whose work and effort determined the definitive configuration of the country's borders.22

The establishment of borders is always a key problem for the foreign policy of any nation. Russia, China, and India, which, like Brazil, are continent-sized, are still bedeviled by border problems and because of this have waged war or had war waged against them throughout their history. The United States has only two neighbors-Canada and Mexico-and, in implementing its Manifest Destiny in the nineteenth century, changed its borders at the expense of its southern neighbor. Brazil has ten neighbors-it is one of the countries of the world with the greatest number of neighbors-and it was Rio Branco who peacefully drew the Brazilian map, first as representative and Brazilian counsel in international arbitrations, then, from 1902 to 1912, as minister of external relations.23

The stature of Rio Branco's diplomatic achievement is undeniable. As Rubens Ricupero asserts, it is difficult to find, in the history of international relations, a negotiating performance and an exclusively peaceful pattern similar to the Brazilian one in the establishment of national borders.24 Rio Branco, himself a baron but a paragon of republican Brazil, was the last great representative of the work of the leading statesmen and diplomats of the Brazilian empire. He provided, through his exceptional knowledge of Brazilian history and geography, a link of continuity and at the same time an expression of the potential for change, which is important for understanding Brazilian international identity.

Not only did Rio Branco bequeath to Brazil a peacefully obtained map of continental proportions, he was also the great institution-builder of Itamaraty, the Brazilian Ministry of External Relations. He inspired the style of diplomatic behavior that, in my view, characterizes Brazil. Such a style is one of constructive moderation and expresses itself, in the words of Gelson Fonseca Jr., as the capacity to "de-dramatize the foreign policy agenda, that is, to reduce conflicts, crises and difficulties to their diplomatic bedrock."25 Such constructive moderation is influenced by a Grotian assessment of international reality-that is, by a concentration on the value of diplomacy and law in international intercourse as appropriate ways to deal with conflict, foster cooperation, and reduce the impetus of power politics.26

BRAZIL IN SOUTH AMERICA: ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL IDENTITY

While evaluating the results of his efforts in consolidating the size of Brazil, Rio Branco commented that the next phase of his work would be that of "contributing to union and friendship among the South American countries." Rio Branco's program was deeply coherent. Ortega y Gasset's well-known formulation is "I am I and my circumstances." With this he intends to show that there is no isolated self, that every person is related to his specific circumstances. The location of Brazil in South America as a given is one of the basic circumstances of its international identity, of its collective "self." That is why Brazil's relationships with its neighbors are not an option but a necessity of its geographical circumstances.27 Thus, once the country was disentangled from the issue of borders, a constant goal for Brazilian foreign policy became to work for union and friendship among South American nations.
Alongside motivations of Kantian "perpetual peace" that might sustain such a goal, it is worth mentioning that a peaceful climate in South America is an important condition for "development of national space," the predominant orientation of post-Rio Branco Brazilian foreign policy.

During the 1930s, Brazilian efforts in search of conciliatory solutions—whether in the question of Leticia, which resulted in armed conflict between Colombia and Peru, or in the Chaco War between Paraguay and Bolivia—were in line with Rio Branco's program. In the 1990s, Brazil's role as one of the guarantors of the 1942 Rio de Janeiro Protocol to help creatively resolve the territorial dispute between Peru and Ecuador is part of the same program. The solution that was found and that brought to term the 1942 Protocol was one of the great diplomatic accomplishments of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso in his first term of office and of his Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia, both of whom were personally involved in all phases of the negotiation.

Rio Branco's conception of a foreign policy to bring union and friendship to South American nations finds, according to Rubens Ricupero, its context within an axis of relative equality among partners. As part of such an axis, it is representative of a classic concept of diplomatic action: countries should make the best politics out of their geography. This directive was recently furthered in order to favor and stimulate the development of national space. In effect, in a world that simultaneously regionalizes and globalizes, it is convenient to make not just the best politics but also the best economy out of a geography, as, for example, the Europeans have been doing since the 1950s with their integration process. That is the reason for a line of action set on transforming the Brazilian borders from classic borders of separation into modern borders of cooperation.

The following provide some examples of foreign-policy landmarks aimed at fostering the opportunities for economic cooperation: the 1960 ALALC (Latin American Free Trade Association), superseded in 1980 by ALADI (Latin American Development and Integration Association); the 1969 Plate Basin Treaty; the 1973 Treaty with Paraguay that led to the construction of the Itaipu hydroelectric plant; the 1979 Tripartite agreement between Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay on the Itaipu and Corpus hydroelectric plants' compatibility; the 1978 Treaty of Amazonian Cooperation; and the 1979 Tripartite agreement between Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay on the Itaipu and Corpus hydroelectric plants' compatibility; the 1978 Treaty of Amazonian Cooperation; and the inauguration, in the first semester of 1999, of the Bolivia-Brazil gas pipeline, bringing about a positive conclusion to a number of initiatives that had been going back and forth since the 1930s.

But the paradigm of this process of transformation of the role of borders in South America is Mercosur—a trading bloc established by the Treaty of Asuncion in 1991. It was the result of an effective and strategic restructuring of the Brazil-Argentina relationship, which had alternated between periods of close convergence and of distancing and suspicion. The previous, preparatory phase for Mercosur occurred in the 1980s after the military regimes had drawn to a close. Such a phase was marked by initiatives taken by Presidents Sarney and Alfonsin, who, based on the existing precedents of convergence, brought the two countries to a new level of understanding. The 1988 Treaty on Integration, Cooperation, and Development reflected this new level and, at a time of great economic difficulties for Latin America, represented an attempt at stimulating development by simultaneously focusing on the broader political context. This context contemplated issues such as the consolidation of democratic values, respect for human rights, and the reduction of tensions, including confidence-building measures in the military-strategic area, particularly in the nuclear field.

The shape acquired by Mercosur in the 1990s is the accomplishment of Presidents Fernando Collor, Itamar Franco, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso on the Brazilian side and President Carlos Menem on the Argentinean side. In 1995 new advances were generated by the implementation of a customs union. It not only incorporated Paraguay and Uruguay into the integration process, but also created an
associative link with Bolivia and Chile. Mercosur expresses a vision of open regionalism; it attempts to render the internal and external modernization agendas compatible with each other—a necessity for both Brazil and Argentina in the 1990s, given the exhaustion of the import-substitution model for the state and the economy. It also represents a democratic reference for its constituent states, and, notwithstanding the difficulties it has been facing—inevitable as they are in any economic integration process—Mercosur remains a symbol of a new South American presence in the post-Cold War world.36

The Brazilian-Argentinean understanding lies at the heart of Mercosur, just as the understanding between Germany and France stood as the cornerstone for the construction of the European Community. The Brazilian-Argentinean understanding also possesses an international security dimension in the nuclear field that transcends South America. In effect, the nuclear confidence-building measures implemented in the 1980s gave way in the 1990s to the establishment of a formal mechanism of mutual inspections; opened nuclear installations to international supervision; and allowed for the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which bans nuclear weapons in Latin America, to come fully into effect. With Brazilian adhesion in 1998 to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the international nonproliferation regime increased its scope, since Argentina and Brazil were no longer considered "threshold states."37

In short, given its geography, its historical experience, and the line of continuity of its diplomatic activity, Brazil is at ease with the South American component of its international identity. Its immediate vicinity, in contrast to that of China, India, or Russia, is propitious, in a Grotian sense, to what President Fernando Henrique Cardoso calls the organization of the South American space.38 At the turn of the millennium, the shadow of concern over the organization of this area lies in an aspect of international security that was modified in the post-Cold War world. Indeed, if the threats of military confrontation that could affect us directly have diminished, the diffuse risks of anomic violence have increased.39 In South America, these risks stem from the weakness in the state power of some of our neighbors to deal appropriately with centrifugal forces that can bring certain particularities up to higher levels, including organized crime, illegal drugs, and guerrilla activity.

BRAZIL IN THE ASYMMETRICAL AXIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

The construction, during the twentieth century, of the South American component of the Brazilian international identity was achieved by means of a foreign policy developed along the axis of relations between relatively equal states. Even though South America may have been very far from the center of the international political and economic system, such an axis of relatively equal relations evidently was and continues to be influenced by another axis, which Rubens Ricupero calls the axis of asymmetrical relations. This axis corresponds to the interaction of both Brazil and the other South American states with those countries from which we are all separated by an "appreciable political and economic power differential."40

In the beginning of the twentieth century, the very "unwritten alliance" with the United States established by Rio Branco took this into account. Indeed, from the Brazilian perspective, such an alliance had two objectives: with respect to the asymmetrical axis, to release Brazil from the preponderance of its previous economic and political relationships with the European powers; with respect to the symmetrical axis, simply to preserve it as such, thus seeking to avoid its contamination by the former's asymmetry. For Rio Branco, such contamination was always an underlying risk.41

Both Rio Branco and Joaquim Nabuco—Brazil's first ambassador to the United States—took care in preserving a margin of autonomy when developing the Brazilian approach to PanAmericanism. Throughout the twentieth century, such a concern would mark Brazilian identity in multilateralism and
the asymmetrical axis. One example of this concern is the interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine. In
the Brazilian view, this should not be taken as a unilateral declaration by the United States, but rather
as part of the International Law of the Americas, applicable through cooperative and joint action on
the part of the main American republics.42

After the consolidation of national space was formally achieved, Brazil could begin to express its
uneasiness with the European concert's logic of unquestioned conferral of governance over world
order to the great powers. Here lies the significance of Ruy Barbosa's diplomatic action as Brazilian
delegate at the second Peace Conference in the Hague in 1907. As the representative of Republican
Brazil inaugurating the country's presence in international fora, Ruy Barbosa, with Rio Branco's
support and invoking the legal equality of states, called for a role in the elaboration and the application
of the norms that were to apply to the great international problems of the time, thereby disputing the
logic of the great powers.43

The same reasoning governed Brazil's participation in the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. The
characterization of the great powers as nations that have "general interests" as vast as the inter-state
system itself seemed illogical to Pandia Calogeras, the Brazilian delegate to the conference. It was
illogical given that the new inspiring principle of the League of Nations, based on Wilson's Fourteen
Points, called into question the old logic of the European concert by affirming the equality of nations
with regard to the law. The implementation of the conference regiment, which proposed a distinction
between great powers with general interests and powers with limited interests (all others), would deny
this concept. As Calogeras pointed out in a cable to Itamaraty and in his diary entries, the
consequences of this, from the Brazilian perspective, would be to ascribe to the great nations the role
of courts from which to judge the interests of the smaller ones.44

This evaluation led the Brazilian delegation to take the initiative to act in coordination with other
nations of "limited interests," undertaking demarches that resulted in the great powers accepting the
presence of smaller ones in the various commissions of the conference. The success of such demarches
allowed the Brazilian delegation to the Peace Conference, headed by future president Epitacio Pessoa,
to deal not only with specific Brazilian interests (back dues for coffee sales and the legalization of the
property of merchant vessels) but also with "general interests" inherent to the establishment of the new
post-World War I international order. Subsequently, Brazil also dealt with "general interests" as a
temporary member of the Council of the League of Nations, in which category it remained until 1926.
In that year, Brazil withdrew from the League, given that it had not obtained, after Germany's
accession, the status of permanent member of the Council, a diplomatic objective that had been
established by President Arthur Bernardes.45

The assertion that Brazil has "general interests"-that is, a vision of the world and its functioning-and
that such a vision is important to safeguard and to put forward the country's specific interests, as made
explicit in the post-World War I period, would become a constant trait of the Brazilian international
identity during the twentieth century. The locus standi for this assertion resides in the diplomatic
competence with which Brazil has made its presence felt in international life as a medium-sized power
of continental dimensions and regional relevance.

It is not easy to define what constitutes a medium-sized power.46 Giovanni Botero, in his 1589 book
on the "reason of state," points out that such powers would have the characteristics of not being as
weak and thus not as subject to violence as the small powers and simultaneously not being so great as
to provoke envy as do the great powers. Moreover, Botero observes that since those in the middle
participate in extremes, they have, in principle, the sensibility to exercise the Aristotelian virtue of
searching for the balanced middle ground.47 The Aristotelian middle ground corresponds to one form
of justice and can, for that reason, depending on the diplomatic situation, become an argument for legitimacy, capable of attaining a generalizing scope and therefore of being of interest to the other participants in international life.

Brazil has shown the capacity to articulate such consensual solutions. The locus standi for exercising this role—that of working for the "possibility of harmony"—stems from the fact that Brazil is not a scary "monster country." In the words of former minister of external relations Saraiva Guerreiro, it does not have "an excess of power, neither an excess of cultural, economic, or political attraction." That is why it needs to construct its international presence on the basis of confidence, which expresses itself through coherence. If the limitation of its means makes it a medium power in the international system, its concurrent condition as a medium power of continental proportions naturally confers upon it a role in the shaping of the world order. It is this conjunction of factors that gives Brazil "softpower" credibility, to use Joseph Nye's terms—a necessity if it is to display the Aristotelian virtue of middle-ground justice.

This role of mediation within multilateral diplomacy is not a given. It is a challenge posed by each diplomatic situation. Success or failure depends upon the greater or lesser intensity, at one particular moment, of existing tensions and controversies at the international level. It also depends on the talent of delegates who need to explore possibilities in international form so as to generate power through joint action, as Hannah Arendt would say.

The soft-power role of Brazilian international identity has existed under the various and variable possibilities offered by internal and international circumstances. Such a component has also been relevant in more recent times. In the field of the environment, this occurred during the Rio Conference of 1992 as the heuristic components of sustainable development were worked out so as to give new conceptual legitimacy to the question of development from the global issue perspective. In the economic sphere, it was highlighted at the conclusion of the Uruguay Round that led to the creation of the World Trade Organization. In the field of values, the soft-power role helped lead the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights to a successful conclusion. That conference gave international recognition not only to the universality, indivisibility, interdependence, and interrelationship of various human rights (civil and political rights; social and economic rights; collective rights) but also to the legitimate international interest in their promotion and protection.

THE SEARCH FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SPACE

During the twentieth century, internal analyses and reflections on Brazilian national identity spurred the idea that the development of national space should become the characterizing note of Brazilian foreign policy. A stronger note, however, was given by the discussion of the contrast between the potential and the reality of a country of continental proportions such as Brazil. In this context, it is worth examining the role of nationalism in shaping Brazil's international identity. In line with one of the interpretations of Brazilian history, nationalism in Brazil is oriented toward the internal integration of its great national space. It is therefore not, like others, an expansionist nationalism, and it is thus compatible with a Grotian vision and style of diplomatic behavior.

Nationalism is usually a term that allows for multiple meanings. In the case of Brazil, and to summarize a multifaceted discussion, I believe we can say, as Antonio Candido does, that if there is a naive and patriotic vein in extolling Brazil's potential as a new country full of future promise, there is also a more profound view that realistically evaluates the country's deficiencies. This evaluation is rooted in the social-science "classics" of the 1930s and in their successors of subsequent years that attempted to interpret Brazil. Using different methodological approaches and from distinct political
orientations, such important academics focused on explaining what were the "faults" in the country's formation. In this sense, the 1930 Revolution which corresponds to a political, economic, and cultural watershed in twentieth-century Brazilian history—would signify a generalized change of perspective. It led to a critical evaluation of Brazilian nationalism as it brought into being the notion of Brazil as an underdeveloped country.53

The consequence of this was the perception that nationbuilding in the twentieth century would require a project to correct, through systematic action, the original "faults" in the country's formation, including social exclusion. Therein lies the strength of the idea of a nationalism that seeks to integrate national space through development. The latter would result from a goal-oriented nationalism. As Helio Jaguaribe, in his important analytical reflection on the significance of nationalism in Brazil, said: "nationalism is not imposed by our peculiarities, neither is it a simple expression of national characteristics. It is, on the contrary, a means for achieving an end: development."54

From the 1930s on, these reflections clearly oriented Brazilian foreign policy and diplomatic action by means of two principal guiding lines. One was to obtain and cultivate space for the exercise of autonomy—that is, in the words of then-minister of external relations Horacio Lafer in 1959, the zeal "to preserve the freedom to interpret the country's reality and to find Brazilian solutions to Brazilian problems."55 The second was to identify which external resources could be mobilized in different international situations in order to respond to the internal imperative represented by the challenge of development.

The effort to translate internal necessities into external possibilities, thus increasing the country's control over its destiny and following the logic of a nationalism of ends, finds its inaugural and significant paradigm during the various phases of the first Getulio Vargas government (1930-1940). In this period, which begins under the impact of the 1929 crisis that interrupted the flow of capital and caused a collapse in the price of coffee, then the country's main export product, the first problem was to obtain hard currency for financing international trade and for meeting Brazilian financial obligations. In light of such imperatives, the Vargas government explored the breaches that existed in the international system by maintaining pragmatic equidistance from the great powers and by using the country's potential strategic importance in order to obtain external resources to cover internal needs.

As Gerson Moura shows, the start of the war turned pragmatic equidistance into an actual alignment with the United States. Such an alignment was imposed by the weight and importance of the United States in the inter-American context, of which Getulio Vargas was keenly aware. That explains the care with which he cultivated his relationship with Roosevelt. This alignment was, nonetheless, negotiated in light of the diplomatic logic represented by a nationalism of ends, drawing upon what the country could offer for the war effort—that is, essential raw materials and military bases in the Northeast that were important for the war in Africa. Such a negotiation finds expression at two complementary levels: the economic and the military-strategic.56

At the economic level, the objective of the Vargas government was to promote the country's development through a controlled participation in the world economy—a plain compatible with what was occurring in the rest of the world. The attainment of this objective is illustrated by the financing that was, after protracted discussions, obtained from the United States for the establishment of the steel industry in Brazil. This is how Getulio Vargas referred to this diplomatic success in his diary entry of May 31, 1940: "just before retiring, I received a coded cable from our Ambassador in Washington which informed that the American government [was] ready to finance our steel program. It was a happy news which filled me with satisfaction. It is a new sort of life for Brazil: wealth and power."57
At the military-strategic level, the objective was to reequip the Armed Forces and to obtain the support of the United States for Brazil's decision to participate effectively in the war through the dispatch of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force to the European theater of operations. This decision gave Brazil-in contrast, for example, with Peron's Argentina-the locus standi and the trustworthiness of a country that was truly aligned with the victors who subsequently built the new world order. The rigid bipolarity of the Cold War and the priority given by America to the reconstruction of Europe (by way of the Marshall Plan) left, during the Dutra government, few rewards for the Brazilian locus standi as an aligned country and for a diplomatic logic marked by a nationalism for achieving ends.

The existence of fissures in the international system (Suez; the Hungarian Revolution; Bandung) opened spaces for Brazilian foreign policy to implement a nationalism of ends in a more outspoken manner, all the while conducting its diplomacy in Grotian style. The Pan-American Operation can be seen in this context as the great initiative through which the presidential diplomacy of Juscelino Kubitschek (1956-1961) succeeded in articulating the internal imperative of development within the inter-American system.

This imperative was universalized through the independent foreign policy pursued by Presidents Quadros (1961) and Goulart (1961-1964). The internal and external factors that precipitated the military regime in 1964 initially reduced the scope for "autonomy from a distance" brought about by the independent foreign policy. Nonetheless, the profound forces of the nationalism of ends, as a strong component of Brazilian national identity, once again came to light in view of the internal situation and of the functioning of the internal system, which gave new meanings to the North-South polarity in international life (OPEC). The clearest expression of this can be found in the responsible pragmatism of President Geisel (1974-1978) and of his minister of external relations, Azeredo da Silveira.

In summary, while the international system that prevailed was that of defined East-West, North-South polarities, and while import substitution based on the country's continental dimension was economically successful, Brazilian foreign policy worked on the basis of the logic of a nationalism for achieving ends-seeking autonomy from a distance. This operated in a constructive and flexible manner, focused on exploring areas of opportunity offered by the competitiveness of bipolarity. The objective, as formulated by San Tiago Dantas, was to find emancipation through development.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The fall of the Berlin Wall was an inaugural event: it marks, along with the downfall of the Soviet Union, the end of the "short twentieth century." The collapse of the Wall and its reverberations during the 1990s no doubt correspond to a shift in the functioning and configuration of the international system after World War II. Indeed, international life ceased to be structured around the defined polarities of East/West, North/ South relations. It became characterized by undefined polarities, subject to the "deep forces" of two different types of logic that operate in dialectical contradiction yet also in mutual complementarity: the logic of globalization (of finance, economy, information, values); and the logic of fragmentation (of identities, state secession, fundamentalism, social exclusion).

The interaction between one logic that integrates world space and another that disintegrates and questions the first has much to do with what President Fernando Henrique Cardoso denominates an "asymmetrical globalization." Such a concept highlights the perception of discontinuities in the international system, which reveal the existence of an unequivocal shortfall in the governance of global spaces.
How do monster countries, including Brazil, position themselves with regard to these new realities? Having won the Cold War in peace, the United States is today the only world superpower; it is relatively at ease in this world of discontinuities and has been exploring the opportunities offered by the current international system in order to assert unilaterally its own globalism. China, for its part, was one of the great beneficiaries, at the military-strategic level, of the end of the Cold War, and managed to achieve exceptional development by competently administering the interplay between what is "internal" and "external" in a globalized world of undefined polarities. For India, this new world modified the country's military-strategic situation and how it fit into its regional setting. Such a modification explains India's affirmation as a nuclear power outside the purview of the NPT (Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons) as well as its cautious approach toward the logic of globalization, whose imbalances can release, within the country, centrifugal forces that up to now have been managed by its own democratic system. As the successor to the Soviet Union after its Cold War defeat, Russia continues to wield an impressive nuclear capability but finds itself in the midst of great economic and political difficulties and searches for a new international identity. In short, the abovementioned monster countries continue to be scary, albeit in new configurations and for different reasons.

How is Brazil doing in the face of such new realities? It is important to mention that Brazilian society has changed significantly since 1930 as a result of a set of public policies, including foreign policy, inspired by a nationalism for achieving ends. Brazil urbanized, industrialized, democratized, diversified its exports, broadened its diplomatic relations—although it did not, nevertheless, correct one of the "faults" of its original formation: the problem of social exclusion.

At the internal level, the decade of the 1980s saw a politically successful transition from the military regime to democracy. Economically, Brazil witnessed, amongst the external debt crisis and inflation, the exhaustion of the import-substitution model. Such exhaustion became even less equivocal in view of the changes that took place at the international level after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Under the impact of diminishing costs for transport and communications, globalization, through technological innovation, led to the dilution of the economic and financial significance of borders, fraying the difference between the "internal" and the "external." In a world of undefined polarities, such fraying put in question the efficiency and dynamism of the process of internalizing productive chains by means of the controlled insertion of the country into the world economy. Indeed, globalization not only accelerated financial flows, but also precipitated the expansion of productive chains, which are now organized on a worldwide level. It made outsourcing a routine corporate procedure and turned foreign trade and the production of goods and services into two sides of the same coin. For this reason, it became inoperative to promote development through a state-controlled relative distancing from the world economy, relying on the country's continental scale and on the operation of the previous logic of nationalism for achieving ends. The world that Brazil used to administer as an "externality" became internalized, thus putting an end to the effectiveness of the repertory of solutions that shaped the country in the twentieth century.

President Fernando Collor (1990-1992) perceived the magnitude of these future changes. He had what in classical Greece was termed eustochia—sharpness of gaze. He thus sought, with clumsy vigor, to reorder the country's internal and external agendas, in a process that was jeopardized by the serious internal problems that led to his impeachment. His succession by Vice President Itamar Franco (1992-1994), properly following constitutional procedures and therefore attesting to the maturity of democratic institutions, provided the country with an early pause to digest the scope of the change. In his first term of office (1995-1998), President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, making use of what the Greeks called anchinoia—agility and swiftness of intelligence—brought a new and more consistent rationality to the process of agenda reordering. In his second term, which started in 1999, he has
before him the challenge of effectively transforming the new agenda into one through which, in the context of an "asymmetrical globalization," the country can strengthen its control over its own destiny as well as resolve, with social-democratic sensibility, the persistent problem of social exclusion.

What does this challenge mean from the point of view of foreign policy, conceived as a public policy focused on the development of national space? I believe, along with Gelson Fonseca Jr., that if the country was previously able to construct, with reasonable success, its possible degree of autonomy through a relative distancing from the world, then at the turn of the millennium this autonomy, necessary for development, can only be achieved through active participation in the elaboration of norms and codes of conduct for the governance of world order.64 In other words, the country's "specific interests" are more than ever linked to its "general interests" in the workings and dynamics of the world order. It is for this reason that the ongoing opus of continuous change that characterizes Brazilian diplomacy requires that the line of foreign policy inaugurated at the Hague in 1907 be deepened in multilateral fora.

Brazil is a country of continental scale, a fact relevant to its participation in the making of world order and its ability to articulate consensus between great and small. During the 1990s it dealt constructively with "global issues" through participation, not distancing. Those issues have been reinserted in new terms in the international post-Cold War agenda. Let us from among them highlight the environment, human rights, and nuclear nonproliferation, with the observation that on the level of values such constructive treatment is compatible with the Western component of Brazil's international identity; it is congruent with the view that characterizes its diplomatic conduct; and it is viable in light of how Brazil fits into the world.

Given the interplay of variably shaped alliances allowed for in a world of undefined polarities, multilateral fora constitute, for Brazil, the best chessboards for the country to exercise its competence in the defense of national interests. It is here that Brazil's potential can best be put to use and can excel. In the political and economic fields, such potential can help elaborate norms and codes of conduct for the governance of globalized space. This is where Brazil's greatest challenge lies.

In effect, in the development of national space and the alleviation of poverty, the real challenge for Brazil lies in the negotiations of the financial agenda and the agenda for international trade. Globalization shortened spaces and accelerated time, and such acceleration of time affects Brazil in a nonuniform manner. Time is not only the abstract measurement offered by calendars and watches. It is also a concrete social process. The acceleration of time, spurred by globalization, affects social processes in distinct manners, and we can discern different chronological spans for what I could call financial, media, economic, political, and diplomatic time.

Financial time is the online time of financial flows, whose volatility has been provoking successive crises in emerging markets that have directly or indirectly affected us. That is why negotiations on a "new financial architecture" are so relevant for Brazil.

Media time is also online time. It brings to and into Brazil the immediate repercussion of events and the weight they have on collective perception. Consequently, it creates an environment of excessive concentration on the present moment, to the detriment of paying necessary attention to its future implications. The focus on events and the lack of focus on processes imposed by the workings of the media pose a constant challenge for the construction of the soft power of Brazil's international credibility. That is why, for example, presidential diplomacy and summit meetings are important, as they constitute expressions of open diplomacy, creating events that can be used to inform internal and
international public opinion about the significance of the processes that are underway in the country.65

Economic time is the one that applies to production and investment cycles. It is slower than financial or media time, and, in the case of Brazil, it is affected by systemic conditions of competitiveness. This requires reforms in, for example, the fiscal and social security areas. Such reforms advance at the pace of political time, which in Brazil as well as in the rest of the world is distinct from financial, media, or economic time. It is, in principle, in a democratic regime, a slower time, subject to the territoriality of political institutions, to electoral cycles, to party interests, and, in the case of Brazil, to the problem of the complex balance between the states of the federation in a country characterized by the pluralism imposed by its continental scale.

The challenge of synchronizing political time with financial and economic times has a dimension that passes through diplomatic time, which in the case of multilateral negotiations is a slower time. It is in this time, which is predominantly that of the WTO, that Brazil as a small global trader needs to widen its access to markets. It also needs to obtain space, which is narrowing, for the conduct of its own public policies. Indeed, in a country such as Brazil, development will not automatically come about from the virtuous combination of fiscal, monetary, and exchange-rate policies, although in them lie the macroeconomic conditions for its sustainability. Development requires an ample array of public policies that, in a manner congruent and compatible with a macroeconomic equilibrium that sustains currency stability, would reduce inequality and further the development of national space, ascertaining that within it economic agents enjoy fair conditions for engaging in the sort of competition that will enable them to face the challenges of globalization.66

The challenge facing Brazilian foreign policy at the outset of the twenty-first century is that of searching for the right conditions in order to sing the tune of specificity in harmony with the world. It is not an easy challenge, given the magnitude of the country's internal problems; the difficulties in synchronizing concurrent times so as to implement public policies; and the general cacophony that characterizes the world today, given the discontinuities that prevail in the functioning of the international system. The history of the making of Brazilian identity and of Brazil's place in the world, as analyzed in this essay, nevertheless provides a significant foundation for successfully taking on such a challenge.

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