

BOOK REVIEW ESSAYS

Choosing Relevance: New Research Directions and the Future of Brazilian Foreign Policy

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This essay reviews the following works:

Teerã, Ramalá e Doha: Memórias da política externa ativa e altiva. By Celso Amorim. São Paulo: Benvirá, 2015. Pp. 520. R\$44.00 paperback. ISBN: 9788582401712.

Brazil and Latin America: Between the Separation and Integration Paths. By Jose Briceño-Ruiz and Andrés Rivarola Puntigliano. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017. Pp. 198. \$36.99 paperback. ISBN: 9781498538473.

Foreign Policy Responses to the Rise of Brazil: Balancing Power in Emerging States. Edited by Gian Luca Gardini and Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. Pp. xiv + 239. \$49.99e-book. ISBN: 9781137516695.

Brazil as a Rising Power: Interventions Norms and the Contestation of Global Order. Edited by Kai Michael Kenkel and Philip Cunliffe. London: Routledge, 2016. Pp. 234. \$57.95e-book. ISBN: 1138946788.

Política externa na Nova República: Os primeiros 30 anos. By Dawisson Belém Lopes. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 2017. Pp. 284. R\$47.00. ISBN: 9788542301915.

Brazil on the Global Stage: Power, Ideas, and the Liberal International Order. Edited by Oliver Stuenkel and Matthew M. Taylor. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Pp. xvii + 228. \$84.99 e-book. ISBN: 9781137491657.

Introduction

The study of Brazilian foreign policy is an academic field in transition and expansion. This is because of two interrelated factors: the enlargement of Brazil's position in the world since the 1990s and the growth in the scholarly community dedicated to its study. Along this path, some of what one might consider the formative ideas of the field are being qualified or openly questioned: its prescriptive character, the alleged Ministry of Foreign Affairs monopoly over Brazilian foreign policy formulation and implementation, the opposition of paradigms such as Americanism and universalism (or globalism),¹ and the supposed immutability of objectives such as development and autonomy. Issues of sources, methodology, and the form of appropriation of the diplomatic discourse are being considered through a more consistent dialogue with the advances in the fields of international relations and comparative politics.

This book review essay looks at two single-authored books, one coauthored book, and three edited volumes on Brazilian foreign policy. They are all well-researched and relevant contributions. From different perspectives, all the works go beyond simplistic accounts and toward new and meaningful understandings of

¹ The Americanist paradigm conceives of the relation with the United States as the central axis of Brazilian foreign policy and main instrument for enhancing Brazil's capacity to act on the world stage. The universalist or globalist paradigm is considered to be opposed to Americanism and has as its axis the idea of diversifying foreign relations as a central foreign policy objective and necessary condition for increasing bargaining power, including with regard to relations with the United States.

Brazilian foreign policy. They present a wealth of valuable information and analysis on topics such as Brazilian positions in Latin America and international regimes, the foreign policy of different administrations, the decision-making process, and the role of public opinion. Besides the relevant scholarly contribution, they clearly show cases of how Brazil seeks to shape the regional and global order, thus contributing to future public and policy debates. This is particularly important since Brazilian foreign policy is not fairly predicted by categories often present in the mind-set of policy-makers and commentators from other countries.

The authors of the six books come from different countries and institutional affiliations, from Brazil and abroad. This helps lend diversity and international perspective to the analyses and shows the greater interest in understanding Brazilian foreign policy. The books are fueled by Brazil's rising international stance in the first decade of the 2000s. Notions evident in the books' titles clearly signal this: "Brazil on the global stage," "the rise of Brazil," "Brazil as a rising power." Considering Brazil's current or recent positions in the world—what Dawisson Belém Lopes considers as the return to the normal inclination of the Brazilian foreign policy curve—one might initially think that the books describe a situation that no longer exists, as if an emerging state were writing its memoirs, so to speak. But this is not the case. From an analytical point of view centered on Brazilian foreign policy, the books make relevant contributions on issues such as the role of agency and ideas in foreign policy, the analysis of regionalism, the formation of state preferences, disputes over international norms and moral agendas, the study of bilateral relations, and the conditions for so-called emerging powers to rise in global politics. Furthermore, they help one reflect on the consequences of situating the main explanatory variable excessively close to the phenomena one is seeking to explain.

Agency, Ideas, and Norms

Because of its spatial dimensions (the world's fifth largest country by size and population, bordering ten other countries, with abundant natural resources), economic potential, and diplomatic culture, Brazil has always had a role in international negotiations and regimes on issues from sustainable development, climate change, and renewable energy to nuclear matters, disarmament, human rights, and financial and commercial issues. But while it has always participated and potentially had a seat at the table, it has not always influenced the discussion and international results. In this sense, agency and actors' strategies matter, even though one cannot disregard structural variables such as material power, the negotiation's locus, the issue, the stage of the negotiation, commodity prices, and other international conditions. One could also identify the limits to agency and the differences in constructing influence according to different international agendas. In all, agency and the quest for international influence are not objectives per se in a state foreign policy, at least in Brazilian foreign policy, as we can learn from the books reviewed. They seek to contribute to a multilateral, pro-development global order in which Brazil has a relevant role. The empirical meaning of this general idea varies over time and according to the theme, the domestic situation, the projects of the country's political elites (and the role of foreign policy in such projects), and the international political and normative environment.

The trajectory of Brazilian foreign policy in the first decade and the beginning of the second decade of the 2000s demonstrates the centrality of agency, development policies, and presidential diplomacy in the international behavior of the state. The Brazilian case sheds light on the complex way in which states ascend and on the obstacles they face in this trajectory, manifesting the nonlinear nature of this process. The ability to build alliances with other states and nongovernmental actors is another attribute that contributes to creating room to maneuver for developing and emerging countries in international politics. In this perspective, emerging is a political process of interaction with the broader international environment, and political entrepreneurs play a relevant role in shaping new paths for global governance by triggering processes that lead to change in international social practices. Hence, Brazil's rise is not explained by economic factors alone; political factors are also crucial (a consequence of this is that situations of retreat in Brazil's positions in the world cannot be explained solely by economic aspects). These are some of the lessons drawn from the biographical account by Celso Amorim, who was considered by David Rothkopf from *Foreign Policy* to be "the world's best foreign minister."²

Differently from the other books reviewed here, all written by academics, Amorim's *Teerã, Ramalá e Doha: Memórias da política externa ativa e altiva* brings with it the perspective not only of a practitioner of contemporary Brazilian foreign policy but also of one of its chief makers. The book consists of three narratives relating to episodes in Brazilian foreign policy between 2003 and 2010, when Celso Amorim was

² David Rothkopf, "The World's Best Foreign Minister," *Foreign Policy*, October 7, 2009, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/07/the-worlds-best-foreign-minister/>.

Brazil's foreign minister. The first case deals with Brazilian and Turkish attempts to bring about a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue in 2010, which culminated in the Tehran Declaration. The second concerns the evolution of Brazilian diplomatic efforts toward Arab countries (and, as a consequence, Israel) and the rationale behind them. The third deals with Brazil's participation in the Doha Round of the WTO, including its leadership of the agriculture G-20. All three involve Brazilian activism in different spheres of international politics. According to Amorim (11), they "frame a transition from an inhibited 'middle power,' confined to its own region, to a global player, a new status recognized and indeed welcomed by a great many countries that interacted with us." Amorim's assumption is that global players possess general or universal interests. In relation to this aspect, the current question in the academic and political debate is the extent to which Brazil's international presence and interests are really global. Furthermore, how can one identify the new status of global player of a (emerging) state, and what are the benefits of this new position? How can one measure the success or failure of a foreign policy initiative?

The episode of the 2010 Tehran Declaration had major repercussions in Brazil and also internationally, since the Iranian nuclear issue was one of the most sensitive questions in the complex geopolitical dynamic of the Middle East. The chapter written by Togzhan Kassenova (138) in the book edited by Oliver Stuenkel and Matthew M. Taylor analyzes the evolving nuclear identity of the country and poses a question whose underlying assumption may be questioned but is nevertheless interesting: Why would Brazil be so anxious about the standoff with Iran, a country that remained remote from Brazil geographically, politically, and culturally? Beyond the search for an enhanced role in the international security agenda and other relevant aspects present in Amorim's analysis, such as President Barack Obama's request to President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, three additional reasons may be considered: (1) Brazil's specific interests as a nonnuclear weapons state working on a nuclear submarine and with an advanced nuclear fuel cycle, including the capacity to enrich uranium; (2) the fact that, like Iran, Brazil's uranium enrichment program is not driven by considerations of economic feasibility—both countries believe in the importance of self-sufficiency in the nuclear field; (3) the importance attributed by Brazil to nuclear energy and its concern that the nonproliferation agenda promoted by developed countries might limit its own access to nuclear technology (Kassenova, in Stuenkel and Taylor, 138–139).

One does not aim to analyze Brazilian nuclear policy here, but rather to illustrate the movement to complement the analyses of decision-makers with other research sources, whether primary or secondary. This may seem an elementary or unnecessary statement, but until recently, largely because of the way in which the Brazilian foreign policy field of study took shape, analyses made by diplomats entered the academic research agenda without due contextualization.³ One example is the way in which the notions of "autonomy through distance" and "autonomy through participation" created by Ambassador Gelson Fonseca Júnior⁴ were utilized in academic works to explain Brazilian foreign policy during the Cold War period and in the 1990s, respectively. Research conducted by Antonio Carlos Lessa, Leandro Couto, and Rogério Farias empirically demonstrates the fragility of the "autonomy through distance" thesis and how it can instill in the analyst a predisposition to ignore phases of great activism and participation during the Cold War period and episodes of distance and absence in the later period.⁵ This is not to say that one must disregard works authored by diplomats or the benefits of dialogue between academics and decision-makers. But it does mean recognizing that the motivations, the systems of incentives, and the means of construction and validation of knowledge among academics and diplomats are not identical.

The theme of Brazil as a global player, present in the first-person account by Amorim, also appears in the excellent compilations edited by Stuenkel and Taylor and by Kai Michael Kenkel and Philip Cunliffe, though with different focuses. These two books concentrate on the role of ideas and norms in Brazilian foreign policy. *Brazil on the Global Stage: Power, Ideas, and the Liberal International Order*, edited by Stuenkel and Taylor, seeks to explore the "implications of Brazil's rising international profile for global norms, and in particular, for the dominant global liberal order" (6). Referring to the "liberal international order," the authors incorporate John Ikenberry's definition that this order is characterized by open markets, international institutions, cooperative security, democratic community, collective problem-solving, shared sovereignty over some issues, and the rule of law. The debate over the meaning of a liberal international

³ Leticia Pinheiro and Paula Vedoveli, "Caminhos cruzados: Diplomatas e acadêmicos na construção do campo de estudos de política externa brasileira," *Revista Política Hoje* 11, no. 1 (2012): 211–254.

⁴ Gelson Fonseca Júnior, *A legitimidade e outras questões internacionais* (São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1998).

⁵ Antonio Carlos Lessa, Leandro Couto and Rogério Farias, "Distanciamento versus engajamento: Alguns aportes conceituais para a análise da inserção do multilateralismo brasileiro (1945–1990)," *Contexto Internacional* 32, no. 2 (2010): 333–365.

order and its constituent elements is an interesting topic per se, including its situation in the context of increasing questioning of US centrality in the world. The book incorporates Ikenberry's definition but it does not aim to enter into its specific merits or the debate with its enthusiasts or critics. One of its objectives is to check how Brazilian ideas relate to liberalism and the relationship with regimes, institutions, and issues of security, trade, environment, and the economy of the international order after World War II, with a greater focus on contemporary issues until 2013. The book is very thorough, but it lacks a more in-depth discussion on Brazil's development cooperation. Other studies have documented how Brazil has not adopted the dominant global norms on this issue represented by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

According to the editors, the chapters indicate that Brazilian beliefs about the national interest are similar enough to those of the global liberal order to suggest that Brazil will be a productive collaborator in that order. Following this idea, the editors argue that in spite of questioning and critically challenging relevant aspects of liberal internationalism, "Brazil appears to be in agreement with the broad precepts of the contemporary international order, and the system-wide benefits this order produces for Brazil are far too significant for the country to seek to significantly upset that order" (Stuenkel and Taylor, 8). In this perspective, as we can read from Marcos Tourinho's chapter on Brazil's position in relation to nonintervention norms, Brazil's ambiguous relationship with current international governance structures has less to do with the content of that order than it does with the hegemonic practices that have accompanied it. In this author's words, Brazil's stance would be for "liberalism without hegemony" (Tourinho, in Stuenkel and Taylor, 91–92).

Brazil as a Rising Power: Interventions Norms and the Contestation of Global Order, edited by Kenkel and Cunliffe, analyzes the role of ideas and norms in foreign policy and international politics, as well as the role of rising powers and their agents as relevant actors in defining moral agendas and international norms. The book is focused on the relation between human rights and state sovereignty present in the notions of humanitarian intervention and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The volume has two interrelated dimensions: a rich conceptual analysis of the normative factors related to international interventions, and an empirical account of rising powers' stands on the subject, focused mainly on Brazil. In the context of the 2011 intervention in Libya led by NATO, Brazil launched at the UN a concept note titled "responsibility while protecting" (RWP). RWP is a recurring focus in the book's various contributions. According to Kenkel and Cunliffe (10), "the document (RWP) represents a major waypoint for Brazil in that it is no longer categorical in its rejection of the utility of force, but rather highlights its potential counterproductive effects when conflated with the Western state's particular interests with reference to the increasing perception of potential for R2P's misuse by Western powers."

As well as shedding light on the Brazilian motivation for proposing RWP, the book is a relevant contribution to a comparative understanding of the positions of other rising powers on the theme. The chapter by Alcides Costa Vaz is a particularly valuable contribution for understanding rising-power stances and responses to the political and strategic challenges posed by normative shifts regarding sovereignty and intervention. Vaz argues that rising powers' behavior regarding international intervention has been primarily driven much more by a sense of instrumental selectivity than by a normatively grounded willingness to work together. The oscillation between the rising powers' opposition to and discrete support for Brazil's RWP initiative can be seen as bearing out this argument, which draws attention to the difficulties involved in collective action among the so-called rising powers. The book also contains a dense discussion on peace-building theories and peacekeeping applied to the Brazilian case.

The RWP proposal studied in the Kenkel and Cunliffe book would place Brazil in the select group of international norm-makers on issues of international security and global crises management. This is another case of the country acting as a global player. Among many interesting questions that emerge from reading this book, two stand out: Why does the Brazilian proposal of RWP not take off? And under what conditions can ideas and norms spread without the backing of powerful actors? Whether in the construction of the contemporary international order or in other historical periods, in the relation between norms and foreign policy, there remains a huge analytical potential in the study of Brazil's participation in the building of international norms, as well as in the analysis of processes of localization of international norms.

Regionalism and Domestic Dynamics

The role of the region in Brazilian foreign policy is controversial. Does the country's performance as a global player presuppose the support of its neighbors? How do the countries in the region regard Brazil? Is Brazil a regional leader, a regional hegemon, or a regional power? When does the integration path begin in Brazilian foreign policy? Why does Brazil not support regional integration decisively? What is the role

of Brazil in the security governance in South America? These are some of the questions that *Brazil and Latin America: Between the Separation and Integration Paths*, by Jose Briceño-Ruiz and Andrés Rivarola Puntigliano, and *Foreign Policy Responses to the Rise of Brazil: Balancing Power in Emerging States*, edited by Gian Luca Gardini and Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida, help answer, with innovative research designs as their starting points. As Dawisson Belém Lopes demonstrates in *Política externa na Nova República: Os primeiros 30 anos*, questions of relations with neighboring countries and regionalism were among the foreign policy themes that came up most markedly in public debate and domestic politics (including in election campaigns).⁶ There was a double critique of Brazil's behavior. On the one hand, there were expectations from Brazil's neighbors that it might yield more and hence contribute to their development, in the context of Brazil's rise. On the other hand, important domestic actors considered that Brazil was yielding too much to its neighbors and should have a more pragmatic posture. With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to say that both perspectives overestimated Brazil's capacity and underestimated the consequences of the "re-primarization" of the economy, of the low levels of investment in innovation and technological capacity, and of China's activity in the region. The question of finding an adequate balance between agency and structure in foreign policy analysis is a challenge for different approaches.

Gardini and Almeida, in their collection, assembled an excellent group of scholars to study the impact of the emergence of Brazil on a number of Latin American countries (the extent to which the rise of Brazil is a process that has been initiated, consolidated, or interrupted is a question beyond the analytic scope of the book). There are also chapters discussing the literature on international power status and the position of Brazil, two chapters tackling Brazilian policy toward the region, and one discussing how Latin American regionalism regards the rise of Brazil. The latter, written by Andrés Malamud, points out that Latin American regionalism remains mostly a question of foreign policy, without having acquired a dynamic of its own. Unlike the other edited books analyzed in this review essay, the Gardini and Almeida volume has a concluding chapter in which the editors systematize the findings of the chapters, reconnecting the research questions and the analytical framework defined in the introduction.

Two questions guide the book (Gardini and Almeida, 4): Has the rise of Brazil prompted a clear coping strategy in Latin American countries? Can this response be understood as balancing, "bandwagoning," or some new typology? It is possible to find three factors of relevance in the different sets of bilateral relations analyzed in the book: history, domestic politics, and level of (asymmetric) interdependence. Interestingly, the chapters demonstrate (some of them using data from public opinion polls) that attitudes regarding Brazil vary across different groups of the Latin American political elites, and dynamics of contestation and cooperation can occur simultaneously. Furthermore, the chapters present the expected beneficial aspects and threats of Brazil's rise for its neighbors and the key features of the bilateral relations with each country.

In their concluding remarks, the editors summarize the findings of the chapters in terms of the countries' strategies vis-à-vis Brazil in the following way: Argentina (soft regionalism, light balancing, and soft hedging); Chile (collision avoidance, cooperation without alignment, multiple bounds, and institutional counterweighting); Uruguay (asymmetric alliance, close strategic alliance); Paraguay (dependency, resistance aiming at extracting benefits, compliance/subservience); Bolivia (shifting balancing, shifting bandwagoning, asymmetric sovereignty-development alliance); Peru (strategic alliance, opportunism, asymmetric alliance); Venezuela (problematic soft balancing, pragmatic acquiescence, social power diplomacy); Colombia (soft balancing, cooperation without alignment, multiple bonds and institutional counterweighting); and Mexico (containing and engaging, approaching, soft balancing). This typology of bilateral relations goes beyond the notions of balancing and bandwagoning that prevail in international relations literature, therefore constituting relevant contributions for future studies. One of the conclusions of the book is that "overall, Latin American responses to the rise of Brazil are quite varied, but if a pattern could be identified, this would be a multiple contestation strategy" (Gardini and Almeida, 233).

Another relevant theme in Gardini and Almeida's volume is the relation between public opinion and foreign policy. The extent to which public opinion is a crucial barometer in forecasting states' foreign policy is debatable. In the case of the countries studied in the book, can favorable opinions toward Brazil mentioned in some chapters predict how states will behave in relation to Brazilian positions on the world stage? Are attitudes favorable toward Brazil the same thing as attitudes favorable toward the Brazilian government? Do neighbors resent Brazil's ambiguity in relation to the region? Are Brazilian elites foreign policy watchdogs?

⁶ In order to emphasize the electoral consequences of governments' foreign policy choices, Lopes (145) submits the following hypothesis: "foreign policy gained salience inasmuch as median voters started making a direct connection between the results achieved by the incumbent ruler in the country's foreign affairs and their feeling of personal well-being."

Is foreign policy an issue of dissensus among public opinion? Despite its relevance, this is a little-studied theme in the field of Brazilian foreign policy, with little data available.

The chapter by Almeida makes an important contribution to a change in this setting. It uses survey data on the perceptions of the Brazilian mass public to explore, at the level of ideas and beliefs, the ambiguities of Brazil's relations with its regional surroundings. The survey data come from a national survey conducted in 2014 with 1,841 respondents as part of a collaborative international project titled "Las Americas y el Mundo." The questions of the survey were formulated considering the academic and public discussion on the issue. One of the findings is that "most Brazilians do not consider themselves to be Latin or South Americans, and show ambivalence in their feelings towards Brazil's regional neighbors" (Almeida, in Gardini and Almeida, 41). The chapter shows that the reluctance of Brazil's foreign policy to try to play an actual regional leadership role is mirrored by public opinion, which would rather see the country cooperating with, rather than leading South American nations. The literature about Brazilian leadership in the region is inconclusive, as is the definition of what it means to lead a region. Some authors point to Brazil's inability to lead the region, while others consider there is no interest in leading the region. Almeida's specific contribution to this debate is to present the perspective of public opinion.

Briceño-Ruiz and Puntigliano have written an interesting historical analysis of Brazil's relations with Latin America seeking to show a "path of integration" that goes as far back as colonial times. They frame the book in order to challenge what they call the "mainstream approach," or the "path of separation," to the study of the relations between Brazil and other Latin American countries. The authors propose three key elements of analysis in order to explain the reasons that "have led the Brazilian elites to foster regional cooperation and integration with the rest of Latin America: autonomy, development and identity" (xxiii). It is pertinent to note that these three elements, seen by the authors as factors of approximation with the rest of Latin America, in other studies are pointed to as factors that distance Brazil from the region or create difficulties for cooperation and integration efforts. In terms of foreign policy, João M. E. Maia and Matthew M. Taylor (in Stuenkel and Taylor, 50–51) reflect the majority position in the literature when they state that Brazil cared little about Latin America before the 1970s.

The effort made by Briceño-Ruiz and Puntigliano to construct a new narrative of Brazil's relations with Latin America—stressing exchanges, cooperation, and approximations—may open up new lines of analysis about historical facts and personalities of the political and intellectual life of the country and region. The authors conduct an interesting analysis of the evolution of Simón Bolívar's perception of Brazil and of Joaquim Nabuco's and Manoel Bonfim's perception of Latin America. The book tackles two questions: how ideas related to Latin America have evolved over time in Brazil, and how Brazilian foreign policy toward Latin America has evolved over time. At the same time, maybe owing to its reach, the book reflects the challenge of relating the two. In the book there is a laudable effort to bring authors and themes of Brazilian social thought into the field of Brazilian foreign policy. This movement of greater analytical approximation between the foreign policy field and Brazilian social thought is also present, though with different aims, in the chapter by Maia and Taylor in the Stuenkel and Taylor book, as well as in chapters of Lopes's book.

One of Briceño-Ruiz and Puntigliano's key theses is that "despite evident setbacks, and at times strong opposition, the long-term tendency seems to go along the path of integration." Along the same lines, they consider that "integrationist initiatives and supranational identities are not exceptional elements in Brazilian foreign policy and development-oriented policies" (Briceño-Ruiz and Puntigliano, 146). The authors' thesis is controversial and certain to stimulate debate, thus meeting the book's objective of highlighting the fact that interactions with Latin America not only have always existed but in some particular historical moments have been considered crucial to Brazil's international standing. All the same, the debate proposed about the start of an integration path in Brazilian foreign policy should be preceded by a definition of "integration path" and its analytical utility, scope, and results.⁷ Further, it would be fitting to reflect on what would be the best timeframe in which to characterize the path of integration, both in relation to its results and in relation to its causes. This is important, since the centralization of the debate in terms of an integration path or a path of separation might run the risk of tautology, so that it would be necessary to identify the conditions that favor one path or the other.

Lopes's book is a coherent mix of published and unpublished materials written by the author and collaborators. The book carries out an encompassing analysis of Brazilian foreign policy since 1985 (the Nova República period), providing important contextualization and background conditions for the studies

⁷ In some parts of the book it is possible to consider that the integration path characterizes relations of cooperation (and not of integration) by Brazil with the countries of Latin or South America. In others, it seems the authors are talking about a lineage of thought that begins with José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva and has one of its contemporary expressions in the work of Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães.

of the other books. There is also specific analysis of the foreign policy of the Rousseff government (2011–2016), a subject lacking in meaningful literature. The author states that the book has an essayist formula: “I have found in the essayist formula the path to present, with maximum fluidity and directness, some of the understandings I have been developing about the most critical, specific, and structural questions concerning Brazil’s international insertion” (Lopes, 16). This inevitably brings forth methodological and empirical challenges to some of the book’s arguments but does not take away the merit of the contribution, so that it is fair to say that Lopes’s book captures some of the most pressing issues in the Brazilian foreign policy agenda.

A central theme in the book refers to the impact of the political regime on foreign policy and the nature of Brazilian foreign policy-making. Among the books reviewed in this essay, Lopes’s contribution is the one that most concentrates on domestic questions and domestic determinants of Brazil’s international behavior. The study on foreign policy-making deals with foreign policy as a public policy, though recognizing aspects of its specificity. It goes against the idea of the unitary state and seeks to analyze the process of formation of national preferences. This is the area where dialogue with comparative politics has been most present, and its continuity may generate positive effects for both fields. Most works focus on the post–1988 Constitution period and study the formulation of the Brazilian position in specific international negotiations, the activity of the legislative branch and of political parties, the role of ministries and other governmental actors, public opinion, the activities of states and municipalities in Brazil’s international relations, and the participation of nongovernmental actors and interest groups. In this literature, there is a relatively smaller number of works about foreign policy-making during other periods of the democratic political regime, or even about foreign policy-making during dictatorial periods in the country’s history.

With regard to Brazilian foreign policy-making, one of Lopes’s key arguments (24) is that the “Ministry of Foreign Affairs now has to submit to forms of democratic control unimaginable in the past.” This is an argument that connects with the idea of democratization or horizontalization of Brazilian foreign policy-making. This idea seeks to characterize the increase in number of actors in the foreign policy decision-making arena, both from within the state and from society. Underlying this thesis is the notion that in the past the decision-making arena was limited to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In other works, the argument of the Itamaraty monopoly in the formulation of foreign policy is used to explain the alleged historical continuity of Brazil’s international action, grounded in its institutional component and in the objective of autonomy. Rogério Farias and this author have sought to make a contribution to this debate by drawing attention to problematic aspects present in the horizontalization thesis, including conceptual imprecision; lack of clarity as to the baseline to which comparisons are made; fragile empirical bases; limitations in the use of sources; and overestimation of the impact exerted by systemic forces.⁸ Whether in relation to the democratization thesis or other aspects related to the study of Brazilian foreign policy, there has been significant progress in the adoption of consistent analytical methods, but this remains a challenge.

The books discussed above evince the growth and the pluralism of Brazilian foreign policy as a research field. As stated by Gardini (Gardini and Almeida, 14) in his chapter discussing the literature on international power status and the position of Brazil vis-à-vis the most used definitions and criteria, “Brazil and other emerging or new powers pose conceptual challenges to the analytical categories used in IR. The discipline ought to be ready to take them on to capture the world of the 21st century.” This movement connects with the proposal made by Amitav Acharya on global international relations: with IR scholars around the world “seeking to find their own voices and reexamining their own traditions, our challenge now is to chart a course toward a truly inclusive discipline, recognizing its multiple and diverse foundations.”⁹ In this respect, the systematic study of Brazilian foreign policy (and that of other Latin American and developing countries) along the lines presented by the books discussed here can make relevant contributions to progress on issues central to the discipline.

Author Information

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⁸ Rogério Farias and Haroldo Ramanzini Júnior, “Reviewing Horizontalization: The Challenge of Analysis in Brazilian Foreign Policy,” *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 58, no. 2 (2015): 5–22.

⁹ Amitav Acharya, “Global International Relations (IR) and Regional Worlds,” *International Studies Quarterly* 58, no. 4 (2014): 647.

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