

## ARTICLE

## The democratic regime and the changes in Brazilian foreign policy towards South America\*

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In recent times the interaction between democracy and foreign policy has begun to be studied and theorized in Brazil. The link between politics and foreign policy is not new, however, the focus of this article is on the shifts that have taken place since the beginning of the democratic regime. Its aim is to identify changes in Brazilian foreign policy based on ideas and political preferences due to alternation of governments; and deconstruct the idea that Brazilian foreign policy is a state policy, limited to superficial changes. Following a discussion of the recent literature about changes in foreign policy, the article maps the changes that occurred between 1990 and 2003 and analyses Brazilian foreign policy behavior towards South America during the Worker's Party administrations. Based on a comparative perspective, it examines the changes in Brazilian behavior toward the region during the Temer administration. This was the area where foreign policy experienced strongest transformations. Finally, the article briefly points out the changes that occurred in foreign policy towards South America at the beginning of Bolsonaro's administration. The methodology, especially in relation to the Temer and Bolsonaro administrations, uses press material and interviews with foreign policymakers.

**Keywords:** Brazilian foreign policy; democracy; changes in foreign policy; politicization; South America.

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**I**nteractions between democracy and foreign policy in a country, with the consequent politicization of its foreign policy, is an area which began to be studied and theorized in Brazil in recent times. Lopes' work (2013) was an important step in this regard. Connections between democracy and foreign policy can be examined from different dimensions: the impact of developmentalism on the formulation process; traditional forms of acting vs. new actors and practices; the inclusion of foreign policy in the political and/or social debate; the effect of political alternance on the general lines of foreign policy; the organizational role of diplomatic bureaucracy. The connection between politics and foreign policy is not new, nor the changes which have occurred in strategies and/or content, but the focus here is inflections experienced since the implementation of the democratic regime. Although these changes are related to diverse factors, there exists a tradition of continuity announced by members of the diplomatic corps, in the defense of both state policy and the maintenance of the principal objectives of Brazilian foreign policy over time.

The change from Dilma Rousseff to Michel Temer brought inflections in foreign policy and the choice of foreign minister was part of the bargaining over the composition of the coalition government. Foreign policy - principally with a focus on South America - was highlighted by the press and occupied a relevant place in the political debate. In his speeches, Temer's first Foreign Minister, José Serra, criticized and labelled as ideological the foreign policy followed by the PT administrations, and suggested changes in relation to the defense of the international institutions in force, as well as a greater approximation with the Western powers<sup>2</sup>. More recently, the change to Jair Bolsonaro's administration and its impacts on foreign policy demystified in a very raw manner the historic vision of continuity. The choice of a young foreign minister not aligned with the traditional currents of Itamaraty and changes in the rules and the institutional structure of the Ministry raised the question of politicization and the idea of change.

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<sup>2</sup>The term ideological was used from a political perspective, without specifying what it referred to, nor did it show any understanding of the differences existing between the foreign policies of Lula and Dilma Rousseff.

Questions linked to Brazilian proactive behavior towards neighboring countries were what most mobilized political actors and provoked divergences in this context. The construction of Brazilian leadership in the region, the internationalization of resources, and the involvement with corruption of large internationalized Brazilian companies were criticized by politicians from the coalition government. Bolsonaro's rise marked a reordering of the alliances of the Brazilian government in the region as well as its vision of regional institutions.

The article aims to identify changes not only in strategies, but also in the objectives, in the field of foreign policy ideas and preferences (in accordance with HERMANN's conceptions, 1990). It maps the changes that occurred in the 1990s and 2000s, the foreign policy behavior of the 'Partido dos Trabalhadores' (Workers' Party) administrations towards South America and, with the aim of highlighting changes and examining differences, analyzes and compares the policy towards the region during the Temer administration, one of the areas where there occurred the greatest transformations. For the effects of reflection, at the end of the paper the changes that occurred in Brazilian foreign policy towards the region in the first months of the Jair Bolsonaro are looked at. In the framework of Brazilian foreign policy studies, the article aims to contribute to the debate about changes in its content, based on the alternance of governments; deconstructing the idea that Brazilian foreign policy is a state policy with superficial changes.

The research methodology used involves the choice of literature on the theme and, above all in the part referring to the Temer and Bolsonaro administrations, press reports, and observations, and different types of declarations by and actions of participants in the decision making process, as well as interviews with these actors<sup>3</sup>.

The article is organized as follows, in the first part, the literature on the state of the art about change is reviewed. Following this is a historic overview of the changes occurred since the first elected government, concentrating on the PT governments, highlighting their perspective towards South America. The principal part of the paper examines the changes in terms of ideas and the formulation of foreign policy in the Temer administration, also looking at the

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<sup>3</sup>The interviews were carried out in various forms over recent years. There were interviews with structured questions and others with a very informal profile, such as an exchange of ideas.

characteristics of the foreign behavior of the country, notably behavior towards South America. Before the conclusion, I will point to certain foreign policy features of the Bolsonaro administration in relation to the region.

### Change in foreign policy

The defense of continuity has an important political weight for the Ministry of Foreign Relations, which has provoked academic debate about continuity and change in foreign policy.

In terms of explanatory frameworks for the change in foreign policy, a model that is much used in the Brazilian literature is that proposed by Hermann (1990), who suggests the three most frequent classifications: adjustments, program changes, and target changes. Adjustment signifies a change in the intensity and style of foreign policy, without modifying how it is done or its objectives; in program changes there occur variants in methods and strategies to achieve objectives, although these remain unaltered; target or objective change signifies a reconfiguration of proposals for action and the objectives to be attained. A fourth classification proposed is a change in the pattern of international insertion. He identifies important domestic motivations which impact on the foreign policy decision making process and provoke changes.

More distant from the Brazilian literature, Welch (2005) proposes a mode of anticipating changes in foreign policy posture<sup>4</sup>. In other words, he seeks to determine under which conditions a change in direction is more or less feasible. According to Welch (2005), change demands great effort, which favors the condition of inertia; it is thus important to discover when this inertia is breached. He defines three conditions in which change is expected: in states that are not strongly bureaucratized and are authoritarian (which is not the case of Brazil); when the chosen policy fails repeatedly, leading to a reassessment by the policymaker; or when the risk of losses is latent and change is perceived as a means of avoiding it.

Rodrigues, Urdinez, and Oliveira (2019) propose an alternative model of measuring the different actions and dimensions of Brazilian foreign policy within a recent approach which accommodates qualitative and quantitative models

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<sup>4</sup>See the article by Silva (2019).

for area studies. They propose a Foreign Policy Index which establishes diverse variables, both systematic and domestic, while the choice of these variables and their use through mediation is indicated in function of the theme which has to be explained in the foreign policy universe.

Milani, Lima, and Pinheiro (2017) define what they called the 'graduation dilemma'. This explains changes in the pattern of international insertion in the foreign policy of emerging, non-nuclear countries, through the choice of a differentiated strategy. Graduation is identified with moving to a type of international insertion based on autonomy; in opposition to the search for equilibrium in relation to the consolidated potentials; in the choice of innovative and flexible coalitions within the framework of multilateralism; and in the preference for cooperation with other countries from the South. According to the authors, graduation signifies "an ambition for international prominence, a role as rule-maker, a geopolitical vision, and a commitment to regional integration" (MILANI, LIMA, and PINHEIRO, 2017, p. 592).

Gardini (2011) provides a useful differentiation for the analysis of continuity and change, separating pragmatic foreign policy and ideological foreign policy. Pragmatic is where merit is assessed according to usefulness, practicality, and operability above doctrine or pre-established principles, associated with mid-term policies and not a specific government. Ideological foreign policy emphasizes solutions of principle or doctrine, not necessarily linked to the merit of the policy. In this author's vision, elements of the two types of foreign policy are often linked. It should be emphasized that the success of a determined policy does not necessarily arise out of its ideological or pragmatic profile. These definitions apply to the motivation of policy, not its results.

In relation to foreign policy continuity, its defense has an important political weight in diplomatic circles. The centrality of Itamaraty in the foreign policy formulation process is linked, roughly speaking, to the preponderance of its own state project and the international insertion within the Ministry, which is not always explained or shared with other political actors. This concentration of the formulation process makes foreign policy less vulnerable to direct interference from domestic policy and, thus, has less traits of change. Its continuity is based on stable behavior following principles such as pacifism, non-intervention, the sovereign

equality of nations, and respect for international law, supported by a specialized diplomatic corps in which the policy formulation process is concentrated. These principles can be identified with the country's 'diplomatic archive'<sup>5</sup>. Pinheiro and Vedoveli (2012) call attention to the concentration of diplomats who not only implement, but also analyze foreign policy presented as academic papers. The concentration and participation of diplomats as foreign policy analysts has favored the academic acceptance of an official vision of foreign policy.

Within the framework of this profile of continuity, there exist papers which defend with theoretical rigor the existence of continuity in foreign policy in terms of its objectives and patterns of international insertion. Burges (2016) combines different perspectives of analysis and concepts accommodating a long duration perspective of Brazilian foreign policy with consolidated beliefs, with glimpses of continuity of a well structured diplomacy and the structural limits of the Brazilian economy. Despite the ideological features which marked the foreign policies of the PT administration, there predominates in his work the presentation of a monolithic and singular 'Brazil'. Lafer (2001) highlights an identity of Brazil which acted, at the same time, as a factor of the 'persistence of the international insertion' of the country, as well as its singularity<sup>6</sup>. Itamaraty played an important role in the construction of this. However, this discourse of continuity hides discontinuities or changes which can be identified in empirical studies.

In contrast to the defense of continuity, based on the process of democratization and the alternance of presidents, some authors work with different dimensions of changes in Brazilian foreign policy. In search of elements of continuity and change, Lima (1994) shows two historical paradigms – that of the special alliance with the United States and globalism; Silva (1995) refers to pragmatic and ideological Americanism; while Letícia Pinheiro (2000) introduces the pragmatic institutionalism of the Fernando Henrique Cardoso administration. Focused on the impact of ideas in foreign policy Saraiva (2010) identifies two groups of thought within Itamaraty: the pragmatic institutionalists supported by Pinheiro (2000) and

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<sup>5</sup>In relation this, see Silva (1995).

<sup>6</sup>Identity is seen by the author as a "set of circumstances and predicates which differentiated the vision of a country and its interests as an actor in the world system" (LAFER, 2001, p. 20).

the autonomists. In this paper she also introduces the role of the 'Partido dos Trabalhadores' (Workers' Party) in the formulation of foreign policy.

Based on the analysis of governmental changes from Sarney to Lula da Silva, Fonseca (2011) reinforces the dimension of continuity, highlighting that, despite the changes with the alternance of presidents, these occurred in the strategy dimension, meaning that the objectives remained the same. It is what she calls the 'paradox of change in continuity'.

In a seminal 2000 article, Maria Regina Lima (2000) raised the debate about the binomial democratization and foreign policy. In her view, as the themes of foreign policy began to gain emphasis in the public policy agenda and became an object of interest to various segments of civil society, the Ministry of Foreign Relations' concentration on policy formulation and what would be identified as Brazil's 'national interests' began to be questioned. The process of economic opening is believed to have favored the politicization of foreign policy, due to unequal distribution of its costs and gains within Brazilian society, while the consolidation of the democratic regime is said to have encouraged debates and preferences in civil society on themes from the international policy agenda. The effects of globalization in the field of the social medias expand the debates and preferences.

Cason and Power (2009) highlight how the 'presidentialization' of foreign policy, supported by the active behavior of a president committed to the foreign agenda in the field of formulation and implementation can interfere with the directions of this policy. Burges and Bastos (2017) highlight the centrality of the president and demonstrate how the commitment of the president to foreign policy is necessary for innovative behavior. Vigevani and Cepaluni (2011) show the variations in the conceptualization of what autonomy is.

Milani and Pinheiro (2013) open the path for debates by highlighting some established traits in the analysis of the country's foreign policy and reinforcing the dimension of foreign policy as public policy. This signifies bringing it to the field of policy which, as a result, confirms changes linked to transformations of the political scenario. It also points to the plurality of actors in the framework of the new institutional arrangement. The identification of foreign policy as a state policy or government policy starts to be present in works on Brazilian foreign policy, putting

the debate on continuity and change in a new format; a constant foreign policy in time, anchored on a diplomatic 'archive', against the specificities and preferences of each government.

Lopes, Faria, and Santos (2016) present the concept of 'foreign policy cycles' applied to Latin American foreign policy. Ribeiro (2018) mentions the impact of the legislature on changes in Brazilian foreign policy, and the dynamic of relations between the legislature and the executive in foreign policy formulation. Santiago (2018) highlights the influence of ideology in foreign policy through political parties, starting with the idea of ideology and politics. Malamud (2017) points to economic, political, and domestic normative factors as causes of recent changes in Brazilian foreign policy. Busso (2014) argues, based on the Argentine case, that scenarios of crisis are decisive for changes in foreign policy, but are also useful to the analysis of Brazilian case.

The explanatory frameworks for changes and/or continuity in foreign policy is not exhaustive, but the theoretical-conceptual option adopted here seeks important elements in these frameworks. Among the perspectives mentioned three are particularly useful for the analysis.

In first place, in response to the politicization that occurs in dealing with foreign policy, Gardini's (2011) concepts of ideological and pragmatic foreign policy are of importance. Ideology in foreign policy is not something uncommon, since like any public policy, it condenses visions of the world and preferences with an ideological profile with different political nuances. For Gardini (2011) an ideological foreign policy is one that starts with a cognitive map and is focused on doctrines and principles, prioritizing the compatibility of alternatives with the principles defended to the detriment of the practical consequences of these principles (GARDINI, 2011, p. 17). A pragmatic foreign policy, in turn, is based on the utility and practicality of ideas, the weight of the consequences of each action exceeds the value of a principle. Ideological foreign policy is more associated with specific administrations and personalisms, while pragmatic is associated with medium/long-term planning, as a 'state policy'. However, they have almost always been complementary phenomena; a policy guided by ideology alone would tend



towards utopia, while that guided only by pragmatism would tend to be immediate and opportunistic (GARDINI, 2011, pp. 13-14).

Much concentrated in the hands of Itamaraty, Brazilian foreign policy was presented for many years as a state policy, isolated from the political game. However, democratization and the subsequent democratic regime brought public actions to the political universe, assuming divergences, preferences, and obviously ideologies. The foreign policy of the PT administrations, with the participation of a greater number of political actors in the decision making process, was labelled as ideological by various critics. But the following administrations – as will be seen later – were no different in this aspect.

Next, the identification of institutionalist and autonomist currents provides the basis for analysis in the field of ideas and political preferences. This classification was constructed in research published by Saraiva (2010), aimed at introducing concepts into the debate. The groups of thought in Itamaraty are not watertight and diplomats can change opinion or preferences. As in Brazilian politics the transformations which occur in both international and domestic terms provoke changes within these groups as well as favoring approximation or distancing between both. Although both coincide in having a vision which, in the final instance, is not open to the changes that have been occurring in the international economy since the 1990s, in the economic field<sup>7</sup> the institutionalists favor a process called the ‘conditioned liberalization’ of the economy<sup>8</sup>, while in the political party context they are basically identified with the PSDB<sup>9</sup>. They defend Brazil’s formal support for international regimes of a liberal type and identify the rules of international politics as a framework which can benefit Brazilian economic development, combining ideology and pragmatism. They suggest an international insertion for Brazil based on new meanings of the concepts of autonomy and

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<sup>7</sup>Elements such as connections with changes in the productive paradigm of information and value chains are not considered and since the 2000s the Brazilian economy has been growing less than similar countries in terms of a productive stage.

<sup>8</sup>A term introduced by Veiga (2002) for explaining the gradual, discontinuous, and often incomplete implementation of the liberal paradigm adopted in the 1990s in Brazil.

<sup>9</sup>The identification of the majority does not signify that diplomats who follow these currents are members of the PSDB or any other political party in particular, nor that the parliamentarians of this party have acted as a veto power against the foreign policy proposals of the PT (with some exceptions).

sovereignty, in which the values of a liberal order need to be defended by all western countries. In the perspective of the institutionalists, autonomy is compatible with a country integrated with the international order behaving within the parameters of the international institutions in force.

In turn, the principal characteristic of the autonomists is the defense of the autonomous and active insertion of Brazil in the institutions of international politics. They suggest bringing the other countries of the South closer to Brazil, aimed at counterbalancing the power of established western potencies; postulating a reform of current international institutions that can expand the possibilities of action and initiative for the country. In addition, they defend linkages with other emerging countries with similar traits to Brazil, which can serve as a basis for the country's international action in the global dimension. The construction of Brazilian leadership with the regional framework and the rise of the country as a global potency occupies a central place in their propositions. In the economic field the autonomists can be seen as sharing the ideas of developmentalism, while in the field of regionalism they seek better access to external markets. Regionalism is also identified as a channel for the projection of Brazilian companies in neighboring countries.

Finally, in relation to the classifications of change, Hermann's categories (1990) serve as a guide to the transformations that occur during alternances in government<sup>10</sup>. Changes in style are frequent in Brazilian foreign policy and in the case in question program changes are mostly identified as changes in strategy. These first two categories are used with greater frequency by the traditional literature mounting the paradox between continuity and change presented by Fonseca (2011). However, the perspective adopted here seeks to discuss what is understood as a foreign policy objective and its level of profundity and permanence oriented towards changes of objectives<sup>11</sup>. Agreeing with Merke

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<sup>10</sup>Silva (2019) provides a very good analysis of Hermann's perspectives (1990) for the analysis of the foreign policy of the Temer administration.

<sup>11</sup>Elements such as 'development' and 'defense of the territory' are objectives which are difficult to remove from the foreign policy agenda of a country such as Brazil. The debate about the country's regional or international insertion can be understood as a change in strategy or a change of objective to be pursued.

(2008), who highlights the various re-significations of key terms of Brazilian foreign policy such as autonomy and development, maintaining the coexistence of a discourse of continuity in processes of changes, it is defended here that not always do the terms used in different governments signify the same thing.

Change in the domestic political environment, not only of regime, but also of the alignment of internal forces and social sectors, is fundamental for a political office holder to be able to implement a program for government; bureaucracies, whose administrative normativity serve as a resistance to change, can be overcome by an innovative internal group; while decision-maker learning based on the lessons of the international system also has an impact. These are motivations which act with different combinations in relation to events in the recent trajectory of Brazilian foreign policy. External shocks which provoked changes in the international scenario and had an impact on countries are another a factor to be highlighted. In the case of Bolsonaro's administration, the figure of the leader who imposes his vision on foreign policy as an element of change needs to be considered.

In harmony with Cason and Power (2009) and Burges and Bastos (2017), we start here with the premise that changes in foreign policy have occurred with greater frequency and intensity, not only in function of systemic changes, but above all due to conjectural domestic elements linked to the alternation of presidents and the politicization of foreign policy; and which have not been exhaustively explained.

### Changes in the 1990s

Collor de Mello's short term in office, with his own liberal type foreign policy, signified a rupture with globalism, whose principles had been established during the 1970s<sup>12</sup>. Faced with this project, the foreign policy agenda was penetrated by political debates. Collor de Mello's liberalizing project did not find echoes within Itamaraty while the crisis of the globalist paradigm encouraged the manifestation of divergences within the Ministry and in political circles leading to the consolidation, among diplomats, of the institutionalist and autonomist groups. These had different visions of the international order, what the national interests were, and what were

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<sup>12</sup>Globalism is understood here as in the work of Lima (1994) and not in the mistaken conception used by the Brazilian Foreign Minister Ernesto Araújo.

the most appropriate strategies to reach the historic objectives of autonomy and Brazilian economic growth. In this case, through constant re-significations, the meaning of the concept of autonomy was modified to adapt to the needs of the political discourse of the group<sup>13</sup>. These groups developed in dialogue with visions of political actors during the period and were defined in the 1990s<sup>14</sup>. This difference of visions within the Ministry interacted with actors of other governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations in the foreign agenda formulation process.

In function of the internal political crisis and the lack of support among diplomats and economic actors, Collor de Mello's initial foreign policy project was modified. In the middle of his term, the position of Foreign Affairs was occupied by Celso Lafer, who contributed to the delimitation within the Ministry of the institutionalist current. Based on the guiding criteria of institutionalism, Lafer proposed to follow two guidelines for foreign action: 'creative adaptation' and the 'vision of the future'. The vision of the future pointed to active participation in the international scenario in defense of the principles of the new post-Cold War order, while the 'vision of the future' suggested the search for a more favorable international order to Brazilian aspirations (ARBILLA, 2000, p. 355).

The impeachment of Collor de Mello and his replacement by Itamar Franco led to the appointment of Fernando Henrique Cardoso to Itamaraty, continuing with institutionalist ideas. Its vision of the role of the United States is clear in the 'de-dramatization' experienced by the relations between the two countries. These were concentrated around divergences over themes in the organization of international commerce and related to the integration process of the American continent, but without confrontations and maintaining a low Brazilian profile. In this period, foreign policy was based on the identification of the international order as a scenario of 'undefined polarities' (LAFER and FONSECA JR., 1994). Cardoso coordinated the formulation of the work 'O repensar do Itamaraty e da Política Externa Brasileira', which marked later foreign policy.

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<sup>13</sup>Pinheiro and Lima (2018) argue that the concept of autonomy cannot be resignified and that the presence of a logic of autonomy in Brazilian foreign policy is more of an exception than a rule.

<sup>14</sup>Adopted here in part is the nomenclature of Pinheiro (2000) for one of the groups. The denomination of the autonomists was mentioned by Saraiva (2010).

Months later the appearance of Celso Amorim appeared as a return to globalism; in practice, he began to design the actions of autonomists based on a new strategy of international insertion. In his year and a half in the office, Amorim brought novelties, such as for the first time the proposal to construct a South American identity (through the proposal to create the Free Trade Area of South America), and the increase of relations with extra-regional emerging countries capable of leveraging the foreign actions of the country.

Cardoso's presidency consolidated the position of the institutionalists. Its principal difference in relation to previous foreign policies was the re-signification of the concept of sovereignty, defined in the period as shared sovereignty. This was identified as a process of construction of a new international order based on a 'concerto' of countries with a harmonic discourse in defense of Western values, seen as universal, which would be supported by the formation of regimes aimed at guaranteeing the consolidation of these values. As an element of change, this position was based both on the perception of the existence of the new scenario of variable alignments and on the adhesion to the international regimes in force (FONSECA JR., 1999). This also represented a re-signification of the concept of autonomy; 'autonomy for integration' <sup>15</sup>. This new meaning was established to the detriment of the autonomy identified in previous globalist administrations, aimed at self-sufficiency.

In this perspective, Brazilian diplomacy sought to behave actively in the multilateral forums, being characterized as a global player, and opted for adhesion to international regimes in the area of security aimed at occupying what Milani, Pinheiro, and Lima (2017) called 'bridged diplomacy'. In the foreign policy of the period Brazil's role in a conjuncture of variable geometries had to be simultaneously one of 'convergence' in terms of values and 'criticism' in relation to distortions which had a place in the international order (VIGEVANI and CEPALUNI, 2011, p. 99). In relation to neighboring countries, the government came to identify them as important partners for the empowerment of Brazilian action in multilateral institutions, as well as receptors of the expansion of Brazilian

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<sup>15</sup>"The times of isolation and self-sufficiency have ended. National sovereignty is no longer an argument for behavior which goes against fundamental values", "Autonomy for integration signifies support for international regimes" (LAMPREIA, 1998, pp. 08-11).

commerce. It combined efforts in the commercial field with the defense of values linked to the democratic regime.

In the last years of his mandate, Cardoso's foreign policy began to suffer inflections presenting criticism of international institutions and seeking an approximation with countries in the South. In 2000, Cardoso called a meeting of all South American presidents in Brasília, drawing on the idea of South America raised a few years previously by Amorim. In this meeting, the principal themes debated referred to economic integration and infrastructure, together with the importance of the defense of democratic regimes.

### **The changes that occurred with and between the PT administrations and South America**

The election of Lula da Silva and the consequent ascension of an autonomist group within Itamaraty through the return of Amorim as Foreign Minister brought a new profile to Brazilian foreign policy. It was not an abrupt change, but a comparison between foreign policy at the end of the Cardoso administration and at the end of Lula's first term shows many differences. According to Hermann's classifications (1990), initially this involved a change in the style and a program with an international insertion strategy clearly different from that of the previous government, meaning that at the end of Lula's first term changes of objectives could be noted.

The foreign policy formulation and implementation process underwent changes with the entrance of a new actor: the PT's foreign policy specialists, who already had an internationalist aspect. Without previous connections with diplomacy, these thinkers had an important role in relation to the inclusion of new actors in foreign policy formulation and the establishment of important dialogue with Itamaraty through the interaction of Lula's advisors with the Foreign Minister and the General Secretary of the Ministry<sup>16</sup>. In relation to South America, their concerns were oriented to strengthening regionalism, proposing that this focus on social and political

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<sup>16</sup>The interlocution between Celso Amorim and Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães, on the one hand, and Aurélio Garcia and President Lula, on the other, was the privileged forum for foreign policy formulation at the time.

dimensions. They supported the South American governments who proposed changes in development policies and the greater inclusion of popular sectors in the political dimension. In addition, they also argued that Brazil pay a more significant part of the costs of regional integration. The presence of party men in the policy formation process led to criticism of it being an ideological foreign policy, but in practice, as in previous administrations, ideology was linked with a strong dose of pragmatism<sup>17</sup>.

The PT's program for government in Lula's first term began with a mention of foreign policy aimed at South America where regional integration appeared as an element capable of propelling national development. Against Itamaraty's tradition of concentrating foreign policy formulation, President Lula chose as his advisor Marco Aurélio Garcia, then the PT secretary of International Relations.

This vision was linked with the autonomists of Itamaraty, who identified South America as a space suitable for structuring a power bloc. The two groups converged in the figure of President Lula to play an active role in both the global and regional dimensions, highlighting here the role of the leader and his vision of foreign policy, or the presidentialization of foreign policy mentioned by Cason and Power (2009)<sup>18</sup>. In both the global and regional arenas it was simultaneously attempted to project the country, which from the Brazilian perspective were also complementary. In the conception of Milani, Pinheiro, and Lima (2017) Brazilian orientation in the region was one of the traits of overcoming the dilemma of graduation.

Lula's administration began with a profile of stability and economic growth and coexisted with the elections of progressive governments politically aligned to the PT. These factors opened space for Brazil to seek a favorable regional scenario. In this context, Lula's foreign policy prioritized the construction of governance in South America where Brazil had a decisive role in the integration and regionalization process<sup>19</sup>. Strong initiatives were constructed with neighboring countries, including Venezuela, in both the economic area and the interaction of the

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<sup>17</sup>Rodrigues, Urdinez, and Oliveira (2019, p. 18) call attention to the stronger presence of party ideology in foreign policy formulation in the previous administration of Cardoso.

<sup>18</sup>Gomes (2016) provides a very interesting approach to the role of President Lula in foreign policy formulation and of foreign policy during his two mandates.

<sup>19</sup>Regionalization is understood as a process of interaction between the economic and social actors in the region and may or may not include incentives on the part of governments.

respective Armed Forces, whether in bilateral terms or within the UNASUR framework.

Cason and Power (2009), and Hirst, Lima, and Pinheiro (2010) highlight a pluralization of actors in the formulation process during Lula's administration. In the framework of governmental agencies, the advances of south-south cooperation within the initiatives of Brazilian foreign policy increased the presence of other ministers and agencies in the formulation and implementation of this policy, while BNDES allowed for external funding through the export of services. In civil society debates on foreign policy grew: public opinion and economic agents came to follow the foreign policy agenda for the region, connected with a new profile of the means of communication disseminating news about neighboring countries and regional organizations. In South America, public and private economic actors linked to developmentalism saw the improvement of regional infrastructure as an important element for Brazilian development. Opposition political parties, in turn, made public their criticism of the policy adopted by the government for South America, accusing them of being ideological. The variety of actors and the changes they brought left clearer the fact that it was a government policy, subject to divergences. The parliamentary vote on the entrance of Venezuela was the principal example of this division where, as Santiago demonstrated (2018, p. 241), parliamentarians from the right, center, and left adopted clearly different positions.

Lula's foreign policy left a legacy for President Dilma Rousseff. At the beginning of her administration, she announced she would continue the foreign policy and institutional profile of Lula's administrations. Autonomists remained in the principal posts in the Ministry of Foreign Relations; Garcia continued as a presidential advisor; and the variety of government agencies involved in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy was reinforced. The developmentalist economic strategy was strengthened, although now with a focus on support for industries at a moment of crisis in the consumption market. South America remained a priority in official discourses.

Nevertheless, despite some gestures towards continuity, Brazil's effective foreign actions underwent inflection and there was a clear reduction in its activism. These inflections were impacted by the international economic context, but also the internal



economic situation of the country and the new dynamics of the foreign policy formulation process.

The economic scenario was hindered by the consequences of the 2008 international financial crisis which later imposed limits on the Brazilian balance of payments. The so-called new economic policy had negative impacts on the Brazilian economy and the growth of GDP fell; it was lower than the average growth in other emerging countries.

In relation to the foreign policy formulation process, during the Rousseff administration, other government agencies were made responsible for technical questions in the foreign agenda, while the presidential advisors were concerned with political crises in South America. Itamaraty's diplomacy, defending a foreign policy with long term gains through greater participation in global policy themes, had its influence reduced. Rousseff was a president with little engagement in the international dimension (BURGES and BASTOS, 2017, p. 287) and the relationship between the president and Itamaraty deteriorated during her mandate. According to Saraiva (2016), "the undermining of Itamaraty, the decentralization of various decision making agencies and the lack of interest of the president meant that in the decision making process the role of the 'agenda setter', which could lie with either the presidency or Itamaraty, ended up with neither" (SARAIVA, 2016, p. 219).

Here the categories established by Hermann (1990) cannot in themselves explain the change. In principle, it could have been be a change in style, but more than that was involved. Without a change in the program as a starting point, there was a very strong impact on the intensity of political actions, on priorities within the program arch, and with this tactics were also modified. Busso's perspective (2014) of changes propelled by situations of crisis explains in part these transformations, since the 2008 crisis later began to have clear consequences on the Brazilian economy.

At the beginning of Dilma Rousseff's second mandate the economic crisis worsened and a political crisis erupted: the government showed clear difficulties in the economic field, which had a repercussion in the political sphere, "raising the price of coalition presidentialism" (SARAIVA, 2016, p. 219). The dismantling of the coalition government in Congress, the worsening of the economic crisis, and

judicial cases against Brazilian construction companies – which had initially occupied an important role in Rousseff's policy to neighboring countries – accentuated the politicization of Brazilian behavior towards the region.

Although the Executive is rarely held accountable for foreign policy items by political actors in Brazil, divergences between political actors over the behavior of the country and its place in the political debate led to the politicization of regional themes and their inclusion in the agenda of the Legislature (oral information<sup>20</sup>). In the 2014 presidential election campaign the PSDB candidate made criticisms about foreign policy, notably about Brazilian investment in Cuba and the limits of the Common External Tariff of MERCOSUR. Opposition leaders accused Rousseff's foreign policy of being 'ideological' or 'partisan' and pointed to South America and Cuba as the principal areas of mistakes by the government (SARAIVA, 2016, p. 220).

The political crisis and the divergences between the president and the Congress brought foreign policy themes to domestic policy leaving evident its politicization. Political actors with a nationalist profile and visions aimed at the domestic dimensions showed discordances with the internationalization of resources.

Due to the worsening of the internal crisis, diplomacy came to be oriented by the defense of the president's mandate, leaving aside some traditional themes.

### **The Temer administration: changes and/or inertia?**

2016 brought novelties to the foreign policy field. The result of the referendum favorable to the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union and Donald Trump's ascension to the presidency of the United State resulted in reflections on two essentials of the Western global order: multilateralism and the preference of Western societies for liberal values. In South America factors which had favored the deconstruction of post-liberal or post-hegemonic regionalism structured around UNASUR sharpened. The election of Mauricio Macri followed that of Pedro Pablo Kuczynski; the Pacific Alliance and the debate about open

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<sup>20</sup>Comment by Maria Regina Soares de Lima on a panel on which I had a place in the VI Encounter of ABRI, in Belo Horizonte, 2017.

regionalism were progressively become more central; and the problems of Venezuela were worsening.

However, the principal factors which led to changes in Brazilian foreign policy were internal. According to Malamud (2017), problems of a domestic order were already gestating in various fields. The political crisis – as a factor of change – worsened and the first semester was marked by the evolution of the process which led to the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff and her replacement by Vice-President Michel Temer, from the MDB.

Temer's rise to the presidency did not resolve the economic crisis; GDP fell again in 2016 and there was insignificant growth in 2017. The new president faced legitimacy problems and the disorder of his support base in Congress. Formal legal accusations were made against participants in the ministerial team and against the president himself. In 2017 President Temer faced legal accusations and two attempts to have him removed from office to be tried, which were rejected by Congress.

The acute crisis and the recomposition of the government alliance encouraged reformulations in foreign policy. As part of the bargaining for the construction of a government coalition the new presidency named a PSDB foreign minister from the political universe, close to the institutionalists of Itamaraty. The MDB, with a nationalist orientation and inward looking never had a foreign policy project.

With the PSDB holding the position, the criticisms expressed by the party's candidate in the electoral campaign were returned to. In his first speeches, the Foreign Minister José Serra sought to instrumentalize his trajectory in the Chancellery to his domestic policy objectives: he harshly criticized the foreign policy of previous administrations which he called 'ideological and Petista', suggesting some generic transformations in defense of existing international institutions and approximation with Western powers. Among the criticisms presented some had an ideological nature and can be seen in the José Serra's campaign for the presidency of Brazil in 2010. However, the fact that the focus of the foreign policy criticisms of PT administrations were oriented towards Latin America was a strategic resource for a possible future presidential campaign, since the

region, as mentioned, involved a wide variety of interests, identities, and political preferences.

However, in practice the inflections suggested were not implemented in all areas. While the ideological dimension of the new foreign policy appeared visible, the same change did not occur in areas where maintenance dues to the potential gains (the pragmatic dimension) made sense<sup>21</sup>. The historic limits of institutionalists' conditioned liberalization (VEIGA, 2002) in its connection with the new international economic profile were visible; the permanence of the departure from new standards of the international economy continued. As can happen in difficult domestic situations, foreign policy remained in the background; with some exceptions, it continued operating in an inertial manner. On the other hand, the foreign minister recomposed the dialogue between the presidency and Itamaraty. He made changes in key positions in Itamaraty putting diplomats from the institutionalist group in key positions, who had had little room for action during the PT administrations.

In 2017 José Serra was replaced by another senator from the PSBD – Aloysio Nunes- until then president of the Foreign Relations Commission of the Senate. Nunes avoided instrumentalizing the position towards internal politics and was closer to the institutionalist group than his predecessor, attributing the formulation of foreign policy primarily to institutionalist diplomats. The fact of having been president of the Commission of Foreign Relations of the Senate did not signify a strengthening of the participation of parliamentarians in foreign policy policymaking. Itamaraty regained its centrality in the process, bringing back as a vector of foreign policy projects for the country and international insertion defended since the 1990s by the institutionalists; the diplomatic apparatus placed itself as the formulator of a supposed state policy<sup>22</sup>. The maintenance of a situation of crisis was an obstacle for foreign policy and many other government agencies which had been linked to foreign actions oriented their energies to the resolution of the internal crisis.

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<sup>21</sup>Or at least avoiding a loss due to a brusque change, with the principal example being the BRICS group.

<sup>22</sup>Presenting foreign policy as a state policy is a recurrent instrument in Brazilian diplomacy. This information was provided by a diplomat who asked that his name not be cited.

Serra and afterwards Nunes maintained the foreign partnerships constructed with emerging countries by the PT administrations. Shortly after becoming president, Michel Temer went to the summit meeting of the presidents of the BRICS countries. The bloc was pragmatically identified by policymakers as the principal arena for Brazil to obtain inputs in the short term to escape the crisis.

On the other hand, Brazil presented its candidacy to enter the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), composed mainly, but in practice not exclusively, of industrialized Western countries. This was an initiative by the government's economic area which reflected the support for international institutions then operating<sup>23</sup>. However, the acceptance of Brazil as a member depended on the organization's internal negotiations and various adaptations in Brazilian legislation, which until the end of the administration did not occur.

As an aggravating element, Brazil was the target of much criticism from the United Nations Human Rights Council; the president's regressive policy towards agrarian questions, indigenous peoples, and the environment had repercussions abroad. The peace operation in Haiti was ended and the Brazilian government did not answer the United Nations request from Brazilian troops for the new peace operation.

During 2017, the general secretary of the presidency of the republic released a document critical of the foreign policy of the PT administrations, which pointed to the importance of Brazil finding a 'grand strategy' for its foreign policy<sup>24</sup>. The document centered attention on criticism of the directives of the PT period stating that the BRICS group did not have much of a future; that south-south cooperation was the fruit of mistaken choices; and that the request for a seat on the United Nations Security Council was detached from the need to count on the support of its actual participants and supported by regional representations which were not confirmed. The commercial policy of Lula's administration was said to be mistaken due to obscure economic data and the wrong identification of who were the most significant commercial partners. The document sees MERCOSUR as an obstacle due

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<sup>23</sup>Although Brazilian protectionism is enrooted, sectors of the coalition which supported President Temer were favorable to the liberalization of the national economy, notably those who held the Ministry of Finance. Joining the OECD appeared for the first time in a PSDB government program in 2006.

<sup>24</sup>Accessible at <<http://arte.folha.uol.com.br/mundo/2017/06/01/relatorio.pdf>> .

to the profile of the governments of its member states and identifies problems resulting from Brazilian competition with US hegemony, seen as positive for the region.

Finally, the text suggests the adoption of the 'grand strategy' concept, criticizing previous foreign policies<sup>25</sup>. This type of discourse is typical of governments who want to differentiate themselves from their predecessors. The document conveys the idea of change, historically avoided in diplomacy.

However, the worsening of the internal political crisis and the need for the president to defend himself from accusations of corruption greatly limited presidential diplomacy which, from the beginning to the end of his mandate, was meager.

### Changes in South American policy

In relation to the changes in Brazilian foreign policy under Temer, South America was the most affected region. This fact is not surprising, "since there exists within the country and its neighbors, a greater variety of interests, mismatched perceptions, segments with specific connections, political identities/divergences, and inter-societal contacts" (SARAIVA, 2018, p. 250). Both regionalization and interdependency, although still limited in the region, made sense in various dimensions. Divergences about foreign policy between political actors and the inclusion of its themes in political debates reinforced the politicization of subjects related to South America, above all Venezuela. Conflicting preferences and the possible gains from the use of these themes in the domestic policy agenda were clear. The themes of South American regionalism and question resulting from Brazilian activism towards countries in the region mobilized various political actors and provoked differentiated discordances and visions among these actors.

In Dilma Rousseff's first term, the perspective which pushed Brazil closer to countries from the region during Lula's administration lost space and were interrupted in the crisis of the second mandate. The president remained favorable to the institutions of regional governance; proximity with

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<sup>25</sup>In relation to this concept, see Brands (2014).

progressive administrations and the vision of South America as a geopolitical space were maintained (SPEKTOR, 2014). However, Brazilian initiatives within UNASUR were reduced. The formation of the Pacific Alliance was a counterpoint to the post-liberal regionalism of UNASUR and challenged the Brazilian strategy with the return of aspects of the open regionalism model.

In relation to Venezuela, UNASUR sought solutions for the crisis, but without achieving any important result. In the region it was the country which most received attention from the Brazilian government, as well as from the political actors of the opposition. Its definitive joining of MERCOSUR was debated in Congress. In relation to Argentina, an alliance in the political field made itself felt in the removal of Paraguay from the bloc after the 'impeachment' which removed President Fernando Lugo, complying with the expectations of the PT.

In the transition to the second term, the politicization of foreign policy through criticisms and actions of the legislature, along with legal processes against directors of infrastructure companies resulted in the decline of the role of Brazil in the region as an agenda and consensus maker. The new Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira engaged in UNASUR missions and made an effort to take a balanced approach to the political context in Venezuela, while the president showed her support for the legislative process; though neither attacked the arguments of President Nicolás Maduro. Other central questions in region such as the Colombia peace agreement and the reincorporation of Cuba in the OAS (which mobilized Latin-Americans greatly) were not the object of action by the Brazilian government. In the transition to 2016 the energies for a structured foreign policy faded.

With the crisis, the pillars of the position favorable to South America were abandoned: actors favorable to developmentalism in the region concentrated on internal problems; the PT was caught up in the political crisis; Itamaraty was progressively losing weight in the decision making process. The crisis increasingly attracted the attention of political actors and the foreign policy of the PT administration was questioned. A vision of domestic political authors linked to the MDB and small parties belonging to the coalition gained space and encouraged criticism of foreign actions which created costs. Questions referring to the involvement of construction companies in corruption put on the political agenda the investments in infrastructure in the region funded by BNDES.

The change of government and the option for a foreign minister from the political sphere had an impact on behavior in the region. As it was a theme which mobilized the political debate, José Serra reinforced the criticisms of Rousseff's policy, seeking with this to satisfy the domestic dimension. The focus of a foreign policy in a situation of political crisis was oriented above all to South America. His first attitude was to criticize the general secretary of UNASUR and the countries whose governments had condemned the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff. With this it sought to leave clear the profile of the new Brazilian government, thereby changing Brazilian behavior towards UNASUR and neighboring countries.

The idea of Brazilian leadership which had lost relevance with the previous government was definitely left aside. Within the framework of Latin America, the government sought an approximation with the governments closer to it, although without any expectation of acting as an agenda setter in the region in the short term or any type of movement which involved costs. Brazilian construction companies who had operated around the region during the PT administrations were accused and legal action taken against them in different countries, in some cases along with local politicians. Brazilian investment in the region was drastically reduced with long term impacts

In MERCOSUR, in partnership with the governments of Argentina and Paraguay, the Brazilian government got Venezuela removed from the bloc, while the approval of the entrance of Bolivia left the political agenda. On the other hand – and with a pragmatic dimension -, the common critical task criticized by the PSDB during the electoral campaign was not questioned. Argentina is a great purchaser of Brazilian manufactured products and TEC (the Common External Tariff), despite its many imperfections, serves as a factor of cohesion for the bloc. In relation to commercial questions, an approximation with the Pacific Alliance was encouraged and negotiations for the signing of a free trade agreement with the European Union regained positive expectations.

The replacement of José Serra by Aloysio Nunes brought foreign policy closer to the expectations of diplomats, but the behavior towards South America persisted. Among the regional challenges, the Venezuelan crisis was the most demanding. In



relation to the Brazilian position in the OAS, in the first confrontation between the Maduro administration and Organization in 2017, Brazil abstained. In 2018, with another equilibrium within the Organization, the question of the suspension of Venezuela returned to the agenda, with the objective support of the Brazilian government. In the same year the Lima Group was organized during the Summit of the Americas with thirteen countries, initially with the aim of constructing an alternative path for the Venezuelan crisis. Brazil participated in the Group, but gave reticent support due to the costs which the crisis seemed to impose on Brazil; and came out against sanctions<sup>26</sup>.

The arrival of many Venezuelan immigrants in Brazil, fleeing the crisis, expanded the frontier problems. Lacking the infrastructure to receive the migrants, Roraima and its Boa Vista began to coexist with the foreign presence, in a scenario of difficulties in accommodating them and with low tolerance on the part of some local segments. Trade between the two countries fell and the position of the Brazilian government became more critical<sup>27</sup>.

When Brazil assumed the presidency of MERCOSUR in July 2017, Nunes suggested the suspension of Venezuela due to the rupture of the democratic order. The proposal was accepted and the suspension confirmed. During this period the Brazilian embassy in Caracas gave asylum to a Venezuelan judge who was being persecuted by the local government<sup>28</sup>. At the end of the year, due to criticisms by the Brazilian ambassador in Caracas of the government's internal measures, Maduro declared him 'persona non grata'; the countries were left without ambassadors and with their diplomatic relations reduced.

Brazil's problems with Venezuela had a reduced impact on UNASUR. The advance of conservative governments on the continent hindered the functioning of a regional organization with a post-liberal profile. Discordances about a possible name to become general secretary at the end of Ernesto Samper's mandate paralyzed its activities and in 2018, along with Argentina, Chile, Colombia,

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<sup>26</sup>See the report in O Globo, 14/04/2018, Venezuela: Nunes evita falar de sanções (Venezuela: Nunes avoids talking about sanctions).

<sup>27</sup>See the report in O Globo, 25/05/2018- "Relação entre Brasil e Venezuela nunca esteve tão ruim" (Relationship between Brazil and Venezuela has never been so bad) (OLIVEIRA, 2018). It speaks of a decline of 10% in Brazilian exports to Venezuela in the previous five years.

<sup>28</sup>In comparison with the case of the Bolivian senator who sought asylum in the La Paz embassy, it is worth noting that the diplomat who brought him to Brazil was the chief of staff of Aloysio Nunes.

Paraguay, and Peru, Brazil suspended its participation and its contribution to the organization. In 2018 the rise of Sebastián Piñera in Chile, Mario Abdo Benítez in Paraguay, and Iván Duque in Colombia accentuated the liberal and/or conservative option in the region worsening the position of an intergovernmental organization which needed consensus to function. Post-liberal regionalism was deconstructed and a new foreign policy cycle began in the region (LOPES, FARIA, and SANTOS, 2016).

In relation to MERCOSUR, following the suspension of Venezuela, the negotiations for signing a free trade agreement with the European Union took a new direction, and expectations rose that it would be signed by the end of Temer's term in office. However, the negotiations did not advance as expected and encountered obstacles in Brazilian demands, which functioned as a hindering factor; while on one hand the European Union placed limitations on the agricultural area, on the other hand, Brazil, as the most industrialized country in the bloc, insisted on its historic protectionism. In relation to the Pacific Alliance, the Argentine government intensified the initiatives of approximation between the 'two blocs'<sup>29</sup>. The interaction between Brazil and Paraguay in the economic field has been marked by the inflow of Brazilian capital for investment in the neighboring country, due to the moment of economic stability which the country was passing through, in contrast with the problems of the Brazilian economy.

Finally, relations between Brazil and Argentina, despite the expectations created, were not aligned. Although they approximated each other in relation to the challenges of the region, and despite not being progressive governments, they did not have similar matrices or preferences. The Macri government has a clearly liberal profile, in contrast with the Brazilian government which, despite having adopting liberalizing measures, did not have liberalism as an objective in itself. To the contrary, "it used liberalism only as a means to maintain itself in power" (SARAIVA, 2018, p. 254). In relation to the posture towards negotiations with the European Union, as well as the positions adopted to the crisis in Venezuela, the position of the Argentine government was harsher<sup>30</sup>. In relation to activism and

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<sup>29</sup>Argentina became an observer of the Alliance.

<sup>30</sup>A report in *Veja Magazine* on 28/09/2018, "Itamaraty: pedido ao TPI de investigação da Venezuela não é sólido" (Itamaraty: request to the Venezuelan ICC for investigation is not solid) stated that Nunes met with his Venezuelan colleague and said he wanted 'less tensions',

extra-regional partners, the Argentine government showed at its beginning a more positive performance, since it was an elected government. Michel Temer's administration, in turn, created mistrust among the foreign partners who showed a preference to wait for the election of a new president with legitimacy to establish policies of interaction with Brazil. These differences within the liberal perspective limited interactions.

### **The new Bolsonaro administration and the dispute between ideology and pragmatism in foreign policy<sup>31</sup>**

If Hermann's classifications (1990) are taken as references, the foreign policy announced in the program of the candidate Jair Bolsonaro fits in all of them – including in relation to the change in the model of international insertion. According to Welch's criteria (2005) the previous foreign policies, principally in the PT administrations, but also of the Michel Temer administration, were identified as 'flawed' and thus required a radical change<sup>32</sup>. During the electoral campaign, President Bolsonaro repeatedly committed himself to the de-ideologization of foreign policy, but gave clear indications of a strong rightwing ideological bias, a foreign policy breaking with Itamaraty's traditions of continuity.

As well as coinciding with changes in the international scenario through the proliferation of rightwing nationalist governments, the beginning of Bolsonaro's mandate signified a change in the domestic political environment in relation to internal political forces. The new government brought together very different sectors, with diverse visions, who are disputing with each other the role of political agenda setter.

The new president chose a young foreign minister from within the hierarchy of the Ministry and, in the first day of government, published a Provisional Measure which opened the way for a reform of Itamaraty, allowing the rise of younger diplomats to the detriment of the more experiences

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highlighting the position of Aloysio Nunes opposing the letter sent by Argentina, Chile, Columbia, Peru, and Paraguay to the International Penal Court asking for investigations of crimes against humanity committed by the Venezuelan government.

<sup>31</sup>This part is based on declarations and press articles.

<sup>32</sup>In relation to the errors attributed to previous foreign policy by the new foreign minister, see Araújo (2019).

ones for key positions. Some positions were ended and others created. It demonstrated the intention to change the ambassadors in the country's principal embassies and left in limbo a generation of diplomats at the peak of their careers<sup>33</sup>. With this it was sought to break a bureaucracy whose administrative normativity served as resistance to change and intended to consolidate an innovative group capable of overcoming the institution's ingrained principles.

In his speeches, the new Foreign Minister Ernesto Araújo revealed controversial international preferences which showed a clear ideology and without tangible gains. He has defended a determined morality to be applied to the international order and traits of religiosity, against what is called 'globalism' and 'Cultural Marxism'<sup>34</sup>, contradicting historically accepted fundamentals such as the defense of human rights, concern with the environment, and the preference for multilateral solutions for global problems. He declared the intention to transfer the Brazilian embassy to Jerusalem based on elements with a religious focus originating from the evangelical lobby; and promised a great convergence with the United States. He removed Brazil from the Global Pact on Migration. Brazilian government measures have affected commitments assumed by Brazil in the Paris Accord.

On the other hand, a strong identity with the United States was revealed. In various campaign speeches, President Bolsonaro showed his identity with the United States and highlighted the importance of looking for alignment with the partner in the north with a particular positive mention of President Donald Trump<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup>See the report in Mello (2018), "Antes de assumir, novo chanceler 'encosta' diplomatas não alinhados" (Before taking office, new chancellor 'put on the bench' diplomats not aligned), and the report in O Globo on 14/03/2019, "Bolsonaro trocará 15 embaixadores em postos chave para melhorar sua imagem" (Bolsonaro will change 15 ambassadors in key positions to improve his image), (OLIVEIRA and GAMBA, 2019). The government actually began to change ambassadors in its fourth month in office.

<sup>34</sup>See the report in O Globo on 13/03/2019, "Chanceler de Bolsonaro ataca parcerias com Europa, Brics e América Latina e critica a 'aposta no antinorteamericanismo'" (Bolsonaro's Chancellor attacks partnerships with Europe, BRICS and Latin America and criticizes the 'bet on anti-Americanism')(OLIVEIRA, 2019c).

<sup>35</sup>See, for example, the report in O Globo on 21/01/2019, "Aproximação entre Trump e Bolsonaro gera expectativa de avanços em agenda bilateral" (The rapprochement between Trump and Bolsonaro generates expectations of advances in bilateral agenda) (OLIVEIRA, 2019a).

Foreign Minister Ernesto Araújo followed the same line<sup>36</sup>. Early acts of sympathy and internal misunderstandings were seen early on, such as Bolsonaro's affirmation of the opening of an American base on Brazilian territory, denied by General Augusto Heleno. Bolsonaro's first foreign presidential visit was to the United States, with the perspective of signing an Extra-NATO partnership agreement (as had existed with Argentina for many years) and to negotiate an agreement for American use of the Alcântara base<sup>37</sup>. The later confirmed perspective of the US lifting its veto on Brazil's joining the OECD was also mentioned in the meeting.

However, the context presents limits and possible losses or contrary reactions abroad and within the country have been identified by participants in ministerial positions in the new government who asked for more pragmatic behavior. In the foreign scenario, while the Bolsonaro administration applied various of the ideas it propagated, Brazil faced opposing forces and tangible prejudices. The proposal to transfer the Brazilian embassy to Jerusalem was condemned by Arab countries, who are one of the principal purchasers of Brazilian meat and other agricultural products, postponing its implementation.

In relation to negative comments on China, Brazil's largest commercial partner, there was a risk of fall in exports. The reference to BRICS which until that moment had been the financial support for Brazil abroad could be badly interpreted by the governments from the bloc<sup>38</sup>. Criticism of the Paris Accord ran into external obstacles. In the final BRICS declaration fidelity to the Accord was reinforced, while in relation to the signing of the EU-MERCOSUR agreement, France had already conditioned its approval on Brazil respecting the Paris Agreement. One of the most reactive countries to changes in the European Common Agricultural Policy, France will not lose any opportunity to bring together beliefs and values with the interests of its farmers.

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<sup>36</sup>The foreign minister participated in the anti-Iranian conference organized by the United States in Poland, which brought together extreme rightwing governments. See the report in O Globo on 14/02/2019, "Araújo participa de conferência anti-Irã" (Araújo participates in anti-Iran conference) (DUCHIADE, 2019).

<sup>37</sup>The question of becoming an extra-NATO ally was diffused with much pomp. See the report in Folha de São Paulo on 02/03/2019, "Brasil pode virar 'grande aliado extra-OTAN' dos EUA em visita de Bolsonaro" (Brazil could become U.S. 'great extra-NATO ally' of Bolsonaro visit).

<sup>38</sup>See the report in O Globo 13/03/2019, "Chanceler de Bolsonaro ataca parcerias com Europa, Brics e América Latina e critica a 'aposta no antinorteamericanismo'" (Bolsonaro's Chancellor attacks partnerships with Europe, Brics and Latin America and criticizes the 'bet on anti-North Americanism')(OLIVEIRA, 2019c).

In relation to Cuba, in terms of external forces, Brazil has total liberty to break with and harm the country in relation to what it finds opportune. Cuba is a small country with few economic resources and little power – this is the adjustment variable where rulers can apply their respective ideologies without suffering retaliations. The Cuban government terminated the contract for the ‘Mais Médicos Program’, and its president was not invited to the presidential inauguration.

These ideas also encountered limits in the internal scenario. In the agribusiness field, the retaliation of Arab countries would impact on the direct interests of Brazilian exporters of agricultural products, reducing its exports. Distancing from China would directly hurt exporters of soybean and other primary products, while breaking with the Paris Accord could reduce exports to European countries, also purchasers of primary products. The ‘ruralistas’, who were a group who received a new department in the structure of Itamaraty, have already shown their concern with the foreign minister’s statements which could result in losses for them<sup>39</sup>.

Finally, a sector which has resisted the application of the Bolsonaro government’s ideological proposals is the diplomatic service. Itamaraty has a historic tradition of acting in multilateralism and has internal groups with political preferences. The ideas presented by Bolsonaro (and his foreign minister), with rare exceptions, do not have followers. In the mid-term, it is difficult to convince a well-structured corporation such as Itamaraty to abandon multilateralism and universalism and to implement proposals coming from actors external to diplomacy, which could also bring tangible losses to the country.

Internal divisions within the government began to appear in its first two months, while the struggle between the ideology of some sectors closest to the president and other groups that are part of the government and who were concerned with losses – who present themselves as pragmatists – is already being felt. Disagreements between Bolsonaro’s foreign policy and especially the reaction of the military members of the government – including the vice-president Hamilton Mourão - is another part of a scenario that shows what Brazil’s foreign relationships will be like under this administration.

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<sup>39</sup>See the report in O Globo on 14/03/2019, “Ruralistas querem reunião de emergência com Araújo” (Ruralists want emergency meeting with Araújo)(OLIVEIRA, 2019b).

In the case of South America, the Bolsonaro government found a new cycle favorable to the implementation of its ideas. The administrations of Iván Duque and Sebastián Piñera were his preferential allies, leading the president to show some sympathy for PROSUR, a Chileno-Colombian project to replace UNASUR<sup>40</sup>. In the case of Venezuela, the rapid recognition of Juan Guaidó as interim president of the country was announced by the Brazilian government, although with veiled criticism within the governmental apparatus due to the interaction constructed during the many years of 'Petista' administrations. In relation to the actions to be used against Venezuela the governments of the United State and Columbia have defended harsher positions in relation to the crisis in the country, also presenting as an option military intervention. The presidency and Foreign Minister Araújo have given some support for these ideas<sup>41</sup>, but like the weight and counterweight of ideology and pragmatism, military representatives have imposed limits, notably Vice-President Mourão, who was present in the meeting of the Lima Group with Foreign Minister Araújo<sup>42</sup>. The idea of the use of any military force was strongly rejected and the existence of a channel of conversation between the Armed Forces of both countries since previous governments was acknowledged<sup>43</sup>.

In the case of MERCOSUR, there have been no changes until the present. During the presidential campaign the current finance minister Paulo Guedes made comments about multilateral and bilateral agreements and the Common External Tariff (TEC). However, since Brazil is the country which most benefits from TEC to export manufactured products in which they do not have a comparative advantage in the international market, various questions were raised about the permanence of protectionism and the Manaus Free Zone. The ending of TEC would remove long-term benefits from Brazilian industries. In addition to Argentina being a great

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<sup>40</sup>See the report in O Globo on 08/03/2019, "Brasil adere a bloco sul-americano proposto por Chile e Colômbia" (Brazil joins the South American bloc proposed by Chile and Colombia), (OLIVEIRA and GONÇALVES, 2019).

<sup>41</sup>See the report in O Globo on 12/02/2019, "S.O.S. Venezuela. Brasil terá centro de ajuda na fronteira" (SOS Venezuela. Brazil will have an aid center on the border)(FIGUEIREDO, 2019).

<sup>42</sup>See the report in Folha de São Paulo on 26/02/2019, "Grupo de Lima rejeita ação militar na Venezuela apesar da pressão norte-americana" (Lima group rejects military action in Venezuela despite US pressure). The Group actually rejected the idea of military action.

<sup>43</sup>See the report in O Globo on 14/03/2019, "Porta-voz de Bolsonaro admite canal de conversas entre militares brasileiros e venezuelanos" (Bolsonaro spokesman admits channel of conversations between Brazilian and Venezuelan military)(MAIA, 2019).

purchaser of Brazilian manufactured goods, the Maurício Macri administration is liberal and seeks to establish bilateral accords. Here, as in the case of PSDB with Temer, after the government took office Minister Paulo Guedes changed his discourse in relation to the bloc and left for afterwards the decision to approve its internal initiatives, which are more urgent. The Agreement with the European Union continues to advance.

On the other hand, and also in the case of Temer, the relations of Bolsonaro and Maurício Macri are misaligned. Maurício Macri has a clearly liberal preference, but this did not signify conservatism in customs. For example, the defense of human rights is an important theme for Argentine society and the presence of numerous army officers in the government has no counterpart in Buenos Aires. Unlike other presidential inaugurations, which Argentine presidents usually attended, Macri did not appear at Bolsonaro's. On the other hand, the respective positions of both presidents towards Venezuela are similar.

### **By way of conclusion**

As can be seen, changes are a part of the democratic regime and ideology is a full part of politics. This research can still be expanded in some ways, but some ideas can be advanced now. The principal of these is that the changes that occurred in Brazilian foreign policy towards South America with Michel Temer's administration, and those that have started to occur with Bolsonaro, deconstruct the idea of a state foreign policy whose fundamentals do not change. As seen in the second part, foreign policy has experimented inflections since the return to democracy; in the cases of the administrations of Collor de Mello and Itamar Franco during their periods in office. The article avoided mentioning important systemic or external factors, in order to show the weight of two domestic factors in changes foreign policy: alternance of government and the ideas of those who held key positions.

In dialogue with the explanatory perspective for change examined in the first section, it is possible to argue, in accordance with Hermann's classifications (1990), that in the case of Brazilian foreign policy towards South America, the transition to Temer signified not only an adjustment added to a more frequent programmatic (and strategical) change in Brazilian foreign policy (FONSECA, 2011), but also a



change of objectives. Targets such as the construction of regional governance and the consolidation of Brazil's regional leadership role were abandoned. Brazil's principal partners in the region were changed (with the exception of Argentina). Although Rousseff's administration did not implement strategies in this sense, in terms of discourse the criteria of the previous administration was maintained. However, it is important to highlight that the decline of foreign policy oriented to neighboring countries between 2011 and 2016 reduced the impact of change.

In the case of Bolsonaro, looked at from a broader sense, changes in Brazilian behavior also fit into the classification of change from Hermann's perspective (1990) in the international insertion model.

In relation to the binomial of pragmatic foreign policy /ideological foreign policy (GARDINI, 2011), under the Temer administration Brazilian behavior towards the region had an important ideological aspect, considering the criticism of the Venezuelan government due to its disrespect for the principles of a political regime. However, pragmatism was also present, since there were differences within the government in relation to foreign policy preferences. Finally, Brazil's behavior towards Venezuela was not aligned with the most radical (and liberal) proposal of the Argentine government. Some actions were oriented to utility, practicability, and operationality rather than doctrine or the cognitive map. However, it should also be noted that pragmatism is not synonymous with success. In relation to the behavior of the Bolsonaro administration, ideology made itself felt in relation to Venezuela and in the sympathy demonstrated towards the PROSUR project, but in the Venezuelan case pragmatism was defended by the military holding government positions. In the case of MERCOSUR, so far pragmatism seen as continuity so as not to affect gains has been felt in the two administrations.

Finally, some details can be raised for reflection. In relation to what Cason and Power (2009) call foreign policy presidentialization, Michel Temer was not a president committed to the directions of foreign policy and did not defend specific ideas; which, according to Burges and Bastos (2017, p. 287) did not propel strong change. However, in the case of South America, a foreign minister was appointed with political interests in change. Bolsonaro, in turn, has a strong commitment to foreign policy ideas, which were strongly mentioned in the presidential campaign. The alternance in administrations was fundamental for the changes. In both cases,

as emphasized by Busso (2014) the transformations occurred in situations of crisis. There is a clear mention of the 'failures' of previous foreign policies, which appears in Welch (2005) as an element of change. Ideology, as shown by Gardini (2011), as well as change, appears in various governments.

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