

Brazilian Foreign Policy Discourses and the Quest for Ontological Security

Luciano da Rosa Muñoz*

Abstract: In this paper, I analyse Brazilian foreign policy with special attention to change from Americanism to Globalism in the early 1960s. This article argues that such change happened amid a crisis of ontological security. Traditional diplomats were supporters of Americanism, whereas some intellectuals and politicians came up with Neutralism, an alternative foreign policy discourse. They upheld different narratives of Brazil's identity, whether as a Western country or a bridge between developing nations and the West. I will argue that diplomats did solve such critical situation and regain control over Brazilian foreign policy's formulation and implementation. They did so by deactivating parts of Neutralism and carving out Globalism, which would become the new hegemonic foreign policy discourse.

Keywords: Brazilian foreign policy; ontological security; discourse analysis; biographical narrative; Americanism; Globalism

Introduction

In the first decades of the twentieth century, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – also known as Itamaraty – gained control over our foreign policy making process with a considerable level of autonomy inside the state apparatus as well as regarding social pressures. Such outcome had a great deal to do with Itamaraty's high professionalism, *esprit de corps*, and bureaucratic insulation (Cheibub 1985; Lima 1994). It was also due to their legitimacy and ability to carve out a foreign policy discourse – Americanism – around the memory and legacy of Baron of Rio Branco, a national hero responsible for peacefully negotiating Brazilian frontiers and founding its modern diplomacy. After World War II, however, Americanism fell into decay, and new actors such as politicians and intellectuals arose and wanted to have a greater say in Brazilian foreign policy making and implementation. From this I ask: what happened to Itamaraty once its foreign policy discourse was at stake? How did it react to such critical situation?

* Universidade de Brasília (UNB), Brasília, - BSB, Brazil; lmunoz1984@hotmail.com ORCID 0000-0001-6685-9385

I understand that foreign policy discourses only work if there is balance between identities and practical policies. If there is no such balance, a critical situation unfolds (Hansen 2006; Ejdus 2018). I do not think, however, that identities are fixed entities. Rather, there is a process of identification whereby subjects seek to achieve an ultimately impossible sense of completeness (Epstein 2010; Eberle 2019). In the end, subjects will at most be able to feel as if they were ontologically secure. My first hypothesis is that Brazil and Itamaraty were facing a crisis of ontological security in the late 1950s because special relations with the United States were no longer working the way Brazilian diplomatic elite expected. As a result, Brazil's identification with the West was open to contestation. Some politicians and intellectuals began to defend Neutralism in order to identify Brazil as part of the developing world. My second hypothesis is that Itamaraty successfully addressed such critical situation once it deactivated parts of Neutralism and started to carve out what Globalism would become. By doing so, it could regain control over Brazilian foreign policy and restore its own feeling of ontological security.

Ontological security and discourse analysis: scope definitions

In recent years, foreign policy analysis (FPA) has been receiving inputs from the ontological security theory (OST). Mitzen (2006: 342) states that '[o]ntological security refers to the need to experience oneself as a whole, continuous person in time – as being rather than constantly changing – in order to realize a sense of agency.' Drawing from Anthony Giddens' sociological insights, she claims states engage in ontological security seeking-behaviour the same way individuals do. In the international arena, states have to guarantee not only their physical security but also a stable cognitive environment in order to relate means to ends and have continuous agency. They pursue this ontological security by routinizing their relations with significant others. Routinization is a practice that generates basic trust between a given state and its significant other, which, in turn, regularises social life and makes its identity knowable. Breaking with such routines is disruptive to ontological security and may cause great anxiety (Mitzen 2006).

There is an important question through which FPA and OST scholarships meet, that is, 'how is the process of making foreign policy complicated by ontological security demands?' (Mitzen and Larson 2017: 5). Steele (2008: 52) states that '[o]ntological security comes about when agents continue to choose actions which they feel reflect their sense of self-identity.' Unlike Mitzen, he emphasises the struggles with self-identity through biographical narratives built by agents, both in order to fight anxiety and to avoid shame. Therefore, the process of making foreign policy has to cope with this need states have of a stable sense of self to have agency in the world. Foreign policy discourses aim at creating a stable link between identities and policies. In turn, policymakers always seek to legitimise their discourses by trying to show their audiences that policies and identities are coherent with one another. However, they can never fully achieve this goal because their discursive balance will need political adjustment when affected by historical change (Hansen 2006). Therefore, I assume here that such relationship between foreign policy making and ontological security-seeking behaviour is at once political and discursive.

Biographical narratives highlight experiences that matter in order to provide the self with knowledge of its place in the world and demarcate its existence in time and space. Berenskoetter (2012: 264) conceptualizes the nation state ‘as an entity constituted through a narrative designating an experienced space (giving meaning to the past) intertwined with an envisioned space (giving meaning to the future) and delineated through horizons of experience and of possibility, respectively.’ What matters to a biographical narrative depends on political selection and discursive interpretation. Foreign policy discourses may create foundational myths to demarcate the birth of a nation state by selecting and emphasising life stories of particular individuals – national heroes – and groups who serve as exemplary reference points, whose words and deeds are deemed essential to national identities. On the contrary, future visions of the national self – such as utopias – make possible to envision what nation states can become, or what transformations may change them for the better (Berenskoetter 2012).

On the one hand, foreign policy discourses are linguistic constructions that aim at providing ontological security to nation states by telling their biographical narratives with a sense of continuity in time and space. On the other, because foreign policy discourses are also contingent and thus open to contestation, they need to authorize which subjects are able to speak when defining, for example, who the national heroes are. On their side, these subjects are agents who authorize their discourses with supportive institutions and practical policies. Biographical narratives require maintenance, which depends both on ‘(i) agents who can claim expertise and legitimacy in carving out authentic memories and visions and possess the creative skill to fuse them and (ii) agents who adopt and carry the narrative along, and who possess the resources to affirm it with tangible practices’ (Berenskoetter 2012: 279). Brazilian diplomats were such agents. They had to deal with a crisis of ontological security in the late 1950s, because not only Brazilian biographical narratives were at stake, but also traditional foreign policy routines towards our significant other – the United States – were in peril.

According to Lima (1994), Itamaraty’s institutional features – such as their high professionalism, *esprit de corps*, and bureaucratic insulation – may explain how this diplomatic elite accumulated a set of principles, beliefs, and practices that over time fused into paradigms of foreign policy. In the Brazilian state formation, since the first half of nineteenth century, our Foreign Ministry has progressively gone stronger in terms of controlling the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. This growing autonomy not only inside the state bureaucracy but most importantly vis-à-vis pressures from society had a great deal to do with Itamaraty’s capacity of shielding Brazilian foreign policy from unwanted and unexpected changes and ensuring its continuity (Cheibub 1985). On the one hand, Brazilian diplomatic elite has historically claimed legitimacy and expertise to carve out our foreign policy discourses on the grounds of Baron of Rio Branco’s memory and legacy; on the other, they have been displaying considerable institutional resources to carry such narratives along, because of their bureaucratic insulation and virtual monopoly over Brazilian foreign policy making.

In general, authors concur that from the beginning of the twentieth century until the end of the Cold War two paradigms may explain our foreign policy: Americanism and

Globalism (Pinheiro 2004). First developed by Rio Branco himself, Americanism had three important tenets. First, there was a perception of ideological convergence between Brazil and the USA, be it similar aspirations, values, or points of view. Second, given the power disparities between both countries, there was a pragmatic dimension in which Brazil tried to use American international power in order to achieve its national interests. Third, Brazilian elites downplayed the importance of proximity with Latin American neighbours in favour of closer ties with the US (Ricupero 2006). However, Globalism turned such tenets upside down. Such paradigm gained strength after the 1960s under the assumption that Brazilian foreign policy should abandon its traditional American centre of gravity and globalise itself. In that context, Brazilian elites envisaged the country's power projection in the world, which would reinforce their need for establishing connections with the developing world and pursuing more autonomy in foreign policy decisions (Lima 1994).

In this paper, I borrow both signifiers – Americanism and Globalism. Nonetheless, I do not consider them as paradigms of foreign policy, but rather as foreign policy discourses. I make this move because I think such paradigmatic analyses may have two important setbacks. First, when dealing with foreign policy they tend to overemphasise continuity. Lima (1994: 34) affirms that paradigms have an interpretive nature and thus are open to polemics and replacement. When presenting Americanism and Globalism, however, she pays little attention to the play of practice in-between, when political and discursive struggles took place and shaped the process of change from one paradigm to the other. Second, such analyses tend to underestimate domestic pressures over the foreign policy's formulation and focus on the Brazilian diplomatic staff as if they had always been crafting paradigms behind closed doors. Here I choose to present Americanism and Globalism as foreign policy discourses in order to stress historical change and political dispute. I will argue that there was not a smooth transition between such discourses. Rather, traditional diplomats resisted change because their feeling of ontological security rested precisely on rigid routines attached to Americanism.

Such statement begs for further theoretical clarification. One first key question is the unit of analysis: 'whose ontological security?' One may assume as if states sought ontological security like individuals do in order to achieve more productive insights. It is also possible to consider that individual decision-makers involved in foreign policy situations are the ones seeking ontological security (Mitzen and Larson 2017). Here I do not choose any of these units of analysis because I apply a discursive approach. Such approach is more empirically grounded and does not presume who are the key actors of international politics – either states or individual decision-makers. From a Lacanian perspective, Epstein (2010) affirms that there is no essential self to be found neither in states nor in individuals. In fact, identification is a better concept than identity, given that identity is never fully achieved. This making of the self is an everlasting and eventually frustrated attempt to achieve completeness and make up for an original lack. Identification is a dynamic but impossible process of compensation. In Lacanian terms, furthermore, such insecure subject will never be able to fully achieve ontological security

because foreign policy discourses cannot entirely express affective and corporeal aspects of subjectivity (Eberle 2019).

Individuals feel anxiety, states do not. But both can talk when they adopt certain discourses and not others. The discursive approach offers a way of travelling between both units of analysis inasmuch as it empirically identifies which relevant actor speaks in each discourse (Epstein 2010). In my case, units of analysis may actually juxtapose. As we shall see, Brazilian diplomats in the 1950s were trying to compensate their own original lack by identifying themselves with Rio Branco, Itamaraty, and Brazil. On the one hand, they were individuals who felt anxiety when their traditional routines attached to Americanism underwent decay. On the other, Brazil was talking to other states through their foreign policy discourses, given that diplomats are also agents in charge of speaking on behalf of the Brazilian state. Nonetheless, such discourses are nothing but linguistic constructions open to historical contingency. I will argue that traditional diplomats could no longer identify themselves with Brazil as they used to do once contestation to Americanism emerged. They were both losing grip over Brazilian foreign policy and feeling anxious because their own identifications were in jeopardy.

Another important theoretical question has to do with causal direction: 'does who we are cause what we do, or does what we do cause who we are?' (Mitzen and Larson 2017). I follow here a poststructuralist epistemology and refuse the search for causation on either ideal factors or material ones. I see foreign policy as a discursive practice and understand that identities and policies reinforce each other. 'Identities are thus articulated as the reason why policies should be enacted, but they are also (re)produced through the very policy discourses: they are simultaneously (discursive) formation and product' (Hansen 2006: 19). Identity construction may unfold through spatial and temporal dimensions. In foreign policy discourses, spatial identities relate to the construction of boundaries historically centred on the nation state. Temporal identities pervade these discourses with themes such as development, continuity, change, and repetition. As a result, political disputes between hegemonic and alternative foreign policy discourses emerge when each of them offers different accounts of spatial and temporal dimensions of identities. In other words, when they diverge on how to tell the biographical narrative of a nation state (Hansen 2006; Berenskoetter 2012).

I will apply discourse analysis as a method of research. A discourse analysis approach stresses the linguistic construction of reality, given that discourses are systems of statements that produce certain interpretive possibilities to make sense of reality but preclude others. Intertwined with power relations, discourses create, articulate and position subjects vis-à-vis one another (Doty 1993). As systems of signification, discourses structure binary oppositions that establish relations of power such that one of the elements is considered hierarchically superior. Furthermore, they define subjects authorized to speak and to act. These subjects are discursively related to privileged poles such as reason and order, while silenced subjects are attached to inferior ones such as passion and chaos. As a poststructuralist method of research, discourse analysis is twofold. On the one hand, it involves identifying binary oppositions and subject positions in a particular discourse;

on the other, it involves studying the play of practice through which alternative discourses come up and defy the hegemonic ones (Milliken 1999). I will come back to it in my empirical analysis.

As we shall see at length, Americanism fell into decay in Brazil in the 1950s, alongside Itamaraty's capacity to virtually monopolise Brazilian foreign policy making. Being the hegemonic foreign policy discourse, it conveyed a specific understanding of Brazil's temporal and spatial identity as well as pointed to which routines it should prioritize in its international relations. In the second section, I will describe the ways some intellectuals and political leaders came up with and supported Neutralism (Jaguaribe 1958), an alternative foreign policy discourse based on a different account of Brazil's biographical narrative. In the third section, I will analyse how Itamaraty could eventually rebalance identities and policies by adjusting and incorporating such discourse to Globalism in the early 1960s. In my empirical analysis, I will come back to OST in order to grasp such move in more detail. Also, applying methods of discourse analysis will allow me to look more closely at what relevant figures – diplomats, intellectuals, and political leaders – thought and enunciated about Brazilian foreign policy.

Biographical narratives at stake: Americanism and its critics

At the end of World War II, Americanism was at its peak. Brazil had just won the war in alliance with the United States. In exchange for the American government's commitment to fund construction of a state-owned steel company in Brazil, President Getúlio Vargas allowed the US military to prepare air and naval bases in the Northeast region, whereof American troops were sent across the South Atlantic Ocean to fight against the Axis. Due to its own initiative, Brazil later decided to send ground troops to take part in the Italian campaign under American command, thereby receiving modern armaments under the aegis of the Lend-Lease Act. Brazil was the only South American country to join the Allied war effort, which enhanced its prestige when victory was achieved. With American support, it also became one of the first non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. Overall, Brazil-USA relations were at its historical best in 1945, fact that convinced Brazilian political and diplomatic elites that our country could sustain this special relationship in peacetime as well (Moura 1991).

Conventionally, Baron of Rio Branco is accepted as the creator of such conception of special relationship with the United States as the key to Brazilian foreign policy. At least since the 1860s, the USA had been the main importer of Brazilian coffee, a commodity around which revolved most of our rural economy. This relationship was mutually beneficial in political affairs as well. Brazilian friendship was strategic for the USA to strengthen their Pan-American project of hemispheric leadership, especially against the backdrop of increasing animosity among Hispanic American countries. Besides, such privileged interlocution with the USA was vital not only to secure Brazilian interests against its neighbours in South America, but also to deter possible adventures from European colonial powers into its huge and ill-protected territory. In 1912, shortly after Rio Branco's passing, he was already considered a national unanimity. Throughout his

almost ten years ahead of Itamaraty, he could both restore Brazil's reputation in the world and settle advantageously its remaining boundary disputes. Americanism was an important part of his legacy to his successors.

From that point up to World War II, it became the hegemonic foreign policy discourse in charge of telling Brazilian national identity and providing its self with a stable sense of agency in the world. I understand that Americanism reinforced Brazil's ontological security in two ways. In terms of self-reflection, Brazilian elites thought the United States and Brazil were comparable republics, because both were continental in size, and had substantial natural resources and economic potential. In other words, if Brazil and the USA were alike, Brazilian elites could imagine the former as being part of the Western great powers' inner circle. In terms of routines, Brazil's foreign policy was organized around the idea that through American friendship it could accomplish its goals of regional prominence and prestige in the world. As a consequence, the USA worked as the perfect significant other: at once a mirror image to Brazil's desired future glory and a power asset to its desired national interests. Hence, we may figure out why Americanism became sacrosanct in the decades after Rio Branco's demise. I argue it has been so because such foreign policy discourse could provide a right balance between national self-identity and practical policies.

I do not consider Americanism as a source of Brazil's ontological security as if it were an anthropomorphized state. Such foreign policy discourse made Brazilian diplomats themselves feel as if they were ontologically secure both as individuals and as parts of a bureaucracy. Their quest for ontological security rests upon a process of identification with signifiers such as Rio Branco, Itamaraty, and Brazil. First, they equate Brazil and Rio Branco, who became a belated national founding father, especially because his magnificent diplomatic victories made even stronger our myth of territorial unity (Santos 2010). Second, diplomats associate the Baron with our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or Itamaraty, named after the palace where Rio Branco died working in 1912. Interestingly, Itamaraty is also known as the 'House of Rio Branco', as if Brazilian diplomats were part of a family headed by a late father figure (Moura 2007). They identify themselves with Rio Branco not only because he is a national hero, but mainly because he is the exemplary diplomat, whom his successors may follow and emulate but never surpass. Consequently, we see why Americanism became a powerful source of routinization for diplomats' daily work for at least fifty years after Rio Branco died.

We come full circle if we now observe that such diplomats traditionally identified themselves with Brazil itself, by means of monopolising Brazilian foreign policy's formulation and deciphering national interests as if they were the most virtuous men in the Republic (Belém Lopes 2013). In 1945, as I have mentioned, Americanism was at its peak. In that same year, amid celebrations of Rio Branco's 100th anniversary, President Vargas authorized by decree the creation of a diplomatic academy known as Rio Branco Institute. Such school crowned a steady process of professionalization of the diplomatic career in Brazil whereby old patrimonial methods of recruitment were abandoned. In spite of its initial inspirations of openness to society, Rio Branco Institute eventually

held responsibility only for training and socializing new diplomats after they had already passed its hard entrance exam, which turned such career socially exclusive among us (Farias 2015). As long as professionalization progressed, diplomats became more and more zealous of their expertise and authoritative role in making our foreign policy, alongside the increasing bureaucratic routinization of Americanism.

In fact, they controlled not only Brazilian foreign policy's formulation and implementation, but also its conceptual and historical interpretation. Until the 1970s, as Pinheiro and Vedoveli (2012) show, there was not a clear distinction between political and intellectual activities in Brazil given that our social sciences academic milieu was not solidly established yet. As a consequence, diplomats juxtaposed their roles of bureaucrats and intellectuals, especially because many of them were also professors at the Rio Branco Institute. In their works of diplomatic history, they tended to emphasise the crucial role Itamaraty had in forming Brazil's national character (Casarões 2019). Hence, they had enough power to demarcate a certain interpretation of Brazilian national biography. This was made under the sign of temporal continuity, inasmuch as diplomats always privileged experienced spaces in the past over envisioned spaces in the future. For them, two of the main features of Brazilian identity are Itamaraty's institutional continuity over time and our massive territory, in itself a mark of immutability (Lafer 2007). Such narrative goes back as far as 1750, when Alexandre de Gusmão, a Brazilian-born Portuguese diplomat, negotiated the Treaty of Madrid, nicknamed our 'birth certificate', whereby our current territory was first outlined (Goes Filho 1999).

It is possible to understand why there was so much enthusiasm with Americanism among Brazilian political and diplomatic elites when the war was over. They sincerely expected the wartime special relationship with the USA would remain. In 1946, President Eurico Gaspar Dutra came to power with that in mind. He tried to show the USA that Brazil was their most faithful ally by breaking diplomatic relations with the USSR. In New York, the Brazilian delegation followed their American colleagues in every vote at the United Nations. In Rio de Janeiro, Dutra made room for delegations to sign the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR), whereby the USA consolidated their hegemony over the region. Furthermore, Dutra's administration eagerly adhered to the GATT system and its liberal tenets. In a few years, Brazil-USA trade balance became heavily negative. Nonetheless, from the American perspective, Brazil was no longer a priority. With the outbreak of the Cold War, they focused on containing communism in Europe and East Asia, and no longer had interest in fostering Brazilian development. As a result, Latin American waited in vain for its Marshall Plan (Moura 1991).

In 1951, Getúlio Vargas was back in power. This time he focused on the oil sector and thought his wartime pragmatic bargaining skills could once again convince the USA to release public financial aid. But the results were meagre. Increasing frustration with the USA-Brazil relations ignited a fierce debate over autonomy in our foreign policy. On the one hand, nationalists launched a huge campaign called 'The Oil is Ours'; on the other, cosmopolitans thought Brazilian economy should accommodate to liberal tenets in order to draw private foreign investments. In the end, Petrobras was created as a state-owned oil company, which strained even more the dialogue between Vargas and

the White House (Hirst 1990). In turn, Itamaraty began to lose track of Brazilian foreign policy making. Vargas himself got hold of his nationalist economic agenda alongside his Economic Advisory, whose mindset followed the progressive teachings of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), hardly amenable to traditional Americanism. Furthermore, the oil campaign split various parts of Brazilian society such as the military, the political parties, the press, and even the common people.

In the mid-1950s, Americanism was in decay. As a consequence, diplomats seemed to be no longer capable of controlling Brazilian foreign policy's interpretation as well. New intellectuals arose and they were very critical. In 1955, President Café Filho authorized the creation of the Higher Institute of Brazilian Studies (ISEB), a think tank attached to our Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) that gathered important intellectuals such as Hélio Jaguaribe (political scientist), Roland Corbisier (philosopher), and Guerreiro Ramos (sociologist). They were in tune with the Bandung Spirit, according to which peripheral nations should refuse alignment with either of the Cold War blocs and follow their own path of economic and social development. As far as Brazil is concerned, they concurred that American economic and cultural colonialism were to blame for its backwardness (Corbisier 1958). If colonialism meant American hegemony abroad, with-in Brazil it meant past colonial structures such as an agrarian economy, land ownership concentration, and high illiteracy rates. Those intellectuals believed a new Brazil had just been born, and for that they were utterly supportive of more autonomy in foreign policy hand in hand with nationalist economic measures such as state-led industrial planning, as well as land and educational reforms.

ISEB intellectuals wanted to break with the past, but Itamaraty was a part of it. Their body of work brought about another account of Brazil's national biography, now under the sign of change. They sustained a dynamic understanding of history, whereby progressive time in motion would eventually wipe out the colonial shackles of the past. For political debates, ISEB intellectuals came up with the ideology of national-developmentalism, a concept which embodied an envisioned space within which Brazil should become a more egalitarian and developed country, and even a major power (Pécaut 1990). In terms of discourse, I argue they thought Brazilian temporal identity on the grounds of a binary opposition between past and future. In Corbisier's words (1958: 45-50, free translation), 'until 1922, we mean until "The Modern Art Week", there is no history properly, but prehistory of Brazil. [...] We have nothing else to do but invent our destiny, building a culture that adequately expresses the new Brazil we must create.'¹ Our 1922 Modern Art Week is considered the starting point to Brazilian cultural nationalism, in parallel with economic nationalism under way in the 1950s. Unlike traditional Americanism, ISEB intellectuals now identified Brazil not with the West under American leadership, but rather with Latin America and the non-Western developing world.

Brazil's ambivalent postcolonial subjectivity (Vieira 2018) can also explain why diplomats' and ISEB intellectuals' foreign policy discourses collided. If Brazil was completely Western, then its foreign policy routines ought to align with the USA; if Brazil was somewhere in-between the West and the non-West, then it should seek an autonomous foreign policy and diversify its partners. Dutra's years began to show that Americanism

was no longer effective. When it comes to ontological security, we may see how there was not a fine balance between discursive identity and foreign policy routines anymore. If Brazil was part of the West, why did the USA give up helping its development? If Brazil had now to look for partnerships outside the West, why did it have to keep on considering itself a bulwark of the West? In a groundbreaking book published in 1958, Hélio Jaguaribe deeply analysed the aforementioned debate between nationalists and cosmopolitans. Taking sides with the former, he defended Americanism should be abandoned in favour of Neutralism, as he called it. In his mind, neutrality in the Cold War meant Brazil should leave behind its traditional alignment with the Western bloc in order to become one of the neutral mediators between the USA and the USSR. Akin to other ISEB intellectuals, he thought foreign and domestic policies were inseparable parts of the same project of national emancipation.

I consider that Jaguaribe recurs to a binary opposition between past and future too, inasmuch as his argument lies on three main pairs of past/future poles: Cosmopolitanism/Nationalism, Americanism/Neutralism, and Heteronomy/Autonomy. Once again, I follow Epstein (2010: 343), according to whom ‘a *subject-position* refers to a *position within a discourse*. It is a place-holder, a linguistic category, the I/we of a discourse.’ From now on, I will spot subject-positions and binary oppositions depending on who speaks. In Jaguaribe’s alternative foreign policy discourse, Itamaraty does not hold the hierarchically superior positions anymore:

Itamaraty has lost the autonomy it had, in the Old Republic [1889-1930], to formulate and implement our foreign policy, by virtue of increasing interference of other administrative organs (CSN, BNDE, Petrobrás etc.), the Presidency of the Republic, the Congress, the press, and class organizations in our foreign policy making. [...] Such ornamental attitude [of Itamaraty in the 1920s], in opposition to our previous foreign policy phase of pragmatism and dynamism [Rio Branco’s years], although partly justified by our country’s condition, started our diplomatic decadence, once it instilled inside Itamaraty sterile habits such as the daily routine of following precedents, which also disfigured our foreign representatives’ mentality, who are more worried about drawing individual sympathy and adherence from foreign upper classes than assuming the Brazilian position in defence of our national interests. [...] [After World War II], a new phase opens up to our foreign policy, where we are today, which is characterized by the impossibility of maintaining its old ornamental meaning, and by contradictions that affect its formulations, both in its reciprocal relations and regarding our country’s and ruling forces’ needs. (Jaguaribe 1958: 223-227, free translation)²

Let me now analyse such discourse in terms of presupposition, predication, and subject positioning (Doty 1993). As background knowledge, Jaguaribe presupposes not only that the new is better than the old but also that an autonomous foreign policy is better than an alienated one. In terms of predication, he opposes 'ornamental attitude' to 'pragmatism and dynamism', and 'individual sympathy and adherence' to 'national interests.' On the one hand, in the old days, when Itamaraty had complete autonomy to formulate and implement our foreign policy, it went through a stage of decadence, whereby in their ornamental attitude diplomats ended up searching for pleasing foreign upper classes rather than supporting national interests. As a result, Brazilian foreign policy became alienated or heteronomous. On the other, in present days, its formulation and implementation has decentred, and that ornamental attitude has become contradictory and no longer could be maintained. But which Itamaraty Jaguaribe places like that? As we can notice, his critical assessment takes aim at Rio Branco's successors, but Rio Branco himself remains untouchable, given that pragmatism and dynamism are attached to his foreign policy. In Jaguaribe's view, Rio Branco was not a problem; Americanism was. Brazilian foreign policy was in decay because his successors had routinized Americanism and lost touch with the country's actual interests. However, as we have seen, Itamaraty's quest for ontological security depended precisely on these routines.

Critical situation and narrative adjustment: Globalism is born

I understand that critical situations happen when subjects can no longer feel as if they were ontologically secure. As a result, they cannot bracket fundamental questions anymore (Ejdus 2018). First, states need to feel at home in international society and have a sense of their place in it. As we have seen, from the mid-1950s onwards, Americanism fell into decay. As a result, diplomats and ISEB intellectuals differed regarding which place Brazil should occupy in the world, either a bulwark of the West or a neutral developing country. Second, states need to maintain stable relations with their significant others. When states lose a friend with whom they cultivate a special relationship, a deep sense of ontological insecurity ensues. It was precisely what happened to USA-Brazil relations after World War II. We saw that Brazil felt neglected by its special friend in spite of its obvious efforts of either fervorous alignment or skilful bargaining. Third, states need an autobiography that provides a sense of self-identity continuity in time and space. Once Americanism fell into decay, Itamaraty's biographical narrative followed the path. They could no longer identify Brazil only with the West. In addition, by opposing pragmatism to the ornamental attitude, I argue Jaguaribe was disrupting Itamaraty's line of historical continuity which attached Alexandre de Gusmão, Rio Branco and his successors.

In the 1950s, traditional diplomats did not seem to feel at home either. Inside Itamaraty, the number of economists increased because there was also growing interest in economic development issues across the country. Such diversification in the diplomatic staff brought about a self-identity conflict between traditionalists and modernizers. The former thought diplomats should remain generalists and deal with high politics; the latter were in favour of paying more attention to economics (Rosenbaum 1968; Cheibub

1985). According to Mitzen (2006), when individuals are rigidly attached to their routines, they perceive them as ends in themselves and resist changes to avoid anxiety. In the late 1950s, Americanism had long become an end in itself for most diplomats. It is precisely what Jaguaribe calls 'Itamaraty's sterile habits such as the daily routine of following precedents.' In his book, he states that Itamaraty was in crisis by the late 1950s. I could say diplomats were in a crisis of anxiety. It was not possible to take Americanism for granted anymore. Against the backdrop of Neutralism, they would have to bring fundamental questions to discursive consciousness in order to figure out new ways of routinization.

Without a doubt, President Juscelino Kubitschek was a modernizer. His campaign motto was 'fifty years of progress in five years of government.' Through his Goal Plan, Kubitschek heavily encouraged investments in industrial sectors such as energy and transports (Penna Filho 2002). After five years, he could even accomplish the gigantic construction of Brasília, Brazil's new capital city. Hence, we may understand why Kubitschek had little interest in traditional salon diplomacy. In 1956, right after his election, he resumed presidential diplomacy and travelled abroad in search for foreign investments (Danese 1999). As time went by, his Goal Plan became more expensive. Americanism was in decay, but he decided to try one last shot. In 1958, he sent a letter to Dwight Eisenhower, whereby he attempted to convince the White House to release public funding to Latin American development. Kubitschek wrote that it was in the USA's best interests to help fight poverty in Latin America if they really wanted to cut off communist threats at the root. Such letter embodied his most ambitious initiative of presidential diplomacy, known as Pan-American Operation (OPA). OPA's immediate results were disappointing notwithstanding, because the White House was still insisting that Brazil should draw private foreign investments in the first place (Penna Filho 2002).

Not surprisingly, Itamaraty had no part in OPA's initial insight. In fact, it was the poet Augusto Frederico Schmidt, Kubitschek's personal advisor, who came up with such idea. Brazilian foreign policy's formulation and implementation were becoming more open, but traditional diplomats were still nostalgic of their aristocratic days. Manoel Pio Corrêa Júnior, a career diplomat who were then ahead of Itamaraty's Political Department, was one of them. In 1959, he received Schmidt at the Itamaraty Palace for discussing the Pan-American Operation. In his memoirs, Corrêa (1995: 603-604, free translation) confessed that 'between Augusto Frederico Schmidt and myself there was a solid and sincere mutual antipathy. [...] my professional coldness, my undisguised disdain for opinions of amateurs, and my lack of admiration for his literary genius exasperated him.'³ He thought OPA was sheer nonsense. I argue his disdain towards Schmidt actually disguised Corrêa's anxiety and showed his rigid attachment to Itamaraty's old routines. After all, through OPA, Schmidt tried to invigorate Americanism without previous consultation to traditional diplomats.

In terms of discourse, I see in Corrêa's memoirs a presupposition according to which diplomats should keep complete control over Brazilian foreign policy. In this excerpt, we can see this if we look at his predication. On the one hand, Schmidt is just a poet who gets emotional ('exasperated'), an 'amateur' who knows nothing about diplomacy; on the other, Corrêa is a rational ('cold') and 'professional' diplomat. Therefore, Schmidt's

subject-position is one of silence. Another traditional diplomat, Vasco Leitão da Cunha, who were then in charge of the Brazilian Embassy in Cuba, affirms in his memoirs that ‘OPA was a fantasy. [...] Brazil has no mandate in the continent to take the cards of the problem.’⁴ (Cunha 1994: 210, free translation). In other words, he thinks Kubitschek’s move was bad Americanism. Schmidt’s idea was just a fantasy – not reason, but imagination. In 1961, John F. Kennedy announced The Alliance to Progress, a foreign aid program destined to Latin America which intended to counter the Cuban Revolution, but also indirectly echoed OPA’s concerns.

The same year, President Jânio Quadros assumed after a landslide victory. He was much inspired by personalist leaders such as Charles de Gaulle, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Josip Broz Tito, all of whom refused the Cold War bipolar system. In a paper published late that year in *Foreign Affairs*, Quadros stated that Brazilian foreign policy ‘has now become the instrument for a national development policy. [...] [and] has ceased to be an unrealistic academic exercise carried out by oblivious and spell-bound elites; it has become the main topic of daily concern’ (Quadros 1961: 27). I notice here echoes of Jaguaribe’s criticism to ornamental diplomacy. In fact, Quadros wished to bury traditional Americanism in order to identify Brazil both with the West and the developing world. As a result, he flirted with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). In practical policies, Jaguaribe’s theoretical Neutralism became a sort of quasi-Neutralism, because Brazil never really joined the NAM (Cruz 1989). I argue Quadros’ Independent Foreign Policy (PEI) confirmed ISEB intellectuals’ biographical narrative. In his paper, he affirms Brazil is mostly Western, but also has close ties with Latin America and the Afro-Asian nations because they all shared the burden of underdevelopment (Quadros 1961).

We see here how Quadros attempted to rebalance discourse and practical policies. Ever since Vargas, Brazil was already searching for autonomy in its capital goods industry. Kubitschek pursued autonomy by means of diversifying trade partners, even within the Soviet Bloc. These changes progressed with Quadros, and diplomatic alignment with the USA was finally over. Then, the biographical narrative was to tell that Brazil was culturally and racially mixed, hence it had to tighten ties outside the West. In such scheme, traditional diplomats would have to accept foreign policy had become not only open to democratic debate but also that there was nothing ethereal about it. In Rio de Janeiro, however, they resisted Quadros’ PEI and were recalcitrant to accept that Itamaraty would be transferred to Brasília. In turn, Quadros hardened their administrative routines. He reduced diplomats’ income and even decided they had to start working at 8 a.m. (Rosenbaum 1968). This came to a head when he sent a special envoy to East Germany without previous understanding with the diplomats. Vasco Leitão da Cunha, then Itamaraty’s Secretary-General, resigned.

Quadros also faced mounting criticism to his audacious foreign policy among conservative politicians. In August 1961, he decided to decorate Che Guevara. It was the last straw. A few days later, Quadros resigned. His resignation plunged the country in a very serious political crisis. Conservative politicians and the military initially refused to accept João Goulart’s inauguration. He was Quadros’ vice president and rather committed

to social justice. In accordance with ISEB intellectuals, Goulart emphasised in his political plan the need for structural reforms, especially land reform. In foreign policy, he ensured continuity to PEI. As we have already seen, ISEB intellectuals did not separate domestic and foreign policies. For them, both were parts of the same search for economic development, social justice, and national emancipation. After 1961, both political realms became more and more entangled within a great national debate, which split the public opinion in two irreconcilable and contending groups. On the one hand, the right-wing was for Americanism, economic liberalism, and Christian values; on the other, the left supported PEI and structural reforms (Manzur 2014).

In January 1962, such debate heated up even more. San Tiago Dantas was sent to Punta del Este, Uruguay, to attend the OAS 8th Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. In late 1961, Cuba had been formally aligned to the Soviet bloc. In reaction, the US government called that conference in order to put to a vote a motion according to which Cuba should be suspended from the Organization of American States. Brazil was one of the few countries that decided to abstain. The US motion won, and Cuba was suspended. In his vote, Dantas argued that Cuba should not be suspended because this would threaten the principle of non-intervention. He also argued that isolating Cuba would only strengthen Fidel Castro's regime even more. Just like Goulart, Dantas was a left-wing politician. Regarding his days ahead of Itamaraty, Dantas (2011: 9, free translation) affirms he pursued Brazil's national interests, 'seen as a country that aspires to (I) development and economic emancipation; and (II) to the historical conciliation between representative democracy and a social reform capable of preventing owning classes from oppressing working classes.'⁵ In his mind, foreign policy was an instrument for social reform. He also thought Cuba should stay in the OAS because in terms of social reforms it was an example to be followed.

A few days before the OAS conference took place, four former Brazilian Ministers of Foreign Affairs, José Carlos de Macedo Soares, João Neves da Fontoura, Vicente Rao, and Horácio Lafer, all of them adherent to traditional Americanism, went to the press and tried to dissuade Goulart and Dantas from applying their Independent Foreign Policy in Punta del Este. In a newspaper article, they argued both should reconsider their decision in order to 'safeguard Brazil's traditional position, always in the forefront among the OAS builders, supporter of the continental unity, under the aegis of two great memories – Rio Branco, Joaquim Nabuco [...] (*apud* Garcia 2008: 377, free translation)⁶. In February 1962, Dantas gave a speech on national television and radio in order to justify his vote to the people. Interestingly, he remembered the Second Hague Peace Conference, held in 1907, when under instructions of Rio Branco the Brazilian delegation had already dissented from the USA (Dantas 2011: 177). After 1962, the major national debate knocked on Itamaraty's door. San Tiago Dantas and the former ministers of foreign affairs were all of them politicians. They were fighting for incompatible accounts of national biography and had different readings of Rio Branco's legacy. Among traditional diplomats a deep sense of ontological insecurity came to the fore. That was when Araújo Castro appeared in the spotlight. He was a modernizer who understood changes were happening.

In 1963, he became the first career diplomat ever to be ahead of Itamaraty. Castro thought Americanism had to pass and ensured continuity to Brazil's new foreign policy. Nonetheless, he dispensed with Jaguaribe's Neutralism as much as with Quadros' quasi-Neutralism. In his mind, neutral nations had nothing more to do in terms of political mediation between the Cold War blocs given that the USA and the USSR had just solved the Cuban Missile Crisis directly. Besides, being a diplomat, Araújo Castro discarded Quadros' flirtation with NAM political leaders in favour of strengthening Brazil's voice on economic development issues at the United Nations (Cruz, 1989). At times of critical situation and great ontological stress, 'political actors *activate* narratives or specific messages *within* narratives, to justify policy shifts, and *deactivate* those elements that no longer serve the policy purpose' (Subotić 2016: 616). This way they cope with critical situations and adjust narratives in order to feel once again as if they were ontologically secure in spite of changes. I understand it was precisely what Araújo Castro did on behalf of Itamaraty. Not only did he deactivate messages of Neutralism, but he also saw no connection between domestic and foreign policies:

Itamaraty cannot have but one ideology: the ideology of Brazil's interests, commitments, and traditions. Itamaraty is not an academy of international law or a society of byzantine ideological debates. One cannot formulate and conduct a foreign policy of independence and maturity if there is no calm, reflection, and objectivity. And we cannot allow that external problems – about which we will pronounce ourselves, with independence and authority, when we are called to do it in international forums or conferences – become disturbing elements of our internal peace and tranquillity. (*apud* Franco 2008: 248-249, free translation)⁷

Let me now come back to my discourse analysis. In terms of presuppositions, I see here two important things. First, domestic and foreign policies are different realms and must not mingle. Second, Itamaraty alone has authority to formulate and conduct Brazilian foreign policy. Such presuppositions then unfold in binary oppositions. As far as predication is concerned, I notice Castro affirms Itamaraty's sole ideology is Brazil's national interests, commitments, and traditions. As a result, only diplomats would have enough 'maturity' to formulate and conduct foreign policy with 'calm, reflection, and objectivity' given that they are professionals. Hence, in his predication foreign policy is attached to reason and order. On the contrary, Castro considers that domestic ideological debates have to do with passion and chaos, inasmuch as he affirms that they are confusing and complicated ('byzantine') and 'disturbing' of peace and tranquillity if they mingle with foreign policy issues. We may see how Castro's and Corrêa's predications are alike. Consequently, we have here two distinct subject-positions. On the one hand, diplomats, who must define Brazilian foreign policy discourse ('we cannot allow'); on the other, all non-professionals who should not interfere.

Araújo Castro gave this speech in December 1963, when political situation in Brazil was boiling. When he affirms Brazilian foreign policy needs maturity, I argue his

discursive move is twofold. First, he deactivates Dantas' original concern with social reform. For Castro, maturity meant dissociating foreign policy from the major national debate about Goulart's structural reforms. In September 1963, in his famous 'Three D's' speech at the UN Assembly, Castro had pointed out that middle and small powers should work together in the North-South debate in favour of disarmament, decolonization, and development. On the one hand, he stated at New York that 'the fight for *development* is the fight for economic emancipation and social justice'⁸ (*apud* Franco 2008: 190, free translation). On the other, he tried to depoliticize the Independent Foreign Policy in order to shield Itamaraty from ideological upheavals in Rio de Janeiro. In February 1964, President Goulart called a huge rally to announce his land reform. Significantly, Castro was his only minister who did not attend. Second, by affirming only diplomats were mature enough, I think he intended to cut short the process of early democratization Brazilian foreign policy had been witnessing since the mid-1950s.

By deactivating messages of Jaguaribe's, Quadros' and Dantas' narratives, I think Castro intended to carve out a new foreign policy discourse able to restore Itamaraty's sense of ontological security. According to Hurrell (2005), the Brazilian Foreign Ministry embodies a set of foreign policy ideas, or an informal foreign policy ideology, such as Brazil being a natural mediator, a geographically satisfied country, and having a vocation for peaceful conflict resolution. These ideas were part of Rio Branco's Americanism. From Castro on, development and national autonomy were also added to Itamaraty's foreign policy ideas. As we have seen, such ideas were dear to Neutralism. Castro became the founder of Globalism, whereby Brazil refused aligning with the USA and searched for a prominent power position in the North-South debate (Lima 1994). On the one hand, he followed traditional diplomats when he stated Itamaraty should keep complete control over Brazilian foreign policy. On the other, he was not rigidly attached to routines of Americanism. As a modernizer, he could learn and adapt to PEI. Hence, I consider Araújo Castro resumed Itamaraty's quest for ontological security because he updated Rio Branco's legacy into a new biographical narrative by which Brazil could now be identified both with the North and the South. In the late 1960s, Globalism would become routinized and eventually thrived.

Final remarks

In this paper, I made a contribution to Brazilian foreign policy analysis. This article focused on change from Americanism to Globalism. I argued that such change may be understood as an example of ontological security crisis. We have seen that Americanism as a foreign policy discourse was no longer effective by the mid-1950s because the US government had no more interest in fostering Brazilian development. As a result, both Brazil's self-reflection as a bulwark of the West and its routinized special relationship with the USA were broken. From the late 1950s to the early 1960s, Neutralism emerged as an alternative foreign policy discourse. ISEB intellectuals and some political leaders understood Brazil should abandon alignment with the USA in the Cold War and identify

itself as a bridge between developing nations and the West. I stated that in such critical situation different national biographical narratives were at stake.

We have seen that diplomats were facing an ontological security crisis by the late 1950s. In their biographical narrative, Americanism was crucial because it echoed Rio Branco's memory as the founder of Brazilian diplomacy. If Americanism crumbled, both their historical monopoly over and their self-identification as guardians of Brazilian foreign policy could be in jeopardy. Afterwards, I turned to discourse analysis in order to show that there was a political dispute between traditional diplomats and ISEB intellectuals. I showed Itamaraty reacted and proceeded to narrative adjustment. They deactivated parts of Neutralism and started to carve out Globalism, which would become the new hegemonic foreign policy discourse. I could demonstrate Itamaraty did so by three discursive moves. They argued only diplomats were professional and had authority to deal with foreign policy issues; they affirmed domestic and foreign policies must not mingle; and they included development and national autonomy in their new foreign policy discourse.

Notes

- 1 In the original Portuguese: 'Até 1922, queremos dizer, até a "semana de arte moderna", não há propriamente história, mas pré-história do Brasil. [...] Não temos outra coisa a fazer, senão inventar o nosso destino, construindo uma cultura que seja a expressão, a forma adequada do novo Brasil que devemos criar.'
- 2 In the original Portuguese: 'O Itamaraty perdeu a autonomia de que desfrutava, na República Velha, na elaboração de nossa política exterior, em virtude da crescente interferência de outros órgãos administrativos (CSN, BNDE, Petrobrás, etc.), da Presidência da República, do Congresso, da imprensa e dos órgãos de classe, na *policy making* de nossas relações exteriores. [...] Essa atitude ornamental, contrastando com o sentido pragmático e com o dinamismo de nossa política exterior da fase precedente, embora parcialmente justificada pelas condições do país, marcou o início de nossa decadência diplomática, instaurando, no Itamaraty, hábitos que o esterilizavam na rotineira prática dos precedentes e que desfiguravam a mentalidade de nossos representantes no exterior, mais preocupados em captar, individualmente, a simpatia e a adesão das classes dirigentes estrangeiras do que em assumir a posição brasileira e a defesa dos interesses nacionais. [...] Abre-se, assim, nova fase para nossa política exterior, em que ora nos encontramos, caracterizada pela impossibilidade de perduração de seu antigo sentido ornamental e pelas contradições que afetam suas formulações, tanto em suas relações recíprocas quanto às necessidades do país e de suas forças dirigentes.'
- 3 In the original Portuguese as follows: 'Entre Augusto Frederico Schmidt e mim existia uma sólida e sincera antipatia mútua. [...]; exasperava-o a minha frieza profissional, o meu indisfarçado desdém pelas opiniões de amadores, e a minha impermeabilidade à admiração por seu imenso gênio literário.'
- 4 In the original Portuguese: 'A OPA era uma fantasia. [...] O Brasil não tem mandato do continente para tomar as cartas do problema.'
- 5 In the original Portuguese: '[...] visto como um país que aspira (I) ao desenvolvimento e à emancipação econômica e (II) à conciliação histórica entre o regime democrático representativo e uma reforma social capaz de suprimir a opressão da classe trabalhadora pela classe proprietária.'
- 6 In the original Portuguese: '[...] no resguardo da posição tradicional do Brasil, sempre na primeira linha dos construtores da OEA, de sustentáculo da unidade continental, sob a égide de duas grandes memórias – Rio Branco, Joaquim Nabuco [...].'
- 7 In the original Portuguese as follows: 'O Itamaraty não pode ter senão uma ideologia: a ideologia dos interesses, dos compromissos e das tradições do Brasil. O Itamaraty não é uma academia de direito internacional ou uma sociedade de debates sobre bizantinismos ideológicos. Não se formula ou se conduz

uma política externa de independência e maturidade sem calma, sem reflexão e sem objetividade. E não podemos permitir que problemas externos – sobre os quais nos pronunciaremos, com independência e autoridade, quando formos chamados a fazê-lo, em foros ou conferências internacionais – se transformem em elementos perturbadores de nossa paz ou tranquilidade interna.’

- 8 In the original Portuguese: ‘A luta pelo *desenvolvimento* é a própria luta pela emancipação econômica e pela justiça social.’

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Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Camila Amorim Jardim and both anonymous reviewers whose careful reading and insightful remarks helped me improve and finish this paper.

About the author

Luciano da Rosa Muñoz holds a PhD in International Relations from the University of Brasília (UnB) in the area of International and Comparative Politics. He is a professor of Brazilian Foreign Policy at the University Centre of Brasília (CEUB). He co-edited the book *Relações Internacionais para um mundo em mutação: policentrismo e diálogo transdisciplinar* (2020). He is a contributor to the website *Errante – o Internacional fora do lugar*. His areas of research interest include Brazilian Foreign Policy, History of International Relations, Critical Theories of International Relations and Cinema and International Relations.

Discursos de política externa brasileira e a busca por segurança ontológica

Resumo: Neste trabalho, analisamos a política externa brasileira com especial atenção para a transição entre Americanismo e Globalismo no começo dos anos 1960. O artigo argumenta que essa mudança ocorreu em meio a uma crise de segurança ontológica. Os diplomatas tradicionais apoiavam o Americanismo, enquanto alguns intelectuais e políticos propuseram o Neutralismo, um discurso de política externa alternativo. Eles sustentavam narrativas diferentes da identidade do Brasil, seja como um país ocidental ou como uma ponte entre os países em desenvolvimento e o Ocidente. Argumentamos que os diplomatas conseguiram resolver essa situação crítica e retomar o controle sobre a formulação e a implementação da política externa. Eles fizeram isso desativando partes do Neutralismo e criando o Globalismo, o qual se tornaria o novo discurso de política externa hegemônico.

Palavras-chave: Política externa brasileira; Segurança ontológica; Análise do discurso; Narrativa biográfica; Americanismo; Globalismo

Received on 05 October 2021 and approved for publication on 24 October 2022.



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